

# VICTORY in Shachtman Passport Case!

## LABOR ACTION

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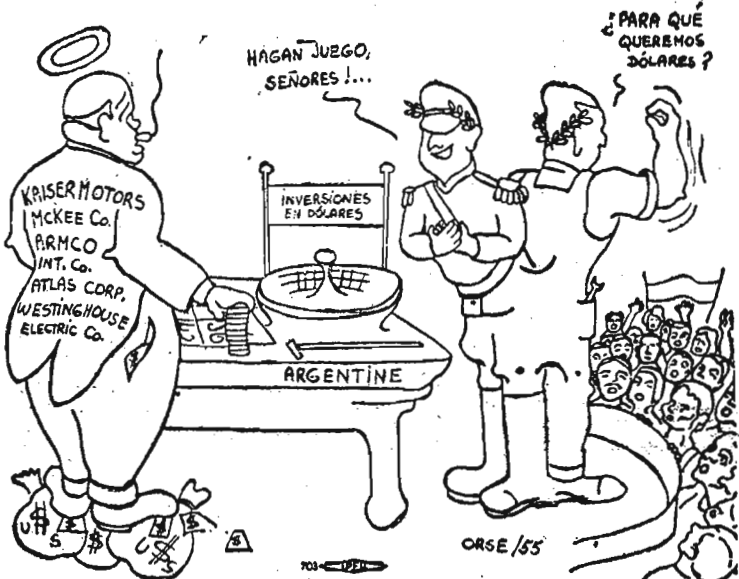
FIVE CENTS

### Federal Court of Appeals' Precedent-Making Decision Hits Gov't in 3-0 Reversal Of Lower Court, Upholds Right of ISL Chairman!

A few hours before this issue went to press, Joseph L. Rauh Jr., Washington attorney representing Max Shachtman in his case to force the State Department to grant him a passport, telephoned the great news headlined above. The court's decision—unanimous—declared that Shachtman had been denied due process of law when the State Department's Passport Bureau refused him a passport on the ground that he belongs to and is chairman of an organization listed as subversive by the attorney general. Full details on this far-reaching and extremely important decision in next week's *LA*.

## WHY PERON'S POWER CRACKED: Political and Social Forces Behind a Dictator's Decline

This cartoon, a comment on U.S.-Peron relations, appeared in the March issue of *C.O.A.S.I.*, the illegal organ of the free trade union movement of Argentina affiliated with ICFTU, published across the river in Montevideo. Peron is shown as two-faced demagogue telling the workers scornfully "Why do we want dollars?" while at the same time he invites U. S. capital to get into the game labeled "Dollar Investments." In addition, Peron's government has been getting large loans from the *Yanquis*, the basis of the recently publicized "better relations" between Washington and the Argentine dictator. Here's one Latin American government for whose overthrow the CIA will NOT be responsible!



By HAL DRAPER

The outstanding background fact behind the decline of Peron in Argentina is the fact that over the last four years the Argentine dictator has been steadily losing his mass support, especially his support among the working class.

For a first comment on the revolt, it is important to explain the relationship between this development, which the most competent observers have been pointing to with increasing frequency, and the role of both the army and the church with respect to the Peron regime.

Here is the background:

Peron came to personal power, in the "October days" of 1945, within the framework of a military regime which had overthrown the old government in 1943. He came to power as one military "strong man" replacing a series of others, but, unlike his predecessors, not merely as a military dictator. Learning something from the social demagoguery of both Fascist and Stalinist totalitarianism, and adapting his lessons to Argentine possibilities, he set himself (as minister of labor) to acquire a mass labor base loyal to himself.

In this he had great success, and for a couple of reasons:

(1) The old cadres of the small Argentine working class and labor movement had a strong and conscious radical and socialist tradition, especially among the main sectors of the skilled workers who were of non-Spanish extraction (particularly Italian). But with the development of industry and trade, larger numbers of peasants had been incorporated in the urban centers—new proletarians, and very raw. This is the ultimate basis of the division between those working-class sectors which were and remain hostile to Peron and provide the basis of the socialist opposition, and those working-class sectors (possibly the majority at one time) which gave Peron his "des-camisado" labor troops and the basis for his Peronist-controlled "trade unions."

(2) For several years favorable economic conditions made it possible for Peron, following his route to power, to operate by giving his chosen masses real economic concessions—not merely demagogic promises and phrases, of which there were also plenty. It cannot be over-emphasized that for a period, the Peronist tactic meant some genuine gains for workers as bribes for their good will. The test of his power, however, started to come when, as was inevitable, this very temporary period was over, and the Argentine economy started running into grave difficulties, as during the last few years.

#### ARMY WAS DECISIVE

What happened in 1945, essentially, was that, while remaining in the last analysis within the framework of a military dictatorship and not really following the fully developed totalitarian pattern from which he had learned some tactical pointers, Peron used his mass labor support as a weapon against his partners inside the military junta in order to make himself supreme as against them. In his ensuing period, he had to balance off the army (which is an autonomous political power in its own right) against his labor support (even if this labor support is considered to be only that of a big and active minority).

In spite of totalitarian touches and tactics here and there, especially with regard to the formal institutions of democracy, the Peron regime still essentially depended for power on this balance of support from army and the Peronista sector of labor, plus the church, whose support was purchased in 1943 by breaking the Argentine tradition of separation of church and state in education. But this is just another way of reiterating that it remained a military dictator-

(Turn to last page)

## The Stockholder-Democracy Myth

By GORDON HASKELL

One of the most resounding flops in the recent history of the American "public relations" industry was the offer of the Ford Motor Company to permit its workers to buy Ford stock at half price. The direct reason for the collapse of this particular product of the "social engineering" fraternity was that it was offered as an alternative to the demands of the United Auto Workers. The broader reason, however, was that there is no basis for it in the economics of the workers to whom it was addressed.

One of the weaknesses of dictatorships is that eventually the dictators tend to become the victims of their own propaganda machines. They begin to accept as facts the lies with which they seek to fool the masses. It would appear that whoever dreamed up the Ford "stock-sharing" plan fell prey to the same kind of process.

During the present war-economy boom, there has been a massive propaganda campaign to the effect that a basic redistribution of wealth has taken place in the United States. Giant profit-swollen corporations plaster the papers with full-page (tax-deductible) ads claiming hundreds of thousands of "owners" in the form of stockholders.

The old days, they tell us, in which one could rightfully have spoken of vast empires owned by a handful of individuals, are gone forever. Now millions of Americans "own" the great corporations, and further millions can join their ranks

whenever they feel the urge to. The impression is created that anyone who does not own corporation stock today is out of step—a failure, or at least a maverick.

The old American Dream, to cease being a wage-worker and to go into business for oneself, has simply been modernized. Now the dream (so the story goes) is to assure one's own future and a college education for one's children by buying stock—by becoming a part-owner and sharer in the golden stream of profit produced by the great, public-spirited modern corporations.

The theme has been presented cleverly or crudely, depending on who has been ringing the changes on it. Small wonder that public-relations men and corporation executives have come to believe it. After all, they own stocks, and most of the people they know personally own stocks—so why shouldn't it be true?

#### THE AMERICAN DREAM

A recent government survey of typical family finances (reported in the June 24 issue of *U. S. News & World Report*) demonstrates how hollow is the claim.

Not only do the vast majority of families own no stocks, but they have no liquid resources with which to buy them. According to this survey, 92 per cent of all families own no stocks at all. Of the 8 per cent which do own some, 3 per cent own less than \$1000 worth; another 3 per cent own between \$1000 and \$10,000 worth, and the remaining 2 per cent own the rest.

When it comes to cash savings (that

is, money on hand with which stock might be bought), the picture is not much brighter. Some 29 per cent of all families have no savings at all (U. S. government bonds, bank deposits, postal savings, accounts in savings and loan associations or credit unions). Another 35 per cent of all families have less than \$760 in cash savings.

The remaining 36 per cent own more than \$760 per family, but most of it is concentrated in the upper brackets. That is shown by the fact that ten per cent of American families own 65 per cent of the liquid assets in the country.

The simple truth, known to the Ford workers, is that the vast majority of them own no stocks, and have no money they can spare for stocks.

What they "own" is a car, TV set and some furniture. They most likely fall within the 23.2 million families who owe money on installment purchases or a mortgage. They dream not of becoming part-owners of Ford, but of the day when the finance company or the bank will cease to be part owners of THEM.

Even in the midst of this war-production prosperity, for millions of workers, that is the Great American Dream. And for these same people a stretch of unemployment when they fall behind on their payments is the Great American Nightmare.

The Ford executives and their "social engineering" experts had to learn the facts of life the hard way. That is the fate of people who are taken in by their own advertising slogans.

## LONDON LETTER

# Railwaymen Win a Victory; Bevan Kicks Off for Left

By OWEN ROBERTS

LONDON, June 16—Yesterday, after 17 days of traveling by motor bus, thumbing lifts, and walking, the people of Britain were once again able to go about their business using the railways as the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen called off its strike. Agreement was reached late on Tuesday evening when the British Transport Commission—the body which operates Britain's nationalized railways—agreed to negotiate pay differentials with both the ASLEF and the national Union of Railwaymen within the next seven days. In other words, the Transport Commission has at last been forced to stop sitting in the corner like little Jack Horner and to get around the table with the railway workers.

So far there are no details of the likely pay increase; these are to be finally decided by Lord Justice Morris who has been appointed referee in the dispute and whose decision the unions and the Transport Commission have agreed to accept. Yesterday Jim Baty, the secretary of the ASLEF, had a long private session with Lord Justice Morris and today it is the turn of Jim Campbell, secretary of the NUR.

Although the essential details are lacking it is possible at this juncture to say that the strike has been decided in favor of the unions—in face of determined opposition from the Transport Commission, the government and the prime minister.

They have not only forced the Transport Commission to conduct talks while the strike was still in progress but have also had the principle of wage increases conceded before starting the wheels turning again. A valuable lesson to have taught the newly elected Tory government—particularly when so many of its backwoodsmen went around during the election campaign breathing awful threats against the trade unions and strikers.

## RIGHT TO STRIKE

There have been suggestions from various quarters—although it must be admitted that they are not as yet very influential ones—that workers in the nationalized industries should forfeit their right to strike. The reasons advanced for this step are that these workers are servants of the state and the public and as a consequence a strike on their part is a move against the state itself.

It is rather a coincidence that this very subject was debated at the Fourth World Congress of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in Vienna last month, which came to the conclusion that it will "continue its fight to ensure that all workers' rights are respected, including the right of workers in public services and nationalized industries to bargain collectively and to strike."

It is, of course, very doubtful that the ICFTU had Britain in mind when it passed this particular resolution; but it is rather comforting to think that should any measure be contemplated which restricts the right to strike in the nationalized industries, the British Tory government will find itself in conflict with the ICFTU. It would prove, to say the least, a very interesting situation!

