

independent socialist

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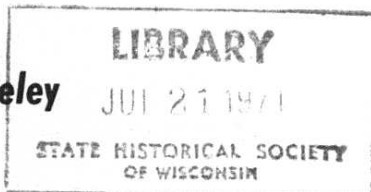
The P.F.P. and the Crisis in American Politics
by Michael Shute & Charles Capper

Free Speech and Political Struggle
by Hal Draper

New Garbage in Old Pails
by Kim Moody

Hollywood's Gift to Berkeley
by Charles Capper

Fascism and Poetry
by Gary Hunt



Plus Notes on Vietnam, Poland, and Black Power



'The Democratic Party is like a big House' --Humphrey



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No. 4
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ISCA Program in Brief

We stand for socialism: the collective ownership and democratic control of the economy, established by a revolutionary transformation from below and aimed toward the building of a new society.

We stand for a socialist policy which is completely independent of and opposed to both of the reactionary systems of exploitation which now divide the world: capitalism and bureaucratic Communism.

Capitalism is an outlived system of private profit and corporate oppression, even where represented as the "welfare state" and administered by liberals or social democrats. At home, in the midst of a false prosperity based on a Permanent War Economy, it perpetuates unemployment, poverty and racism, while witch-hunting radical social dissent in the name of "anti-Communism." Abroad, struggling to contain or absorb the colonial revolution, its imperialism spreads reaction and prolongs underdevelopment, in the name of democracy but in the interests of its own hegemony.

The self-styled Communist regimes, Russian, Maoist or independent, are systems of totalitarian collectivism that are similarly counterposed to socialism. Ruled from above by bureaucracies that control the state that owns the means of production, they regiment at home in the name of industrialization, while choking or perverting revolution abroad — by way of the various Communist parties, which are political agents of the ruling bureaucracies, not of the working class.

Our orientation is toward socialism from below, not dispensation from above, toward a socialist strategy which has nothing in common with the various attempts at permeating or reforming the ruling classes of the world.

The Independent Socialist Clubs of America are educational and activist organizations which seek to contribute to the training of a new generation of socialists and the rebirth of a mass socialist movement in the U.S. Based on the ideas of revolutionary Marxism, we look to the working class black and white, blue collar and white collar, as the basic progressive force in society. We work toward the development of a genuine political alternative to the capitalist power structure and its parties, toward

a new mass party of the working class, the black community and the anti-war movement.

We stand for full support to the struggle for black liberation, for self-defense against racist terror and police brutality, and the independent self-organization of the ghetto. We look forward to a future coalition of black and white workers, but blacks cannot allow their struggle today to be subordinated to the present conservative consciousness of American workers.

We applaud the new currents of militancy spreading through the labor movement and manifested in the growing wave of strikes. We call for an uncompromising fight by rank-and-file caucuses against racism and bureaucratism in the trade union movement, against the subordination of the interests of labor to the demands of imperialism and corporate profit.

Within the anti-war movement, we are for a militant fight for a democratic, anti-imperialist foreign policy, for the withdrawal of American troops from all foreign lands and unilateral disarmament. We are for strengthening all tendencies toward a Third Camp of those who reject both war blocs and their military preparations. In Vietnam, we favor not only popular revolution against American domination, but also the rejection by the masses involved in that revolution of the Communist leadership of the NLF. A new revolutionary leadership must be created if the popular struggle against U.S. imperialism is not to be betrayed by the rise of a new bureaucratic ruling class as in China and North Vietnam. As a precondition for an independent Vietnam, we demand immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops. If withdrawal means a major defeat for Washington, it is of its own making. More importantly, if this defeat is incurred or quickened by the demands of an indignant American people, then Washington's defeat would be the American people's victory.

Our view of socialism is both revolutionary and democratic, both humanist and working class: an international, revolutionary-democratic movement of opposition that presents a third choice for the world, for a new world of freedom and peace, a new society of abundance that will give men the power to create and control their own lives.

Vietnam And the New Politics

So many new and critical stages in the Vietnam war have been proclaimed in the past few years that calling attention to yet another one invites a shrug of the shoulders. But to ignore the fact that the stunning defeat of the Americans and South Vietnamese government during the recent Tet offensive has brought about a qualitative shift in the war itself and at the same time produced a deepening of the crisis in American politics which transcends those of the past would be a very serious mistake. For both the enormous dangers as well as the new possibilities for opposition to the war and to the political and social order which has bred it must be carefully assessed if anything is to be done to change the situation.

POLITICS OF INCINERATION

The dangers are obvious. Even today General Westmoreland asks for 200,000 more troops for Vietnam. The pressure on Khe Sanh with all of the deadly parallels to Dienbienphu continues to build up. Whether by deliberate calculation or by criminal incompetence, or both, the American military command has chained up 5000 Marines as a sacrifice whose deaths will be used as an emotional justification for further escalation of the war and, not improbably, for the use of tactical nuclear weapons. The South Vietnamese regime, never more than an agency of American control can no longer pose as anything other than a military dictatorship pure and simple, which locks away its Buddhist and independent opponents. The facade of the "other war," has fallen away to reveal most of South Vietnam, rural and urban, under the control of the Viet Cong. And perhaps most important of all, the hatred of the ordinary South Vietnamese people for the destroyers of their country and the lives of their people, the Americans, grows and grows so that they are pushed ever more into the arms of their enemy's enemy, the Viet Cong.

All that is left to a bankrupt Johnson administration is a deeper and more vicious policy of military escalation: a policy which, in the absence of new and more effective opposition, will inevitably be adopted by Johnson. The increased danger of a war with China and of the Third World War itself, together with internal repression at home, strengthening the already powerful tendencies toward the creation of a Garrison State in America, thus loom on the horizon.

MASS DISAFFECTION

And yet, out of this same military and political debacle there have arisen new possibilities for building an opposition movement — one genuinely independent of the old parties and militant in the struggle to change American society. These possibilities rest, first of all, upon the awareness, at every level of American society, of the inadequacy of the political and economic orders to

solve any of the internal, let alone foreign, problems facing the United States. Confusion, despair, and feelings of powerlessness, are mixed with a willingness to consider new approaches, new ideas, and new political strategies which break out of the accepted pattern of the past thirty years. The American involvement in Vietnam is at one and the same time cause and symbol of the destruction of these old certainties.

Related to this mass disaffection is the public collapse of the ideas and programs of the establishment itself. Its disarray mirrors the disarray of the rest of American society. After some twenty years of nearly unanimous bi-partisan agreement of the fundamental outlines of American cold war policy, serious and possibly irreparable divisions have begun to appear among top circles of the economic and political establishment. These established leaders, sensing for the first time the monster which they as well as Johnson are responsible for, draw back, confused and fearful of the consequences of the Vietnam war and of the policy which has led to it, even while they are incapable of comprehending, much less dealing with, the roots of the crisis.

Thus at the very point of a new escalation, one of the most important voices of American business, the WALL STREET JOURNAL, advises its readers to be prepared for a defeat in Vietnam. By itself this would be important enough. Its true significance however, which testifies to the depth and extent of the political crisis produced by these divisions, lies in the fact that the policy which the JOURNAL regards as futile and self-destructive is the one that Johnson is clearly going to continue to pursue, deaf to the warnings of his supporters, impervious to the criticisms of even the most conservative elements.



Ali may be forced t' destroy it t' save it.

THE OLD IMPOTENCE . . .

Among the politicians too, this awareness of the futility of Johnson's policy has grown; and to the same degrees that they feel their own inability to stop what they regard now as a disaster, finding themselves passive onlookers in the destruction of the system to which they otherwise loyally adhere, to that extent do the divisions become ever deeper and the political crisis more severe.

Along with Robert Kennedy, thus, they despair at the course of events which they are powerless to affect. But when faced with the choice of breaking with the system of which they are a part, they draw back: for them there are no alternatives, no new ways to act. They fall back into empty rhetoric, or expressions, often moving, of moral indignation; Or they continue to hope against hope for "reason" to return to the Administration. Thus Fulbright in his recent Senate speech calling for Congressional approval of any new escalation of the war (as if that would matter!) was, by his own admission, only attempting to re-open a dialogue with the President, in the hopes that Johnson might be cajoled or pressured into shifting his position! This astonishing display of political impotence and desperation is matched by Robert Kennedy's repeated statements of support for Johnson' in 1968 — statements which follow close on the heels of some of the strongest expressions of disgust and dismay to come from the mouth of an establishment politician in many, many years.

Never before in the history of the Cold War, then, has the Establishment been so divided as it is now. Nevertheless when all is said and done, all of them,

from McCarthy and Kennedy to Fulbright, remain politically and socially within the boundaries of that policy, unhappily, fearfully, but still basically tied to it because they are tied to the maintenance of American capitalism.

. . . AND NEW POLITICS

The important point is not merely that the Establishment is divided, but that they are now VULNERABLE. The loss of confidence, the questioning of basic values, the increasing isolation of Johnson and his clique, together with these schisms at the top must be seen as an opportunity to be seized. Not to cajole or wheedle within the establishment, but to begin the hard, long, and yet completely necessary task of breaking it down, further demoralizing and discrediting it. Opposition to the war, militant opposition, beginning with the demand for immediate withdrawal of American troops, must be intensified. Demonstrations which seek out the weak points of the leaders — including especially the liberal leaders — of the establishment must be escalated. These together with independent political action through the formation of Peace and Freedom parties must be used to exacerbate the divisions in the establishment and at the same time to solidify opposition to the war as well as to give the mass of American people a new sense of hope for the solution of the problems of American society. All of those who have grown disillusioned with the old way of American politics must be drawn into this new movement. For war and regimentation, the new movement must offer the perspective of a genuine commitment to democracy — here and throughout the world — and to revolutionary social change — at home and abroad.

Upheaval in Poland

The fighters against war and injustice in Tokyo and in the streets of Detroit are not alone in this world — they have allies in Eastern Europe. As the IS goes to press, events which are paralleled only by the demonstrations prior to the Hungarian Revolution are unfolding in the Communist police states. Over ten thousand students in Warsaw — joined by newly aroused contingents of adults — are battling the police. With developments in Czechoslovakia, and slight rumblings within Russia itself, not to mention continued tumult in China and bureaucratic unrest in Cuba, there are indications that the momentous discontent against American imperialism is now being paralleled by a renewal of the international revolution against the second ruling class, the Communist elites. No event could have more momentous consequences for the world as a whole and as an aide to the struggle against the American state department in particular. The enemies of both ruling classes are the struggles of the people themselves for a better and freer life.

POLAND & HUNGARY 1956

The East European developments are as yet unformed. But they have, taken together, a smell sharply reminiscent of the two years preceding the Polish and Hungarian revolutions of 1956. The events in Poland and Czechoslovakia stir the most interest. Each have their own significance.

The more restrained events have occurred in Czech-

oslovakia. But these have a hidden potential. Until recently that country has been one of the most resistant to liberalization in Eastern Europe. Last year, the hard line Czech Communist leader Novotny was "kicked upstairs" and now he has taken to touring factories to appeal publicly for support from the population. The fight between the Communist Party "liberals" and hardliners has broken out into the open, featuring among other things, declarations about the need for greater freedom of political parties. The people have not actively entered the conflict. But the pattern follows that of pre-1956. Then, pressure from the population caused liberalization. This in turn caused sharp inner party struggles in which the party factions, threatened by each other, turned to the people themselves for support. Once having done so they were unable to prevent the active popular intervention of the masses, an intervention which in Hungary toppled the entire structure of bureaucratic rule. For this to happen in Czechoslovakia, which has one of the most cohesive and at the same time oppressed working classes in Eastern Europe, could have enormous consequences.

