

LABOR ACTION

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Stalinist Press and Eye-Witness Reports Now Reveal—

Mass-Resistance Revolt in Czechoslovakia Rivaled East German Workers' Uprising!

Fight in Germany Is Nationwide; Western Powers Get Jitters Too

By HAL DRAPER

While the sharpest struggles in East Berlin have been lulled, according to reports as we go to press, resistance action in the whole of the East German zone, which followed hard in the wake of the Berlin rising, is still continuing with at least sporadic strikes and riots.

The Russian occupation authorities have had to formally execute 22 so far. The first was a West Berliner, Willi Goettling; the twenty-second was the CP mayor of Doebnitz, in Saxony-Anhalt, H. W. Hartmann, who was accused of knocking down a *Volkspolizei* cop who had fired or was about to fire into a crowd of demonstrators.

Beginning Saturday, completely authenticated details became scarcer as the Russian forces tried to wall off East Berlin and the rest of the country. But admissions in the Stalinist press itself verified reports of spreading action throughout the zone.

Neues Deutschland conceded that work stoppages and "disorders" had reached the furthest corners of the country, as it attempted to explain why Russian troops had had to intervene. ("Of course, it would have been better if the German workers had repelled the provocations themselves in time," it said, "but the workers did not have the necessary high sense of responsibility.")

All over East Germany, cities were under Russian martial law, including Potsdam, the headquarters of the Russian army, up to Magdeburg on the Elbe, up to the Polish frontier, up to the uranium mine region bordering Czechoslovakia. On

Picket Russian Consul in N.Y.!

**in solidarity with the workers of
East Germany and in protest
against the Stalinist police terror!**

This demonstration is called by the Workers Defense League. The Independent Socialist League calls upon all its members, friends and readers of **LABOR ACTION** to join the picket line as a show of socialist solidarity with the workers' uprising.

**Before the Russian Consulate
68th and Park Ave.
Monday, June 29
4:30 to 6 p.m.**

Hear
MAX SHACHTMAN
on
**The Workers' Uprising
in Stalinist Germany**
See page 2

the 18th the UP reported that rail transportation through East Germany was at a standstill.

After a special meeting of the central committee of the Stalinist party (SED), official admissions came out on the extent of the movement. It admitted that the resistance "had the character of an uprising," citing "attacks on food warehouses," etc., as well as "murderous assaults on functionaries of the party, of mass organizations [front organizations] and of the state apparatus."

"A large number of provocateurs have been arrested," it stated. "The remaining part does not dare to appear. But quiet has by no means been fully assured. The enemy continues his insidious agitation."

Very significant was its admission of widespread implication of CP members in the movement. "Tens of thousands of them sit in their offices, write some papers or other and simply wait. The whole party must be mobilized."

As of Thursday, the 18th, East Berlin was still paralyzed by the general strike.

(Continued on page 7)

The mass movements against the state and Communist Party in Czechoslovakia, during the first week in June, rivaled in size and extent the workers' general strike, demonstrations and riots which swept East Germany last week, it is now known.

The difference in the relative publicity given to each of these movements in the American press is accounted for by the fact that the German revolt could be witnessed, and even photographed, in detail from the window through the Iron Curtain provided by partitioned Berlin.

The picture of what happened in Czechoslovakia has been put together from widespread admissions in the Czech Stalinist press and from eye-witness reports of Czechs who took advantage of the *mélée* to escape across the borders. It has not yet appeared in the general press. Last week, the *New York Times* carried only a story based on one such excerpt from a Stalinist organ, which we referred to in our last issue.

A soberly documented but nevertheless sensational compilation by the research department of the National Committee for a Free Europe just issued, which we have good reason to consider entirely reliable, makes clear that a riotous anti-regime explosion shook the entire country for a period of several days beginning June 1.

Like its German counterpart, it was primarily a movement arising out of the industrial working class. In at least one case, army troops refused to be used against demonstrators. In many other cases, local militia could not be used at all.

While the German reaction was kindled by a new speedup decree increasing work norms, the wave of militancy in Czechoslovakia was touched off by a state decree which wiped out a substantial part of the workers' savings.

Much of what we wrote last week about the East German action applies to both countries. This month has been historic.

Regardless of how soon, or with how much of a lull, the attack from below against the Stalinist power resumes, or to what extent it spreads through the satellites in the next period, we again point out that we have just witnessed the first mass workers' revolts against the Russian power in Europe—the historic beginnings of the working-class revolution against Stalinism.

(See pages 6 and 7 for full story.)

Hysteria, Panic and Fear In the Rosenberg Execution

By H. W. BENSON

For 27 long months, since their conviction in March, 1951, the case of the Rosenbergs creaked through the judicial machinery. A death sentence remained suspended while somberly clad judges, lowly and high, pondered the legal intricacies of their appeals in the quiet and dignified chambers of American justice.

At leisure they continued what Supreme Court Justice Frankfurter called "the all too leaden-footed proceedings." It was, or appeared to be, American justice in all its majesty and equity, swayed not by passion but by law, carefully and fully weighing and assessing claims and counter-claims to ensure justice and legality.

Not once in all this time did Judge Kaufman's death sentence appear in danger of being reversed. As each legal knot was untied, the government prosecutors could remain in confident safety, patiently awaiting the inevitable electrocution. The annoying extension of time could be benevolently tolerated in the comfortable assurance that in the end spies of a hated enemy would die. So long as this assurance remained, the Rosenberg case would unravel in all the forms of a calm, cold, pure justice.

But this façade of serenity was too brittle to withstand the simple, honest action of one courageous Supreme Court Justice who for the first time held out the possibility that the death sentence might be overturned.

In acting upon a last moment appeal, William O. Douglas stayed the execution, announcing that there were reasonable grounds for questioning the legality of the death sentence.

(Turn to last page)

Inside the Liberal Party: Ranks Want to Run Independent Candidate for Mayor

By PETER WHITNEY

NEW YORK, June 21—What candidate will the Liberal Party support in the coming mayoralty election in New York City? This question hung heavy over the Ninth Annual Dinner of the Liberal Party, held on June 17, at the Hotel Commodore, with some 1700 party enthusiasts in attendance.

Like a specter at a banquet, this question kept rearing its head, despite the strenuous efforts of the party leadership to keep it safely hidden away until they had a decision cut-and-dried for the membership. But the skeleton in the closet kept popping out, and the rank and file made no bones about their stand. They showed unmistakably that they wanted Rudolph Halley, president of the City Council, to run as the independent candidate of the Liberal Party for mayor.

Halley, elected two years ago to his present post as the independent candidate of the Liberal Party, received two ovations at the dinner, despite State Chairman A. A. Berle's attempts to head them off. His two years in office have solidified his position with the rank and file of the Liberal Party. Although a registered Democrat, Halley has carried on a vigorous battle against the Democratic Party city machine and the Dewey Republican state machine.

Halley has based himself on the Liberals' municipal and state program, in developing and presenting their solutions to the many civic ills. Unlike other candidates elected to office by the efforts of the Liberals—for example, F. D. Roosevelt Jr., who loved 'em and left 'em—Halley has considerably identified himself with the party, addressing its gatherings and participating in its internal life.

This may be due to a real political development on his part in drawing closer to the Liberal Party, or it may simply be because only there does he see the organizational machinery through which he can hope to make a bid for City Hall. In any case, it is a fact. And it is also a fact that sentiment within the Liberal Party for an independent mayoralty candidate this year largely crystallized and rallied around the figure of Halley.

POPULARITY CONTEST

There is no lack of candidates for the city's highest post. Berle, in opening his speech at the dinner, began his remarks by addressing: "Ladies, gentlemen, and candidates for the mayoralty. . . ." Four of them were present at the dinner—Halley (the only one seated on the dais, next to his political godfather and mentor, Alex Rose, Hatters Union president), District Attorney Frank Hogan, Representative Jacob Javits (Republican-Liberal), and Judge Samuel Liebowitz.

Despite Berle's appeal to the audience not to make it a "popularity contest" and to withhold applause until all four names had been read, Halley's name evoked a long ovation of vigorous applause, table-thumping, and foot-stomping. This noisy demonstration drowned out the other three names read, and aroused an annoyed comment from Berle that the leadership did not select its candidate on the basis of "organized noise."

The question may legitimately be raised: just how DOES the Liberal leadership select the candidate? How does it consult the membership on so important an issue? How can the rank and file of the party exert its influence and record

itself on this question? The Liberal Party boasts in its literature and in the speeches of its leaders that it is a party really and truly controlled and run by the rank-and-file members.

The selection of the Liberal mayoralty candidate could be a splendid example of the leadership practicing what it preaches. In general, previous candidates have been the results of deals and maneuvers engineered by the top leadership and presented to the membership for rubber-stamp endorsement. The Liberals, unhappily, did not distinguish themselves from the Democrats or Republicans on this score.

DISCUSSION ON

In an excellent but all too unusual step, on May 1, the Liberal leadership opened up a "discussion period" on the coming municipal elections and urged the clubs (over 90 in the five boroughs of New York) to explore this question thoroughly and to relay their opinions to the state office. At the same time they would be arranged at which decisions announced that a city-wide conference would be made, and until then they urged that clubs not publicize their points of view, particularly to the press.

Although these club discussions are still continuing, it is common knowledge that in most of the clubs the discussions resulted in overwhelming votes urging the party to run an independent candidate, in most cases naming Halley. In some cases, the club votes have been unanimously cast for Halley, and his support is wide-spread and deep within the party. This is true even in the very heart of Javits' district, where the membership indicated its preference for Halley despite the fact that the Liberals have energetically supported Javits in his congressional runs..

To date no city-wide conference has been held, and it was at the dinner, with some 1700 party members present, that the membership had its first city-wide opportunity to express itself, even if in a limited and partial form. Obviously, only at a conference, where discussion and debate is possible can club delegates accurately reflect the sentiment within the ranks.

DAILY NEWS POLL

Given the plethora of willing candidates, even the Democratic Party has felt compelled to take the pulse beat of its ranks on this question, and has sent out thousands of postcards to its active supporters requesting them to register their choice. So far, the result has been heavily weighted against the incumbent Mayor Impellitteri, and this has sent the

Democratic chieftains busily searching for an attractive vote-getting possibility.

The Daily News, a tabloid with some two million readers, conducted a straw poll which showed Halley leading all other candidates, and Javits obtaining a small percentage of the vote. Halley's stock rose considerably as a result of this poll, and it reinforced the conviction of the Liberal members that Halley was the indicated candidate and could even win "going it alone." It is reported that Halley's preference is to run as an independent on the Liberal ticket, despite rumors of an approach by a leading Democrat.