## TIFFIN MOVES UP

As the railwaymen went back to work yesterday, the mammoth Transport and General Workers' Union announced the name of the man who will step into the place which was recently occupied by Arthur Deakin and earlier by Ernest Bevin. The new general secretary of this 1,290,000-strong right-wing union will be Jock Tiffin, who beat his nearest opponent, Charlie Brandon, by 267,019 votes to 146,366.

Tiffin, who has been No. 2 in the union for the past nine years and who has been acting secretary since Deakin's death last month, can be relied upon to continue unbroken the policies pursued by his predecessors. An aggressive right-winger, he

will make full use of the additional power which he has now gained and there is little chance of a let-up in the line followed by the TGWU for many years, a line which has set the pace for the whole of the right wing of the British labor movement.

## BEVAN'S PLAY

The political wing of the movement has not been static while all the activity has been going on in the trade unions. Preparations for the big debate on Labor's defeat in the election are now under way. Last weekend Aneurin Bevan ventured to have a few words on the subject while addressing a public meeting.

"The best thing the Labor movement can do," he said, "is to make up its mind from now on that it is never going to win any General Elections in Britain and it will not matter if it does win them unless the movement is going to dedicate itself to the accomplishment of a socialist society. People are saying that socialism is out-dated and that public ownership does not matter any more. When they tell you this, you young men and women, when you sometimes begin to despair and believe what they are saying, that socialism is an old-fashioned affair, remember it may be that you are becoming old-fashioned."

This, though containing no revolutionary statements, may be seen as the skipper of the Bevanite team taking the first shot at the ball and setting off his teammates in a marathon match. Only one thing is in doubt—there is no telling at this particular stage who will be acting as the football!

## AFRICA

## The Continent Is Not So Dark

By PRISCILLA CADY

The African people in Kenya have been without any recognized political organization since the banning of the Kenya African Union in 1953. The government has recently announced, however, that a new "party" will be permitted to organize, but the restrictions under which it must operate and the limited extent of its powers indicate that the British intend it to be a sterile and paternalistically controlled organ of approved opinion only. There are a lot of experienced politicals among the African leaders, however, and they can be expected to make the most of the new situation.

## TANGANYIKA: 'PARTY'

The Tanganyika Legislative Council has now been established on a basis of parity. In colonial language "parity" means something-less-than; in this case it means specifically that ten Europeans represent 18,000 Europeans (only 3,000 of whom are permanent residents) while ten Asians represent 60,000 Asians, and ten Africans represent eight million Africans. (Ten equals ten equals ten, that's parity.) The hobbled and tedious steps which constitute the pace that England has set for the road to self-government can hardly be acclaimed as great leaps of progress, but neither can they be ignored.

## LIBERIA: SCANDAL

President Tubman has just won what has been reported to be a landslide election victory in Liberia. During the election he deported Didwo Twe of the Kru tribe, who founded the Reformation Party in an abortive attempt in 1951 to represent the approximately two million aborigines who are ruled over by a minority of American Negro descent. The only opposition given any kind of opportunity was that of ex-President Barclay (whose paper Tubman shut down shortly before the election).

Barclay charged that on Tubman's re-

## ON THE JIM CROW FRONT

# Expose Peonage System for Negro Workers Lured to North

By SCOTT ARDEN

New York made the headlines in the Negro press last week when it was revealed that some employment agencies in the state are enticing domestic workers from Virginia and North and South Carolina only to force them into virtual slavery upon their arrival.

The situation was spotlighted at hearings of a Joint Legislative Committee on Labor Conditions, with state Attorney General Jacob Javits and Herbert Hill, NAACP labor secretary, as the principal witnesses.

Describing the circumstances of the domestic employment racket, the Baltimore *Afro-American* quotes Hill as testifying: "Unlicensed employment agencies operating along the suburban periphery of New York City (where licensing is not required) solicit colored women from Southern communities to come to New York.

"The solicitation consists of advertising in the Southern newspapers and in some instances labor agents from New York City actively recruit. . . ."

The women who are lured to New York often are forced by the "agency" to pay for their own transportation "many times over." Hill stated. He read the affidavit of a woman whose transportation costs from the South were deducted from her wages each time she was sent out on a job. When she quit altogether, the agency called her at home and threatened arrest if she did not return to work.

Another affidavit read by Hill told a woman's story of being "sold" by an agency to various employers for \$50, for jobs where she worked from 7 a.m. to midnight seven days a week.

The "system" the labor agents use is the tradition-honored one of their trade. Told that they will be given well-paying jobs, the young women, many still in their teens, are tricked into signing contracts, Javits revealed. These contracts appoint the agency as their sole representative and bind the woman to work no less than six months.

"All too often the salary received by the workers was not as much as the salary which she had been promised before she left her home," the attorney general stated.

The average contract provides that an employer pay the agency and the worker \$55 each month for four months, a total of \$110, an amount considerably lower than the wage scale of the area. Gradually the agency's percentage dropped and the worker's increased to \$70 per month for the second four months and \$85 for the balance of the year.

The "labor agents" who comb the South are paid from \$40 to \$85 "per head," depending on their bargaining ability, the committee was told.

The hearing, which grew out of complaints filed by the NAACP, received a series of legislative proposals from Hill.

These included: Enactment of a uniform statewide licensing statute for all employment agencies; issuance of agency licenses by the state attorney general with enforcement authority for the conditions upon which a license is issued; outlawing false representation concerning wages and working conditions in the solicitation of workers; establishment of stated limitations for deductions for fees, including transportation; revocation of employment-agency license if the stated conditions are violated, plus action under the Penal Code, and the denial of the right to apply for reinstatement of license for a three year period.

## TERROR IS BACKGROUND OF LEE MURDER

Events in the murder of Rev. George W. Lee, Negro militant, in Belzoni, Miss., on May 7, have been moving rapidly.

"An eyewitness account of the lynching . . . has been given FBI agents" in East St. Louis, Illinois, the *Afro-American* reports.

The witness, Alex Hudson, was traced to Illinois by the NAACP, after fleeing Mississippi in fear of his life. Billy Jones, president of the Illinois State NAACP, accompanied the witness to the FBI office where he told his story.

Hudson said that on the night of the lynch-murder, he was sitting with a friend when Lee's car passed. He saw another car overtake that of the courageous clergyman and heard shots fired from the second car, after which Lee's car swerved off the road and crashed into a house—while the second car disappeared in the darkness.

"Occupants of the lynch car are well known to everyone in the Belzoni area," A. H. McCoy, president of the Mississippi State NAACP, charged Wednesday. "The puzzling thing is why the sheriff doesn't arrest the men who did it," he added with a note of bitter humor.

Sheriff Shelton, whose "interest" we mentioned in our first report of the case (LA, June 6), had attributed Lee's death to the auto crash, until informed by the FBI that the militant minister had been killed by shotgun wounds. When informed of this rather obvious fact he suggested that the "killer must be another colored person because Lee was a lady's man."

Another friend of Lee fled Mississippi recently. The Rev. J. H. Hargrove, a solicitor for the NAA in Mileston, Miss., decided it was time to leave when a friend told him of overhearing two white men say that Hargrove "was likely to follow the Rev. Mr. Lee if he didn't quit working for the NAACP."

Hargrove revealed that his troubles didn't start with the Lee murder. His credit had been frozen since the first of the year by the work of the white "Citizens Committee," despite the fact that it had always been good in the past. In addition he was faced with a mortgage covering hidden expenses and cotton-ginning services he never received.

But since Sheriff Shelton's "theory" is the one being pushed by the "Citizens Committees" (or "Councils") it should be reported that, according to the NAACP, witnesses are available who state that on the very day of his death, Lee told them that "someone at the courthouse" had "advised" him to remove his name from the voter's registration list. Lee refused to do so, and there can be no doubt that this direct defiance, plus his outspoken anti-Jim Crow activity, led to his lynch-murder.

## YOU'RE INVITED

to speak your mind in the letter column of Labor Action. Our policy is to publish letters of general political interest, regardless of views. Keep them to 500 words.



# Class Conflict Shakes THE 'MIDDLE WAY' IN SCANDINAVIA

By DANIEL FABER

The limitations of the Scandinavian "Middle Way" were spotlighted in recent months as one country after another, with the sole exception of Norway, became the scene of serious social conflicts.

In Sweden, three months ago, the breakdown of collective bargaining in the paper industry almost led to a lockout by the employers which, if it had been allowed to happen, would have affected 500,000 workers.

## SWEDEN

### GENERAL STRIKE THREATS AND EMPLOYERS' "BRUTALITY"

The Swedish paper workers have long been unable to benefit from living and working conditions similar to those of other export industries, even though the paper industry benefits from an extraordinary export boom. This year, when its contract with the employers organization came up for renewal, the Paper Workers' Union demanded a wage increase of 9 per cent. According to neutral observers, the paper industry could afford wage increases of 10-15 per cent without weakening its position on the world market.

The employers, however, considered that the position of Swedish exports on the world market were threatened by the union's demands. According to their theory, an increase in the workers' purchasing power would bring about an increase in imports and threaten the financial balance of the country.

Consequently, the demands of the paper workers were met with a counter-proposal of 3 per cent, and after a pretense of negotiation, the employers threatened to declare a general lockout if the paper workers did not accept their terms. A spokesman for the employers' association stated that the lockout had been decided upon because the Paper Workers Union not only refused to reduce its demands, but "encouraged other unions to put forward equally unreasonable demands."

The Swedish Federation of Labor (L. O.) responded with a threat of a general strike. While the paper Workers Union numbers only 37,000, the strike would have involved 500,000 workers, that is, one-sixth of organized labor, and would have been the most widespread conflict in the history of the Swedish labor movement, since even the general strike of 1909 only involved 300,000 workers.

The conflict was temporarily settled by government arbitration, which decided on a compromise solution (7-8 per cent). However, this sudden intrusion of the grosser facts of social life has shaken the whole edifice of social peace and class-collaboration that the employers and the social-democratic leadership have built in common.

The SP daily *Aftonbladet* wrote that "the brutality of the employers' organization has dangerously threatened the new human relations which it took decades to establish." In parliament, the social-democratic deputy Axel Strand, president of the L. O., declared that social peace could not be maintained by appealing to the moderation of the workers alone. Although the Swedish trade-union movement, he said, has always shown a sense of responsibility toward society as a whole, it was not ready for capitulation.

Over the issue of wage increases, Strand entered in conflict with his social-democratic colleague, the minister of finance, and maintained that wage increases were possible in large numbers of industries.