Poland is more advanced. There the students, now joined by adults, are out in the streets in the same kind of demonstrations and attacks on the regime which began the revolutions in the nineteen fifties. In the earlier part of this century, Germany, with its strong socialist movement and tradition of struggle, was viewed by Marxists as the vanguard of European revolution. Poland plays an equivalent role for Eastern

Europe today. For thirteen years, since the beginning workers strikes in 1955, its working class has engaged in intermittent warfare with the bureaucracy. Its student population has displayed unremitting rebellious tendencies against the totalitarian controls which stifle freedom. Perhaps even more important, in Poland there exists the beginnings of a sophisticated revolutionary socialist leadership for the mass upheavals. Among those arrested in the current events (started in protest at the closing of a play with anti-Russian lines), have been Kuron and Modzelewski, young Poles who together with the longtime Trotskyist Ludwig Hass and others have formulated a theory of the Communist bureaucracy as a new ruling class and who were arrested just two years ago for publishing a manifesto charting a course of revolution against the regime. Ten years ago the masses had no comparable incipient leadership.

DECADE OF FERMENT

This lack, in fact, was one of the reasons why the Hungarian Revolution was eventually lost. Another reason was that the revolution did not spread fast enough. Today, however, there is ferment throughout the entire Communist bloc. In Russia itself sporadic protests by intellectuals continue. In Rumania more top-level conflicts between the Rumanian leadership and the Russians continue, conflicts which play upon the hostility to Russian oppression of Rumania. Resistance to national oppression by the Russians, we recall, helped to ignite the 1955-56 events. In East Germany mounting disquiet, again on bureaucratic levels, is displayed at the events in Czechoslovakia. It is fair to say that if the Czechoslovakian and Polish unrest were to spread to East Germany, and involve an East German working class which marched in the streets soon after the death of Stalin in 1953, the lid would indeed be off. It is worth noting also that only recently the Chinese working class began to involve itself in street struggles against the more repressive wing of the Chinese bureaucracy and that top level conflicts continue in Cuba, with the jailing of Escalante. The Chinese and Cuban working classes - prevented from striking and choosing their own leaders and now more highly concentrated than ever before - each have tremendous striking power. And finally, even in North Vietnam the memory of the agrarian revolts in the late nineteen-fifties against Ho Chi Minh's barbaric rural policies cannot be forgotten.

The nature of the world today is that each ruling class, capitalist and Communist, serves as excuse for the repressions of the other. It will be recalled that in 1956 the United States sought stability in Eastern Europe at the expense of the Hungarian freedom fighters. And in Vietnam, the Communist National Liberation Front, the incipient new ruling class of South Vietnam, competes vigorously with LBJ's militarist barbarians in liquidating independent popular struggles such as that initiated by the Buddhists two years ago. Each ruling class is threatened by popular struggle and that is why the ferment in Eastern Europe today represents as much a threat to the State Department as it does to the Communist ruling class internationally.

These facts should help dictate the response of American radicals. Two years ago, when the Polish revolutionaries, Kuron, Modzelewski, Hass, et al were arrested, a campaign was launched in the United States by the radical movement to free them. Eventually they were freed (only to be now rearrested) due undoubtedly

in part to the pressure here. That campaign was begun in Berkeley by a coalition which included almost all of the most principled opponents of the Vietnam war and the American power structure. It spread throughout the world. An even larger campaign is called for now, a campaign which both calls for the release of the imprisoned students and supports that revolution which impends, if not tomorrow then at some certain point in the future, against the Communist bureaucrats.

"PIG COPS" IN POLAND

It is made evermore clear from the Polish events that the world is divided into what is really a three cornered battle for inheritance of the world between the two ruling classes, each hostile to and aggressive towards each other, and the struggle of the people for a better life - between the capitalist world, the Communist bureaucracy, and the Third Camp of the people. The first has its headquarters in Washington and includes the Western European regimes (led as some of them are by pseudo-socialist governments) and the colonial puppets of the West in such places as Saigon, Angola, Seoul and Formosa. The camp of the Communists includes the East European regimes, Mao, Castro, the incipient new rulers of the NLF and other dictators. The camp of the people does not yet hold power - but it is a front which asserts itself sporadically throughout the world - yesterday in the independent non-NLF struggles of the Vietnamese Buddhists against American imperialism and in the Hungarian Revolution; today in the growing trade union unrest in America, the demonstrations of the Polish students, the resistance of the black liberation fighters, the anti-war battles of American students. As blacks in the American ghetto struggle against enemy "pig" cops (as the police in Northern California are affectionately known by the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense) so have anti-Ho North Vietnamese peasants and anti-Gomulka Polish students struggled against their own "pig" cops.

This struggle is, in toto, the Third Camp and needs for its success primarily two things - the self confidence of the masses themselves and a consciousness of its own position. The former will come in the course of struggle, as it has developed increasingly in Poland and in the U.S. anti-war movement. The latter is more difficult and involves the rise of a leadership which recognizes the real unity of interests internationally between oppressed peoples everywhere and the need for the building of an international movement against both oppressor camps. The growth of such a leadership must fight against the aforementioned tendency of each ruling class to use the other as an excuse for its own oppression. In the United States that fight must take an unusual form for radicals here tend often to the mistaken illusion that the enemy of their enemy is their friend. In opting for support of such groups as the NLF, they lose faith in the struggles, current and latent, against oppression as great as that which they themselves fight against. They further retard the development of a conscious Third Camp leadership which can see the unity of those struggles and thereby further their own cases. That is why it is particularly important to defend Kuron and Modzelewski today for these revolutionaries oppose both international ruling classes and can serve as an intellectual vanguard not only for the Polish working class but as an example to aspiring leadership of mass movements throughout the world.

Carmichael and "Black Unity"

In the six months since the Chicago New Politics Conference the Black Power Movement has developed in several different directions. One direction, represented by Stokely Carmichael's speeches since he returned from his travels abroad, stresses "black unity" in the face of a monolithic and racist white society.

According to Carmichael, Blacks are doomed to a struggle for survival in which there is no possibility of gaining any meaningful support from any section of white society. Black people are struggling for their very humanity, whereas even the oppressed elements in the white community are fighting only for "dollars and cents." Carmichael concludes that Blacks must begin now to create a united front to fight against a permanently hostile white America.

Carmichael's assertion that Blacks in this country are entering into a struggle for survival has a strong element of truth to it. One need only look at the newspapers to understand that the Johnson Administration and the big city machines are prepared to stop at nothing this summer when the nation's ghettos again rise up in protest against their oppression. There is talk of tanks capable of carrying twenty men, tear gas, mace, and even more novel and macabre types of weaponry which the police are preparing to use in case of any trouble.

"BLACK UNITY"

But the question is: does Carmichael's strategy represent a practical line of defense for the ghetto? We think not. The call for "black unity" can mean many different things. On the one hand, it COULD mean a demand for unity based upon the kind of radical social program that can end racism and racist exploitation in this country; that is, a program which points to the need for a new kind of politics in America, in which the corporate power structure would no longer be permitted to carry out its reactionary domestic and foreign policies. This kind of call for united action would, as part and parcel of its attack on the white power structure, put the conservative elements in the Black community in the position of having to forfeit their ties to the Establishment as the precondition for unity.

However, the impression one gains from listening to Carmichael's speeches is that he is projecting an all-inclusive Black unity based solely on the rhetoric of Black Power. Of course, it is difficult right now to say precisely what he is proposing, since his strategy has only begun to be spelled out in practice. Nonetheless, there are several indications that Carmichael is advocating an umbrella-type of unity which includes elements from the Black community who have been most unwilling to assert their independence from the white power structure; this unity is to be cemented by an agreement among Black leaders not to publicly criticize each others' policies or perspectives. (This means, of course, that conservative Negro leaders will not be attacked in front of the BLACK masses as well as in front of whites). Unfortunately, the consequence of this policy of DE FACTO accommodation to traditional Negro leaders makes it impossible to undercut their basis of power in the ghetto — at least in any democratic way — and

thereby permits them to maintain their dominance.

The twin policies of all-inclusive unity and disinterest in the struggles of exploited white Americans will prove, in the long and short run, disastrous to any successful struggle for Black survival. For it is precisely the fact that the stakes are so high that makes imperative the creation of an effective, powerful force capable of fighting the oppressive and racist power structure of this country. Carmichael's unwillingness to confront the old-line Democratic Party Negro politicians who have for so long played the role of "brokers" between the Black masses and the Establishment means that, to the extent that his strategy is followed, Black militants will be unable to build an independent, radical movement in the ghetto.

WHITE ALLIES?

Moreover, it is not only the need to build a militant Black movement conscious of who its enemies are that is sacrificed by Carmichael's perspective; by consigning white America to the ash can of history, he is discarding potential allies whose fighting energy will be essential to victory against one of the most powerful and increasingly repressive governments in history.

The fate of black and white oppressed is inextricably intertwined. We say this not to advance the old liberal arguments urging Blacks to go slow so as not to alienate the nation's fragile white majority. To the contrary, we see the development of a militant mass movement in the ghetto as an urgent and immediate necessity. Ultimately, however, the success of that movement depends on whether or not the millions of whites in this country who are also exploited by this corporate imperialist system organize to defend THEIR OWN interests. Blacks can help to encourage the emergence of such a white movement — and thus truly constitute themselves a "vanguard" for America — by building their own militant movement with a social program that points the way to a radical restructuring of this country. But Carmichael's perspective, by counterposing Black survival to the building of coalitions between Black and white oppressed, only serves to reinforce the current racism and conservatism of many potential white allies.

No one can deny the fact that racism permeates every section of white society today, including the most exploited. But it would be suicidal to project this static fact into a permanent reality. In the past couple of years America has witnessed a resurgence of mass opposition not only among anti-war student activists, but among hundreds of thousands of blue-collar and white-collar workers. If the current struggles against the power structure continue, many whites will find themselves needing every ally they can get — and, DESPITE their racism they will be much more receptive to alliances with militant Blacks than they are today when their struggles are only beginning to raise them out of their conservative lethargy.

BLACK POWER & NEW RADICALS

Black people cannot passively await the development of militant struggles of whites; the whole idea of Black Power spoke to the need for Black organization independent of ALL white forces, no matter how radical

or sympathetic to the struggle for Black liberation they may be. The Black Power slogan had such dramatic appeal precisely because it recognized the fact that Black people in this country are subject to special forms of oppression simply because they are Black, and that they therefore need to have their own movement to defend themselves irrespective of the opinions of whites who are supposedly their allies.

When the Black Power idea was first put forward there was an ambiguity as to its real meaning--both as to the type of Black unity which was being proposed, and in terms of the question of being open to the possibility of meaningful alliances with white oppressed people. In recent months, Carmichael has articulated his own current definition of the slogan, which is the opposition of a monolithic Black community to a monolithic white society.