Such a position on Halley's part is borne out by the speech he delivered to the convention of the Hatters, Cap and Millinery Workers International Union at the invitation of President Alex Rose. He launched into a strong attack against any coalition with the Republicans, a policy currently under exploration by the Liberals, and urged an independent course in New York City. He decried a pet theory of a strong section of the Liberal leadership—that a "good, clean, progressive" city administration could be selected on what they term a non-partisan basis, divorced from party considerations.

HALLEY LEARNED

Halley admitted that he had learned a good deal in office, and no longer believed that there was no such thing as a "Democratic" or "Republican" way of sweeping the streets of New York or collecting the garbage, or any other presumably non-partisan municipal problem. Municipal problems—like the rent increases of 15 per cent granted by the state legislature, the prospect of increased subway and bus fares, the continued shortage of adequate housing, the corruption and gangsterism linked up with City Hall and all aspects of civic government—these problems cannot be solved without a bold, aggressive program backed by some fighting independent force.

His speech clearly pointed to the Liberals as the only solution—provided they could rise to this great opportunity, perhaps the greatest yet offered to them to become the first party in the city of New York.

Unfortunately, the Liberal Party leadership appears to be still bogged down in the swamps of coalitionism, and they are floundering around for a "good government candidate with the broadest possible non-partisan base." Thus reported State Chairman Berle to the dinner gathering, after stating that a change was definitely needed in New York City.

Berle gave no details on how the "exploratory discussions" with Republican leaders and the Citizens Non-Partisan Committee were proceeding, but he significantly dropped the hint that in 1951 too a coalition with the Republicans had failed to materialize despite their best efforts, and then the party had named Halley as its standard-bearer. The applause which greeted this reminder left little doubt that the members would welcome a similar "failure" in 1953.

JAVITS PROBLEM

While Berle did not deign to report on his activities as representative of the Liberal Party in this coalition attempt, the understanding is that Javits has strong support as a coalition candidate. Javits is actively seeking the mayoralty post and is eagerly courting the Liberal Party endorsement, since he would have little chance on the Republican line alone. What can the Liberal leaders say to all these contenders for their affection?

The Liberal leadership have supported Javits for Congress again and again, on the basis that he is a "good" liberal Republican. But they have been denouncing the Dewey Republican administration in the state, and in particular the rent-increase program pushed through the past legislative session, as well as the whole Transit Authority mess which will mean increased fares in New York. Will Javits attack Dewey? How can supporting Javits square with all the Liberal attacks on Republican opposition to the needs of the people?

The Liberal leadership is aware too that next year the state governorship is coming up. Won't a Javits victory in New York ensure further Republican victories in New York State? And where was Javits when all the hot city issues were in dispute? Will he carry out the Liberal policies and program on the municipal scene? To whom will he be responsible? Also, the practical

Liberal leaders remember that another so-called liberal Republican was knifed by his own party voters not so long ago.

Berle insisted, however, that all attempts had to be made to find the broadest base for selecting a candidate who would be completely free of all machines, adding aside "including our own!" Berle's aside, if seriously intended, would question the very existence and role of the Liberal Party, presumably devoted to the welfare of the people. Berle insisted that only after all possible attempts to reach agreement had failed should an independent candidate be named.

BERLE'S LINE

Giving perhaps a clue to the strategy of the leadership, Berle explained that if all attempts failed the Liberals would then be in the strongest position to get support from even these elements for their own candidate. But he emphasized, "To go it alone is the last thing to do—not the first."

This approach is typical of the timidity and lack of confidence in the powers and potentialities of the Liberal Party which so severely handicap the leadership. We shall run an independent only if forced to do so—so insist the leaders—instead of unfurling the Liberal banner and announcing to the world that we make no deals, we make no more alliances or misalliances; we have the only program for the city and the state; here it is and here is our candidate. What a breath of fresh air such an approach would be in the Augean stables of New York City politics!

Interestingly enough, it was the second speaker at the Liberal Party dinner—Senator Wayne Morse, ex-Republican and presently "Independent"—who uttered the boldest challenge to those present. Morse aggressively denounced what he termed the "Cadillac crusade" on the part of bankers, monopolists, and big-business interests against the interests of the people. He described the big steal of the tideland oils and the robbing of our natural resources.

He warned the audience that when someone hollered "creeping socialism," they could be sure that private monopoly was out to rob the people. His language was strong and his candor was refreshing after Berle's pussyfooting. He was proud to be an "Independent" because in reality it was a one-party system with two labels. He said that the liberals had been functioning as a veto-party, and under the new administration even that is no longer true.

CALL BY MORSE

Morse predicted that sooner or later one of the two major parties will die out, and a realignment will take place. It would come faster, he predicted, throwing out a challenge, if 20 liberal leaders in high posts would dare to recognize the need and would dare to sacrifice themselves to make the greatest contribution to this country's development, by declaring themselves for an independent party which would truly represent the little people in the United States. Such a party, he said, would rally the independent voters, and he insisted that the majority of American voters had rejected the cliché "My party right or wrong" and would respond to a party which could fight for their interests.

Morse called for 20 such leaders to walk out of their party with a declaration that they mean to build a party for the little people who are not represented by the two major parties and can only find a way out in a realignment. Morse pledged himself to this task.

Realists may say with justice that Morse's enthusiasm for a new independent party stems from the fact that in Congress he has been frozen out by the Republican Party whose 1952 candidate he bolted, and not supported by the Democrats, but it is not Morse's personal fate which is the issue here. The thunderous applause which greeted his speech and the standing tribute paid to him indicated that Morse was echoing a sentiment deep within the Liberal Party membership.

Whether there will be such 20 men depends upon great social and political changes—but his singling out of the Liberal Party as one of the few independent political forces indicates the road down which it must travel if it is to fulfill a progressive role in the realignment process.

Labor Action FORUM

New York City

MAX SHACHTMAN

speaks on

*The Workers' Uprising
In Stalinist Germany*

Thursday, July 2 at 8:30 p.m.

LABOR ACTION HALL

114 West 14 Street, New York City

WHAT ACCOUNTS FOR SYNGMAN RHEE?

By GORDON HASKELL

Syngman Rhee's defiance of the United States in releasing the bulk of the anti-Stalinist North Korean prisoners of war is one of those startling events which reminds us that politics is the most complex and uncertain of human activities. It is quite understandable that one of the first reactions to Rhee's putsch was to ascribe it to mental aberrations overtaking the South Korean dictator in his old age.

Looked at from a distance, every consideration would seem to be against Rhee's action. His government had been installed, in the first place, under the protection and tutelage of the United States. When it was attacked by the Stalinists, only American intervention on a mass scale saved it from speedy and relatively easy extinction.

For three years American armed forces have fought on its soil, and have built up the Republic of Korea army from nothing to a considerable force. This army depends on America for all its arms and supplies, and on the American air force, navy and heavy armor and artillery for indispensable support. Without the Americans, Rhee's government and army could hardly spit at the Chinese and North Korean Stalinists, let alone oppose them in battle.

After three years of fighting, both major powers involved have apparently decided that they can gain nothing from continuing the war. Ever since General MacArthur was driven back from the Yalu, both sides have decided that the political and military risks involved in fighting the war to a victory are too great to be taken, and the resultant stalemate has made this one of the most inconclusive wars in history.

In the past few weeks the Stalinists have shown every indication that they are willing to accept the blow to their prestige involved in admitting that there may be thousands of their own former soldiers who do not want to return home.

This time, the truce seemed right around the corner. And then Rhee lashed out.

At first his government encouraged demonstrations demanding that the Americans and their United Nations

allies fight to unify the country. The Korean demonstrators then threatened to fight on alone if a truce is concluded on the terms which seemed almost agreed.

Then Rhee took the only immediate action it was within his power to take without directly and immediately risking armed conflict between ROK and UN troops—he liberated the prisoners of war. By doing so he gave a real earnest of his determination to obstruct the truce by every means at his disposal; he proved that he is not just a man of words in this struggle, but a man of deeds—and reckless ones at that.

POPULAR FEELING

That Rhee is not a madman is indicated by one compelling fact: his opposition to the truce and his action in releasing the prisoners apparently has tremendous support in South Korea. Every newspaper report from that country indicates it.

And what is even more convincing than newspaper reports is this: not a single member of the South Korean legislature, not a single prominent South Korean, has yet been found to stand up openly and disagree with Rhee's stand, even under the protection of the U. S.

Surely there would be every inducement for many a South Korean leader to oppose Rhee on this if his actions are

Rhee Backs into New 3-Point Program

As LABOR ACTION goes to press, the papers report that Syngman Rhee has made public a three-point plan under which he would be willing to accept a truce.

Rhee's three points are:

(1) The withdrawal of Chinese forces from Korea, or, if that is impossible, simultaneous withdrawal of Chinese and United Nations forces from Korea.

(2) Signing of a mutual-security pact between the United States and South Korea prior to the troop withdrawal.

(3) Limiting the post-armistice political conference to 90 days, with the armistice to be called off if the conference fails to produce a satisfactory peace settlement.

This is Rhee's program for the moment. As the pressure is applied to him by the American government, we can expect him to change his proposals and demands almost from day to day in an

effort to gain maximum support for his course both in Korea and in the United States.

Rhee's demand for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Korea is a perfectly just one. His desire for a mutual-security pact with the United States is understandable. But his demand for an end to the truce after 90 days if the post-armistice political conference fails to produce a "satisfactory settlement" is a very visible trap.

The Rhee government has proclaimed for years that the only "satisfactory settlement" of the war for them is the extension of their power to the Yalu. Thus they have proclaimed in advance that for them no solution to the war or the political problems which would follow it is acceptable except complete victory.

In the hands of this old "patriot" even the most progressive demands, such as the withdrawal of all foreign troops, are filled in with a reactionary content.

unpopular. Unless one accepts the idea that the American government or its military representatives in Korea are secretly backing the old man, this is evident. It has been rumored that the chief of staff of the army opposes Rhee, but even if this proves true one man is not a movement.

In the circumstances the Americans could be expected to back up any prominent figure who would take his stand against Rhee. But to date none has been found. For this there can be only one reason: Rhee's stand is so popular that to oppose him on this would be political suicide for anyone who might attempt it.