Even more significant for the crisis of class-collaboration in Sweden is the fact that the Miners Union of the Kiruna iron

mines in the North, traditionally a radical union, has taken position against a government plan to complete the nationalization of the Kiruna mines. To these workers, any difference there may exist between a private employer and the SP government is obviously not worth talking about.

## FINLAND

### ELECTORAL DEALS AND WAGE RAISES

In March, seven civil-service and public workers' unions struck for a pay increase in Finland. The strike lasted 10 days, involved 25,000 workers, and completely paralyzed the railroads, post offices and other public services.

It was bitterly opposed by the government, which is a coalition of Social-Democrats (7 seats) and Agrarians (6 seats). The unanimity of the two parties in opposing the strike has been explained by the electoral deal which is said to exist between Leskinen, secretary-general of the SP, and the agrarian leader Kekkonen, in view of the 1956 elections.

Nevertheless, the strike ended in a victory, since the last demands of the civil servants were accepted: each of them moves one rung higher on the civil-service wage scale.

The original demands of the strikers would have meant a yearly increase of 7 billion F-marks (31.5 million dollars) in the state budget; the present increase amounts to 5.1 billion F-marks (roughly 25 million dollars), of which 2.1 billion is set aside for the lowest paid categories.

## DENMARK

### FARM WORKERS AND LABOR STATESMEN

In April, the farm workers went on strike in Denmark. As is known, Danish farming is one of the major sources of exports for the country, and is a highly rationalized industry. Consequently, the profession is also highly organized, and most farm workers are union members.

The issue in the recent strike was shorter working-hours. Even though farming is better organized in Denmark than almost anywhere else in the world, working hours are longer than in any other industry. The Farm Workers Unions are fighting for an 8-hour day and a 6-day week, such as exists in Swedish farming, for instance.

Here too the strike called by the farm workers was countered by a general lockout on the employers' side, which put 70,000 people out of work. To end the strike, parliament voted in favor of compulsory mediation by a government board. The parties in favor of compulsory mediation were the SP and the liberal bourgeois parties. The conservative parties and the CP opposed it. The labor organizations involved in the strike also opposed compulsory mediation.

In justification of its position, the SP declared that it was against compulsory mediation on principle, but that there were exceptional situations, such as this one, when "society's interests" were at stake, and where the parties involved could not solve the conflict by themselves.

Consequently, the conflict was turned over to a government mediation board, which took a decision amounting to maintaining the status quo before the strike. It ignored the main body of farm workers, and granted insignificant concessions to a few special groups.

Thus the barn-workers got five free days every two months, but without compensation in pay; the nursery workers got a 48-hour week, but only in the three summer months, and only with a 50 per cent compensation for the 2½ hours lost. (That is, with an hourly wage raise of six tenths of one cent for the men and of four tenths of one cent for the women; basic wages for this category were about twenty cents before the strike.)

In the presentation of their case, the unions had pointed out that the long hours of the farm workers in fact excluded them from the social and cultural benefits available to the other workers. In its report, the Mediation Board recognizes the need for an 8-hour day also in farming—at some unspecified future time. For the present, the "time is not yet ripe."

The statements by the labor spokesmen expressed resentment and bitter disappointment over the decision. The president of the Nursery Workers' Union pointed out that nursery workers were still working longer hours than anybody else, and that the so-called wage raise was negligible, especially in view of the low basic wage prevailing in the trade.

The workers' representative on the Mediation Board termed the concessions "very meager," as they didn't change working conditions for the mass of field and farm workers. He reminded the public that the labor unions had been opposed to mediation from the beginning, and predicted that resistance against mediation in general will increase, as a result of the decision. As to the employers' association, they simply commented that their "arguments were so forceful, that they couldn't be disregarded."

At the time of the lockout, the CP daily, *Land of Folk*, had advocated the extension of the strike to the slaughterhouses and to the transport workers. It is likely that such a measure would have given the strike a better chance than compulsory mediation.

The SP was, of course, prevented from taking a militant position, as it is too busy governing and defending the interests of "society as a whole." Instead, it fell back on "labor-statesmanship," at the expense of the farm workers.

After having been instrumental in pushing compulsory arbitration through parliament, it protested in its daily *Social-demokraten* against the decision of the Mediation Board, deploring that the workers' demands "were not fully met." But, it said, one must be grateful to the board for declaring that the 8-hour day is a good thing in principle.

The present agreement remains in effect until March 1956, when it comes up for renewal. According to the president of the Danish Federation of Labor and to *Social-demokraten's* editorial, the employers will not get off so easily then.

## ICELAND

### THE UNIONS AND STALINIST ADVENTURISM

The strike in Iceland, which broke out in the middle of March and lasted six weeks, belongs in a different category.

As readers of LABOR ACTION know, the leadership of the Icelandic Federation of Labor fell into Stalinist hands at the end of last year, partly because of the treason of a social-democratic trade-union leader by the name of Hannibal Valdimarsson. After this success, the Stal-

inists apparently considered it necessary to consolidate their leadership in action.

So when the collective agreements came up for renewal, the Stalinist-led unions made the following demands: 15-18 added vacation days, a 30 per cent wage increase for unskilled, and 25 per cent for skilled labor, and full monthly payment of the compensation for the increase in the cost of living. (Before, this compensation was paid only quarterly, and fully only for the lowest-paid categories of workers.) The negotiators failed to agree, and a strike was called by the IFL on March 18 involving 7,000 members belonging to 14 unions.

The strike was not supported by all unions: the social-democratic Seaman's Union did not participate in it, nor did the personnel of the Keflavik airport call a sympathy strike, as it had been asked to do by the IFL leadership. Fighting broke out between strikers and non-striking transport workers.

After a six-week strike and after the complex exhaustion of their strike funds, the unions had to accept the following terms: a 3-day increase in vacations, a 10 per cent increase for unskilled and a 4 per cent increase for skilled labor, the payment of the cost of living-compensation remaining as it was.

In short, the strike was a badly prepared propaganda action on behalf of the CP; as such, it failed to get the support of the majority of Iceland's working-class, and ended with a defeat.

The policy of the social-democrats over the recent years had been to raise real wages by cutting down prices, taxation and custom duties. As a result, the purchasing power of the Icelandic working class was as high last February as it had been in January 1953. In this instance, social-democratic policy has been far more effective. The 1952 strike, which had been reluctantly called by the SP leadership, was won because its program was supported by the unanimous opinion of organized labor, while the "militant" Stalinist strike was lost because the workers would not support demagogic adventures.

An interesting sidelight on the strike is that Valdimarsson, the former social-democrat who had been elected president of the IFL with Stalinist support, was completely eliminated from the leadership by his erstwhile friends, who would not even allow him to sit on the strike committee or to take part in negotiations. This is not the first time that Stalinists betray their socialist allies, but it rarely occurs as quickly as it did here.

## IN SCANDINAVIA TOO THE ISSUE IS POWER

The particular situation in Iceland, where the SP is not in the government, should not obscure the significance of the other strikes: in Sweden, Denmark and Finland serious social struggles had to be conducted by the labor movement against the opposition or the unsympathetic neutrality of predominantly social-democratic governments.

Even in Norway, where no large-scale social conflict has taken place as yet, the high investment rate and the excessive armament expenses (125 million dollars a year, the largest single item in the budget), have brought about a mild inflation and a steep rise in prices. As a result, the trade-unions demand that steps be taken to lower prices, and the Labor Party youth, in its annual conference in May, demanded that the government intervene more energetically in banking and credit.

It may also be significant that the weekly *Orientering*, whose main effort in the past has been to propagate neutralism in the Labor Party, is now devoting a full page every week to a discussion on the problems of socialization. It may be hoped that this discussion represents the beginnings of a positive socialist program.

In all Scandinavian countries, except Iceland, the trade-union movement, reformist as it is, is impelled to enter into conflict with the social-democratic leadership in government.

The marginal situation of the Scandinavian countries in international politics, as well as a "social peace" based on the strength and the patience of the labor movement, have made it appear that merely controlling the capitalist economy would be sufficient to solve its contradictions. The recent conflicts, among other things, tend to show that "loyal administration of capitalism" by social-democratic governments has ceased to provide even temporary solutions on a limited scale. In Scandinavia, as elsewhere, the social question is posed in terms of power.

## A New Civil-Liberties Fight Gets Under Way

**Pacifists, Arrested, to Test Rights in H-Bomb Drill**

By EDWARD HILL

On Wednesday, June 15, 29 pacifists were arrested in New York City for refusing to take cover during the H-bomb air raid alert. On the following Sunday their spokesmen announced that the case will be vigorously fought in court, with broad constitutional issues concerning the New York State Civil Defense Emergency Act of 1951 to be raised.

The 29 were members of the *Catholic Worker*, Fellowship of Reconciliation and War Resisters League. They had notified authorities in advance of their decision to refuse to take shelter. Within minutes of the sounding of the alert they were in police custody. Among those arrested were Dorothy Day and Ammon Hennacy of the *Catholic Worker*; A. J. Muste, emeritus secretary of the Fellowship of Reconciliation; and Bayard Rustin, executive secretary of the War Resisters League.

The arrested pacifists were arraigned by Magistrate Kaplan in night court, Wednesday night. After a bitter exchange with one of the defendants, the judge sent out a riot call, ordered the courtroom cleared, referred to the defendants as "murderers," and ordered them held in \$1500 bail on a misdemeanor. If convicted, the demonstrators are liable to a \$500 fine and/or a year in jail.

In their statement Sunday night, spokesmen for the group said that an interim committee was handling immediate details with regard to bail, lawyers, etc. Several possibilities are being explored for the conduct of the defense, and it may be that some kind of nationwide committee will be formed to aid in this task.

There has been no announcement by the group or its lawyers of how constitutional issues will be raised. However, certain questions suggest themselves immediately. The air raid drill was a mock emergency, yet the police powers exercised in it were quite real. The mix-up in the Department of Agriculture (where wires canceling a farmer ballot were taken seriously) reveals that this question is a serious one.

In terms of civil liberties, American law has traditionally held that constitutional rights can be suspended only by actual emergency. Even in the watered-down version of the "clear and present danger" test used by the Vinson majority in the Dennis case, the court reiterated this principle. In the present case, there was no clear and present danger. A "mock" danger was declared. Can such declaration of danger be regarded as justifying a suspension of the Bill of Rights?

One could imagine situations in which "mock" clear and present dangers could be declared in order to handle strikes, political opposition, the right to assembly, etc. It would seem apparent on the surface of the case that important—even crucial—civil liberties issues are involved. The First Amendment to the Constitution is certainly at issue.

Another question which the pacifists raise is that of conscience. There were eight million "simulated" deaths in the nation on Wednesday, three million in New York City alone. There were many post-alert admissions on the part of government authorities that the techniques used in the drill were totally inadequate

to deal with a nuclear war situation. The pacifists' action obviously raises the point: Can one be forced to participate in such an action?