There's another interpretation of the practical mean-

ing of Black Power. This conception combines the strategy of independent militant Black organization with an orientation toward forging coalitions with radical forces in the white community who are willing to join with Blacks in a thoroughgoing attack on the corporate power structure. California's Black Panther Party for Self Defense seems to be pursuing this strategy, as is shown in the recent alliance between the Panthers and the Peace and Freedom Party in which both groups have agreed to an ad-hoc coalition to fight for Black Power and an end to American imperialism against Democratic Party politicians. In our opinion, this second interpretation of the meaning of Black Power addresses itself in a most relevant way to the necessity for beginning now to create the embryo of a new mass radical movement in America -- the only kind of movement that can end the system of racist oppression in this country.

Support Your Local ISC

The Independent Socialist Club of America is a federation of independent socialist clubs and organizing committees around the country. The ISCA plays an essential role in the growing radical movements of students, Blacks, anti-war activists and labor insurgents, participating loyally from our own independent revolutionary socialist vantage point. If you would like information on the ISCA's federated clubs, ideas, publications and activities, write to:

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An open letter to the Party

Jacek Kuron
Karol Modzelewski

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The Peace and Freedom Party

by Michael Shute & Charles Capper

The California Peace and Freedom Party convention meeting March 16-18 in Richmond has the chance to seize the leadership of new and momentous forces in American life. The Peace and Freedom movement arises from the revolt of masses of people, predominantly middle class whites, with the aid of Black militants, against the horrors of the American century. We have launched picket lines and demonstrations, marches and direct action, against the Establishment which sustains those evils. Now we have brought our picket lines and direct action into the field of electoral action, to give the movement as a whole a cohesiveness which it has not yet had. The question confronting the Peace and Freedom Party now is: having gone this far, can it proceed to build an even broader social movement, a social movement which will mobilize the latent power of the great mass of workers and poor people, bring the status quo to bay, and replace it with new humane institutions of its own.

MIRACLE OF THE PFP

For most onlookers the success of the Peace and Freedom Party in registering 105,000 people was a miracle. When the drive started, virtually every "expert" and left political leader believed the task was impossible. This was no mere petition campaign, they argued, but a demand that people register out of the Democratic Party and into a new political party. We were asking people to break from the party they had viewed as "their party" for long periods of time and within which most electoral campaigns for liberal ideas had been waged. To make matters worse, we were asking them to leave the Democratic Party for a new party which had no candidates or big names or money or organization. An impossible job.

At first glance America's recent political history seems to substantiate this claim. In the nineteen thirties this country was rent with conflict. Without a large, organized and principled left, the meager program of an establishment party, Franklin Roosevelt's Democratic Party, won the adherence of millions of intellectuals, workers, black people and other minorities. The relative improvement in life from the depression created by the crumbs from the establishment table tied these elements to the Democratic Party. In part, these masses of people accepted those crumbs, instead of using their own power to build their own political institutions, because the labor movement had only begun to organize itself and had not yet begun to conceive of itself as an independent political force.

Then came World War II, if not to save the world from democracy then to wrest American capitalism from the grip of depression. The war meant new imperialist aggressiveness on the part of all the victors, but it demolished Hitler's rival imperialism and thus inspired the loyalty of millions of workers and intellectuals. This loyalty impeded the growth of that anti-establish-

ment self-reliance which had begun to grow in the nineteen-thirties. It intensified the feeling of millions of people that their self-interest rested with the fortunes of the Democratic Party.

By the 1950's, however, the crumbs became meager indeed. Without the moral sway of anti-fascism breathing life into an otherwise corpse-like political atmosphere, the enthusiasm of the forties converted itself into ever-sharpening cynicism about the relevance of politics in general, and American liberalism in particular. Hence, the political apathy and social acquiescence of the Eisenhower years.

But as Bob Dylan might have said, something was happening here Mr. Jones - and that something explains a good deal of the miracle of the Peace and Freedom Party and the decision of over 105,000 Californians to opt for a new political party. The reasons should be clear. They started to become clear as the fifties passed into the sixties and old identifications crumbled. The new American generation remembers little of Rooseveltian charisma. Neither the depression nor the reforms of the New Deal are part of its experience. America is afflicted by new crises of war, urban discontent and racism - crises rooted in the failure of the Democratic Party since the New Deal to change anything fundamental about American society.

To these crises the Democratic Party establishment offers no solution. LBJ cannot attach a "make the world safe for democracy" label to the bloodbath in Vietnam. Nor, in a period where American capitalism is threatened as never before (and this time not by a rival capitalism but by new social systems) can it afford to make concessions to the demands of minorities, workers and the underprivileged at home. Today, LBJ opposes the crying need of trade unions for shorter hours with equal pay, a demand which also is an answer to widespread unemployment and thus one of the grievances of blacks as well. Today the Democratic Party cannot come through on its single important pledge to the unions for repeal of Taft-Hartley section 14B. Today, troops enter the ghetto to repress black demonstrations, today agents of the state invade campuses and homes of intellectuals to arrest anti-war dissidents. Under these circumstances, loyalty to the Democratic Party ineluctably weakens.

WALLACE & LIBERALS

The disaffection caused by these developments explains the California Peace and Freedom miracle. But it also explains the non-miracle of George Wallace, the reactionary whose party also got on the ballot.

Wallace, of course, is part of a more general trend that has been developing since the fifties and stands as the single most important indictment of Democratic liberalism, even on its own terms: the rightward drift in American politics. Though historically, of course there have been important differences between the

Democratic and Republican parties over the last thirty years, when threats are increasingly posed to the American corporate structure as a whole, as in the recent ghetto uprisings or in Vietnam, Democratic Party liberals and right-wing reactionaries stand together. Hence, Johnson's grotesque execution of Barry Goldwater's election promises in Vietnam. Moreover, the absence of any left wing political force only reinforces this right-ward drift.

Given heretofore existing political vacuum in the context of rising social discontent, a George Wallace becomes as much a sign of the times as the Peace and Freedom Party. The inability of the power structure to solve its problems results in a general frustration which can lead not only to new adherence to leftwing alternatives but to right wing ones as well.

We must be clear on this. People are discontented with the war and the racial crisis. For the first time they are looking for new alternatives. For example, there are large numbers of people who have become upset with the war and favor EITHER escalation and use of nuclear weapons OR immediately getting out. The sentiment is unmistakable. They are tired of the war and want it over ONE WAY OR THE OTHER. And that is just the way that they may move politically, to the right or to the left. Unfortunately, up to now only the right-wing has offered a dynamic alternative to the stagnation of establishment liberalism. This is the danger of the current situation and one which makes imperative the resolute assumption by the Peace and Freedom Party of the task of tapping the sources of frustration in such a way that a progressive solution is the outcome of the general upheaval which is in process.

What is wrong with the McCarthy campaign inside the Democratic Party is precisely that it cannot do this. In the first place, McCarthy, in his accommodation to establishment liberalism fails to propose a real choice. McCarthy, it is true, REFLECTS discontent with the war, as indicated by his 40% vote in the New Hampshire primary. That this 40% - this discontent -

exists, is good and healthy. But the program around which McCarthy organizes it is not significantly different from that of Johnson for it does not speak to the problem of the general aggressive intentions of American imperialism. Negotiations for McCarthy are another way of preserving the influence of that imperialism. Secondly, the moderation of McCarthy cannot ultimately satisfy the demands of Americans for a more immediate end to the war and thus, as the substitute for a more left-wing alternative, this moderation paves the way for an erosion towards the immediatist solutions of the right.

McCARTHY'S IMPRISONMENT

But even more important, because the McCarthy campaign is within the Democratic Party it cannot do the vitally necessary job of leading people beyond mere discontent with the war and into political opposition to those corporate interests that historically have shaped American foreign policy within both parties. The McCarthy campaign, because it is trapped inside the Democratic Party, can only stifle the building of new radical institutions which can counter the drift towards the right by the very fact of opposing the capitalist political institutions from which right wing politics inevitably flow. To channel discontent into reinforcing a weakened attachment to the Democratic Party can only contribute to the generalized frustration from which the right will benefit.

This makes the role of the Peace and Freedom Party vitally important. It also makes it extremely important to face up to the fact that today the Peace and Freedom Party is only a beginning and not a substitute for the party which must be built if a real alternative to the rightward drift is to be constructed. A look at the composition of the Party and its problems illustrates the truth of this statement.

The Peace and Freedom Party is today based primarily on a white middle class constituency. It is true



that this constituency has been the first to respond to the generalized crisis by acting in a radical manner. Students especially have been in the vanguard of pressing forward both radical programs and radical modes of activity which upset the status quo and provide a banner of radicalism behind which others can rally.

These advantages can only carry the movement so far, however. There are problems which go along with the advantages of this constituency. One problem is that the issue of the war, which motivates much white middle class activity, can be an extremely abstract moral issue. When it becomes materially concrete it becomes so often in a way which is contingent upon the war in Vietnam going badly for the United States; the increased draft of young people or the failure of America to prosecute the war successfully. Despite its protestations to the contrary, the peace movement will be deflated if the war in Vietnam suddenly takes an unexpected turn towards the success of American troops or towards an extended bombing pause or temporary truce. This would disarm the growing oppositional tendencies in American life and merely give the Establishment new life to begin a new war at another time in another place. It would also leave untouched the domestic sicknesses of the society.

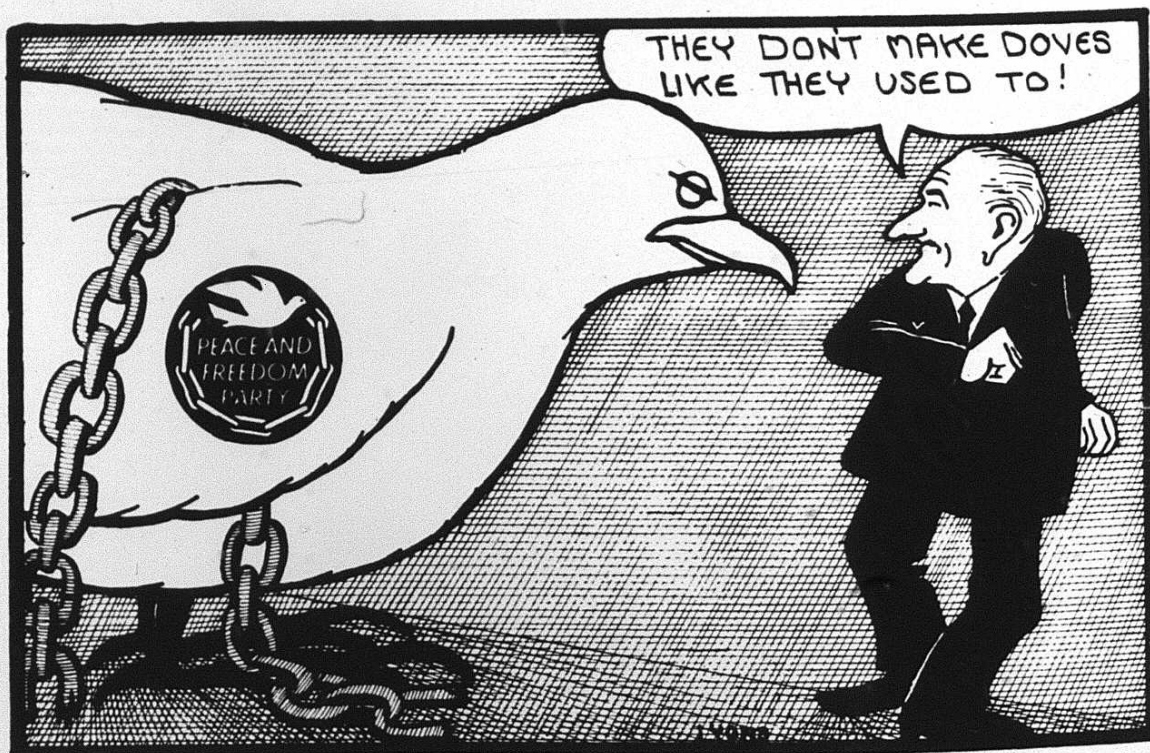
A second problem with the present components of the PF movement is that they have little ultimate power within society. Students and intellectuals have been the vanguard until now because they are freer from the stable day-to-day workings of society. But precisely this instability points to their central disability, their isolation from the day-to-day centers of power, such as in American industry for example. For this reason they have less potential ability to reshape society themselves and to create those institutions which can be substituted for the present ruling class.