The popularity of Rhee's stand, however, like the popularity of all dictators, is enhanced by silencing whatever domestic opposition may exist. Thus the papers report that Dr. Chough Pyung, former home minister and leader of the oppositionist Democratic Nationalist Party was beaten up by a mob which ransacked and destroyed his home after he had held a press conference critical of Rhee's stand on the truce. Ko Hung Moon, Chough's aid, was also beaten and his home was ransacked too. The Democratic Nationalist Party is not a Stalinist front, but is said to represent primarily bankers, landowners and businessmen. Rhee's toughs are seeing to it that even these conservative elements are prohibited from breaking the appearance of complete national unity on the truce question.

Why does Rhee take such an adamant stand, and why just at this moment rather than during the months and years of the truce negotiations?

The reason given by spokesmen for his government is that a truce along the lines of the one now close to conclusion would be national suicide for South Korea. Their country has been destroyed in the war. The truce will leave hundreds of thousands of Chinese Stalinists on Korean territory. It will permit the Stalinists to build up their air fields and supply depots right behind the lines. They will be in a far better position to launch another and decisive attack than they have been during the past two years. Instead of a truce, they contend, the United States should resolutely conduct the war until victory over the Stalinists is achieved, and the country unified under the Rhee regime.

FRUSTRATION

Rhee could be mad, but he is supported by the people, and they are not insane. Neither he nor they can really believe that the South Korean army can fight to victory alone. The feeling of the mass of the people can only be explained on the basis of their misery and frustration.

The people of South Korea have gone through three years of hell. Their towns have been razed, their fields ravaged, their families broken up, their people killed by the hundreds of thousands. And now, all this may be for nothing. Their little country has been a pawn in the struggle of the imperialist giants, an incident in a global conflict. Now a truce is being made which will leave their ultimate fate in hands other than their own.

They were not even given the dignity of having a representative sit on the truce team as an equal with the foreigners. What they want is impossible, but they have suffered so much that for the moment at least, they lash out with a rage born of their frustration.

In this crisis, the American liberal supporters of the war in Korea find it difficult to explain Rhee, and even more difficult to take a position on what should be done about the South Korean resistance to the truce. When the war started, they tended to skip over the fact that Rhee is a reactionary dictator in his own country. They had to paint South Korea as a democracy so as to make their support of the war more palatable.

Rhee remains as reactionary now as he was before the war. His government of landlords and speculators opposed democratic land reforms and suppressed political opposition. They could gain little social support in South Korea, and presented no force which could attract even the North Korean victims of Stalinism to their side. For the moment, Rhee may be the popular spokesman of a frustrated people. But even now he can make no appeal which could attract any political support from North Korea; he offers no progressive program for the unification of the country.

His demand is for the military conquest of North Korea, for the unification of the country by purely military means. And what saves his action from the charge of utter irresponsibility is that he is no doubt calculating on gaining the support of powerful reactionary forces in this country.

Rhee knows that General MacArthur, the prophet of force in Asia, was hailed by hundreds of thousands of enthusiastic Americans on his triumphal return from Japan. He knows that there is strong support in American military circles for a war to victory, as evidenced by the testimony of General Van Fleet before congressional committees. The most reactionary sections of the American press have been unrestrained in their glee at Rhee's actions.

The old man may be bluffing, but he is not gambling with an empty hand. There is no way of knowing what encouragement or even assurances he has received from military and political circles in this country. But even if he has received no specific commitments, he has reasonable justification to believe that if he can succeed in torpedoing this truce a powerful demand will arise in America to end the war in Korea by military victory, regardless of the consequences.

Given the political and military forces which have overwhelmed the Korean people, there can be no really progressive outcome to the war in their country alone. Rhee's resistance to the truce, with no positive alternative to offer but World War III, is a tragic confirmation of this hard fact.

Regarded abstractly, South Korean resistance to the truce, and to the American power which seeks to impose it, is an expression of the desire for self-determination by a small helpless nation. But in the concrete circumstances, this desire takes a form which is reactionary, which finds support only in the most reactionary sections of American society, and which, if successful, would have reactionary and even disastrous consequences for the whole world.

That is part of the tragedy of Korea. Its tragedy can only be resolved by a change in the world configuration of forces. Only a global defeat of both Stalinist and capitalist imperialism could give real hope to the people of Korea.

Washington Seeks to Wrap Up The UN in Its Loyalty Witchhunt

By GABRIEL GERSH

During the past several months, the Eisenhower administration has been putting strong pressure on UNESCO to accept a loyalty program and its consequent purges and witchhunts. Although the purpose is to eliminate American citizens whom the Republican administration considers "subversive," the more important aim has been to intimidate and purge the entire corps of international civil servants. With good reason, this step has aroused the fury of the executive board of UNESCO and the Staff Association.

The Eisenhower administration, for many months, has been conducting its own loyalty probe; indeed, last week, the U. S.'s permanent representative to UNESCO said that unless the "loyalty situation" at UNESCO is cleared up Congress would not appropriate any more money for the agency. He went on to say, incorrectly, that UNESCO was the only UN agency which still employed a few Americans who had not answered the loyalty questionnaire issued after Truman's order last January. There are, in fact, a few Americans in UNESCO who have not returned the questionnaire, but there are Americans in other UN agencies who refused to comply with Truman's order on the ground that it did not apply to international civil servants.

LEFF CASE

Last week, the U. S. intensified its campaign to rid UNESCO of "dangerous subversives." The U. S. has asked UNESCO to change the forms which all applicants for employment must fill out, so that these forms would be similar to the loyalty questionnaires which are given to Americans who are employed in UNESCO positions or applying for them. With considerable courage, UNESCO has refused to obey the U. S.'s wishes.

The executive board of UNESCO, in fact, has decided that under existing staff rules it could not fire any UNESCO employees at the instance of the State Department. Furthermore, the executive board has issued an order which makes it possible for any dismissed or suspend-

ed employee to take his case beyond the UNESCO Appeals Board to a higher authority. It is possible that the first person who may be able to take advantage of this new ruling is David Leff, an American who has been indefinitely suspended.

A few years ago, for no specific reason, the State Department revoked Leff's passport. When, again for no definite reason, he was called to appear before a federal grand jury, he refused to go to New York and requested unsuccessfully that he be allowed to submit whatever information required at the U. S. embassy. His reluctance to leave Paris was due to the fear that if he went back to New York, he would not be allowed to return to Paris, where his family is living and where he works. Leff's refusal to go to New York was supported by the Staff Association, which condemned Leff's suspension by the director-general of UNESCO—a measure taken under strong pressure by the State Department.

This is a very dangerous precedent, for it illustrates the way in which the U. S. is trying to eliminate Americans whom it cannot get dismissed by an international agency. If Leff is compelled to return to New York, he could be prevented from returning to Paris and his employment would terminate.

What's more important, all these devices may be unnecessary if the new McCarran bill is passed. Under the provisions of the proposed law, any American who accepts a UN post, or continues to hold one, without having received the loyalty "blessings" of the FBI, will be subject to five years imprisonment, a fine of \$10,000, or both. However, UNESCO is not the real target of the Republican Party's fury. Having succeeded in capturing the State Department, the McCarrans and McCarthys now want to transform the UN completely into an instrument of American foreign policy. These Republican policymakers feel that the UN is part of the U. S. strategy against Communism and that it should play its part as an obedient ally in the cold war. The events in UNESCO, therefore, should be a warning and a challenge to all those nations that favor independence for the UN.

Reveals that U.S. Was Preparing to Use Biological-War Weapon in World War II

By BERNARD CRAMER

An authoritative statement by a responsible expert reveals the extent to which the government has gone in its development of biological warfare.

Like the atom bomb, it has been prepared in secrecy. The report leaves room to anticipate that, also like the atom bomb, it may be launched upon a horrified world, unexpectedly, and by any side.

The report also reveals that ONE form of biological warfare was on the point of being used by the U. S. in the Second World War when the war ended—with the use of the atom-bomb, instead.

The authority is George W. Merck, president of the drug-manufacturing firm that bears his name, also special consultant to the secretary of war and chairman of the U. S. Biological Warfare Committee, who recently received the Medal of Merit, the government's highest civilian award. His address on the subject at the "Science and Civilization" session of the George Westinghouse Centennial Forum in Pittsburgh on May 16 has been published in the firm's publication *The Merck Report* for July.

The source is sufficiently out-of-the-way; the forum subject was sufficiently ironic; and the content of Merck's address revealed at least one fact which no doubt would have been indignantly denied if it came from any lesser personage.

Merck first describes the recent history of biological-warfare developments in the country. He says:

"Biological warfare no longer can be regarded as a laboratory experiment. It has advanced far beyond the laboratory stage, and its possibilities have been sufficiently explored to PERMIT ITS SERIOUS CONSIDERATION AS AN EFFECTIVE TYPE OF WARFARE." (Emphasis added here and in subsequent quotations.)

He adds that it requires attention as part of a defense plan and also as a "threat in being."

"It might have been employed in World War II," he says (apparently with reference to the Germans, who, he asserts, used anti-U. S. livestock inoculations even in World War I), "for it offered an open avenue of attack upon us." It wasn't because they feared the U. S. could go them one better, he declares.

NOT JUST "GERM" WAR

The biological warfare he is discussing is not just so-called "germ warfare" but wider in conception. It may include "bacteria, fungi, viruses, rickettsias and toxic agents derived from living organisms... to produce death or disease in men, animals or plants."

In 1941, "the views of scientists, alert to its dangers, were made known to the secretary of war." Stimson had a study made by the National Academy of Sciences and the National Research Council, which urged "appropriate steps." The re-

searchers opined that "The wise assumption is that any method which appears to offer advantages to a nation at war will be vigorously employed by that nation."

The White House then started "intensive large-scale investigation" in collaboration with the British and Canadians, utilizing the resources of the armed forces, civilian scientists, private research institutions, industries, and several government departments, including the U. S. Public Health Service and the Agriculture Department.

"Starting as a project under the most extreme secrecy, the work was undertaken under the wing (and cloak) of the Federal Security Agency. Emerging from this 'cover' (but not from secrecy) the army, with the navy collaborating, took over. Unique facilities were built for experimentation on pathogenic agents."

OFFENSIVE TOO

Merck is naturally not under the illusion that the defensive aspect can be separated from offensive possibilities. "While the main objective in all these endeavors was to develop methods for defending ourselves against possible enemy use of biological warfare," he claims, "it was necessary to investigate offensive possibilities in order to learn what measures could be used for defense. Accordingly, the problems of offense and defense were closely interwoven in all the investigations conducted. Consideration of the problem from an offensive point of view necessitated numerous new developments and concepts."

