

STUDENT SOCIALIST

June 26, 1951

Vol. III No. 8

EDITORIAL:

A NEW PURGE?

Despite a court overruling of the regent-imposed loyalty oath at the University of California, the spawn of academic repressive acts continues to breed in profusion in the State Legislature.

Most recently the Senate Un-American Activities Committee poured out over 200 pages of brochure, hashing and rehashing its lengthy dossier of real and fabricated charges against the University. Avoiding the direct attack, the committee claimed that the administration "aided and abetted" the infiltration of the faculty by communist elements. Thus by complex legerdemain "the international communist conspiracy" is brought to roost beneath Sproul's ~~bad-mor~~ at least inside the confines of Sather Gate.

The fact that the committee can conjure up not one shred of evidence since the end of the war to uphold

Published by WEST COAST REGION of the SOCIALIST YOUTH LEAGUE, 466 10th St., Oakland, Cal. Tel: TW 3-7346 Office hrs.: Tu, Th, 7:30-10:00 PM; Wed, 1:00-4:00.

its contentiousness in no wise deters their bold-face denunciations. Burns, head of the Senate Un-American Committee, seems to be absorbing the lessons taught by his precursor, Tenney, and the mastercraftsman in fanciful assertions, Senator McCarthy of Wisconsin.

The report, however, served to incite State legislators. The Senate expressed its profound appreciation for so lengthy a work by endorsing unanimously the life of the Un-American committee for two more years. And a suitable appropriation for the committee to continue its "revelations" seems assured. This, despite a blustering economy drive in the Capital.

Then Levering, whose name is beginning to rival Tenney's in the field of civil liberties, initiated a resolution calling for an intensive investigation of communism at the University. But the education committee of the Assembly felt compelled to kill Levering's resolution. After all, even an Assemblyman by simply reading the report could discover nothing to be "intensively investigated at the University." Moreover, the legislators were not yet ready to fly into the teeth of both the administration and the Board of Regents. They called for "no further action" leaving the matter to the "loyalty and competence of the top management and administration" of the University. But they showed their political fangs by endorsing a bill intervening in the administration of the State Colleges. This bill called for the ousting of all faculty members who even supported Communist organizations.

A long road has been traveled since the question of loyalty oaths was first broached at the University. Thus far the Regents - a group of special and vested interest appointees by the governor - have wrested con-

trol from an Academic Senate, which died ignominiously, victimized by its own timidity. The struggle still continues. Only now the legislature shows hunger for the control of the state's largest and richest educational institution. The time is not far off when petty politicians will swarm out of Sacramento into the campus and the curriculum itself. The University has degenerated into a political football; the issue of communism has been the camouflage covering that struggle for power--a struggle waged at the expense of the University and the student body. #

THE EDITORS

ANTI-FRANCO PICKETING

SAN FRANCISCO, May 10 --Protesting U.S. aid to Franco and supporting the general strikes in Spain, five Bay Area leftist groups held a lively, picket line demonstration at the entrance to the Spanish Consulate in San Francisco.

The enthusiastic picketers raised placards and chanted from the line, "Halt US aid to Franco," "Down with totalitarianism on both sides of the iron curtain." Handbills explaining the purpose of the action and the stand of Socialist Party, Independent Socialist League, Industrial Workers of the World, Berkeley Socialist Club and Socialist Youth League participants, were passed out to the noon crowd.

The interest aroused and the report of the SF Chronicle evidenced the success of this joint action which attempted to point out the need for international solidarity in the struggle against Fascist tyranny in Spain. Workers and students in the Bay Area should continue this type of cooperative action which follows similar anti-Franco demonstrations in New York, Chicago Philadelphia and Los Angeles. #

OREGON STATE

SYL UNIT OR BUST

Within the last year, students at Oregon State College were introduced for the first time to the program of independent socialism. A series of articles in the Oregon State Daily Barometer presented in public the socialist analysis of capitalism and Stalinism, Korea, the Barcelona general strike, the Bevan resignation and other current political issues.

While the socialist spokesmen in Corvallis have yet to break the intense political apathy of the student body, the newspaper articles stirred up political interest for a short period in the form of a lively debate in the "letters to the editors" column of the student paper. One significant consequence of this debate was the rooting out of campus Stalinists from their progressively less comfortable hiding places.

Although there have not yet been any actual SYL meetings on campus, socialist ideas concerning war and civil liberties have been expressed repeatedly in public meetings, and have received encouraging response from many students.

Heartened by these manifestations of student interest, SYL members in Corvallis announced their intention to form an SYL unit at Oregon State College this fall. A public meeting is scheduled for some time early in October. Oregon State should become the first of many SYL units in the Pacific Northwest.

Students in Oregon or Washington who are interested in the SYL should write either to the Student Socialist or to Labor Action, Box 358, Seattle, Wash.#

JIM CROW IN

UNIVERSITY OF
OREGON

OREGON SORORITY

Early in May at the University of Oregon race prejudice brought attention and publicity to one of the sororities. Prejudice first against a girl who dated a negro and later against the sorority which expelled her for it.