In another statement, the group pointed out the political implications of the alert. They defined it as being part of American war preparations, an attempt to create a spirit of acceptance for war. Immediately after the test, government statements confirmed this analysis when leaders suggested that the alert made universal military training a necessity. The pacifists have presented a clear challenge to the mentality of the garrison state.

Socialists, whether pacifist or non-pacifist, can rally to defend the New York demonstrators. The civil-liberties issue which they raise is of considerable importance, a defense of free speech; the conscience stand is one which deserves universal respect; and the political analysis of the implications of the drill points to an important thought.

**READERS TAKE THE FLOOR****C. O. Cases**

To the Editor:

Burton Rosen, socialist and non-religious objector to war, was paroled from Springfield, Mo., Medical Center for Federal Prisoners, on Saturday, June 11, after having been behind bars since December 18, 1953. He had been sentenced to four years imprisonment as a non-registrant, but protested against the law on the ground that it made no provisions for the rights of conscience for people who were atheists, and thus violated the First Amendment.

John Forbes, of Chicago, a draft objector on the same grounds, is also under four-year sentence in the same institution, and was recently denied parole. Meanwhile, the same fight against Section 6-J of the draft law, which grants rights of conscience to believers in god only, is being waged by Vern Davidson and Dave McReynolds of Los Angeles, who are seeking funds to appeal their convictions. Donations should be sent to McReynolds at 222 Ashland Ave., Ocean Park, Calif.

Rosen's attempt to appeal his conviction in the higher court had failed due to insufficient funds. Funds received were returned to the donors. The issue he sought to test, however, can still be tested in the cases of Davidson and McReynolds. Their case is different only in that they complied with registration requirements, but refused induction. Rosen and Forbes had refused to register.

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available too, of course . . . also  
for \$2.50.**Party Crisis Grows as Leadership Suspends Left-Winger Madhu Limaye****India's Young Socialists Sound Alarm Against SP Right Wing**

By PHILIP COBEN

The critical seriousness of the political fight inside India's Praja Socialist Party is evidenced by a communication received this week by LABOR ACTION from the Young Socialist organization of that country.

Among other things, it reveals that a well-known party leader, who has been criticizing the leadership from the left, has been suspended from membership for a year. This is Madhu Limaye, who has not only been a leading figure in the Indian socialist movement but was also very active in the founding of the Asian Socialist Conference at Rangoon on behalf of the PSP.

The Young Socialist circular is primarily an appeal to the league's membership to support its coming conference in spite of factional opposition by the party's right-wing leadership. Mimeographed, labeled "An Urgent Letter," it is dated June 1 from the Banaras headquarters of the league, whose official name is Samajawadi Yuwak Sabha (SYS).

The immediate cause of the fight is the trend on the part of the party leadership (as the left-wingers fear) to gloss over differences with the ruling Congress Party of Nehru, the main bourgeois party of the country. As LABOR ACTION reported, the PSP's general secretary, Asoka Mehta, has been the chief butt of left-wing attack as leader of the tendency for political capitulation to the Congress Party. Now the Young Socialists go further and also charge the right wing with aiming "ultimately" at merger with Congress.

In an accompanying informational letter, the general secretary of the youth organization, Rangnath, announces that the SYS will hold its first National Conference at Puri, Orissa, on June 28-30. In defiance of the party's action against him, Madhu Limaye was asked to preside over the gathering.

"Dr. Rammanohar Lohia will also address the conference," writes Rangnath. There is no other information, however, on the role in this fight, taken by Lohia, one of the most respected leaders of the party, unless Rangnath's announcement is to be taken to mean that Lohia is openly supporting Limaye and the SYS.

The most important passages of the SYS circular follow.

**FROM TEXT OF YOUNG SOCIALIST CIRCULAR**

The SYS today is facing a challenge. Those in the PSP, who for the last three years have been trying in more than one way to somehow or other hamstring the party to the Congress and its governments, are now indirectly trying to play the same game in relation to the SYS.

The ideological crisis that overtook the party three years back had to a large extent been resolved at Allahabad at least for the rank and file and for those who took inspiration from the party of socialism. But the last year has shown that some at least in the party have not yet given up the hope of dragging the party into the vicious folds of Congress cooperation.

They, however, have changed their tactics. Instead of a frontal attack on the accepted ideology, they have thought it better to stiffen its implementation by devious technical devices and by taking cover under undemocratic slogans like "the United Leadership" and "disciplined speech," etc.

Having been thwarted in their attempts to lead the party into a net of cooperation with the Congress and ultimately to a merger of identities, they have now chosen to make it a party of paralyzed opposition and a docile annex of the ruling party.

Evidently, this suits the leader of the Congress Party much more than the other alternative of merger.

The tragedy of the whole thing is that these partisans are not even honest in their professions and are trying to hide this prime motivation behind a hundred pretexts of discipline, organization and even pseudo-democratic principles. Having inflicted a terrible injury on the great principles of the dignity of the human person at Nagpur, the partisans of paralyzed socialism were able to rope in other well-meaning socialists—although, we hope, for the time being—by means of a two-pronged device, of seem-

ingly maintaining the unity of the party on the one hand and saving a socialist ministry on the other.

Ever since then they have succeeded in blackmailing those who innocently believe that the façade of a unified party in spite of sharp ideological cleavage must be maintained in order to face the ensuing general elections. They have by inceduous pressure been coercing the erstwhile neutrals of the party into crushing the might of those who stand for a militant line and back the Allahabad Policy not merely in words but in deeds, by a series of organizational maneuvers and in the name of discipline.

The collaborationists have thus turned an ideological backing into an organizational disputation. The suspension of Madhu Limaye cannot therefore be taken to be an isolated event. The alleged indiscipline of Madhu Limaye, which he was forced to commit to defend the policy of the party, is insignificant in comparison to the numerous indisciplines that have been and are being committed by the collaborationists in order to defeat the policy of the party. Those who have all along been fighting to make the PSP a real opposition party of militant socialism cannot accept the disciplinary action on Madhu Limaye as an individual act but must take it to be censure on the spirit of the Allahabad Policy. . . .

The SYS has a clear vision of the problems that face it in the future. Should the Praja Socialist Party seem to flinch from the path of militant socialism and the construction of a new world, the SYS is determined to travel alone to its objective. It shall, however, make all attempts to fight such a reaction in the party by all means available. It must be clear that by the principle of collective affiliation of class organizations which is accepted by all progressive peoples' parties, the Praja Socialist Party can still save the socialist movement from stultifying.

The SYS cannot bind itself with the changing fortunes of the PSP, without having the right to participate in the determination of its policies. The SYS therefore considers it to be its foremost task to keep the PSP on the straight militant path by agitating for the affiliation of its membership with the party and till such affiliation is granted to exert pressure from outside to save the party from possible deviations.

The SYS has invited Comrade Madhu Limaye to preside over the deliberations of its annual conference because he symbolizes in the present context the revolt of the youth against the inroads of reaction in the party of socialism. It makes little difference if Madhu Limaye has temporarily fallen a prey to the machinations of a group in the party. It makes little difference if the National Executive has confirmed his suspension for one year without giving a thought to the implications of the problems. He continues to be a pillar of the socialist movement.

It is also immaterial, although highly undemocratic, if important persons in position of power in the party have chosen to stay away from the conference and have even asked members of the PSP to follow their lead. They have in this way shown their dictatorial propensities and disregard of jurisdiction. In face of the National Executive's standing resolution asking party activists engaged on the youth front to make the SYS their forum, a joint faculty of the party have issued a presumptuous circular to party members not to participate in the conference. There is no doubt that it will receive the disregard that it deserves at the hands of party members.

Members of the SYS should be alive against such unauthorized interference with the organization and express their resentment against such gratuitous insult. Matters have gone still further when a calculated move is afoot to sabotage the conference by withdrawing the Orissa PSP's cooperation. . . .

**LABOR ACTION**

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## India's Young Socialists Appeal

The YSL has received two communications from the Samajawadi Yuwak Sabha (Young Socialists) of India, the youth group of the Praja Socialist Party. One, an announcement of the first National Conference of the SYS, which will be held at the end of June, contained an invitation to attend the conference. The other is an SYS document (reported in detail in this issue of LABOR ACTION) discussing the recent struggles between the left and right wings in the Indian PSP and their repercussions for the SYS.

In recent years the PSP has developed a right-wing group which is conciliatory toward Nehru's Congress Party. The SYS document makes it quite clear that the Indian Young Socialists stand in the forefront of the struggle against these reactionary developments and for a militant socialist policy. The PSP had, in a bureaucratic maneuver, suspended Madhu Limaye, one of the leaders of its left wing. The SYS invited Comrade Limaye to preside over its conference despite his suspension.

In retaliation, the PSP right wing has begun a campaign to sabotage the SYS Conference. Several important PSP leaders have announced that they are

staying away from the conference and have urged other PSP members to do likewise. In addition, moves are afoot to have the Orissa (the location of the conference) PSP organization withdraw its cooperation, according to the document. General Secretary Rangnath called upon the SYS to continue all present plans for the conference, despite the difficulties which will now be faced.

In a message to Comrade Rangnath, YSL National Chairman Max Martin stated the regret of the YSL that it could not have a representative present at the conference. The message expressed solidarity with the Indian Young Socialists and sent "the warmest fraternal greetings to the National Conference of the SYS, and the strongest wishes for its success." It called for international cooperation of young socialists in "the struggle against capitalism and Stalinism and for a socialist world of peace, freedom and plenty."

The SYS was organized in June 1953 and reports a membership of 30,000. The SYS is affiliated to the International Union of Socialist Youth, having applied for membership to IUSY in December 1953 and having been accepted in early 1954. Nath Pai of the SYS is president of the IUSY.

## UCLA's 'Observer' After One Semester

By ARLON TUSSING

LOS ANGELES, June 6—When the UCLA administration reorganized the *Daily Bruin* last semester, there was a brief flurry of campus concern for freedom of the press. Three thousand students signed a petition asking Chancellor Allen to rescind his directive, but within a few days interest in the *Bruin* issue began to diminish, as it had each time in the past when the administration or its agents in student government had tightened control of the paper.

As in the past, there had been talk of an independent student paper, to be published off-campus, which could cover controversial issues in a manner the *Bruin* could not or did not care to do.

For the first time, however, such a paper was actually published this semester, produced by individuals from the former *Bruin* staff. During the spring semester, 15 weekly issues of the *Observer* were published, a four-page photo-offset tabloid

of about 1000 words per page.

The first issue did not promise a long or meaningful life for the *Observer*. There was no vital or controversial material in the issue, because the editors were still timidly hoping to obtain campus recognition for their new publication.