The army section at work on it employed almost 4000, plus another 100 in a sepa-

rate navy group "at work on a special phase of the problem." The first accomplishment which Merck lists was their development of methods to mass-produce "pathogenic micro-organisms and their products."

Another was "precise methods" for producing "clouds" of micro-organisms.

"For the first time a pure, crystalline bacterial toxin was isolated and studied. This was the toxin *Clostridium botulinum*, type A, which is the most potent biological poison known to man."

Another branch was the production and control of fungus, bacterial and virus diseases attacking crop plants.

READY IN LAST WAR

At this point, Merck reveals that the U. S. was already planning to use this variety of biological warfare when the Second World War ended. This is what he told the forum on "Science and Civilization":

"The work was initiated to find destructive agents against various crops and was successful. Only the rapid ending of the war prevented field trials in an active theater of synthetic agents which would, without injury to human or animal life, affect the growing crops and make them useless."

"Applications of certain of these agents, even in infinitesimal dilution, had shown that they were capable of depriving the enemy of the benefits of his own labor by depriving his garden and field crops of their fruits. Not until he had carried through the labors of cultivation would he find that the roots had grown sere and that the plant must wither away without yield."

Merck shows a very nice sense of distinction when he asserts that this variety of biological warfare would not cause "injury to human or animal life," that is, directly. It would seem from his revelation that the plan was merely to cause a harmless famine, which would do nothing more than starve the opponent nation to death—before, however, that opponent wipes out American crops, if possible.

It should be noted that this is a weapon directed in the first instance against the civilian population, the population as a whole, and is not a specific weapon against war industry, unless the entire economy and life of a country is consid-

ered "war industry." It is in a sense even more unlimited than the atom bomb.

This is the weapon that the U. S. had already decided to use in World War II.

Presumably, unlike the Germans, Washington had decided that it could do so without fear of successful revenge. But it was well known that Germany also had biological-warfare developments, no doubt of a different kind.

The question arises: If Germany had retaliated with biological warfare which was (say) more immediately directed against human life, would the U. S. have screamed "atrocities" on the ground that its first step in the field was calculated "only" to produce famine?

How would this philosophic debate on the relative barbarism of BW weapons have gone?

A QUESTION ARISES

When the U. S. used the atom bomb over Japan—moreover, unnecessarily in the opinion of a great many experts—it forfeited any claim that it would refrain from launching ANY weapon because of humanitarian or ethical considerations.

Merck's statement also raises another possibility, which cannot be glossed over. If the U. S. was actually on the point of using its "famine bomb" in the last war, it certainly had no scruples about using it in the Korean war. The Chinese Stalinists may then be lying about America's alleged "germ warfare" to produce disease, but the question is at least raised whether they have pinned this charge on the more "humane" BW expedient described by Merck. If the charge is still to be scouted, it certainly is only on the ground that such action in the situation was not in any case "tactically feasible" either because of the size of the problem or inevitable objections by the U. S.'s allies, in addition to the fact that both disease and crop-failure demand cover-charges by the Chinese Stalinists to evade responsibility in a standard Stalinist manner.

In any case, one can only be struck by the matter-of-fact attitude toward these horrible means of destruction shown by "responsible" officials. The barbarity they evince is in itself a sufficient commentary on the dread consequences of the Third World War toward which imperialist conflicts are rushing.

LONDON LETTER

Labor Issues a 'Challenge to Britain'

By DAVID ALEXANDER

LONDON, June 16—Today the Labor Party National Executive has published a "Challenge to Britain," in which it recommends a policy for discussion at the next party conference.

Among its 86 clauses are those, firstly, which already represent part of Labor's policy.

(1) Abolition of all health-service charges (as proposed by Bevan).

(2) Renationalization of iron and steel which at present is being denationalized. There is a proviso here, as in the case of transport: "on terms which will ensure that no profit is made at the expense of the public."

(3) Similarly with return to public ownership of transport we read: "We shall reserve the right to reserve for private ownership such vehicles as are not needed or, because of neglect, are not worth having."

These safeguards are deliberately meant to discourage capitalists from buying back nationalized stock by making the market uncertain enough to be uneconomical.

The same tactic has been used with the issue of commercial television here. A small group of Tories have been trying to steamroller the government into allowing commercial television to compete with the British Broadcasting Corporation. However reactionary or conservative this national body is, at least its standard of taste in support of this reaction is high. The present system is infinitely preferable to the American system, where each commercial television company, in competing for the public,

has to rival the others in popular appeal.

To anticipate and obviate this unpleasant possibility, Attlee announced in Parliament this week that when Labor comes to power it will abolish commercial television. He seems to have hit on the right economic weapon for discouraging reactionary legislation.

Suggested for further nationalization are more industries. The great chemical industry, with its vast monopolies, is being viewed with interest. The British Sugar Corporation will be taken "into full public ownership." All water supplies will be nationalized; this is a very progressive measure, as the variation in development, price and efficiency in different parts of the country is very marked.

VIEW TO COMPROMISE

The Labor Party also intends to enter the private field of industry by other methods, "e.g., by schemes of differential initial allowances, by joint partnership between the state and private industry, by placing government orders, by the provision of 'advance' capital for factories and by leasing of costly capital equipment."

The "Challenge to Britain" mentions specifically some industries in which they will intervene but which they will not buy out.

(1) They will acquire an interest in machine tools, and use this to further research and rationalization in this field.

(2) They will take powers to acquire any aircraft manufacturing firm which falls down on its job, particularly if "it neglects valuable opportunities for expansion."

(3) A ten-year program for agriculture is planned, including setting up more agricultural cooperatives. It is hoped to increase production by one-third in five years.

(4) Labor will set up a National Housing Corporation to build houses in regions where new industries are being developed.

(5) "The possibility of the state itself manufacturing essential requirements for the health service, including artificial limbs, will be examined."

(6) Public control of Industrial Life Assurance.

It must be remembered that this program has been written with a view to compromise. "We advocate nationalization here only for those industries where the immediate national need makes the cause overwhelming." For the chemical industry we read "a substantial degree of public ownership," but this will be achieved "in a way that will not disturb the smooth functioning of the industry at home or abroad." The capital market will be "reviewed." Where the private sector "fails to act in the public interest... the state shall either build and operate new enterprises, or acquire a controlling interest in existing enterprises, or both."

From the socialist point of view, that last statement should be inverted to give the stress to public control, with the private sector making up for its deficiencies.

It is to be hoped that in the Labor Party Conference the militants will convert what is essentially an ambiguous if imaginative program into a dynamic and progressive policy, though it may still be short of a clearly socialist policy.



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Youth and Student Corner

One Battle for Academic Freedom Is Won at Roosevelt College

By PHILIP WRIGHT

CHICAGO, June 21—With the mask of liberalism stripped from its face by the school paper and the Student Council during the recently ended semester, the administration of Roosevelt College, once a proud citadel of liberalism and academic freedom, now speaks to an incredulous faculty and student body in the authoritarian language so familiar on campuses throughout the country.

A series of cases have shown that the school authorities now believe in using naked administrative power, instead of merely subtle pressure, to suppress student democracy: an attempt to censor the Roosevelt College *Torch* through the threatened expulsion of the editor, an order to the Student Council to desist from taking a poll of music students on conditions in the Music School, a deafening silence while two students and a professor charged the Dean of the Music School with threatening a student with the draft, an admission that Personal Record Blanks of RC students have been turned over to the FBI.

When the Student Council and the *Torch* publicly announced that they were taking polls on school conditions, the administration lost confidence in its "liberal" methods and proceeded to issue a barrage of administrative orders to prevent these student bodies from embarrassing them any further. The school authorities expected unquestioning obedience from these students; to their surprise, they received quick and spontaneous defiance.

DRAFT THREAT

The initial spark which set off a series of explosive events at RC was the charge by Shirley Lerner, chairman of a special Student Council committee investigating the dismissals of two teachers, that prejudice was involved in the dismissals. The two teachers, Professor Dale Pontius of the Political Science Department and Professor Hans Tischler of the Music School, had received letters from RC President Edward J. Sparling informing them that because of financial stringency the school was unable to grant them their promised tenure and consequently they could not be hired the following semester.

Pontius—who was publicly criticized by Sparling several months ago for interrupting a televised speech of Senator McCarthy by shouting "It's a lie" when the Wisconsin menace called the Institute of Pacific Relations a Stalinist front—charged that he was being dismissed for heckling McCarthy and for his criticisms of official school policy over a period of several years. Sparling asserted that his rebuke of Pontius was unofficial since Pontius' encounter with McCarthy occurred outside the school.

A group of approximately 50 music students presented a petition to Sparling urging the retention of Tischler, and when it was ignored by the president they requested the Student Council to investigate the case. Both Tischler and Pontius filed grievances against the school.

The Student Council made preparations for the polling of the opinion of the Music School student body on whether Tischler should be retained and whether there was mismanagement of the Music School.

Meanwhile, Mitchell Messer, a music student, charged that the dean of the Music School, Joseph Creanza, called him into his office and told him: "I know that you are the leader of the underground and don't try to deny it because I know what you've said about me and other members of my faculty. If I find out that you continue to criticize my faculty I'll have you put in the army."

Messer was drafted a few days later.

POLL ISSUE

Emory Balduf, dean of students, then issued an order citing an obscure and irrelevant Faculty Senate provision, prohibiting the council from taking the poll. The council proceeded to make preparations for taking the poll outside the school.

Abba P. Lerner, professor of economics and chairman of the Faculty Senate, agreed to receive the returned questionnaires at his home, and, in the presence of Student Council President Chris Jechinnis, tabulate the results and destroy them. A perturbed president sent an executive order to Professor Lerner ordering him to cease participation in the poll. Lerner withdrew under protest

and Jechinnis resigned as president of the council, followed by the majority of the council members.

The *Torch*—which had simultaneously been taking a series of polls all week in an effort to test its right to take polls—deliberately enabled the administration to "discover" the fact that it was taking a poll similar to the one banned by the president's executive order. Balduf called the *Torch* and screamed to the associate editor who answered the phone, "There's a *Torch* member in the cafeteria taking a poll."

"Oh," replied the editor, "do you want that to go in as a news story or would you like to take out an ad?"

The overwrought president then phoned

the editor-in-chief, Morris Shanfield, and ordered him to desist from taking the poll. Shanfield informed Sparling that executive orders must be in writing, and since he was going to disobey the order, hoped that he would be able to disobey a legal order.