This girl, a member of Gamma Phi Beta, dated and wished to continue dating a negro boy. Unfortunately the sorority felt that this might cause their members embarrassment and possibly bring unwanted notoriety to the house. House alumnae brought pressure to bear, and the girl's "sisters" in turn threatened unpleasant action if this girl did not leave the sorority.

In the first publicity the house claimed that the girl's decision to move out was of her own making. Shortly thereafter in an interview with the University paper, The Emerald, it came to light that what was being called "free will" was the result of such threats and pressure that continued residence at the sorority was impossible.

With this new light on the matter, letters began to pour into the Emerald lamenting a system which could allow, much less foster, such obviously Jim Crow behavior. Instead of avoiding publicity, Gamma Phi Beta found itself thrown directly into a cold spotlight and within a week the girl was asked to return.

The response of an aroused student body acting against race prejudice forced an untouchable, exclusive group to bow before student indignation. These students must be praised for their excellent response. #

SOCIALISTS "RIOT" IN LA

The brightest spot in the anti-war movement on the West Coast in recent months was the tri-group socialist conference held in Los Angeles at the Case Hotel on April 25 and 26.

The Socialist Youth League participated with the Libertarian Socialist League and the Young People's Socialist League in organizing and sponsoring this anti-war conference which drew more than fifty delegates and sympathetic individuals from Northern and Southern California, the second one in six months.

This second conference drew a larger audience but it failed to pass specific plans for future united front activities because of the reticent attitude of the YPSL. Agreements to work together in the newly-formed Southern California Student Federation Against War and tentative proposals to attempt to organize a joint anti-war federation in Northern California, were among the many things discussed. A wide range of attitudes on the best manner in which to struggle against war were presented but no real pro-war tendency existed.

For all those who participated in its sessions, the conference was a real school of anti-war, socialist politics. All types of tendencies presented their views--from Trotskyist to pacifist--and excellent headway was made in clarifying differences and getting agreement on minimum types of cooperation.

The agenda included educational reports on Stalinism, the American scene, the British Labor Party and Socialism and the War. Except for a few individuals, the conference was thoroughly third camp in its orientation. Everyone agreed that the two pro-war forces today--Stalinism and capitalism--must be opposed in order

to carry out a fruitful struggle against war and reaction in America.

The assembled delegates decided to put their agreements into practice by holding a free-speech rally at Los Angeles City College, where a previous SYL meeting had been broken up by a combination of fascist thugs and the school's reactionary administration. This peaceful but determined meeting was held successfully, but at the last minute the Los Angeles riot squad--sirens, squad cars and all--intervened and carted the speakers to the city jail.

The vice president of LACC, C. R. Milham, at the last minute declined to press charges (since he had called the riot squad and then attempted to start a riot himself) and the SYL leaders were released.

The rotten Los Angeles press smelled a witch hunt however, and decided to push the incident. Four-inch banner headlines announced: RIOT BREAKS OUT NEAR CITY COLLEGE. The LA Times reported that: POLICE BREAK UP SOCIALIST RALLY; and the other papers followed suit. For two days the SYL pushed Truman, MacArthur and the war off the front pages. The incident made television, the news broadcasts and went out over UP wires. Unfortunately, the lack of any riot whatsoever made a continuation of the story a little hazardous, even for the Los Angeles press.

The conference reconvened, sent out a press release giving a true picture of the "riot" and announced that it would continue its fight for free speech at LACC despite the administration.

The success of this second anti-war socialist youth conference points up vividly the necessity for more and broader actions of a similar kind. Next fall should see the organization of anti-war, third camp groups in other areas of the West Coast in order to strengthen and deepen the struggle begun in Berkeley and Los Angeles. #

FEATURE

WHITHER ENGLAND?

Most American liberals have long viewed the gradual, realistic, practical policies of the British Labor Party with admiration.

"Here we have," goes the argument, "real socialism (not Communism) being introduced into a modern industrial country by a series of peaceful, structural changes in private property. The Fabians were absolutely correct; the next step in Britain as in most other countries in the world, is to continue the trend toward nationalization and state control over the essential industries and public services."

-This widely-held view, unfortunately, dismisses the problem presented by Britain just where analysis should begin. Sympathy with the Labor Party in its long struggle with the Tories is excellent but far from sufficient. All fighters for socialism must first understand where Britain stands today and where she is being taken by the Labor Party policies. Only then will it become possible to intervene in British politics and hasten the socialist victory.

One of the most obvious difficulties with the view which sees socialism as the end product of a series of increasingly extensive nationalizations is the existence of Stalinism as a world power. This new phenomenon, arising from the destruction of the first workers' revolution, demands a serious reevaluation of all socialist (and even liberal) thinking. Of all of the lessons to be learned from the tragic fate of the Russian revolution, one stands out as supreme: nationalization of industry is not equivalent to socialism! Stalinism has completely abolished private ownership and control of the means of production and placed the direction of the essential industrial processes into

the hands of an all-powerful, totalitarian, state bureaucracy. This new ruling class is not a benevolent protector of the interests of the people, as some would have it, but a brutal and ruthless exploiter which has reduced the masses to the level of state serfs. It is no longer possible to deny that a new social system, neither capitalist nor socialist, has arisen in Russia.