During the semester, the paper has improved both in appearance and in content. *Challenge* has been indebted to the *Observer* more than once for its coverage of UCLA events. The weekly *Observer* has consistently scooped the colorless daily *Bruin* on important campus issues, and despite its space limitations, covered them more thoroughly. The *Observer* was the only source of news on the debate in Student Legislative Council over discrimination in living groups, when *Bruin* editor Irv Drasin (who was running for ASUCLA president) ruled that there should be no coverage of the anti-discrimination issue until after the student elections.

Some of the *Observer's* original timidity still remained in its attempt to maintain an "impartial" objectivity in news reporting. This strained attempt at impartiality resulted for instance in a cursory and inadequate coverage of the Student Civil Liberties Conference (of which editor Martin McReynolds was chairman). The *Observer* has a peculiar technique of printing its news articles on controversial subjects in a disjointed and unevaluated form, followed by a sentence or paragraph labeled "analysis," in substance a short editorial.

### VOICE OF LIBERALISM

The paper's contents have been generally well balanced in view of the *Observer's* function. The sports and "social" news which now occupy most of the *Bruin's* space are largely absent, but there have been enough lighter features to provide variety from the serious news and editorials which occupy two-thirds of the paper. An entertainment section, called "the Discerning Observer," tries to cover too many items too briefly and too flippantly to be worth reading.

Among the high points of the last semester have been Martin McReynolds' signed editorials pointing out the twin dangers to civil liberties from acceding to the persecution of the Communists and from making political concessions to them.

Through its editorials the *Observer* has established itself as a political tendency, one which has been lacking at UCLA for several years—namely, a group of principled civil-libertarian liberals, independent of the Stalinists. This tendency has been represented for several years in Berkeley by the Student Civil Liberties Union, and on some campuses by Students for Democratic Action. The YSL welcomes the liberals back to UCLA.

The appearance of the *Observer* next semester is uncertain. Although subscriptions and contributions have barely been enough to keep the paper going through the spring semester, the editors do not feel that money is the main problem. Not enough of the present staff will be available in the fall to sustain the paper, and unless new personnel can be found the *Observer* will not resume publication.

The *Observer's* personnel crisis presents a special challenge to liberals at  
(Turn to last page)

## Civil-Liberty Rally Hears Wide Panel

By JACK WALKER

BERKELEY, May 18—A real array of political opinions and various shades of civil-libertarian views greeted Academic Freedom Week on the UC campus, as the educational committee of the Oxford section of the University Students Cooperative Association sponsored a discussion on "The Right to Hear Divergent Opinions."

Dick Faulkner of the Young Republicans, Alex Garber for the Student Civil Liberties Union, Ed Hoffman of Students For America, Bill Hale of the Labor Youth League (Stalinists), and Charles Shain, Berkeley organizer of the Young Socialist League, comprised the panel. The expected Young Democrat could not make this meeting due to a last-minute change in his schedule.

The meeting was quite lively and most of the fifty students lingered on after it broke at 10:30 p.m., in order to put further questions to the various speakers and discuss the meeting among themselves. There was a general feeling that such meetings were a good thing, and ought to be repeated next semester on a current political topic, possibly on campus and before a larger audience.

### VIEWS ON THE RIGHT

The Young Republican, a "heterodox Republican" or "Federalist" in his own words, proclaimed himself a supporter of Burke and Metternich and hailed the dictum that "The safety of the Republic is the Supreme Law." As a consequence he opposed the right of Stalinists to teach because they represented a foreign power, and contrariwise would support an anarchist, Trotskyist, Catholic or International Democratic Socialist since they were not a danger like "the brothers CommuNazi" in their respective times.

Faulkner feared "crowd culture" and mass democracy, although he thought universal suffrage was still necessary as a check to a governing elite. His opposition to the Stalinist teacher was due to his influence on youth and his position of power on faculty committees in large centralized universities.

Ed Hoffman, chairman of Berkeley's SFA and on the national SFA's Coordinating Council, said that his views did not necessarily represent SFA nationally, but from what has been published by SFA nationally he was quite close to their position. He opposed teaching rights for Stalinists despite competency, and supported in principle though not

in its present form the recently overwhelmingly attacked California Assembly Bill 1215, which seeks to deny partially tax-exempt halls from "subversives" as defined by the Attorney General's List.

As a self-proclaimed "rugged individualist" Hoffman opposes such facilities for those "against the principles of our society," at least as he defines those principles. However, Hoffman did oppose the limited extension of Rule 17 proposed by the Young Republicans, which would open campus facilities only to the Young Republicans and Young Democrats, as opposed to SFA and other non-Subversive List groups (such as YSL).

### TEST FOR LIBERTY

Bill Hale, spokesman for the Stalinist Labor Youth League, said that controversy was the heart of democracy, and democracy couldn't exist without great divergency of opinion. He therefore opposed the suppression of the "Left" and the Communist Party and called them prerequisites for fascism and genocide.

For a person involved in LYL and AYD politics for over seven years, Hale displayed or pretended to display complete ignorance of the American CP's anti-civil-libertarian positions (such as upholding the Smith Act against the Trotskyists), plus Russia's suppression of civil liberties. Despite his friends in the audience, Hale made the most mediocre, dull and stumbling presentation of all, sidestepping most queries put to him and raising puerile defenses to others.

Alex Garber, spokesman for SCLU, indicated that the true test of one's civil-libertarian position came out in a person's willingness to hear the divergent view of one's political enemies, be they Communist, fascist, or Trotskyist. Garber criticized LYL and SFA because they would deny their enemies full civil liberties—in an even more thorough fashion than the poor position taken by the Republican and Democratic Parties in Congress today on the Communist Control Act of 1954.

### YSL'S POSITION

Shain began his talk by thanking the YR's and SFA's defense of his right to

appear on this platform, since the YSL along with SCLU had not originally been invited to this meeting but had gained acceptance by pressing for their inclusion. The presence of these two different organizations prevented the Stalinist LYL from appearing as the left-wing supporter of full civil liberties, as it would doubtlessly have wanted to present itself as to the audience.

The YSL organizer then briefly outlined the YSL position on academic freedom for all political tendencies, if individuals are competent, and upheld the right of students to hold political meetings such as this evening's on the UC campus. He opposed the general community persecution of persons and groups for political opinions and advocacy, as enforced through subversive lists, passport denials, loyalty oaths, etc.

He specifically upheld the LYL's rights, although LYL people had denied him the right to distribute leaflets to their people in New York a few years ago, seizing and destroying the socialist literature.

After characterizing the weak positions on civil liberties held by the McCarthyite SFA, Stalinist LYL, and witchhunting Republicans and Democrats, Shain proposed that the local representatives of these groups should press for a better civil-liberties position in their own national bodies. He cited the YD and YR support of Max Shachtman's debate on the 1951 elections as an example of how these groups contradicted the national policy of their adult organizations.

### POSITIVE PROPOSALS

He urged that the YDs and YRs support such civil-liberties groups as ACLU and SCLU in this area, and that they oppose such local anti-civil-libertarian measures as AB 1215 (mentioned earlier), and the denial of political groups' right to meet on campus.

Some positive things they could do would be to work for a uniform meeting policy for off-campus halls, so that Stiles Hall wouldn't be the only place (outside of occasional use of the co-ops) that let dissident groups hold meetings there. These groups could also share platforms with groups representing dissident opinions on current issues, so that such a right would be maintained by being exercised.

Prior to and after the meeting, appropriate issues of *Challenge* which concentrated on student civil-liberties issues were distributed.

## Class Harmony and 'Social Engineers'

# HENRY FORD, HERO, AND THE LIBERAL CLICHE

By BEN HALL

It is educational, if nothing else, to consider the energetic attempt which has been made by liberals to paint the Ford-GM-UAW settlement as a new and specially hopeful token of class harmony and statesman-like "social engineering."

As we already pointed out last week, a few massive facts well known even to mere headline-readers would seem to make this attempt no easy matter.

114,000 Ford workers had walked off their jobs before Ford's Bugas gave in to the UAW. 70,000 General Motors workers were still on strike over local issues after the national agreement had been concluded. Up to the last minute, no one knew whether an agreement was possible or not. The question was asked: would the auto workers be forced into the biggest strike in their history and would a nation-wide crisis be unleashed by auto contract negotiations?

A few days before Ford settled, columnist Murray Kempton wrote in the *New York Post* under the title "Ford Peace Hopes Dim":

"The odds today are that the CIO Auto Workers will strike Ford at midnight Sunday and there's a gray horse chance they'll have to strike General Motors not too many days later."

And he concluded, "Laughing and casual, to a rock-and-roll beat, the auto workers may be cake-walking to their worst crisis since the Thirties."

Finally, there was no strike. It requires ingenious power of imaginative creation to construct a whole new epoch of labor-capital harmony out of this one simple fact. This would be true even if one could not quote the *Wall Street Journal* (as we did last week) as frankly writing that "feet to the fire" the companies did not have the ability in this situation to resist the union's power.

### AUTHENTIC VOICES

But liberal columnists and editorial writers are equal to the task. If the class struggle cannot be abolished any other way, they can whisk it away by a flick of the typewriter.

**Liberals will be liberals. But the authentic voice of capital is different. The conservative spokesmen for big business waste no time gushing over labor peace; they warn their class to be on guard.**

The National Association of Manufacturers rallied 900 representatives of "industry and management" to Chicago last week to consider "America's Economic Crisis—the Guaranteed Annual Wage," and denounced the auto agreements as "seeds of economic disaster... payments for idleness... union paternalism." The NAM can be permitted a slight poetic exaggeration; it has hysterically predicted the virtual collapse of "free enterprise" if the GAW is adopted.

The more sober ideologists for capitalism are skeptical and dubious. From a nation-wide sampling of editorials published on June 8 in the *New York Times* we can piece together their predominant reaction.

Here are a few excerpts: "It is impossible not to have misgivings"... "if it is turned into a device by which workers get paid for not working, the economic consequences could be disastrous for workers as well as employers"... "it cannot help inducing strains in the economy"... "we are nearer than we realize to the day when the government owes every man a living"... "the UAW must not permit the GAW to become an incentive for not working"... "encourages the growth of monopoly"... "might disrupt the partnership and weaken the economic structure as a whole"... "improbable that it is [practical]"... "new peril in the way of any business" that wants

to expand... "if there are not profits there will be no wages guaranteed." They warn that costs will be handed on to the public in the form of higher prices.

All this is as it should be. The real representatives of business are not swept off their feet; they signal for caution and resistance to the demands of labor and fulfill their role of safeguarding the interests and morale of the capitalist class at a time when one section is compelled to make a substantial concession to labor's militant vanguard. They are eminently loyal to their class.