Shanfield and the *Torch* Board of Editors were summoned to Sparling's office where they were greeted with an executive order directing them to stop the poll which was being taken. Shanfield told Sparling that the *Torch* had already discarded that poll and had formulated a slightly different one. Sparling replied that he would issue an order prohibiting the *Torch* from conducting all polls without prior approval by the President's Polling Committee and threatened to expel Shanfield if the order was disobeyed; he intimated that the Board of Editors would be similarly punished.

BACKDOWN

The Board of Editors maintained that the right to take a poll is an inviolable part of the right of free inquiry, and left the president's office after a three-hour session promising that the poll would be published as planned.

The following day, two hours before the *Torch* went to press, a conciliatory president called Shanfield and the Board of Editors to his office where they learned that no new executive order was forthcoming and that the president had estab-

lished a special committee to study RC polling procedure.

On the following Monday, the *Torch* came out with the results of the poll (needless to say what they were); a statement by Lerner that he and three other faculty members had themselves heard Creanza report that what Messer charged was substantially correct; and the disclosure that Personal Record Blanks of RC students—which are marked confidential—have been turned over to the FBI and that a former student had charged that he was rejected for a government job because the FBI had procured his "confidential" files.

It would be premature to regard the outcome of the militant action of the Student Council and the *Torch* as anything more than a tentative victory. While some RC liberals, most of whom had no part in the activities, were loudly proclaiming that freedom was still safe at Roosevelt College, those with a little more political acumen realized that a few strategic concessions from a threatened bureaucracy can scarcely be considered a lasting triumph for academic freedom.

DENT IN A MYTH

There is no indication that the administration is now more responsive to student's rights. On the contrary, the administration is quietly taking measures to ensure itself against any future opposition from those students who realize that the witchhunt atmosphere of American society may be the reason, but is no excuse, for the political insensitiveness that has characterized RC for the past three years.

But there is an instructive lesson to be gained from the militancy of these students. They demonstrated that the reactionary drift of American colleges can be thwarted.

Four or five years ago, when Roosevelt College was known as a "political college," the administration would not have dared to act as imperiously as it does today knowing the existence of student political apathy. But the opposition of the *Torch* and the Student Council proved that the administration's estimate of the extent of this apathy as a bit too presumptuous. They presented themselves before the administration as a cohesive group and in doing so made a dent in the myth of the invincibility of today's reaction.

BOOKS and Ideas Labor in the Soviet Union

A Study of the Transformation Of the Working Class in Russia

LABOR IN THE SOVIET UNION, by Solomon M. Schwarz.—Frederick A. Praeger, N. Y., 364 pages, \$6.

By HAL DRAPER

Labor in the Soviet Union immediately takes its place as one of a relatively small number of works (compared with the slew of books on Russia that stumble off the publishing-house presses of the country) that are indispensable for any and every serious student of the Stalinist economy.

Solomon Schwarz indicates in his foreword the reason for the scarcity of such books: he "could not find a publisher who would accept a book with such limited commercial prospects" until Praeger "took the risk." The same publisher has more "must" books on the subject upon his lists than a dozen larger houses combined, including the study by Zavalani which LA reviewed last week.

Schwarz's work is not primarily a theoretical study—as he notes, the "fundamental question" of the social nature of the Russian state is not part of its scope. But it is also not merely a descriptive assemblage of statistics, for all of its weight in this respect too. The author analyzes and notes social trends as he marshals the facts.

"In the present book," he writes, "I have in the main confined myself to showing and analyzing the complicated actual evolution of Russian labor policy . . . since the Soviet Union's adoption of universal planning (Five Year Plan policy).

. . . Some day I hope to have an opportunity to relate the story of unionism in the USSR in a separate book."

The sources he uses are almost exclusively official Russian. Slave labor is also outside its purview.

The first three chapters deal with the transformation of the position of the working class from the '30s to today: "Growth and Transformation of the Working Class," "Transformation of the Labor Market," "Transformation of the Labor Relationship." The last four deal with wages, hours, living standards, working conditions, and social insurance.

Insofar as we can briefly indicate a couple of the most important sociological conclusions toward which he points his material, the following sentences may serve:

"The enormous growth of the working class in less than one and a half decades of over-all planning is a fact of great sociological importance, especially as the stratification of labor also underwent substantial changes . . . the formation of a new working class without rural ties." (Page 23) . . . "Today the process of developing a modern working class without rural ties is all but complete in the Soviet Union." (Page 30.)

A second central point of fundamental interest is his tracing of the process whereby the labor relationship ceased to be a "free contractual relationship" and became that of a compulsory, directed labor supply, i.e., the labor relationship of bureaucratic collectivism (in our own terms).

Unreservedly recommended.

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How Mass Action Against Stalinist

By PHILIP COBEN

The mass-resistance riots, demonstrations and strikes which swept the industrial centers of Czechoslovakia during the first week of June were detonated by a state decree which purported to be a "currency reform."

In actual fact, this was no very abstruse economic manipulation which could remain obscure to the masses. In a simple enough fashion which was plain to every man, woman and half-grown child in the country—not only immediately but in advance—it meant that the government was simply expropriating a substantial part of the money savings accumulated by the workers.

By its nature it was far more thorough than if the regime had simply calmly grabbed half of everyone's savings account. It reached into every wad or bag of coins hoarded in a closet or in a sack, just as easily.

All currency in circulation had to be exchanged for the new currency, at the exchange offices. The people physically had to hand over their money. (Many of the riots occurred at these exchange offices.) In return, they generally received the new koruny at the ratio of 50:1, except for 300 kr which got them 5:1.

Some further facts about this holdup are as follows: (1) savings-bank deposits were exchanged on a progressive schedule ranging from 5:1 to 30:1; (2) all group savings—by employees or school children—were favored with the ratio of "only" 5:1; (3) life-insurance policies were revalued in a ratio of 20:1; (4) wages, salaries, taxes, other payments and prices were adjusted at 5:1. There were various other specific provisions, including a slight percentage raise in wages for certain workers, especially industrial workers and miners, who, however, turned out to be the heart of the resistance.

The economic grab that this represented for the mass of workers was plain as a hand in the pocket, although the Stalinist propaganda machine trumpeted that the decree was directed only against "bourgeois class enemies" and the rich. The evidence seems to indicate that literally nobody paid the slightest attention to this clumsy pretext, despite the opinion of certain contemporary political philosophers that modern totalitarian states have perfected "techniques" of convincing masses that black is white, for which reason the only infallible answer to totalitarianism is a democratic atom bomb.

Anti-Stalinist resistance has not been absent from Czechoslovakia, as LABOR ACTION has made clear before in articles on the "cold" class struggle in the country. Absenteeism, slowdowns, low productivity, etc., in various forms have been constant, breaking out sporadically every now and then into brief and intermittent strikes and other outbursts. But the May 30 currency reform was the most draconic assault on the workers' standard of living that has been made all at once in the country, and the response was simultaneous and came in 24 hours.

The Russian Squeeze

An important part of the picture is provided by the analysis of why the government was compelled to take the risk of thus driving mass discontent beyond the bounds of toleration.

The reason, it is clear, was not just the bureaucracy's desire to squeeze the people up to the limits of biological possibility. It was a desperate measure forced on them to escape from the effects of the economic blind alley into which the country had been driven by Russian exploitation and the contradictions of the bureaucratic economy.

This is an important point. There is a solution for an inhuman degree of exploitation which boomerangs: the exploiters merely can decide to let up. There is no solution when the regime is constrained, even beyond the better judgment of its fears, to push the people to desperation.

A fundamental root of the difficulty is the Russians' pressure on the country to produce as part of its blueprint for Eastern Europe. Because of the masters' demands, Czech industries had to convert from the traditional medium and light industries to predominantly specialized heavy industry. Secondly, the country had to raise its annual productivity increase from 5.8 per cent to a staggering 17.1 per cent.

To achieve this output the regime had to convert the major part of its consumer-goods industry, and mobilize all possible manpower resources. A further drain on consumer goods came from forced exports to Russia.

Thus, on the one hand, more and more people were drawn into production, earning wages which would have to be spent. On the other hand, the consumer goods on which they had to be spent declined more and more. More and more cash bought less and less goods. The inflationary pressure was increased as the government sought to stimulate higher production (on non-consumer goods) by offering money incentives. The "scissors" widened between spendable cash and unavailable goods.

This "surplus of money in circulation" (as Vice-Premier Nejedly called it) was money which had lost a great deal of its purchasing power, because of the acute shortage of consumer goods. Since this was so, workers began to use it to "buy time"—that is, leisure time, time off from work. They increasingly took time out from the harassment and drive of the steadily increasing work norms, since the money thereby lost meant less.

This article is a summary and condensation of the document referred to on our front page, just published by the Research and Publications Service of the National Committee for a Free Europe. This group is a serious and responsible research organization not given to sensation-mongering. Its report is quietly entitled "The Czechoslovak Currency Reform: A Survey of Its Background, Provisions and Popular Reaction—May-June 1953."

The report itself is a factual presentation; all political opinions expressed or implied in this article are our own.

The report consists of three sections: (I) on the economic drives behind the regime's decree; (II) on the details of the currency-reform decree itself; and (III), comprising almost two-thirds of the whole, on the mass resistance outbreaks. Sections I and II especially present many economic data and statistics which we have not included here.—Ed.

Relatively tremendous levels of absenteeism became the order of the day, as well as "violations of labor discipline." President Zapotocky estimated that absenteeism reached a daily national average of 25 per cent in 1953! The man-hour losses struck right at the root causes of the whole process: the regime's need to raise production.

Even loyal CP members were caught up in the national trend to "buy time" and lack of enthusiasm about earning more partly useless money. The party was faced with internal problems of party discipline in its own cadres.

They Had to Be Plucked

The solution of cutting wages was not politically practicable for the regime, since such measures were by their nature aimed openly at the workers. It hoped that the currency-reform solution would enable it to pretend, with better grace, that it was not putting through an anti-labor rabbit-punch.

As Vice-Premier Nejedly summed up the pre-currency-reform situation when he broadcast on June 7: The situation "tempted the workers to be absent from work and to underestimate and minimize the value of their wages. It was incredible to watch how much money people had and not only the old capitalists. But how could we fight absenteeism when the worker had enough money so that he was able to stay home from work for a day or two?"

This money had to be taken away. It was, just like that—or rather, just like the May 30 decree.

The people suspected it was coming, in spite of strenuous government denials. A rush on available goods started, only a few days before the currency robbery. *Nova Svoboda* (Ostrava) reported unprecedented waiting lines outside all kinds of shops (even photo studios!), to buy anything with money which they feared would shortly be worthless.

The chickens had to be plucked so that hunger and deprivation, the standard Stalinist labor organizers, would drive the workers back to "disciplined" work.