This makes turning towards other elements within society necessary if today's oppositionism is not to be dissipated. Fortunately the Peace and Freedom movement has begun to do this by its orientation towards the growing militant segments of the black community. In

Northern California this has meant an alliance with the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense. This alliance must be strengthened, for the Black Panthers, despite their current numerical relation to the white middle class movement as a whole, represent a future of a mass Black movement. Because of its racial consciousness and because of its large PROPORTION of working class composition, a mass black movement will be more powerful than its present or even future numbers. It too will be a vanguard.

TOWARD THE WORKING CLASS

But more than this. A reaching outwards means looking toward the awakening militant struggles in the working class. The wave of recent strikes is evidence that the interests of American workers cannot be reconciled with a society dominated by a corporate economy and forced, because of its foreign aggressions, to exact sacrifices by assembly line workers and to postpone radical solutions for automation and unemployment. For many years radicals and liberals looked for leadership to the trade unions, with little to show for it. Most official leaders of labor support the Administration's foreign policy. Leaders and workers both have been unfriendly to militant Black demands. Lacking their own independent political perspective, many white workers often view with hostility Blacks on the move politically. But today, for the first time in many years, militant voices resound in union halls, voices of rank and file caucuses in unions like the United Automobile Workers. These caucuses protest the union leadership's sellout of the workers under the pressure of the Democratic Administration (which demands that the workers make sacrifices for the war in Vietnam). Concurrent with the growth of these caucuses is the spilling over of economic protest into politics in reaction to such Administrative atrocities as strikebreaking. A beginning example of this spilling over was the passing of a pro-labor party resolution by three large locals of the International Association of Machinists af-



ter the recent airlines strike of that union.

The awakening to self-interest in the union rank and file creates the potential for a force in the unions which will oppose the labor leadership and advance a program which is militant on the issues of war and the black struggle as well. That potential will not materialize immediately — it must develop out of the workers own experiences (just as the Peace and Freedom movement did not spring up over night).

But the Peace and Freedom movement — if it is to stimulate the sprouting of working class consciousness and thereby face up to the most central of its problems — must make as its own major preoccupation, its own central strategic orientation, the pressing forward of the program of independent labor political action — for a LABOR-BASED PARTY NOW. It must do this through propaganda in the labor movement, by building links to the rank and file struggles within the trade unions and by contributing towards relating those immediate struggles to the structural failings of our society which produce them.

By its very existence the PF Party helps point the way to independent labor political action. With the breakdown of Democratic Party attachment and the increasing numbers of workers voting as individuals for Republicans or independent candidates, one of the main barriers to organized labor political action is a feeling of futility and atomization on the part of the insurgent sections of labor. The P&FP provides the example of how it is possible to organize independently of the Democratic Party and that there are large numbers of people already in a struggle with the American establishment.

This means, of course, defending labor's struggles before the general public and endorsing its demands for humanization of working conditions, for a decent standard of living, for making the corporation pay the cost for full employment by a program of sharing the work with thirty hours work for forty hours pay; for an end to the anti-labor offensive of the government. It means the firm and principled defense of strikes.

But it means more than this. The official leadership of the unions, most of whom support Johnson, and many of whom are staunchly pro-imperialist, also repress the tendency of rank and filers to use on the job action to obtain immediate redress of their grievances. The Peace and Freedom movement must intervene in the struggles of these workers against their leadership by helping to provide them with a program to effectively fight that leadership — a program whose most important component must be independent political action against the establishment. For the P&FP must show the source of everyday oppression is in that establishment and the way to fight it is through the independent institutions of the oppressed themselves. The P&FP has no more important task than to fight vigorously within the trade union movement and without for the program of a labor party now!

NOT ONLY ELECTORAL ACTION

But the program of the P&FP on the labor movement, however central, is not its total concern. The Peace and Freedom movement cannot limit itself to mere electoral action; its conception of political action must transcend this limited and sterile view of politics, one which is unfortunately bred into the very bones of the American system.

Electoral activity must be a part, but only a part

(albeit an important one) of building a MOVEMENT which engages in direct struggles at all levels of society and over issues which the conventional politics of the old parties disregard. Rent strikes, student strikes, anti-draft activity, — in short, direct action of all kinds, must become the main life of the movement if it is to attract mass support and is to have a real impact upon American society. What alone can tie each of these activities together, giving them coherence and making for a cumulative effect upon the political education of the American people, will be the political and social vision of the Peace and Freedom movement.

What will this vision be?

If the Peace and Freedom movement is to point a genuinely new and progressive way for American society, if it is to build towards a truly free and peaceful world, then it must begin by rejecting the elitist, anti-democratic, and anti-human sentiments and institutions which characterize the major social systems which dominate the world today. The Peace and Freedom movement, if it is to be a real alternative, if it is to attract real mass support in the United States today, must stand unequivocally and unhesitatingly for democracy — here in America AND abroad. It must identify its struggles against arbitrary, undemocratic authority with those of the Polish, Spanish and German students; it must see its opposition to capitalist oppression as of a piece with its opposition to the oppression of workers and peasants in South Vietnam and North Vietnam, as well as Cuba, Russia, China, Greece and Spain. It must stand consistently for freedom of speech and the right of association not only here in the United States but EVERYWHERE — not because it is opportune, but because the kind of movement and the kind of society which the Peace and Freedom movement strives for requires it. For far too many Americans "radical" social change means a limitation of freedom and democratic rights: they RIGHTLY reject that sort of radicalism. To the American working class, upon whom any real movement must ultimately be based, "radicalism" far too frequently means an end to workers' rights, an end to independent unions which alone can protect them against exploitation, whether by capitalist or bureaucrat. They will not and should not support any movement or party which temporizes on these principles. Fortunately, the very existence of the Peace and Freedom Party and movement today, with its rejection of the old-politics and its defense of popular movements, demonstrates that these principles are, as they must be, already becoming an integral part of its existence. They must next be made an integral part of the new world it helps to bring into existence.

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Free Speech and Political Struggle

by Hal Draper

What exactly does the right of "free speech" apply to?

This is a problem with a long history, but it became acute in 1967 with the wave of student demonstrations against Dow Co. and CIA recruiters on campus. Militant anti-war demonstrations demanded that the administrations cease to provide Dow recruiters with special university facilities. The administrations replied; This would be a violation of their right to free speech; they must be accorded the same rights that you yourself demand for your anti-war agitation.

THREE LINES

In the face of this line, leftist opinion fragmented in three different directions:

(1) Many liberals and social-democratic types fell on their face before the administration gambit; they echoed the view that the demonstrations violated the Dow recruiters' "right of free speech" and were therefore bad.

(2) Many radicals and student militants agreed with the administration contention (that the demonstrations violated Dow's free speech), but concluded that it was a good thing to violate the right to free speech in such a good cause.

(3) The third position--which was most cogently supported by the Independent Socialist Clubs--denied that the right to free speech applied to the Dow case, and took both a principled position for the right to free speech and made a militant defense of the anti-Dow demonstrations.

It was No. 2 that was the disconcerting development in this situation. There was no surprise in finding that the same liberals and social-democrats who regularly argued that any militant anti-war action was sinister, should crank out arguments proving that the anti-Dow demonstrations were the work of the devil. But it was another thing when people who had associated themselves with the various "free speech" struggles around the country, now gave support to arguments which effectively dumped the right to free speech altogether. For this was and is the consequence of position No. 2. However put, this position boiled down to the "hierarchy of values" proposition: In our hierarchy of values, free speech is only one rung; stopping the war's barbarism is a higher value; therefore the right to free speech must give way before this higher value.

This line of reasoning does not dump the right to free speech simply for certain cases; it dumps free speech as a right altogether. It reduces it to something you tolerate if there isn't any "higher value" around to negate it at the moment. Moreover, by introducing the need for an ad hoc judgment in each case about the given "hierarchy of values," it also introduces the judge who is to make this decision--naturally in accordance with his own values. There is no despot or au-

thoritarian who could not accept such a theory of "free speech" with enthusiasm--and also with justice. Dictators usually repress only those exercises of "free speech" which do in fact conflict with "higher values" which they hold.

This kind of three-way division is not new; something like it has been seen in radical circles for a few hundred years, long before Dow invented napalm. Within movements of social dissent, there has always been a strong or dominant wing of reformists and reformers, on the one hand; and, on the other, there have also been the elitist and dictatorial currents of radicalism or "revolutionism," more or less openly anti-democratic, often reflecting the aspirations of alienated intellectuals for a "dictatorship of the intelligentsia" which would permit them to impose their own "hierarchy of values" on the society they detested. Both of these have been quite distinct from the third current of revolutionary socialism--from below.

It is quite true, then, that radicals and socialists (if we include all kinds) have never been united in support of a consistent advocacy of free speech. It is not strange that this situation is duplicated in the milieu of the contemporary New Left, where so many of the oldest and most outlived ideas of radicalism have been prolifically reinvented.

Let us try to think our way through this question.

We begin with a consideration which certainly must be granted from anyone's standpoint: it concerns the type of social situation where the right to free speech is involved--not where it is valid or invalid, but simply where it is involved or not. The question of free speech comes alive in the context of social struggles; and only juridical cretins can believe that all social struggles are resolvable by any kind of speech, free or otherwise. In the last analysis, the more basic social struggles are not decided by government rules or in the courts, but by the contest of power.

FREE SPEECH & REVOLUTION

The obvious case in point is a revolution, which entails an open contest for state power. The Declaration of Independence was not an exercise of the right to free speech; it was a declaration of intent to engage in a contest of power which pre-empted the field of any norms of civil peace (free speech included). It represented an appeal not to speech (democratic norms, persuasion, etc.) but to the arbitrament of force. Likewise the Russian Revolution, the German Revolution, and any other revolution. You should not claim that it is the "right to free speech" which permits you to marshal the Red Militia to seize the White House; the troops would die laughing.

This does not mean that there is no question of democracy involved in a revolutionary struggle or any other contest of power. Democracy is a wider concept

than free speech. Your "right to make a revolution"--this moral right, or political right, or whatever you consider it--still demands justification and defense in terms of democratic sanctions. But this is a much bigger frame than the "free speech" question. Also: this does not mean that, once the situation has become a contest of power, there is no longer any question of free speech on your own side of the lines, within your own camp. There most certainly is. But the free-speech issue is no longer an issue as between the two sides that have broken out of the framework of civil peace.