### WHAT! NO BLOOD?

**But who is to alert the working class? The liberals? Sad to say, no. It is good that labor's real class power is immense, for the ideological struggle is terribly one-sided. Conservatives stiffen up one side; liberals soften up the other. To employers, conservatives call for resistance in the class struggle. To workers, liberals philosophize over class peace.**

The *New York Post* seizes the opportunity to get in a few licks at Marxism in an editorial on June 7:

"Over and beyond everything else, the agreement between the Ford Motor Co. and the Auto Workers Union is a landmark of industrial democracy in the U. S. According to the ancient Marxist clichés, a union's demand for what amounts to a corporate guarantee of individual economic security should have precipitated a long and violent class struggle."

Everyone knows that the struggle was not very long, at least not very violent; in fact, not a single Marxian-type drop of blood was shed. Who, the expectant public asks, has brought this blessing?

"In a way, however, the most dramatic figure in the proceedings is Henry Ford II," says the *Post* editorialist. "It is less than 20 years since men were ruthlessly beaten in the mere effort to organize a union in the Ford empire. Now all that seems even longer ago. There will be die-hards who call young Mr. Ford a 'traitor to his class' for accepting the guaranteed-wage principle. But in the history books he will be remembered for a contribution to the social engineering of this century as momentous as the mechanical engineering of his grandfather."

**Where, one wonders, did the *Post* editorialist learn his Marxist clichés? While Henry Ford II is a "social engineer," Marxism is supposed to drip with blood and violence... At any rate, we assume that the editorialist is under the impression, wherever acquired, that some basic tenet ("cliché") of Marxism holds that every important social question must be decided by "long" and "violent" class struggle. Just for the record, we would like to set him straight.**

### LISTEN TO MARX

Consider how Karl Marx himself discussed the victory of the ten-hour-day law in England. We quote from the Address of the International Workingmen's Association, written by him:

"This struggle about the legal restriction of the hours of labor raged the more fiercely since, apart from frightened avarice, it told indeed upon the great contest between the blind rule of the supply-and-demand laws which form

the political economy of the middle class, and social production controlled by social foresight, which forms the political economy of the working class. Hence the Ten Hours Bill was not only a great practical success; it was the victory of a principle; it was the first time that in broad daylight the political economy of the middle class succumbed to the political economy of the working class."

**There it was. A law, passed by parliament, a "legal restriction," not a bit of blood, no violence. Yet Marx could recognize nothing less than a victory in principle for the political economy of the working class. But then he never had a chance to learn his Marxism from the *New York Post*.**

And Marx continues: "But there was in store still a greater victory of the political economy of labor over the political economy of property. We speak of the cooperative movement, especially the cooperative factories raised by the unassisted efforts of a few bold 'hands.' The value of these great social experiments cannot be overrated. By deed, instead of by argument, they have shown that production on a large scale and in accord with the behests of modern science, may be carried on without the existence of a class of masters employing a class of hands..."

Just cooperatives, not a speck of gunpowder or even a club in sight. Not even a sit-in strike or an injunction violation. Just peaceable cooperatives. Yet it was a victory of labor over property.

### THE ENGINEERS

The *Post's* editorialist, then, does not appear to be well-acquainted with "Marxist clichés." This is not too surprising. But at least he should be up on his liberal clichés, like "class harmony" and "social engineering." Let us see about these clichés.

In sum, the *Post* makes these main points:

(1) Demands like the GAW can be settled in one of two ways: (a) by a "long and violent" Marxist cliché, or (b) by social engineering.

(2) Since there was no blood and thunder, there must have been engineering.

(3) If there was engineering, it is Henry Ford II who emerges as the hero. **For us, the discussion centers not over an ignorant interpretation of Marxism but over this: Has the class struggle in fact been replaced by social engineering? Will the decisive social questions of our time be settled in the United States by bringing to bear the great organized power of labor, or on the other hand, do the auto contracts indicate that these matters will be arranged amicably by socially conscious "statesmen" from both classes?**

The conservatives hardly bother with the question; they merely prepare for the fight. Only liberals like the *Post* are titillated by it. Another *Post* writer Doris Fleeson enthuses: "and so another era of great economic and social change has been peacefully set in motion."

A. H. Raskin, labor editor of the *New York Times*, writes: "In achieving this goal, Mr. Reuther avoided the slogans of class warfare that were so much a part of the union's formative years two decades ago. He did his negotiating at the bargaining table, not at press conferences or mass rallies." And "The performance on both sides was a heartening exhibition of industrial maturity... The turbulence that expressed itself in the early sit-down strikes and in hundreds of 'quickie' shutdowns has yielded to a more cooperative attitude based on mutual respect."

A *Times* editorial probably inspired by Raskin tells us: "The relative ease with which agreement was reached on this dramatically new concept of industrial

responsibility affords new evidence of the headway we have made in labor-management relations in the last ten years."

### ILLUSION AND REALITY

It is a fact that the settlements came without a major strike. But to heap a new philosophy of labor-management relations upon it is asking too much for one little fact to bear. There are other facts:

- Auto workers had voted overwhelmingly to strike Ford and GM. Their delegates confirmed this decision. Strikes had actually begun before the settlements. Some are still in progress.
- The UAW convention had authorized a strike fund of \$25,000,000 to be raised by a special dues-assessment plan.
- For five years, UAW members have been readied for a fight for the GAW at conventions, educational conferences and mass economic conferences.
- From start to finish, negotiations were overshadowed by the strike threat.
- Unions which were not ready to fight for the GAW were waved aside by the employers. Witness the utter failures in steel and electrical equipment. Where was social engineering in these cases?

**The union which was ready and prepared for a battle won—without a battle.**

Let us make one thing clear: we are not afflicted by a fantastic vision of the United States racked and torn by raging conflicts among the classes. Things are relatively peaceful. (Only relatively; now and then even simple strikes break out into violence.) But this relative peace is not the abolition of class struggle—it is a stage of it.

Under certain conditions, if labor shows that it is ready to fight militantly, it can win peacefully. But remove the class struggle, let labor rely upon goodwill and employers' social responsibility, and it wins nothing.

In this case, the UAW wrested from the auto monopolists a far-reaching concession that goes beyond the interests of labor alone. As in the fight for pensions, labor leads the struggle for security for all. The employers are compelled to make concessions, and to rescue from the situation what they can. Ford, who was clubbed into submission by union power and the force of competition, comes forward as a public benefactor.

**The illusion: Ford the social-engineer. The reality: labor, vanguard of the nation in the fight for security.**

(If Ford II has gone to work as a social engineer, it is a typical example of compulsory labor; the union prodded him with a strike bayonet. We must voice our protest against the *Post's* approval of such forced labor.)

### BIG PENNY

How awkward that the sordid threat of economic warfare should intrude upon the liberal's search for class harmony! But for the sake of facilitating an artistically rounded philosophy of class peace, we will imagine that what happened in shops and at union rallies never really took place. Let us assume that in 1955, without even the threat of strike, the two sides reached agreement. Still, we would have to view things in perspective before concocting a big theory. But the liberal concoction is based not only on a misreading of the present but on a distorted view of the past.

To show how far we have traveled toward industrial peace, the *Times* editorializes, "General Motors was shut down for 113 days in the period after World War II by a dispute that revolved largely around the question of whether the company's workers should get a pay rise of 18½ cents an hour or 19½ cents. That dispute over a single penny prolonged the stoppage for many weeks after all other issues had been resolved."

The *Times* lesson is simple! In 1945, a long and bitter strike was fought over a penny. In 1955, a basic principle is settled peacefully. A contrast that would be indeed profound, if true.

**It was the biggest penny in history! The UAW strike against GM in 1945-6 was only one, if the most militant, of the wave of post-war strikes which shut down every important industry. The strike movement hit oil, steel, rubber, packinghouse, and others. The labor movement, which had been pent up during war years by a no-strike pledge, took the offensive in fighting to defend the standards of the working class.**

### DIFFERENT PATTERN

Important as the practical demands were, this emerges in retrospect: the American labor movement was fighting to establish itself once and for all, to show that it could not be defeated or destroyed.

The unions succeeded where they had

(Continued on page 7)



# Henry Ford, Hero, and —

(Continued from page 6)

failed after the First World War. During the first war, unions rose in power and in numbers as during the second. But it did not last; in 1920, when the unions were 5,000,000 strong, an open-shop drive began which drove more than 2,000,000 out of labor's ranks and sent the movement into eclipse for 15 years. In 1945-46, a successful strike wave re-founded the labor movement in permanence and it had to be reckoned with as a decisive force.

Without the class struggles of 1945, no peaceful winning of the GAW principle in 1955.

Raskin writes: "It [the auto settlement] promised to add three years of labor-management peace to the half-decade of harmony established in the auto industry by the 1950 agreement between the Reuther union and General Motors." Eight years of harmony! A long time—enough to work out a policy of class peace—but consider these eight years.

When the 5-year contract between General Motors and the UAW was signed in 1950 it was heralded, like the Ford contract, as a harbinger of class peace. For the first time, the union had agreed to a long-term contract. The annual-improvement factor would increase wages every year without dispute. The escalator clause would guarantee that wages keep pace with the cost-of-living without a periodic fight. What greater prospect for peace! But before the year had ended, the labor movement was forced to fight.

With the Korean War, the Truman administration planned a wage-freeze. Decrees were ready to wipe out what the UAW had won in its GM contract. To protect its gains, the UAW sparked a dramatic labor struggle against the government's policy. The United Labor Policy Committee, forerunner of CIO-AFL merger, called labor representatives off all war boards. Truman was denounced along with the representatives of big business. At the UAW 1951 convention, a minority resolution for a labor party received one-third of the votes, and Reuther speaking for the majority said: We all agree on our final aim, we differ only on timing. The GM contract of 1950, invented to spur class peace, was the greatest single factor in precipitating the class struggle.

Later, prices began to stabilize. Auto workers had been granted substantial increases under escalator clauses while prices rose. But now, prices might drop and under a strict contract interpretation wages might also drop precipitously. Auto contracts had two years to run. The union demanded that escalator wage increases be added permanently to basic wage rates. When the companies demurred, the union threatened, not very subtly, to strike. Contracts, said Reuther, were living documents. When the union won, it was a victory not of social engineering but of union power.

## EDGE OF THE KNIFE

We see how misleading are the facile, simplistic liberal clichés about class harmony.

The auto industry has been relatively free of major strikes for five years. If industrial peace were firmly founded in class conciliation, we would discover peace in politics too. Yet the labor movement is compelled to defend its rights on the political field. In state legislatures it combats so-called "right-to-work" laws that undermine the union shop. And it faces the illegalization of organized union political activity.

Where labor is strongly organized, employers are not eager to risk prolonged strike struggles. It was such a strike that nearly drove Chrysler out of the Big Three. The fight may shift onto the political arena; but the class struggle remains.