Besides, new labor forces had to be gained. From where? A little more than two members out of the average worker's family of five were already gainfully employed. Only want could drive a higher percentage of the family to work.

More women had to be driven to the factories. They constituted only 34 per cent of the industrial labor force. The "currency reform" will undoubtedly increase the proportion, to enable the family to live. In addition, child labor, which has been used sparingly, will undoubtedly become more prevalent. In April of this year, school attendance was reduced from 9 to 8 years, in preparation.

The currency expropriation was also necessary to bring pressure to bear on the peasantry. Because of peasant resistance to state collectivization, as well as bureaucratic mismanagement in the land cooperatives, government agricultural collections were not being met.

The currency reform wiped out whatever savings the peasants had, mostly hoarded in cash, and the government expects it to prod the peasants into trying to increase sales to the state and directly to consumers.

After all the denials that had been issued by the government to allay fears and prevent mad buying rushes, the May 30 decree destroyed remaining vestiges of confidence in the government's word even on the part of "loyal" elements. In his June 7 broadcast, Nejedly unwittingly confirmed that the change was being considered even as the government was denying it: "It was Comrade Gottwald himself who sponsored this idea approximately a year ago," he said, no doubt trying to wrap the blow in the mantle of the dead leader.

But it is remembered that as late as May of this year, people were being officially encouraged to buy life insurance. It is remembered that on March 2, Finance Minister Jaroslav Kabeš had cynically lied in *Rude Pravo*: "Both the favorable results of state finances in 1951, the decrease in money circulation and the budgetary surplus in 1952, show the healthy development of our national economy and the firmness of our currency."

The Tide of Anger

The announcement of the currency grab reverberated in the country like a thunder-clap. In plants all over the country, workers, hearing the news over the public-address systems, straightened up and stopped work in dismay. Protests to immediately handy union and party officials; hot debates in plants and street corners; angry crowds before the exchange centers; turbulent lines be-

fore the shops to buy whatever was possible before the change went into effect on June 1.

In the next 24 hours the tide of anger grew like a red flush mounting up to the face of the people. Workers refused to return to work; party cards were thrown into the faces of functionaries; then fights with police and militia; police arrests; rioting to snatch victims from the cops; demonstrations; strikes that lasted for some days. In some communities, particularly near the western border, police behaved softly, even with indifference; in others, they struck brutally and violently.

First let us take a look at official admissions of the turmoil in the government press, as it filtered into warning and alarmed speeches and editorials by the leaders—keeping in mind that the Aesopian and veiled references of this sort, clearly indicating mass outbreaks, must be looked at as the eighth of the iceberg which is visible above water. (Compare, for example, the similar admissions in the East German controlled press as against what is known to have happened.)

Vice-Premier Nejedly, over Radio Prague, June 7: "In the first days it was possible to see fear on the faces of the people as well as uncertainty about what would happen" but today, of course, everybody is happy.

Rude Pravo, June 9:

"It is no accident that immediately after the announcement of the currency reform and the abolition of the rationing system, the enemy was helped by the inadequate watchfulness of some of the workers, who did not recognize the wicked intentions of the class enemy."

Official Admissions

President Zapotocky, in a major address of June 10, devoted solely to the crisis, announced a purge of the "trade union" apparatuses:

"Someone may perhaps ask: does everyone really welcome the new principles and measures? I do not hesitate to give a direct answer. No, there were even protests, and there is no reason to deny it. [That is, it is impossible to deny it.] . . .

"It will be necessary to take steps against those who wanted to utilize these mistakes for subversive anti-state activity, for evoking a panic, and for inciting people to join in anti-state activities. There have been such cases. They were thwarted at the very start. . . .

"It is necessary, that you examine, above all, the ranks of your trade-union organizations. . . . He who strives to slow down our socialist construction and employs sabotage against it cannot have a place within the ranks of workers organized in trade unions. . . .

"The currency reform has given us the opportunity to see the real faces of many people, it has torn off many masks and revealed their true intentions. . . ."

The Central Trade Union Council issued a manifesto in its organ *Prace*, June 2, while the movement was still under way:

"The Presidium . . . directs all organs of the revolutionary trade-union movement to have functionaries explain the importance and aim of the measure to all workers, to lead them to carry it out; to fight mercilessly against the enemy, against all who want to undermine, by defeatism and false rumors, the effectiveness of the far-reaching measures. . . ."

Rude Pravo, June 5, admitted that Communist Party members had been swept along by the movement, by implication "many" and not merely "some":

Enforcement of party and state measures, it lectured, is the "acid test" of a Communist. "However, some Communists did not pass this test—they proved to be no Communists but proprietors interested exclusively in their own egos and their own interests [i.e., in wages, standard of living, etc.] and not in the interests of all the working class and their state. . . . some forgot their primary task, maintenance of the state discipline. . . ."

Mlada Fronta (Prague), on June 3 admitted the youth were among the disaffected, in an exhortation to Youth Union members to counter the "slander, incitement, lies and hate":

"Among the young people there is a good deal of confusion; many questions which must be answered. Certainly there will be some doubts. . . ."

Prague in Siege

These were only the most general admissions from the very summit of the regime in Prague. Such a spate of pronouncements do not come without serious alarm behind them. What had happened in Prague is described by a message from Munich dated June 11 received by the NCFE:

"Prague blocked by troops; the capital in a state of siege; factory workers in an uproar—these are the headlines reported by a German mechanic who returned to Western Germany from Czechoslovakia on June 8, 1953. The mechanic, a cautious and observant man, was sent to Czechoslovakia on June 3 by a German firm which had delivered heavy machinery to Czechoslovakia a year ago:

"The workers I had dealings with were not only discontented and critical. . . . On the walls of the factory a slogan was crayoned: 'For little money, little work' [a paraphrase of the Czech proverb, For little money, little music] . . . I heard open threats that . . . riots would break out all over the country. One worker told me in German, 'We don't care any longer what happens to us; we are tired of the propaganda, the swindle and all that Communist nonsense. If we don't get our salary, we will stop working and tell those bastards off.'"

On the eve of his departure the German mechanic met two truck drivers who had been trying to bring a special truck to Prague as they had been commissioned to do. They had been stuck near Slany, where the police told them the road to Prague was under re-

Rule Swept Over All Czechoslovakia

pair till further notice. They learned through other persons that the capital was cut off from the rest of the country because of open revolts and riots. The city, they were told, was surrounded by military units and nobody was being permitted to enter.

From the report transmitted from a refugee in Vienna we learn that on June 1 more than 400 street-car employees had refused to report for the morning shift. There were heavy traffic jams until replacements were found.

One of the most militant centers of the resistance was the Ostrava region. A refugee in Salzburg reported that the miners in the Ostrava pits went on strike from May 30 to June 4. The army refused to act against the miners. Armed militia drawn from the entire region finally forced the men back to the pits.

A general strike had been declared as soon as the reform was announced over the radio. Among the strikers were fervent Communists, such as cell leaders and supervisors. They tore their party emblems from lapels, threw them on the ground and spit on them.

The manager asked the local military unit to intervene, but the soldiers refused to obey. Militiamen summoned from plants throughout the vicinity used their weapons and killed three miners. The miners then attacked the militiamen and wounded several of them. When the miners were at last forced back, they did not resume work, and had not yet resumed work by June 4, according to the report.

Debate in the Factory

As this event filtered into the Stalinist press, it was translated as follows:

Nova Svoboda, the Ostrava organ, wrote on June 9: "Some workers fell prey to the temptation of the provocateurs and committed severe breaches of work discipline in some parts of the Ostrava District. Considerable unrest and provocations took place. At several points in Moravska-Ostrava state and labor discipline was seriously disturbed. Anti-state agents attempted to provoke trouble in our factories and mines . . . we demand they be punished."

The central organ *Rude Pravo*, the same day, in passing admitted that the Ostrava miners were protesting.

On June 6, *Nova Svoboda* had admitted: "At Vaclav Zofe, Czechoslovak Pioneer Mines, Bohum Iron Works, and the Stalingrad Iron Works in Liskovec, some workers let themselves be misled by provocateurs in the service of the bourgeoisie; but loyal workers . . . liquidated the subversive activities of the provocateurs."

It was also of the Ostrava region, at the Tonak works in Novy Jicin, that an interesting account is given in another report. This hat factory had 1500 workers. The story comes from an escapee who worked in the plant.

At 5 p.m. on May 30, the plant radio broadcast the news of the currency reform. The workers responded

by immediately stopping work and going on strike. Turbulent groups all over the place; hot discussions; open denunciations of the measure. Leading plant functionaries came down but could do nothing. The acting chairman of the plant's party organization, Ladislav Barton, had in advance alerted the plant militia and armed them. Even the five per cent of the workers who were party members shouted with the rest.

Barton tried to give them the line that the reform was really aimed against the village rich and kulaks, but the workers kept shouting at him as he stuttered his lies.

"The arguments between Barton and the workers went on for hours in much the same way. Finally, when they blamed him for opposing the opinion of 1500 workmen, he admitted that he himself was amazed by the behavior of the party; that he could not understand why the party had lied so much. Soon after this confession, he left the workers; but first, feeling that he had to 'comfort' them, he said: 'Don't worry. The government takes care of you. You won't starve.' This brought a terrific cry from the men. 'We've been starving for a long time,' they shouted, 'We don't expect anything from the party!' On strike throughout the entire shift, the workers left the plant at 11 p.m. [the end of the shift], upset and disgusted."

The same worker-escapee said that almost all workers in all plants in Novy Jicin went on strike, the biggest group at the Autopal plant with 3000 workers.

The Pilsen Story

Official admission of the extent of the movement can also be found in set resolutions published in the press as coming from a series of plants in Ostrava.

One such resolution for Czechoslovak Plant, Sector II, in Karvina, denounced "saboteurs," "reactionary attempts to damage work," etc.

One for the NHKG Works asserted "We shall restore order in our enterprises . . . purge counter-revolutionary elements and provocateurs from our plants."

From the Rolling Plant KG Vitkovice Iron Works: "We shall comply with the party and government resolution and crush the counter-revolutionary attacks. . . ."

From the VZKG Rolling Mill: "We pledge that we shall by no means succumb to similar attempts. . . ." A similar canned resolution from "the miners" of Ludvik Pit confirms the strike.