Revolution is only the most obvious sort of case where one may decide to leave one ground and go over to another: that is, leave the ground of "free speech" and go over to the ground of the open contest of power. Of course, war is another obvious case, revolutions being only civil wars in end-form. Frenchmen who elected to help the Allied side instead of the legal Vichy government were not making a decision to which "free speech" is relevant; they were merely choosing sides in a war. In the Cold War, likewise, if you want to give American or British military secrets to the Russians, that has nothing to do with any "rights" but solely with the choosing up of sides in a contest of power.

Even in more "normal" times, there are situations, temporary and usually localized, where a group of people may decide to leave the ground of civil norms like free speech and go over to the other ground. Naturally, they must also be prepared to face the consequences. Strike struggles are always, to a small or great degree, contests of naked social power, even where there are legal forms devised to channelize and mitigate the power-confrontation. This element in a strike can produce situations very like civil war. Again we must point out, this does not mean that democratic considerations become irrelevant--not a bit; there is always the question of who are seeking power over whom, and for what social ends.

There are other types of situations outside the ground of free speech. There is the situation where the framework of civil liberties is denied by the authorities, as in the life of Negroes in the South or Northern ghettos, or by the sheriff's deputies in Delano, where direct action is taken outside the cadre of any speech. If an army unit mutinies, it is not a question of free speech. A civil-disobedience demonstration is also not an issue of free speech; the democratic function and justification for civil disobedience lie on another ground, which has been often explained.

HIERARCHY OF VALUES?

In all these cases, it is never a matter of deciding whether the right of free speech is "negated" by some "higher value," or of dressing a list of values in a "hierarchy of values," but simply a matter of passing from one ground to a different ground, from the ground of the norms of civil peace to the ground of an open contest of power. You always face the need, of course, to justify your decision to pass from one ground to the other. You may decide to do so rightly or wrongly, democratically or not; and that decision can also be judged wise or not; but all we are concerned with here is that these situations fall outside the question of free speech.

Our subject, free speech, is an issue of the first ground, when it is a contest of views, within the framework of the existing power relations, on the basis of

the existing state. With relation to such a contest of views, what do you demand of, or propose to, the governmental power?

At this point in the analysis, we may be told, by some sophisticated radicals who have heard of different kinds of states: "Hold on! What state are you talking about? Their state or ours?" if the objector styles himself a Marxist, he will say: "Are you talking about a bourgeois state or a socialist state?" or its equivalent in current New Left jargon.

There is indeed an opinion, held implicitly or explicitly, which goes like this: As long as we (the good guys) are not in power, we demand free speech and other such liberties--and we deserve them, because we are right. But wait till WE get power: we are not going to be so foolish as to let YOU, who are wrong, make trouble and corrupt the People....

This is not a caricature. It has been put into print by Herbert Marcuse (though not by many other sane people); I have heard it, without searching too hard, from many a young would-be radical; and of course anyone who is not naive knows that it is the unwritten program of any of the Communist Parties.

This is a view very proper to an intelligentsia aspiring to a new ruling-class dictatorship of their own; but it is alien to revolutionary Marxism. Here is a proposition: There can be no contradiction, no gulf in principle, between what we demand of this existing state, and what we propose for the society we want to replace it, a free society.

Naturally, circumstances alter cases, but since this generality applies on both sides, it cancels out and does not affect the proposition. You can legitimately consider the proposition from a moral standpoint--that is, as a moral imperative--but here I am interested not in moralizing but in political analysis. Why this proposition?

First of all: what we demand of this state now does constitute our real program. Secondly: the kind of movement we build now, on a certain basis, will determine our new society, not good intentions. One can, of course, build a movement on the basis of social demagoguery, massive hypocrisy, concealment of real intentions -- as the fascists did, as the Stalinists do -- but such a movement is fitted only to install a new depotism. No movement that really aims at a free society can proceed along these lines.

It is a platitude that the right to free speech always means free speech for the fellow who disagrees, including free speech for views that you detest. Otherwise you are not talking about a right but only about what you are willing to tolerate, what you are willing to grant. We are concerned here about political rights; otherwise we are not talking about free speech at all. It is in this connection that we can use some background history on this issue.

LIBERALS IN THE 50'S

As mentioned, this is not a new question. And the theory of the "hierarchy of values" is not a new theory. It played a very big role in this country just the day before yesterday, that is, in the era of McCarthyism of the fifties. It is widely known how ignominiously the liberals and social-democratic types collapsed before the onslaught of McCarthyism; but it is less widely understood that this collapse was not merely the result of unfortunate personal characteristics (like the existence of a vacuum where their guts should have been). There was an ideology about demo-

cratic rights that was involved--a line of justification. It was, in fact, nothing less than this so-very-new idea of the "hierarchy of values." Sidney Hook, the arch-ideologist of the capitulation to McCarthy, explained in detail (and perfectly sincerely) that he was enthusiastically for free speech, but not for every exercise of free speech when Freedom itself was threatened by indiscriminate free speech. This meant that Communists, who wanted to use free speech and other democratic rights to destroy freedom and democracy itself, could not be permitted to exercise such democratic rights. Therefore Communists could be deprived of free speech and civil liberties without impugning the "higher value" of Liberty itself. This was the basis of the liberal apologia for the witch hunt system.

This system of thought does not become a whit better when the "higher value" is taken to be something different from "democracy itself" or any other particular formulation; it is not a whit better when the "higher value" is taken to be opposition to the Vietnam war. For the methodology of the witchhunters could be combated successfully only if the argument revolved not around whether your "value" was "higher" than mine, but around the method itself, which had to be rejected at the root.

Before getting back to the method itself, however, let us fill out the picture with another version of the same problem. For the liberals capitulating before McCarthyism commonly justified themselves with another gimmick which also had a strong hold on radicals. This was the issue of "civil liberties for FASCISTS." Not that this was the burning issue of the fifties! It had, however, been rife in the preceding two decades, and therefore acted as a methodological model.

Most radical thinking had been set in a mold shaped by an image of what had happened in the Germany of the Weimar republic: "See, Weimar Germany let the Nazis enjoy the benefits of free speech and democratic rights -- and look what happened! The lesson is that a virile democracy has to crack down on totalitarians before they become a clear and present danger, not afterward when it is too late."

The yellow liberals made liberal use of this mind-set and of this historical model, aiming it at the "Communist menace"; and the Cold War witchhunt deepened from the late forties to the middle fifties. All this was not the invention of Joe McCarthy; McCarthyism merely took advantage of it.

Here is a political exercise for the reader on this very question:

In 1949, when the witchhunt climate was deepening under President Truman, the Supreme Court took up the Terminiello case. Terminiello was a man who had made a speech in Chicago that had infuriated a good part of the audience by its unpopular views. So angry did they become that turmoil ensued, and the upshot was that the SPEAKER was arrested for contributing to the situation (by the unpopularity of his opinions). In short, he was arrested because his opinions were so unpopular that hearers resorted to violence.

The Supreme Court decision, written by Justice William O. Douglas, supported his right to express his views. Douglas laid it down that

"a function of free speech under our system of government is to invite dispute. It may indeed best serve its high purpose when it induces a condition of unrest, creates dissatisfaction with conditions as they are, or even stirs people to anger..."

The case against Terminiello was thrown out, as a violation of the "clear and present danger" rule. Was this good or bad?

We must now add that this Terminiello was a fascist (a follower of G. L. K. Smith), and the unpopular sentiments which he had expressed in his speech had been anti-Semitic sentiments. Now -- was the Supreme Court decision good or bad?

If Terminiello had to be thrown in jail for saying derogatory things about Jews, what would that mean for the right of other people, in other situations, to express derogatory opinions about other things or people? Did Communists have a right to make speeches expressing sentiments fully as objectionable as Terminiello's -- for example, defending concentration camps?

FREE SPEECH & FASCISTS

The fact is that the Terminiello decision was a blow against the witchhunt, and this role is not gainsaid by the unsavory character of the individual involved; any more than the civil-libertarian character of certain more recent Supreme Court decisions on the rights of criminals and the restriction of police methods is gainsaid by the fact that the individual cases did involve criminal individuals with no claim on our own sympathy. Another fact is that it was and is not possible to distinguish, as far as the civil-liberties principle is concerned, between cases of "civil liberties for fascists" and "civil liberties for Communists."

Here are five conceptions on this question which need emphasis:

(1) Take the above-mentioned historical analogy with the Nazis in Weimar Germany: it is wholly false. It is simply not true that the truly scandalous behavior of the courts in Weimar Germany revolved around "free speech for Nazis" cases. The judges of this very democratic republic were letting Nazi thugs go scotfree even in cases where they had been caught redhanded in murder, assault, beatings of Jews and radicals, breaking up of trade union headquarters, and similar actions. Action, not speech. If the Nazi movement had confined itself to speeches (including fascist speeches), it would never have been the danger it was. No rights to free speech had to be curtailed by a millimeter in order to have an abundance of grounds for rounding up the entire Nazi leadership years before they became even a clear and present danger. And this was not an accidental fact but inherent in the nature of the fascist movement as such: this movement never made the



slightest pretext of depending on persuasion or education for power. The argument that "history tells us" that fascists have to be thrown in the pokey as soon as they express any opinions considered fascist--this argument is a phoney. In fact, just as phoney as the analogous argument of the witchhunters that the expression of Communist views must be met with policemen's clubs lest "democracy itself" be endangered.

Actions, not speech; this is the key. In contemporary America, for example, socialists are for laws making racist ACTS a criminal offense. If a landlord discriminates against blacks, browns, yellows or bearded whites in renting or selling, a real democracy would crack down on him with the forces of law and order; but this has nothing to do with illegalizing his right to express any stupid or reactionary opinions on any group. (Any more than I would want to be restricted in my right to express my own opinions on the subject of Southern rednecks, liberal suburbanites, Democratic politicians, middle-class Negro businessmen, Jewish shopkeepers in Harlem, and an extensive spectrum of other types.)

(2) Of all the juridical weapons we cannot entrust to a state machine that is not ours, the worst is the right to be selective about democratic rights. Because the state will make that weapon a double-edged one; and the sharp cutting edge will be used against the people, not against the fascists, in the long run if not the short.

THIS STATE IS DANGEROUS

Precisely if and when the state is a bourgeois state, we cannot give it our approbation in abandoning the ground of free speech; and if it is really a socialist state we do not have to. But the practical proposals we hear have to do with the former, of course. Precisely in such cases, we have to stress; we do not trust this state. We do not trust it in general, and above all we cannot trust it to wield such a weapon.

(3) Although we have been using the usual phrase "civil liberties for fascists" and "civil liberties for Communists," the formulation is inaccurate. I am not interested in civil liberties FOR fascists or Communists. It is not their civil liberties we are concerned about; for it is certainly true that they want free speech only to help install a regime that will gag US. If this were really the issue, then there could be no two ways about it. But it is not the issue. The issue of the civil liberties OF fascists and Communists is not separable from the issue of civil liberties of everybody else. It is a question of allowing no such distinctions by this state we do not trust.