It is also essential to realize that since the end of World War II, this system has been extended to most of Eastern Europe and to China, thus losing its peculiarly Russian features and becoming truly an international phenomenon. The consolidation of the Tito regime in Yugoslavia as an anti-Russian Stalinist power makes this even more clear.

If it is important to analyze state intervention into economic life with one eye on the possibilities of a trend toward Stalinism (bureaucratic collectivism), it is just as essential to oppose the view that the Labor Party is merely "administering capitalism" in its epoch of decline. It is futile to identify the British Labor Party of 1945-1951 with the traditional Social Democratic Parties in the period after the first world war.

The classic example of the policy of traditional reformism is supplied by the German Social Democratic Party from approximately 1914 to 1933. During the great revolutionary upheaval which followed the Bolshevik revolution in Russia, this party, ostensibly socialist, actually became a prop for the preservation of capitalist interests and power in Germany. It fought with determination every attempt to overthrow the old order through the agency of proletarian revolution. It jailed revolutionists, shielded the old Junker Army, intervened against the workers' interests and even refused to carry out any nationalizations. Its politics reflected the interests of the small stratum of privileged workers, trade union bureaucrats, etc., which made up the labor aristocracy inside of German capital-

ist society. It was absolutely opposed to the conscious intervention of the workers into industry and fought violently any attempt to replace the bourgeois democratic state by a workers' democracy.

The Labor Party governments of 1924 and 1929 followed the pattern of classical reformism to the letter. They took no decisive steps at any time to expropriate the bourgeoisie. Their actions were calculated to protect their special place and special privileges within bourgeois society.

Tremendous changes have meanwhile occurred within British society. Capitalism in 1951 is bankrupt. Only in America is it a viable social force; in every other country in the world it is physically exhausted and spiritually atomized.

The conditions under which the Labor Party took power in 1945, then, are considerably different from those in which the previous reformist parties had to operate. There was no danger of workers revolution--of proletarian socialist power--since the workers were disoriented by Stalinism on the Continent and lacked a socialist leadership. The Labor Party assumed command of a backward and bankrupt economy. The devastation of years of conservative rule and the tremendous destruction of World War II, left the party with a legacy of economic and financial chaos. It was faced with a declining economy and a weak, disoriented capitalist class. It took power with an unmistakable mandate from the traditionally conservative and sober British people: "everything else has failed, now you must introduce socialism." It is in this situation that the actions of the party must be evaluated.

"The British Labor Party has carried out its program! " This is the sum and substance of most of the argumentation carried on pro and con. The fact that this is used as "proof" of the integrity of the Labor Party leadership is itself a moving commentary on capi-

talist politics, but it is not a question of "proof." The unmistakably anti-capitalist character of its nationalization and welfare moves gives British reformism a new orientation and a new direction which must be examined in its own right.

The figure of 20% nationalization arbitrarily set by the leadership hides the fact that this section of the industry of Britain contains some of the most decisive and significant "commanding heights" of the economy. The state has been able to nationalize more and more through its control of this industry. Already nationalized are the coal industry, iron and steel, public utilities, all civil aviation, tele-communications, railroads, most other transportation, important sections of insurance, and the Bank of England. These industries are run and controlled by small boards of managers and constitute public corporations which must operate within the general limits of government policies.

This nationalization, however, has been unaccompanied by anything resembling a socialist transformation of the relations of production. The British worker, with "his own" government in power, feels very distant from the seat of power, from the realm of responsibility, initiative and social control. The bureaucratization of the party is now reinforced tenfold by the weight of the vast state apparatus of civil servants, managers and technical experts. This homogeneous state bureaucracy has its own interests and operates in the economy with its own aims and methods. Thus the strivings of the British workers for a more significant place in the management and control of industry finds no response in the upper reaches of this rigidly hierarchical body.

There is the further fact that on the boards and committees which run the new nationalized industries are found large numbers of former managers and owners. Nationalization thus serves to reintegrate the old ruling classes into the new sectors of the economy. A

relatively peaceful transformation in the previous functions of the capitalists results in fortifying the commanding position of the bureaucracy over the workers. This new social stratum becomes detached from a private property base and becomes attached to the state. Thus the upper ranks of the Labor Party, basing themselves on the independent power of the state (and its industries), are beginning, feebly as yet, to operate in their own interests as an anti-capitalist, but not pro-socialist force.

In order to consummate this trend toward bureaucratic collectivism, the Labor Party machine would have to ruthlessly crush its own social support--the British workers--while continuing to abolish private property. Such an idea has not even entered the heads, much less the actual plans, of the Labor Party leadership. They have carried through nationalization with the support of a strong, homogeneous, undefeated working class. This class, dissatisfied with the narrow direction of the national industries, is moving more and more toward the concept of workers' control.

The power and organization of the British working class offers splendid opportunities to all English socialists. By entering the Labor Party, organizing a left wing, and pressing for more and more socialist measures, the trend toward state bureaucratization can be halted and a socialist reorganization of British society can be strengthened. This is the task today.#

SYL?

For further information write:

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