"The auto manufacturers," writes Raskin, "are aware that the union can get a solid response whenever it feels the need to show its muscle. The union knows that the major producers will shut their plants rather than surrender the basic rights of management to run the business efficiently. That kind of bilateral respect is the foundation for industrial stability."

Industrial stability? Perhaps. But where is your class harmony? This is the "stability" of two evenly armed enemies. Each side avoids a fight because both realize that it might be costly.

Raskin's class harmony is eternally posed on the edge of struggle. Such is this era of "peace."

# LABOR SCOPE

## Inadequacies of Ford-GM Settlement Point to Conflict Ahead

By BEN HALL

In the big discussion over the UAW's victory for the principle of the Guaranteed Annual Wage, some aspects can easily be overlooked. Our Detroit correspondent Jack Wilson (see accompanying article) reports at length on problems that are left hanging in mid-air after the settlements.

According to his reports, the union membership has received the contracts with mixed feelings.

What if mass layoffs occur within the next year, or even two years? Clearly the Ford-GM concessions offer little protection.

Suppose auto's Big Three embark on an intense expansion of automation which sharply cuts down the number of workers in the plants? If the ranks are alert to such problems, one reason is that the UAW leadership, in stimulating GAW, warned that automation and possible layoffs must be faced.

But the contracts, however great the immediate economic gains, leave the key questions open.

One thing should be made clear. Even if the UAW had won its GAW demand right down the line, auto workers would have enjoyed only a relative protection against unemployment. If in three months, or more, mass layoffs had struck the auto industry, the plan might have proved utterly inadequate. For even under the original UAW demand, an extended period of full employment was necessary in order to build up the fund and provide an adequate cushion. If this was a weakness of the union's plan, it is far more a weakness of the new contracts.

## FACE IT SQUARELY

The union membership, like its leadership and elected negotiating committees, faced a practical question that had to have a yes-or-no reply and could not be evaded by generalizing and speculating. Should the union seize the possibility of winning a contract from Ford without a strike, a contract that brought substantial concessions to the workers and put General Motors under extreme pressure to give in? They decided to accept the agreement. In our opinion the agreements represent a UAW victory and a stimulus to the whole labor movement.

But the weaknesses discussed in the article by Jack Wilson must be faced squarely so that no one is under any illusion.

Jack Wilson points out that the UAW leadership seems to be banking upon a rising period of inflation and prosperity which will carry them through the next three years and postpone the problem of automation and layoffs. Perhaps they are correct. But what if they are wrong? Will the UAW remain passive and will the auto workers simply become the quiet victims of mass unemployment? Will the union, faced with a job crisis, be paralyzed by the printed text of its agreement?

Not the UAW and not the auto militants! We are confident that this fighting union will fight if necessary.

## NO FAIRY TALES

Here we get into questions discussed also in a longer article in this issue (page 6); but it is worthwhile to reiterate some points from the angle of the questions raised by discontent over the settlement's inadequacy.

When the five-year contracts were signed in 1950, superficial analysts predicted an era of peace and harmony. But when the escalator clause and annual-improvement factor were threatened during the Korean War, the UAW found a way to lead the labor movement off all war boards and forced the Truman administration to withdraw a pending wage freeze. Later, with the motto "the contracts must be living documents," it found a way to force the companies to add escalator increases to the basic wage rate.

And this same union will find a way to fight unemployment. Human rights before property rights: these contracts were not signed to legalize suffering and starvation.

The technical aspects and fine print of the contract are important but not

decisive. What is decisive is how the origins of this contract are interpreted. A current fairy tale relates how socially responsible statesmen, from company and union, nobly and selflessly cogitated for the good of the public; at last they emerged with an agreement designed to help burdened humanity.

## DETROIT

# Workers' Coolness to Pact Raises Problems for UAW

By JACK WILSON

DETROIT, June 20—While torrents of publicity rain down on Walter P. Reuther, CIO and UAW president, for achieving a modified form of Guaranteed Annual Wage in the auto industry (and Chrysler will soon follow General Motors and Ford in giving the package), little if any attention is being paid to the undeniable fact that among the auto workers the settlements continue to meet resistance or at best resigned acceptance.

This week the UAW leaders cracked down on two Detroit area Fisher plants, whose leaderships thought they had the right to strike to settle major plant problems, even though the national agreement had been signed. When told otherwise, pickets and secondary leaders stormed the international union headquarters and put on a noisy demonstration of protest. The UAW leaders are insistent that the walkouts at Fleetwood and Livonia plants be called off, denouncing them as unauthorized.

Last week's meeting of the union's Ford General Council, which approved the pact by an overwhelming vote, saw little enthusiasm for it, and some pointed criticism was made of the inadequacies of the new contract and the pattern set thereby.

The UAW leadership continues to express complete confidence in the solution of the problem created by some state laws and regulations which prohibit any supplementary payments, as in Ohio, for example, but other sources indicate that the job will be far more difficult than suggested. In event that the state laws are not changed, the union has the right to negotiate for the money saved up as a wage increase.

## UAW CLAIMS CAUTIOUS

Among the many questions raised in UAW ranks—which account, by the way, for part of the lack of enthusiasm about the package—is: How can the UAW retard a too rapid automation of the auto industry, as it claimed for its GAW plan, when the companies have another full year with no liability for unemployment due to automation? General Motors, for example, is opening 16 new plants this fall, while Chrysler is completing its \$250,000,000 modernization program. It seems obvious that the UAW is banking on a period of prosperity and increased output to take care of this troublesome matter.

Even after the GAW plan goes into effect, the cost of unemployment is so negligible that the claims for the GAW plan in this respect must be considered pretentious or exaggerated to a high degree. Ford and General Motors could eliminate 100,000 workers by automation, and the cost would be less than \$30 million, compared to a yearly wage cost of \$500,000,000 which would be saved.

The general point may be made, from this and other financial examples, that the economic consequences and significance of the modified GAW is highly exaggerated by the national press in writing about this subject. Even the UAW leaders are more cautious in making big claims; they are rather basking in the glory created by other people for them.

An important portent of the future of the UAW program on the GAW will

Union activists will chuckle heartily when they hear this story, even when Reuther tells it to reporters. They know that the union won because it was ready to strike; they know that the auto-monopolists are intensely concerned with workers—as profit producers, and deeply interested in humanity—as customers. If the Big Three give in, it is under the pressure of a militant union.

The new contracts despite their limitations can be the beginning of a new advance in the fight for security. Through the mist and spray of "labor-management harmony," the UAW will see the reality; it will rely upon the militancy and union consciousness of auto workers.

soon reveal itself on two fronts. This week the UAW and American Motors Company, the successor to Nash and Hudson, negotiate again on the GAW. What kind of GAW the UAW accepts in the field of the "Small Three" auto manufacturers should tell a lot about the future.

On the legislative and political front, the UAW faces a delicate problem on the matter of claiming that the contracts at Ford and General Motors make for a GAW. Both these corporations are asking for special tax exemption, such as they do get for payments they make to the unemployment-compensation funds. If the UAW persists in calling the new package a GAW, the government tax experts may make things difficult for the auto companies, and the whole deal can still be called off.

## INDUSTRY FRAUD

Of course, the auto industry has already announced that it expects to raise car prices for the next model, to absorb the "higher labor costs." Thus far it seems that the UAW is keeping quiet on the subject, contrary to other days when it blasted the corporations for higher prices.

The fraudulent character of the auto industry claim of need for higher prices is shown by the simple fact that right now General Motors is making a profit of \$2.98 per hour per man, as recently revealed by the UAW. In the context of these fabulous profits—the surplus value speaks for itself—not only does the industry not need a price boost, but it could easily afford a major price cut plus a far bigger wage package, and still be a real money-maker!

What this writer suspects is that there was no argument on this level between the UAW and the companies because both are banking on another period of inflation, as a stimulant to the economy to keep industry going; and the union feels satisfied that its members will not be unduly hurt by the continuation of the escalator clause which does afford some protection against inflation.

Unless the economy does continue its upward pace and postpone or mitigate the many new problems raised by the current contracts in the auto industry, Walter Reuther has truly opened a Pandora's box this year, for the dissatisfaction among the UAW ranks is bound to grow if the auto industry has any kind of cutbacks or short work-weeks in the next period. It must be remembered that the UAW dropped a key point of its program in not getting a guaranteed 40-hour work-week for anyone who is called in on a Monday. Short work-weeks are a real sore point, and they are not covered by the GAW plan, for any company can (as an example) put in a 4-day week, and thus reduce its liability in operating under the current GAW plan.



# Why Peron's Power Cracked —

(Continued from page 1)

ship, though with totalitarian trappings and tendencies.

Back in 1951 the dynamic of this month's revolt in Buenos Aires could already have been read on one page of Robert Alexander's book *The Peron Era*.

In his chapter on "The Army in Politics," Professor Alexander notes that "The threat of army dissatisfaction continually haunts the administration, but it is unlikely that Peron's fears will become reality for some time to come," for two reasons.

First, he mentions, the army has traditionally been unpopular with the masses, particularly the "organized workers," for it is deeply reactionary and, after fighting no war for 80 years, has become mainly an overgrown police force. But with Peron the army has been basking comfortably in his reflected popularity, and likes it.

## THE ARMY-LABOR BALANCE

This first reason given by Alexander is mainly of interest as background for the second and decisive reason:

"In the second place, the army seems to entertain a healthy respect for the power of Peron's labor legions. The workers are unarmed but fanatical, and are capable of paralyzing all activity for a longer or shorter period. Furthermore, they would not hesitate to turn out in their hundreds of thousands and take control of Buenos Aires—as they did on October 17 [1945]—if called upon to do so by their 'Lider.' No doubt the army could restore 'order,' but only at the price of great carnage and violence. The Argentine Army would again become violently hated by the masses of the people, and the man the regime had overthrown would become a national martyr.

"Finally, the army's high command is aware of the president's considerable support among the rank and file of the armed forces. This is said to have been one of the reasons why the army ended its feud with Peron early in 1948. Certainly the common soldiers would have no particular liking for fighting Argentine workers.

"Therefore, it seems that until the support of Peron among the working classes is seriously weakened, the army will not attempt a revolt. It will not risk a clash with hundreds of thousands of determined workers, a clash which it could undoubtedly win, but which would be detrimental to its interests for years to come, perhaps for generations." (Emphasis added.)

The restiveness of the army colonels under the one-man rule of Peron, which stems from the same sources as the turbulent plots and counter-plots against the government by ambitious officer-politicians such as is a common pattern in Latin America, was, therefore, curbed by the strength of the new social power, a modern working class greatly increased in strength and social weight even if raw and backward in ideology and political experience. And it was this social power which checkmated them as long as it could be used as a pawn by Peron.