In a reverse sort of way, the Communist Party found this out when it gleefully urged the government to use the reactionary Smith Act to put Trotskyists in jail, and hailed that wartime witchhunt as a triumph for progress; only to complain bitterly when, later, the ungrateful government used this same triumph for progress to put them in jail, with exactly the same right. If politics were a matter only of morality or sentiment, one might only have said "Serves them right" of the Smith Act jailings of the Communist bravos who had applauded the Smith Act jailings of Trotskyists. But there is no reason for a genuine revolutionary to fall into this snake-pit. Independent Socialists campaigned against the Smith Act persecutions of the Communist Party for the sake of maintaining the rights of radical dissent in America, not for the sake of the Communist Party.

(4) Nor can we rely on this state to defend us against

aspiring fascist demagogues. And is it not the height of folly to tear down the structure of what civil liberties we have, in order to encourage such an illusion? Yet this is exactly what is done when the state is asked to impugn its own free-speech standards by denying them to anyone.

The case in point that first impressed me involved, as it happens, the same G. L. K. Smith who inspired Terminiello. In 1945 fascist Smith decided to invade Los Angeles with a campaign to build his movement, and started making speeches. As organizer of our Independent Socialist movement there, I tried to get a united front going of radical organizations (and others) to organize a mass picket line against Smith. Not one could be gotten to do so, either together with us or separately -- not the Communist Party, not the Socialist Workers Party, nor any other. (The reasons given were the time-honored ones, such as: don't pay any attention to Smith and he'll go away, etc.) So the first picket lines against the Smith operation were organized by ourselves alone. Simultaneously, another issue arose: Smith wanted to hold a meeting in a school, and the same people who refused to participate in an ACTION against Smith went to the Board of Education to demand that it refuse the use of the school to him. This could only be done by relying on the same ordinances that had been invented in the first place in order to deny school use to socialists and radicals!

Here was the counterposition: we were the only ones to initiate and launch militant mass action against Smith's meetings, but we refused to ask the government to dump what there was of free speech facilities in order to get at Smith. We organized PEOPLE'S action, but we refused to put this double-edged weapon in the hands of the government with our approbation.

(5) On this whole business, there is a fundamental difference between the reactionaries and ruling classes in general, on the one hand, and, on the other, us who are fighting for a socialist democracy.

THE DOW ISSUE

Our aim by its very nature requires the mobilization of conscious masses. Without such conscious masses, our goal is impossible. Therefore we need the fullest democracy.

Their aim requires the straitjacketing or tranquilizing of anything like mass involvement from below. Therefore they must always want to negate or dilute or abolish democratic controls from below.

We, because of the nature of our goals, have no fear of the unlimited unleashing of democratic initiatives and drives. They, on the contrary, must always be wary of it, even when they seek to manipulate it.

And by "they" I mean not only the present ruling elites but also various aspiring elites, like the elitist intelligentsia or bureaucrats who would like to be the benevolent despots in place of the capitalists.

Now we can return to the recent issue of the anti-Dow demonstrations. Was it necessary to dump the right to free speech in order to defend the anti-Dow demonstrations? I think this is nonsense, and the case against it is almost an open-and-shut one. Here are a number of considerations:

(1) The Dow recruiters did not even pretend to be coming on campus in order to present any views, opinions or speech whatsoever. We should welcome the opportunity if they asked for university facilities to present argumentation and discussion defending what they are

doing -- by organizing a forum, or setting up a table to distribute their statements, or what have you. That is a question of free speech.

(2) The Dow representatives were using special facilities provided by the university not to present their opinions on the use of napalm, but to carry on their company business. That's all!

(3) Many universities -- for example, at Berkeley -- withdraw this privilege from companies that discriminate racially or recruit strikebreakers. Is this a violation of the right to free speech by racist companies? The apologists cannot have it both ways. If Dow's right to use university facilities for company business lies in the ground of free speech, then these other cases lie in the ground of free speech too. Or suppose a university adopted the policy of allowing NO private firm or corporation to use its premises and facilities for any company business including recruiting; this still leaves them the full possibility of setting up a headquarters near campus and advertising their presence as usual, and changes very little for them. But whatever one thinks of the desirability of such an overall policy, would it mean that the university had abolished "free speech" for corporations on campus? I do not think anyone would even claim that. The practice of allowing company recruiters on campus is defensible as a convenience for the students, but not as a right for the company.

By the way, if Dow's right to use special university facilities for recruitment of employees is a matter of free speech, then this would be so also if the Communist Party asked for special university facilities to recruit its organizers. It would be interesting to see how many universities would give the Communists this same treatment, and also how many of the liberals, who now defend Dow's "free speech," would demand such equal treatment . . .

The point of arguing this liberal nonsense is only to show that defense of the anti-Dow demonstrations sets up no earthly reason to dump free speech principles-- unless one has other ideological motives for doing so.

But we know, as a matter of fact, that such motives do exist. The latest case in point, in the radical milieu, is the ideological current of which Herbert Marcuse is the best known theoretician.

MARCUSE'S PURE INTOLERANCE

This current has a textbook now: Marcuse's essay in the book "A Critique of Pure Tolerance." Here, almost in so many words, Marcuse condemns freedom of speech ("tolerance" of it anyway) for those whose views are antithetical to him, and, fairly clearly, advocates an "educational dictatorship" of enlightened intellectuals like himself who KNOW they are right and everybody else is wrong. He does this with only occasional backing-and-filling and a smidgin of Hegelianized doubletalk, but not much. (See especially his pages 109-110 and 106, but the whole essay has to be read to get the full flavor.)

What makes this almost fantastic is that this modest proposal for "intolerance" is made in the context of what is Marcuse's other ideological trademark. This is his view that there are no masses who can be mobilized for progressive struggles. "Dissent is declining," he maintains (quite wrongly, of course); and the dissenting minorities are "small and powerless." There is nobody to fight (except a handful of intelligentsia of his own stripe). Nobody has painted a more pessimistic view of the social scene. And yet, precisely

in this situation, he writes a manifesto advocating that free speech and democratic rights ("tolerance") be denied to views that you consider pernicious! *

This is all the ammunition that our witchhunters need. It endorses everything Sidney Hook has ever written in justification of the witchhunt -- though naturally Marcuse and Hook would use the same theory against different victims. To paraphrase the famous "It is not merely a crime but a blunder," one has to say, "This is not merely a blunder -- this is bloody suicide."

These elitist types -- including the Marcuse types who give their reactionary views a radical cast -- fear democratic liberties in their very bones. They are in the full tradition of Carlyle and Ruskin and H. G. Wells and similar theoreticians expressing the impotent aspirations of disrooted intellectuals for Platonic kingdoms of the philosopher-despot (whose visage usually has a curious resemblance to their own).

While they are impotent themselves, their real role is as apologists for less impotent would-be despots.

Revolutionary socialists propose to do the opposite. We want to push to the limit all the presuppositions and practices of the fullest democratic involvement of the greatest mass of people. To the limit; that is, all the way. No progressive social transformation is possible except insofar as the largest mass of plain people from way below in society start moving. And this movement both requires, and also helps to bring about, the fullest opening-up of society to democratic controls from below -- not their further restriction. It means the breaking up of anti-democratic limitations and restrictions. It means the greater unleashing of new initiatives from below. In other words, it means the exact opposite of Marcuseism.

The issue of free speech is only one sector of this greater question; but it is nonetheless a test of politics.

*Perhaps as a result of Marcuse's influence, the SDS's Carl Davidson (New Left Notes, 13 Nov. 1967) has an extraordinarily crude formulation of this point of view. His conclusion: "it is the duty of a revolutionary not only to be intolerant of, but to actually suppress the anti-democratic activities of the dominant order." The reason: "our critique argues" that this social order is anti-democratic. Now if someone else's critique "argues" that it is Davidson and his friends who are anti-democratic, then that someone else has just as good a case for suppressing him and his similars. Not only that, but since the "dominant order" is indeed dominant, whereas Davidson represents a small minority, there is no question of who is going to suppress whom. The very idea of an obvious minority taking about suppressing the "activities of the dominant order" is itself a give-away -- if that order is indeed dominant. Among the things it gives away is that such grandiose bluster is a mark of impotence and frustration, not strength and confidence.



New Garbage in Old Pails

by Kim Moody

On Friday, February 2, thousands of sanitation workers rallied in front of New York's City Hall to determine what course their union would take when the strike deadline expired at midnight. In answer to the spontaneous chants of "Strike, Strike, Strike" from the crowd, union president John DeLury announced he could not declare a strike. At that point shouts went up and eggs whizzed through the air. DeLury, union leader for nearly two decades, ran into City Hall to save himself. When he emerged again, it was to shout, "Go, go, go." At midnight, New York's garbage collection services were terminated and the nine day strike begun.

The contract of the Uniformed Sanitationmen's Association (a Teamster affiliate) had expired six months earlier on June 30, 1967. For half a year the union leadership had haggled, argued and presented briefs under the city's complex system of mediation, impasse and panels, once denounced by DeLury as "a spider's web of company unionism." In the meantime, the conditions under which the men worked continued to deteriorate. The increasing speed-up, for example, is clearly indicated by the fact that between 1966 and 1967 while the number of trucks in commission declined by some 20% and the number of men working the trucks also declined by 5%, still over 100,000 more tons of garbage were collected in 1967 as compared to 1966. In addition, most of the trucks were in bad shape and quite dangerous, and the sanitation centers and garages were hovels. In a city where the U.S. Department of Labor declared the modest but adequate income for a family of four to be over \$10,000 sanitationmen made from \$6,424 to \$7,956 after three years. The union had originally asked for a \$600 annual increase, but the city's "mediation" panel had offered \$300 from the contract expiration date plus an additional \$100 retroactive to January 1, 1968, less than \$400 total.

The city's intransigent bargaining position had been foreshadowed in May 1967 when Mayor Lindsay announced:

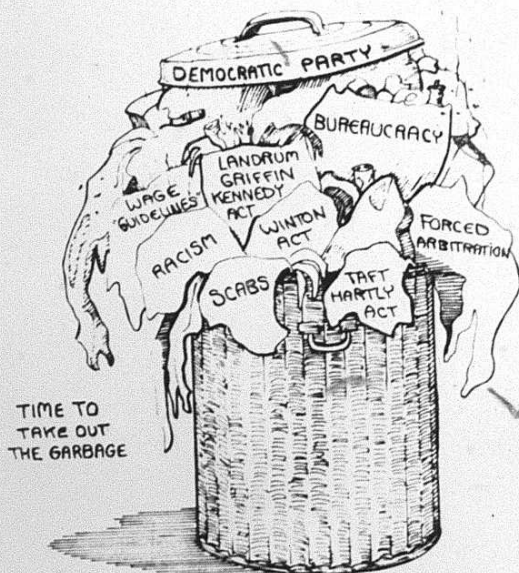
"The salary levels now achieved by major employee groups in New York warrant, in my view, a more conservative approach by the city in future negotiations."