Pilsen is the area which was the scene of the single report on the whole movement which appeared in the New York Times the week before last. The Pilsen Pravda, June 5, spoke of "anti-state demonstrations with the intention of overthrowing the regime, restoring capitalism and making Pilsen the springboard for a counter-revolutionary putsch in Czechoslovakia." It admitted the use of security units, and revealed that pictures of Stalinist leaders had been torn down in the city hall, pictures of

Benes hoisted, acts of violence committed, the Russian flag "disgraced."

So much the Stalinist press admitted. An escapee's report describes the Pilsen situation more circumstantially. Riots started on May 31. On June 1, they became serious at the Lenin Works (formerly Skoda) where the workers refused to work despite appeals over the plant radio. Twenty-seven rebels were arrested by the police that day. At this, men who had by this time started work proceeded to lay down tools again and new riots started. On June 2 the arrested workers were returned to the plant and production resumed, in a tense atmosphere.

Machinery in the factory was damaged. In the town the city hall was pillaged and some papers burned. Stalinist pictures were torn down, and Benes' picture appeared. After some sporadic firing heard on June 3-4, armed militia patrols and machine guns at the entrances were in evidence.

Anything Can Happen

There are many other refugee reports which repeat the pattern from other spots over the country. Strike at the Tatra Works in Koprivnice; at Jihlava, in front of an exchange office, police tried to arrest a woman who was sounding off, but a crowd of 400 freed her; in Jaromerice the CP building was heavily damaged and all its windows broken; at the Tonak plant in Novy Jicin, Moravia, a "well-known Communist" (unnamed) threw in his party book; etc.

"In many places," says a message from Munich, "the demonstrations were so menacing that people were amazed at the passiveness of security officials. It seems that even they were embarrassed and discontented. Only this explains why no firearms were used during the demonstrations at Pilsen, Cheb, As, Chomutov and other towns in Western Czechoslovakia. . . ."

As we summarize this account from the NCFE material, the press reports that the Czech Stalinist regime has announced new steps to punish ringleaders, in line with Zapotocky's threat. Confirming the above reports which pointed to the Ostrava region as a hotbed of revolt, the "trade union" organizations of the regime decided to send 4000 new and presumably loyal cadres into the coal mines to combat disaffection. Its resolution, adopted at a session of the Executive presided over by Zapotocky, denounced many trade-union functionaries for not taking action against the rebels.

Let us remember that these events in Czechoslovakia took place before the East German workers' rising. The news of this outburst in Moscow's satellite across the border is bound to encourage and heighten resistance tendencies in Czechoslovakia. As one escapee's report concluded: "Anything might happen in Czechoslovakia now."

Nationwide Fight in German Workers' Revolt — —

(Continued from page 1)

There has been no definite word since if or to what extent the Russian forces have succeeded in breaking it.

At Magdeburg (West German truck drivers reported) there was a pitched battle between a thousands-strong mass of workers and the police. According to this report, 13,000 workers mainly from the Thaelmann heavy machinery works were involved; they stormed the jail, containing political prisoners, and 22 were shot, after which Russian tanks rolled in under martial law.

Confirmation of some sort of mass action in Magdeburg came with the publication of the inevitable Stalinist-type canned "workers' resolutions" purporting to condemn the riots. The same applies to Warnemuende and Rostock, where strikes and protest marches had been reported.

CONCESSIONS

According to the AP on the 22nd, the regime admitted "sabotage"—i.e., strikes, riots and demonstrations—in the Russian-managed uranium mines of Saxony, heightened (according to a West Berlin paper) when Russian firing squads executed 12.

Other cities reported caught up by the revolt were Dresden, Chemnitz, Dessau, Brandenburg, Leipzig, Luckenwalde, Halle, Erfurt.

The West Berlin press declared that the movement had spread to the peasants of the countryside in many areas—a very significant development. The sections pointed to were around Mecklenburg, Luckenwalde, Forst, Juterborf and Ludwigfelde. The AP had it that peasants were withholding their produce from the state's collection stations and supplying food to distressed workers' areas.

Side by side with its brutal display of violence and armed terror, the Stalinist regime, backed by its Moscow masters, moved to meet the crisis with further announcements of concessions, directed specifically to woo the working class.

It is important to note that the concessions of June 10, easing up certain aspects of the regime, had had not a single item of special interest to the workers. In this announcement, the week before the outbreak of the revolt, the peasants had been promised easier crop quotas; private enterprise had been promised loans; refugees—restoration of property; the churches—letting up on anti-religious drives; plus a lightening of the penal code. At the same time the regime imposed on the workers the decree for heavier work norms which was the immediate cause of the outburst.

JITTERS

What did this mean? Seeking to strengthen its popular support, the government had turned to wooing the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois elements. Either it felt that the workers were "in the bag" and did not need sops—which can be believed only with difficulty, in view of what happened and indeed of previous evidences of discontent, although incredible pieces of stupidity are always possible—or else the government felt that it needed more support or at least toleration from the "former people" precisely in view of waning working-class support.

Using both the carrot and the club, the Stalinists hope to recoup. Rallies of "loyalist" workers have been called, the first one in Berlin being held in—the Comic Opera House.

Not least interesting among the consequences of the East German workers' mobilization has been the outbreak of jitters among the Allies in Western Berlin. At the same time that the Allied commandants sent a note calling on the Stalinist regime to restore free travel in Berlin—

"The Western powers themselves indicated they considered the Berlin situation to have dangerous potentialities. They advised Dr. Ernst Reuter, West Berlin Mayor, that no public meetings were to be held without the authority of the Allied Kommandatura.

"This would specifically apply to a mass meeting planned by the West Berlin government Monday in front of its city hall. The session was to have been a memorial meeting in honor of those who died during Wednesday's street fighting."

THE SLOGANS

The Allied powers can hardly be so afraid of West Berlin's Stalinists, who were weak before this and now doubtless further demoralized. Before this action, too, Western officials had expressed fears lest the action in the East spill over across the sector lines. They could have in mind only a possible effect of the anti-Stalinist revolt in stimulating also West German sentiment for national unity and independence.

Instead of reacting with unalloyed rejoicing at the events, the Allied powers on the spot, regardless of their formal statements, seem to betray the classic ruling-class reaction of fear and disconcertment before a massive self-mobilization of a revolutionary working class independent of their control.

Regarding the relation between the East German movement and the West, an interesting dispatch in the N. Y. Times (June 20) by M. S. Handler from Berlin stated:

"Perhaps the most interesting single phenomenon was the chanting of slogans. These slogans did not call for help from or praise the Western Allies, the Bonn government or any Western personalities. The slogans were confined to demands for the reunification of Germany and free elections. These slogans gave a political overtone to the uprising and indicated a definite political orientation in the sense that national independence for all Germany was invoked."

"INDEPENDENT"

This dispatch is written entirely around the thesis that the revolt was the work of "a nameless and faceless workers' underground organization in East Germany"—a thesis which we would be

very glad to believe, and which has been cropping up elsewhere. Its confirmation would be second only in importance to the fact of the revolt itself, and in the longer run more important. But aside from this, in the course of his analysis, the correspondent keeps stressing:

" . . . the underground is indigenous to the East German working class without any middle-class affiliations . . . [it is] beyond the reach of the intelligence services of the Western powers and immune to the political combat organizations of the middle-class Bonn government . . . [it] has no connection with the West . . . [it] probably will continue to function as an independent organization preferring to follow its own line in pursuit of its own aims."

It is necessary to comment on this Handler dispatch that it was clearly and obviously written under the influence of Handler's Yugoslav-Titoist friends, without any doubt, to the point where he hints in all-but-those-words that it was Titoists who organized the uprising ("former professionals of some Eastern or South-eastern European school"). But nevertheless, the more general picture to which he points is not contradicted by any other information.

An echo of Western uneasiness before the spectacle of working-class self-movement appears in the editorial columns of the N. Y. Times (June 18) after a hail-and-well-done to the East German people: The Stalinist police state cannot be overthrown by the people, it cautions them, fortified by all its wisdom on the nature of revolutionary power. **"Such regimes can only be destroyed by conquest from the outside; as the German, Italian and Japanese governments were in the Second World War, or by 'palace revolutions' which may or may not pave the way for democracy."** (Our italics.)

Clearly and crudely it is saying: "We hereby pat you on the head, but you'll have to wait for the third world war, when we, your American saviors, with our

(Turn to last page)

The Rosenberg Execution — —

(Continued from page 1)

And a day later, after further study he was ready to declare that he was fully convinced that the sentence was in fact illegal.

All the sobriety of the past vanished; the hysteria, the grim demand for political vengeance burst through.

The American judicial system could allow 27 months for legal shadow-boxing but not more than 24 hours to settle a crucial appeal.

One day after Douglas' decision, the Rosenbergs were dead.

Attorney General Brownell insisted that the Supreme Court, which had just recessed, be called back for an extraordinary session to overrule Douglas; Chief Justice Vinson hurriedly obliged; the nine judges deliberated for six hours and then reversed Douglas, against whom impeachment proceedings had already been introduced by frenzied congressmen in the House.

Eisenhower rejected a last appeal for executive clemency.

As the Rosenbergs were being prepared for an execution scheduled for late Friday night, their attorneys appealed for a delay that would avoid their execution on the Jewish Sabbath. The government magnanimously made this gesture of sanctimonious religious solicitude: *they were sent to the chair three hours earlier.*

In ordering a stay of execution on Thursday, Douglas granted that two attorneys, not retained by the Rosenbergs but acting independently of the official defense, had raised a serious legal question that merited a full examination in the courts. They had maintained that the Rosenbergs should have been sentenced not under the Espionage Act, which gives the presiding judge full power to pass a death sentence, but under the Atomic Energy Act, which permits such a sentence only upon recommendation of

the jury. *In the Rosenberg case, the jury had not recommended the death penalty.*

Douglas ruled that the case had to be sent back to the lower courts for adjudication of this new question. It was a simple enough matter. Before the irrevocable sentence of death, he said, let us think this over seriously and carefully.

Later, in his dissent from the Supreme Court's final decision, he said so clearly that no misunderstanding is possible, "The cold truth is that the death sentence may not be imposed for what the Rosenbergs did unless the jury so recommended." And "Here the trial court was without jurisdiction to impose a death penalty since the jury had not recommended it."

In his concurring opinion, Justice Black defended the same ground: "it was unlawful for a judge to impose the death penalty for unlawful transmittal of atomic secrets unless such a penalty was recommended by the jury trying the case."

CONTEMPT OF COURT

The atmosphere of panic and haste which pervaded the decisions of the Supreme Court are hinted at by Black's analysis of its action in reversing Douglas. He denied that the court had a clear power to vacate the stay granted by Douglas, calling it "unprecedented."