The army knew it could not govern against the working class in this Argentina. Peron had taught them this lesson, at least.

## ENDEMIC FRICTION

This has to be kept in mind before coming to the role of the Catholic Church in the latest stage, although the Catholic issue seems to have acted as the precipitant.

Friction between the army and Peron has been endemic to the regime. Army cliques have been in opposition, at various times, on such issues as the abandonment of pro-Nazism, on economic issues, on constitutionalism, on Peron's labor demagoguery, and on the role being played by "Evita" before her death.

The army has been sensitive to economic issues. "At one time a rumor was circulated in Buenos Aires that the G.O.U. [colonels' clique in army] had ordered Peron to either solve the growing economic crisis or step down," reported Prof. Alexander, who is cautious and responsible about rumors.

He describes the conflict with Peron over Miguel Miranda in the early part of the Peron regime: "The army and Miranda waged a bitter fight over the building of a tin-plate plant. The army thought that this should be in their province, as was the National Steel Plant which they were authorized to establish under the Five Year Plan. Señor Miranda, on the other hand, wanted to have charge of that part of the country's in-

dustrialization program. After a long-drawn-out feud, the military finally won, and Miranda dropped the whole matter. For some time there was fear that this might cause the military to turn against the whole regime." (The army's penchant for organizing its "own" sector of the economy is interesting but cannot detain us at this point.)

It was also fairly well known that the army resented Eva Peron's role, and that there was bad blood and near-open scandals here. This cannot be interpreted as merely a personal matter: resentment of Evita was also resentment against Evita's operations, which were directed toward consolidating that prop of the regime which was socially alien to and inherently antagonistic to the army power (whose care and feeding was taken care of by Juan in the Peron family division of labor).

## MILITARY POWER GREW

The threat from the army political cliques can be measured, in a sense, by the degree to which Peron had to make concessions to their power. And these concessions were considerable. Even as compared with previous military regimes, which have not been absent in Argentina's history, the power of the military has increased greatly, and, as noted in passing already, not only in the political field but also in the economic realm.

This is attested not only by Alexander but also by George I. Blanksten's study, *Peron's Argentina* (U. of Chi. Press, 1953). The latter, a hedging type, in this case asserts categorically: "In the years since the Peron revolution, the army's grip on national government and politics has been progressively tightened." The indicators are in such data, as need not here be detailed, as the impressive proportions of military men throughout all posts in the regime, expenditures, expansion, pay (better than in the U. S.), etc.

But, as is classically the case, these concessions to army power buy it off only temporarily; they also strengthen the military's weight and influence and ability to press for . . . more concessions, including coordinate power.

Hence it can be seen how doubly vital it has been to Peron to maintain, as a counterpoise to this military focus of power, the other focus of social power clustering around the organized descamisados; and also to keep the army power from ganging up with allies (like the church). It goes without saying, of course, that "divide and rule" is the basic motto of any such regime.

## NAVY AS SPEARHEAD

But, we may be reminded at this point, it was not the army (which we have been discussing) which actually revolted; on the contrary, the reports painted the army as remaining loyal, while the revolt came primarily from navy aviation. . . . But obviously this picture, which was the early one in the dispatches, turned out to be not quite accurate; for while the army prevented the rebels from taking over, to be sure, it also used the occasion to depose Peron himself from all-power (and perhaps from any power).

What is involved here is a complication which was well enough known before this revolt and which does not change the picture basically.

Alexander's 1951 book already discussed why it was in the navy that concentration of the most anti-Peronist elements took place. Navy elements have been in the vanguard of putsches before this one (e.g., 1945). "Today," adds Alexander, "those young men who, though anti-Peronista, want to enter the armed forces, gravitate toward the navy." A long record can also be given of Peron's attempts to bribe over the navy officer-cadres—not very successfully, for it is never possible to bribe everybody simultaneously with limited resources, even given the best conditions—and Peron has been getting farther and farther away from the "best conditions" he once enjoyed.

It would appear from what has happened that the naval spearheads of the revolt—the "vanguard"—were counting not on forcibly overwhelming and defeating the army in pitched battle (with some bombs over the palace!) but were counting on being able to win over or neutralize decisive army strata in the course of fighting, or on forcing some form of deal over Peron's body, a deal such as seems to be in the wind. It is reasonable to suppose, at least, if only in hindsight, that the navy men would consider it a victory indeed if Gen. Lucero takes over as head of a new junta by agreement with, and offer a settlement with, the navy and the

church—with Peron reduced to a figure-head, a partner or a corpse, as bids fair to be the case, according to last dispatches.

With this reasonable assumption, it is the army which has been decisive in turning against Peron, and the original image of the "loyal" army versus the revolting navy is seen as misleading. It need only be added that this is not intended to gainsay the real antagonism and rivalry between army and navy (a typical Latin American pattern too) as one contributor to the actual form of events.

## STRIKES AND DISAFFECTION

Behind the turn of the army forces lies Peron's loss of support among the workers and masses generally. At bottom, this is due to the inevitable economic difficulties of the regime. It is easy to understand politically backward elements who rallied to Peron while he seemed able to "produce," i.e., give them installments of the better world they wanted. But this regime could not continue to "produce" in this sense; and we have been seeing the payoff.

The sources of this crisis were already becoming visible in 1950-1951. Its consequences also could be seen. It was in these years that the first big-scale working-class struggles against the Peron regime started.

There had been notable strikes even by Peronist unions even before this: e.g., the Sugar Workers in 1949. But the railroad strikes of 1950 and 1951 were the fiercest. The Peron regime had to break the movement brutally, with terror and mass arrests and tortures. On and off since then, there has been a steady guerrilla class-war of strikes, erupting and ending and erupting. Unrest and demonstrations have strongly affected also the university students.

The Peronist "trade unions" were never really quite *gleichschaltet*, never monolithized. The class struggle was intensified under the whip of economic failure and hunger.

In terms of the diagnosis which we have already quoted from Prof. Alexander, we can therefore suggest that the opportunity for the army's disruption of the Peronist balance-of-power was created by this weakening of Peron's support among the workers.

It is true that, dispatches report, the naval revolt was answered by the coming out of city "mobs" of workers who fought against and overwhelmed attacking forces. There is no way of knowing as yet how strong this reaction was, and how it compared with previous efforts of this sort at the call of Peron—above all, of course, the outpouring of the 1945 October Days. But it is not really necessary for us to suggest that Peron had no important base at all left among working-class sectors. The known evidence does not argue that all such support has wasted away, but merely that it is far from being what it used to represent—the overwhelming mass of the underprivileged whom the army militarists could not think of standing up against.

## THE HIERARCHY PREPARES

And now in this context we can try to see how the role of the Catholic Church acted as a precipitant.

We can reject with equanimity the notion that, for some reason, Peron suddenly went stark mad and unreasonably attacked and broke with his good friends in the church hierarchy, thus forcing them into opposition, whereupon the armed forces (as good Catholics and obedient to the implications of the pope's excommunication) donned sword and buckler as crusaders for the Lord and sallied out against the infidel Catholic-baiter Peron. . . .

We are more inclined to listen with interest to those observers who point to a more credible pattern by which the church hierarchy acted, partly unwillingly, as catalyst for the forces building up under Peron's feet.

"Sensing that the opposition to Peron, hitherto confined to the Radicals, the Socialists and some old-line conservatives, was acquiring more and more of a popular base, the Church has permitted some of its priests—'social Christians' with sincere anti-Peronist feelings—to work among the proletariat. In this way, it has secured its position against some future time when close identification with Peron might be a handicap."

This interesting explanation, which commends itself to belief in this writer's opinion, was given last December by Victor Alba (*New Leader*, Dec. 27). The

main cadres of the hierarchy were—well, not quite deserting a sinking ship, yet, but certainly hedging against the future, in a fashion well known to its history as an ally of reactionary regimes.

Some of the sincerely democratic priests, for example, were allowed to start up a Christian-Democratic movement, with pro-democratic implications, and to start work within the Peronist trade unions themselves ("infiltrating" in Peron's eyes, and naturally subversive). It is not possible, on the basis of any available information, to get an idea as yet of how Peron's counter-moves—perhaps mistakenly over-strong from the point of view of correct tactics—drove the Catholic Church hierarchy as a whole into a position of open opposition, or to figure out whether the hierarchy was quite willing to face the showdown that resulted, in confidence of the result. We expect that this picture will be filled in in time.

## THIEVES FELL OUT

It must be said, however, that what we have pictured here is the dynamics of a reactionary regime whose reactionary component forces have been cracking up. That does not make these reactionary components "progressive." The army cliques are profoundly reactionary, as we have said. The hierarchy (with the exception of a number of courageous and principled clerics like Andrea who deserve all respect but who have been powerless to move the policy of the church) has been happy in its alliance with the dictatorship, from which they have benefited greatly.

These people and their political role (for they have to be considered as secular politicians, since they insist on adopting the role) do not become any more progressive or respectable in democratic eyes when they break with Peron in order to preserve their own interests.

In fact, it must be said that most of the particular blows against the church which Peron leveled were elementary steps in what would be a democratic program to separate church and state: secular education, right of divorce, no subsidy of a state religion, etc. (Of course, deportation of opponents, clergy or not, is an entirely different matter.) True to the pattern of his demagoguery, Peron, once he moved against his reactionary clerical partner, did his best to utilize "democratic" weapons against them that might rally a maximum of mass support in a country whose urban population is not noted for extreme religious devotion or admiration for the church's political power.

But whatever the forms, the fact of this split among the previous partners in the reactionary dictatorship offers opportunities to the real democratic and revolutionary opposition, above all, to the socialist opposition and to the illegal trade-union movement affiliated with the ICFTU.

It is to be expected that there will be an attempt to replace the shaken Peron structure with a military-clerical authoritarian substitute. It may even be successful. But in anticipation of whatever struggles may take place, the important thing to stress is that every time a dictatorship cracks wide open like this, the revolutionary opposition has an opportunity to put its own levers into the crack and wedge it wider until the old structure is laid open and the forces of the people can pour through the opening. Not in support of either of the quarreling reactionaries, but in order to change the whole system which allows them to rule.

## CHALLENGE

(Continued from page 5)

UCLA. The paper thus become an important influence on campus, and it is well worth perpetuating.

There is no doubt that the Stalinist LYL and its friends, who have now become the strongest political tendency at UCLA, would like to control the *Observer* or some successor to it. (At Berkeley this semester, they produced a poor imitation called the "Cal *Observer*.") At present, they may be the only element which could sustain a presentable off-campus newspaper (although their past attempts have been anything but presentable). It is debatable whether they could capture the *Observer*, but it is certain that the existence of an independent liberal voice at UCLA depends on liberal students joining the staff and supporting the *Observer* in the coming semester.