BOSS LINDSAY

Lindsay's brutal union-busting tactics in the welfare workers strike (Social Service Employees Union) during the summer were a further warning to the Sanitationmen. Backing up the city's "take it or leave it" bargaining style was the state's new Taylor Law, illegalizing public employee strikes. Inevitably, when the 10,000-member Sanitationmen's union finally forced its leadership to call the strike, Lindsay pulled out all the stops. Almost immediately, the city obtained a court injunction against the strike. The union, however, continued its strike. On Tuesday, February 6, DeLury was hauled into court and sentenced to 15 days in jail and treated to a lecture on public health by the judge. Shortly afterward, prosecution under the Taylor Law

was initiated, resulting a week later in an \$80,000 fine and an 18-month suspension of dues checkoff rights. On the day that DeLury went to jail, Mayor Lindsay ordered 3,000 city employees "transferred" to the Sanitation Department for garbage-collecting duties, i.e., scabbing. These workers, on their own, refused the assignment at the risk of dismissal, and forced District Council 37 AFSCME (AFL-CIO) leader Victor Gettbaum to state that no AFSCME member would submit to the scabbing order and that any workers ordered to scab would be called out on strike by AFSCME. In the early hours of the next morning Lindsay met with Governor Rockefeller and requested that the National Guard be called to the city to collect garbage and break the strike. The vision of the National Guard busting through picket lines, which were thrown up at all Sanitation garages, and manning the trucks with arms in hand set off open discussion of a general strike. It also unleashed the specter of mid-winter "incidents" in the ghetto, where the presence of the Guard — for any purpose — was bound to create hostility. Lindsay apparently was willing to risk even semi-insurrection in order to throttle New York's labor movement; Rockefeller was not.

The governor rejected Lindsay's request for the Guard and, on February 8, announced that he would set up a mediation panel to speed a settlement of the strike. The next day this mediation panel recommended a \$425 increase. A meeting of the union shop stewards accepted the offer, but the mayor said no. Lindsay would not go one penny above \$400. Lindsay, long a sort of cultural hero to New York's middle and upper classes, was sticking his political neck out, and at this point he got it chopped off. Rockefeller announced that the state would take over the City Sanitation Department and put the men back to work at the \$425 rate. For the moment, Rockefeller, initiator of the anti-labor Taylor



Law, became the hero of the labor movement. On February 10, with many issues still unsettled, the Sanitationmen returned to work at the new rate — or so they thought. There was still no contract.

Bargaining between the city and the union was resumed, but the court refused to release DeLury for the talks. It was soon clear that no progress could be made as the city clung to its intransigent position. Furthermore, on February 13, the leaders of the State Legislature announced that they would not bring Rockefeller's proposal for temporary state control of the Sanitation Department up for a vote. This, along with Lindsay's continued refusal to accept the mediation panel's proposal, was the signal for a double-cross on the pay issue. When the Sanitationmen, who were doing a monumental job of cleaning up the city and working many hours of over-time, got their pay checks, they found they were being paid at the old rate, and at straight time to boot. Suddenly, no one had the power to do anything about this terrible "oversight."

THANK YOU, GOVERNOR

The contract talks with the city got nowhere. Fin-

ally, when the union threatened to break off the talks, though not to strike, Rockefeller stepped in again and proposed, along with George Meany, that all issues be settled by binding arbitration. Lindsay and the union leadership jumped on this, as the face-saving device it was, and gleefully accepted.

As of this writing the arbitrators have not arrived at any results, but there is little doubt that they will represent anything like a major victory. To quell the anger of the men at being double-crossed, DeLury has initiated a public exposé of the working conditions in Sanitation. This "moral" pressuring, however, is only a clear indication that these issues will not be resolved in the forthcoming contract. For his part, Rockefeller has clarified his position, once again, by calling for a toughening up of the Taylor Law. Yesterday's hero of labor is once again cast in his proper role as Boss. The inconclusive results of the strike, the continuing deterioration of working conditions for Sanitationmen, and the strengthening of anti-labor legislation as an answer to this situation, all point to the need for rank-and-file organization and control and for independent political action for labor. This may be a difficult path, but the alternative, the old way, is tougher.

AN EXCHANGE

Guerillaism, the Peasantry, and the NLF

By Al Greene

Don Bacheller's article on Regis Debray in I.S. #3 was generally sound, but some of the assumptions he made about guerilla peasant movements, as well as his generalizations (often equating Debray's concepts with ALL guerilla movements in the conclusions he draws) were misleading.

On page 20, he writes: "The peasantry, due mainly to the conditions of rural life, does not tend to create such institutions (peasant councils) on a sustained basis. Where such peasant councils have been formed, they usually have been in a symbiotic relationship with workers' institutions." Later he writes, "Sustained revolutionary institutions among peasants are difficult at best." He says that the remote rural areas in which guerilla military campaigns are carried out make communication between workers and guerilla armies "impossible." He cites the generally "insufficient" military equipping of guerilla armies as causes for the "hopelessness" of their potential success. Then he says what this writer has reason to believe underlies the other reasons posited for giving up on guerilla warfare entirely: "Most importantly, followers of Debray would actively oppose the creation of any independent peasant institutions."

Going on, he says somewhat later on the same page, "They (peasants) are unable to wield any effective control over either the revolutionary movement or the social order. They remain the passive objects of history, rather than making their own history and their own new society."

First, while it might be correct to say that DEMOCRATIC peasants' councils are hardly possible in

MOST revolutionary guerilla situations, this is not to conclude that ALL "sustained revolutionary institutions" are not possible. The fact that Trotskyists were able to organize independent peasant councils in 1947-'48 in Vietnam belies the seemingly "inevitable" way Bacheller and others among us approach the issue. To say, "But Ho Chi Minh and the French colonialists crushed those councils," is nevertheless NOT to say they DIDN'T EXIST, nor is it to justify non-support of peasant guerilla movements because they can't "hold out" against ruling class power. The Hungarian workers were crushed in 1956 by the Russian ruling class because the Russians simply had more guns and men to use them. But to say we shouldn't have supported them (the Hungarians) is to give ourselves over to the crude REALPOLITIK all existing rulers use as justification for their rule. In both cases, Hungary and Vietnam, the issue was and is, do we support revolutionary movements (no matter how rotten their leaderships — and Imre Nagy was certainly no Bolshevik) that strive for self-determination? It seems to me that the answer for any revolutionary socialist is (or should be) obvious.

It will be protested, "But Hungary was a workers' revolt." Still, when people are in motion and SUBJECTIVELY, at least, are revolutionary, do we abandon them? Of course not.

Secondly, if communication between workers and peasants is "impossible," then how was communication established between the Russian workers and peasants in 1917? Certainly Trotsky in attacking the absurdities of the Communist International in 1925 was not stopped from doing so because he felt "communication" between Chinese workers and peasants was "impossible," and therefore a revolution in that country could not take

place.

Thirdly, regarding Bacheller's comment on the "hopelessness" of guerilla campaigns due to their insufficient military equipment, can he say that about the revolutionary peasant movement that has gone on in Vietnam for 30-40 years — since long before they received ANY aid from Hanoi? Certainly the fact that the NLF has been able to hold out since 1950 against American-supported aid, and now against massive U.S. troops themselves, indicates something different. It just may indicate massive popular support for the NLF by the Vietnamese people — and if this is the case, then the traditional concept that guerilla movements "in general" "can't win" because of lack of military equipment is OVER-RIDDEN by the concrete historical circumstance of massive popular support.

Finally, Bacheller seemingly feels that the probable OPPOSITION of Debray and his followers to any such independent peasant institutions is the most crucial reason for "giving up" on guerilla movements. Yet, as a Marxist who certainly feels people ACT to make their own history, he should, it seems to me, draw the very opposite conclusion — namely, that it is the responsibility of democratic revolutionists to involve themselves in all rank-and-file people's movements where the subjective aspirations of the people do not totally rule out struggling to educate them in a Marxist fashion and where they can be approached apart from the oppressive cliques that "lead" them or claim to speak for them. Fascist movements and the internal political mechanisms of the Democratic party are certainly horses of a far different color than a movement whose base is obviously open to revolutionary socialist education even while its leadership is not. To abandon peasant movements to Debray and his likes — or to Mao-Castro-type Stalinists — is to absolve oneself of a socialist's responsibility. When Bacheller calls peasant guerillas the "passive objects of history" because they do not PRESENTLY control a clique-led revolutionary movement, and seems to imply by this that therefore Marxists should shun such movements, and not support them, he's throwing the whole basis for being a revolutionist — the belief in people's right and ability to fight for their needs and rationally make their history — into the ash can. (Also, the fact that the NLF is presently engaged in armed struggle against U.S. imperialism makes Bacheller's statement about them being passive only partially true. It's the PEOPLE who are doing the fighting — remember that!)

Don Bacheller Replies

Comrade Greene's criticisms of my article raise a number of important points, which, due to space considerations, I will have to reply to rather briefly. I will try to answer them in order of their relative importance.

First of all, I thought that I had made it clear in my article that there are important distinctions between Debray's model for guerilla warfare and the traditional Communist form (the China-Vietnam model); Comrade Greene, however, accuses me of equating the two. In the absence of specific evidence for this, I can only repeat that Debray differs significantly from Mao only on the questions of the degree of mass involvement of

(not control by) the peasantry in the guerilla movement, and the relationship of the guerilla army to the vanguard party. Both perspectives are fundamentally similar in that they represent the military-political strategy of an incipient bureaucratic ruling class which seeks to ride to power on the back of an exclusively peasant-based movement. I failed to distinguish the two models only in places where generalizations were applicable to both.

In his letter, Comrade Greene states that "while it might be correct to say that DEMOCRATIC peasants' councils are hardly possible in most revolutionary guerilla situations, this is not to conclude that ALL 'sustained revolutionary institutions' are not possible." This point simply raises the question: what sort of revolution are we talking about? If we are talking about a SOCIALIST revolution, revolutionary institutions must be democratic by definition — this is the essential content of socialism. If, however, we are talking about a BUREAUCRATIC revolution, I would agree that it is possible for anti-democratic revolutionary institutions to exist on a sustained basis in conditions of guerilla warfare. This, however, merely reinforces my thesis.

PEASANTS AND WORKERS

Comrade Greene asks in his letter "if communication between workers and peasants is 'impossible', then how was communication established between Russian workers and peasants in 1917." Here he seems to have fundamentally misunderstood the point I was trying to make in that part of the article. When I said that "even effective communication between the masses of workers and the guerilla armies is impossible," I was referring specifically to the conditions of GUERRILLA warfare. (Contrary to popular misconceptions, the Russian Revolution and Civil War were not fought on a primarily guerilla basis.) The fundamental distinction between guerilla and conventional warfare is that a guerilla army does not attempt to occupy and hold any specific territory, but seeks to defeat its enemy by harassing and exhausting it. If, for example, the Russian Revolution had been fought on a guerilla basis, the White Armies would have occupied Petrograd, Moscow and the other major urban centers and held them until the end of the Civil War (since guerilla strategy specifies that the guerilla army must not seriously attempt to defend a specific area against its opponent). In such a situation, it would indeed have been impossible for the revolutionary workers and peasants of Russia to maintain effective contact with, or control over, the Red Armies. As noted above, however, the Russian Revolution was not fought on that basis.