He expressed his contempt for the calling of the special session in these diplomatic words: "Surely the court is not here establishing a precedent which will require it to call extra sessions during vacation every time a federal or state official asks it to hasten the electrocution of defendants without affording this court adequate time or opportunity for exploration and study of serious legal questions."

"Judicial haste is peculiarly out of place where the death penalty has been imposed for conduct, part of which took place at a time when the Congress appears to have barred the imposition of that death penalty by district judges acting without a jury's recommendation. And it seems manifest to me that this court has not had time or opportunity for sufficient study to give an informed decision on this important question."

The final opinion of the court was 6-3. The third dissenter, Justice Frankfurter, took his stand on the following grounds: "that the claim [of the appealing attorneys] had substance and that the exercise of judicial judgment was wanting."

The technical legal dispute need not be settled in the mind of a layman. It suffices to know that two Supreme Court Justices were fully and firmly convinced that the execution were illegal and a third was ready to consider the question at length.

And all three were appalled by the summary disposition of the case by the majority. The majority decision of six brief, formal paragraphs simply declares that the court does not think the issue of sufficient importance to merit further proceedings.

NOT UNIQUE ARGUMENT

If the 27 months of legal delay were legitimate, why no delay to allow discussion and consideration of points so firmly held by at least two justices? This was a hanging session. "Give 'em a fair hearing and burn 'em"—that was the spirit of the last day.

The New York Post, perhaps somewhat wearied by its crusade against McCarthy, observed in an editorial on June 22, "The Post thinks the good name of America came out intact in the Rosenberg case." It reaches this not unique view by a not unique process of reasoning.

In East Germany, the editor points out, Willi Goettling, executed by the Stalinist occupiers for alleged participation in the East Berlin uprising, "had no trials, no appeals, no stays, no Committee to Secure Justice for Willi Goettling. They just took him out and shot him." The Rosenbergs, on the other hand, had "a fair and full trial early in 1951 and two years and three months of appeals and stays. . . ."

The summary execution of a German anti-Stalinist somehow seems to justify the procedure in the case of the Rosenbergs. This process of reasoning finds its counterpart in Stalinland where the execution of the Rosenbergs is supposed to justify the execution of Goettling!

Thus far, however, no law forces us to apologize for injustice at home in order to earn a license to fight it abroad.

The hysteria revealed in "judicial haste" was not created in the last hour; it finally erupted. It was already latent in the death sentence.

Never before in the history of the

country has a civil court ordered the execution of a citizen for espionage. The acts were committed at a time when Russia was America's ally; the executions were committed in a time of official peace when an unofficial war was coming to a close. But these considerations were brushed aside.

They were sent to their death not merely for spying but for Atomic spying!— words which must be written in shimmery frightening letters. ". . . there can be no doubt," said Douglas, "that the death penalty was imposed because of the Rosenbergs' disclosure of atomic secrets."

Judge Kaufman, in imposing the death sentence, virtually accused the Rosenbergs of starting the Korean war: "I believe your conduct in putting into the hands of the Russians the A-bomb years before our best scientists predicted Russia would perfect the bomb has already caused, in my opinion, the Communist aggression in Korea . . . who knows but that millions more of innocent people may pay the price of your treason."

And, in rejecting the appeal for clemency, Eisenhower said, "I can only say, that by immeasurably increasing the chances of atomic war, the Rosenbergs may have condemned to death tens of millions of innocent people all over the world."

But if they had been found guilty of the same crime in England, like Klaus Fuchs whose role was immensely more decisive, a jail sentence might suffice to atone for their crimes. Or if they had confessed, a commutation of sentence might have followed. "And the nation they betrayed held the hand of clemency out to them," writes the Post "if they would unseal their lips and tell the secrets of the Soviet spy ring. . . ."

Would the crime become less enormous, would the millions of innocent victims become less innocent for their confessions? Can anyone except avid movie fans believe that, but for the Rosenbergs, the Russian spy apparatus with its resources and the Russian scientists would not have the bomb?

BRANDED

Eisenhower and Kaufman express, in a word, hysteria. The Rosenberg crime, writes the New York Times, ". . . stirred the fears and emotions of the American people." They "gave" the bomb to Russia; they were executed in a reaction of fear and hysteria because Russia had the bomb.

"Atom spying!"—this ominous phrase begins to express all the uncontrollable and nameless fear of atom warfare. The atom bomb! The atom bomb! How terrible it is, we know from Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We must avoid it. Anything goes. The Rosenbergs must die.

It is the same hysteria, magnified and more horrible, that will accuse simple striking workers in an atomic-energy plant of treason.

The Rosenbergs were convicted of spying. But they were not electrocuted because they "gave" the bomb to Russia. They had to die because Russia had the bomb.

The U. S. could not stop the Russians from getting the bomb, sooner or later; but the Rosenbergs could be executed. We cannot bring peace and security to the world; we cannot or could not end the war in Korea; but we can execute the Rosenbergs.

The Rosenbergs were accused and convicted of espionage. If this charge was justified, they were guilty of serving a reactionary, totalitarian regime, the enemy of everything progressive and democratic.

But apart from this charge and this conviction, we have seen enough and know enough to realize that the sentence of death came not as the dispensing of a fair, if harsh, impartial justice. It was an act of crude, vindictive, fear-ridden political vengeance, finally consummated in a fit of panicky haste, fright and hysteria.

It was an attempt, through the Rosenbergs, to lash out at an enemy whose advance the United States has been powerless to stop—once and for all. And at the last minute, everyone has his chance to stick pins and knives into the doll-image of the enemy.

This is the political issue in the Rosenberg case as we have seen it—not the legal question of guilt or innocence, which would not in itself have evoked mass demonstrations in London and Paris, but the confession of war hysteria by a capitalist society that reacted in weakness and not in strength; that gave the Russians a bonus in addition to whatever atomic secrets the Rosenbergs may have handed over; that put the brand of the lynch spirit on its execution and of the war drive on its justice.

Who Owns the Corporations? 'Business Week' Tells All

By BEN HALL

The bulk of stock ownership in the United States is in the hands of a tiny minority of the population.

This commonplace statement becomes news as it is confirmed by an unexpected source: *Business Week*, weekly magazine of fact and opinion from the point of view of "business." It assumes significance, too, in the light of the recent efforts by apologists of capitalism to portray the social system in the United States as the "answer" to Marxism.

Among other things, we are often told that in the United States no small exploiting class monopolizes industry; far from it, everybody is supposed to be a little bit of a capitalist in a world of capitalists. How does this fairy tale fit the facts of stock ownership?

In its June 13 issue, *Business Week* summarizes the findings of a group of professors at the Harvard Business School issued in a recent book entitled *Effects of Taxation-Investments by Individuals*. "The authors are not impressed," says B. W. "with the widely publicized statement that some 4.7 million family spending units and 6.5 million individuals own shares of marketable stocks. According to the Harvard study, it is the amount of shares held by different groups, not the number of owners, that counts." And this is the actual picture:

- Item: 35 per cent of all stock is owned by one-tenth of 1 per cent of all "spending units," those with \$50,000 incomes and over.

- Item: 75 per cent of all stock is owned by 3 per cent of the family spending units, those with incomes of \$10,000 and over.

- Item: "On a wealth basis, the study estimates that over 65 per cent of all stock is owned by units whose net worth

is in excess of \$250,000." Average stock holdings of this group is \$100,000 or more.

The myth that high taxation of upper incomes is destroying the capacity to invest is debunked by the Harvard study. It reports that "as a minimum" the top 10 per cent of the population has been accumulating funds for "potential investment" at an annual rate of over \$10 billion (yes, billion). After worrying over rent, gas and electric, groceries, and (O misery) taxes, the tensions that wear away at the nerves of this group are relaxed by the following sedative facts:

(1) 25 per cent of all savings goes to the top 1 per cent of the population.

(2) 55 per cent of savings, at a minimum, goes to 5 per cent of the population.

(3) In these brackets of oppressed millionaires, one-fifth to one-quarter of their total incomes before taxes goes into savings.

In a brilliant psycho-sociological observation, the writer for *BW* comments: "the high income groups have an inbred habit of saving."

That this habit is not simply automatic and self-acting but is also highly cultivated is made clear as follows: "Not all top bracket individuals pay the full theoretical rate."

In fact, very few do. "There are many legitimate ways in which the upper-bracket individuals avoid the crushing burden of the full tax rate." Of the legitimate methods we are told a little; of the not-so-legitimate, or even illegitimate, methods we are told nothing. Perhaps it is better thus; we avoid temptation.

ALL IS NOT LOST

A heart-rending tale is the story of the melancholy millionaire who stares in bewilderment at his bulging bags of almost useless cash: taxes are so high, the poor fellow has no more incentive to invest. And since aside from living high and luxuriously he has no use for money other than saving and investing, it is a sad case.

It is a genuine relief to learn that this tear-jerking tale is only a fable. The Harvard authors "scoff at another theory—that individuals are staging an investors' strike because they lack incentives. There is no evidence, the study says, that high-income groups have an unduly large amount of funds in a liquid state, nor is there a marked unwillingness to invest."

In fact, the effect of high taxes on the upper-upper income groups is to stimulate their profit-making instincts and prod them into greater risks in the search for more income to offset taxation. They begin to invest in stocks which are riskier and pay higher dividends. Since capital-gains taxes are substantially lower than personal-income taxes, they seek more and more to turn their money into investments and take advantage of this lower rate.

"Their desire to make money," says *BW*, "leads them to shift from stable securities to highly speculative ones."

Furthermore, if personal-income taxes on the higher brackets were reduced, the tendency might be to discourage the quest for capital gains and thus decrease investment.

The American way of life remains unimpaired: it is still possible for even a millionaire to make a buck.

Germany —

(Continued from page 7)

atom bombs, liberate you all over again. So it was a wonderful try, but now run along and don't make trouble. . . ."

The *Times'* Arthur Krock reveals that "When the disorders broke out in Pilsen [Czechoslovakia] some days ago this government [the U. S.] looked at the event suspiciously. . . ." And the point of his piece turns out to be worry lest the anti-Stalinist action of the people behind the Iron Curtain stimulate sentiment in this country to cut armaments.

This is the authentic bourgeois mind at work. But the European people, and also the militant workers under the Kremlin heel, do not want to wait for the third world war. And their heroic struggle points the way, whether they are now conscious of it or not, to the real alternative to the war: the workers' revolution, which will not fail to disturb Western capitalism too.

Hear
MAX SHACHTMAN
on
**The Workers' Uprising
In Stalinist Germany**
See page 2