Comrade Greene makes much of my supposed "comment on the 'hopelessness' of guerilla campaigns," a point that, if he re-reads my article, he will notice that I did not make. What I did try to say was that, in general, it is very DIFFICULT for guerillas (and especially DEBRAY'S type of guerillas) to succeed against a well armed and equipped enemy. Furthermore, as I pointed out in the article with reference to Cuba, where guerillas do succeed in overthrowing the old regime, this is less due to their own efforts than to a shift in the objective conditions in the urban centers of the society involved, where EVERY class in that society turns against the old regime, the government collapses, and a vacuum is created which the guerillas fill. This is also essentially what happened in the last stages of the Chinese Civil War.

Furthermore, the protracted struggle necessitated by the guerilla approach, together with the inability of the

guerilla armies to defend specific areas, results in a catastrophic degree of suffering and death suffered by the civilian population, and in periodic orgies of violent repression when the old regime mounts punitive expeditions into guerilla-occupied areas.

When the guerillas seek to compete on equal terms with the government forces, they are forced to greater reliance on outside aid. An example of this can be seen in the present struggle in Vietnam, where an increasingly greater degree of the burden of the war has been falling on regular soldiers of the North Vietnamese Army, and where the nature of the struggle has been shifting from a popular uprising into a brutal contest between the two imperialist power blocs.

By far the most important point which Comrade Greene raised concerns the question of socialist support for the National Liberation Front. We would do well to begin by defining the criteria for support of a social movement.

THE NLF

Comrade Greene seems to base his support for the NLF on his judgment that the NLF is a mass-based popular movement which seeks to overthrow the reactionary social institutions which presently exist in South Vietnam. I would, in general, accept that proposition (although a look at the PROGRAM of the NLF would reveal that it isn't exactly revolutionary, as is often supposed, or even very radical — the important point to remember here is that an NLF victory would undoubtedly lead to the overthrow of capitalism in South Vietnam). However, I believe that simply stating that the NLF would overthrow the institutions of the old regime does not constitute sufficient basis for supporting such a movement. I would maintain instead that revolutionary socialists can only consistently support movements whose success will lead in the direction of socialist revolution (i.e. — which will open up the class struggle and will materially enhance the ability of the masses to fight for proletarian democracy).

It is necessary, therefore, to determine what the consequences of an NLF victory in Vietnam would be, and to determine the nature of the institutions which the NLF would establish in place of the old regime.

First of all, it is necessary to keep clear in our minds the difference between the MASS BASE of a party or movement and its CLASS BASIS; for example, the fact that the mass base of the NLF lies among the peasantry does not mean that the NLF is controlled BY the peasantry, or that an NLF victory will establish peasant control of the state and the society. Instead, the NLF is controlled by an incipient bureaucratic ruling class — that is its class basis, and that is the class which would be projected into state power by an NLF victory. (Similarly, the Democratic Party in the U.S. has a largely working class mass base; but it is controlled by the capitalist class, and therefore remains fundamentally a bourgeois party).

What would be the probable concrete results of an NLF victory in Vietnam? In the first place, on the basis of experience with Communist regimes in the past, it seems virtually certain that the establishment of Communist state power in Vietnam would result in the smashing of the most important independent working class institutions — trade unions and workers' councils (if such councils arose during the course of the struggle). Trade unions in Communist societies are notably different from their equivalents in most capitalist countries in that they are the arm of the

state for the disciplining of the labor force, rather than independent institutions which are potentially capable of defending workers' interests, through strikes, slowdowns, political action, etc. In such a situation, the Vietnamese working class would be deprived of those institutions which are most necessary for it to defend itself as a class.

Secondly, due to the police-state measures generally used in at least the initial period of Stalinist control of a society, it is most likely that any alternative revolutionary socialist leadership in Vietnam would be effectively crushed. Therefore, in addition to losing its independent institutions, the working class in Vietnam would be deprived of its potential political leadership by a Stalinist victory.

And finally, in terms of the material interests of the Vietnamese working class, an NLF victory would almost undoubtedly be disastrous. In an underdeveloped country such as Vietnam, it would be relatively easy for a bureaucratic ruling class to play the peasantry off against the workers in an attempt to cut working class standards of living. Furthermore, in such a society, the forced industrialization which Communist governments usually undertake would mean decades of suffering and brutal exploitation unparalleled since the bourgeois industrial revolution. This economic degradation would hit the peasantry equally as hard as it would the working class.

It is clear, therefore, that a victory for the NLF in Vietnam would in no way promote the realization of the goals of revolutionary socialists — internationalist proletarian democracy leading to a classless society. A victory for the NLF would, on the contrary, make the realization of those goals more difficult in the present period by strengthening the power of the bureaucratic-Communist alternative to capitalist imperialism. I believe therefore, that independent revolutionary socialists cannot support the NLF or movements similar to it; instead they should fight to build a democratic and revolutionary third alternative to both American imperialism and the new system of exploitation which would be introduced by the victory of Communist forces.

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Occupation

Hollywood's Gift to Berkeley

by Charles Capper

The point of Mike Nichols' new film, "The Graduate," seems, at first, clear enough. A newly graduated student returns from an Eastern college, to be greeted by a fawning pack of rich admirers — his parents and their Southern California friends. While the party in his honor enthusiastically awaits his arrival, the graduate, Benjamin, sulks in his room, complaining to his father that he has no future and wants only to be "different." At the party we see Benjamin in his sympathetic role of incredulous straight-man for the vulgar obscenities of his parents' friends: "Plastics" is the one word summation of advice his father's business partner whispers to him. So far so good. Here is the traditional theatrical portrayal of a clean-cut, sensitive middle-class youth displaying clean-cut, sensitive signs of alienation from the materialistic, inauthentic lives of his parents. And here the film seems destined to go the way of all such recent refined portrayals of youthful alienation — minor family conflicts, whimpering cuteness, romantic imaginative wanderings. And suddenly, when summer vacation is over, the youth, having experienced "maturity-developing-realities," makes his peace with society, retaining the sensitivity but now in the context of the reluctantly accepted world of his parents. Along the way, of course, he has learned that there are positive qualities of that world, overlooked by his immature, other-worldly youth. "The eternal cycle of youth and age, youth and maturity, youth and reality," mumbles the satisfied bourgeois placing his wrap around his wife as they leave the theater, at peace with the world. And again we would have the liberal establishment's gesture to the generation of rebellion and alienation — a sympathetic portrayal of the discriminating youth easily re-assimilated, sensitivity and all, back into the womb-tomb of bourgeois society.

But with "The Graduate" something else happens, and that something else points to the special appeal and serious failure of the film — an unsuccessful attempt to transcend the limitations of the dramatic mould of youthful-romantic bourgeois alienation.

BOURGEOIS SHALLOWNESS

Throughout the film there are important signs that this is not to be merely a play of sensitive youth versus practical or even vulgar adulthood. For one thing, the other youths in the film, wherever they appear, are as much as copies in miniature of their parents, with the college substituting for the status motivations of the modern corporate office. Moreover, there is a bitterness here in displaying the shallowness and hypocrisy of the bourgeois world, a portrayal that from the beginning threatens to make any re-assimilation, any liberal "solution," very difficult to imagine. Hence, very early in the film we see Benjamin, stumbling out of the living-room to the cheering applause of a half-dozen of his parents' friends by the pool, in his father's \$200 birthday gift of a skin-diver's outfit. Smothered by the gift, Benjamin is suddenly made into the prized goal of his parent's world — a human being reshaped into the image of a commodity.

The film's real claim to difference, however, is rooted in something much more carnal than a skin-diver's suit. At one point Mrs. Robinson, a sexual (in a hard, "sophisticated" sense), neurotic friend of the family tries to seduce Benjamin after inviting him to drive her home from the party. The resulting series of rendezvous provide the film with an endless series of what T-V GUIDE calls "comic situations," but all with an increasingly bitter cast. After a number of meetings at a local hotel, Mrs. Robinson makes it clear to Benjamin that she does not want him to take out her daughter who is visiting from Berkeley, implying that his escapades have made him unworthy. Due in part to the pressure of his parents, he takes Elaine out anyway and, on the basis of little else than a few superficial "shared experiences," falls in love with her. Meanwhile, Mrs. Robinson, desperate to prevent things from going any further, tells Elaine about what she claims to be a rape by Benjamin. At Berkeley (filmed alternately and unconvincingly on and off location), Benjamin pursues an upset but eventually yielding Elaine. Mr. Robinson, however, after threatening Benjamin with jail if he touches his daughter, somehow manages to drag Elaine off to marry her old boyfriend, "Mr. Make-Out-Artist" from a Berkeley fraternity. Now the heroics really escalate. Speeding in his Alfa Romeo (gift from father), running at a professional pace (former college track star), he breaks into the church, leaps up to the balcony, and from behind a sheet of glass this modern youth-Christ pounds at the invisible barrier, shouting "Elaine." The bourgeois mob of worshippers there for the wedding, Elaine's parents and friends, turn on him violently. And finally the two lovers escape on a local bus, presumably to live the "different" kind of life always, if rather vaguely, desired by Benjamin.

This, then, IS something different . . . or is it? It is assuredly the hypocrisy of the bourgeois family, held together not by love or even sex, but by money, by self-hate, by the fear of the disintegration of social and family class relations; the reification and dehumanization of individuals remade into the image of commodities; the violence with which this class defends itself against any threats to its power and its image of itself — all these point to a good deal more than the "misunderstandings" of a generational conflict. It is no wonder that Benjamin and Elaine can only escape from the corrupt church at the end of the film. But escape toward what? What really is being said here? How really different, how really serious, has Broadway-Hollywood become?

The first thing one notices is that the origins of the conflict, the turning-point seduction scene, though central, is in a way accidental, peripheral, not organically bound up with the structure of the story and characters. What if there had been no seduction, an accident at least as likely (given no particular basis for the necessity of seduction) as what did happen? Then what? You have a film with a student who displays sensitivity and a vague sense of unrest (who doesn't?) over the prospect of his meaningless future. There is certainly little else in him that would indicate much

more of a rebel. The rest of the characters are themselves underdeveloped, generally striking the same tone throughout the film. Mrs. Robinson, a wooden character accurately played as such by Anne Bancroft, is hard, cold, sophisticated . . . and what else? Her evil qualities are presented like those of the stock villains of the old morality plays, with little or no development of their origins or complexities.

A GAME OF LOGIC

But there IS a turning point and the story and characters DO change, or so it seems at first. Yet, because the accident of the seduction remains external to the structure of the story and even the psychologies of the characters, the changes appear unreal. There is nothing inherent in the structure of the family, for example, that would account for its violence at the end. Suddenly Mr. Robinson is upset and grows violent. We know why he changed -- the seduction. But this is only the surface explanation, worthy of a game of logic, not a play. What is it about their nature as characters, as human beings, that accounts for this violence? If nothing but the seduction, how easier then we can all breathe, secure in the knowledge that after all this is only a play, acted out by unreal villains, built on an unlikely accident that could just as easily not have happened.

But even given the one-dimensional, wooden quality of the characters, given the accidental artificiality of the turning-point, still the film might have been salvaged by Benjamin himself. If he had been radically transformed by such an experience, no matter how contrived that original experience might seem, then we might indeed have a more interesting play. And, in a sense, we do. Professionally portrayed by Dustin Hoffman, Benjamin does after all bereft himself of most of his bourgeois luggage in his chase of Elaine in Berkeley. He has given up all his claims on his "future," stripped himself of his fraternity boy suit, and even run down his Alfa Romeo on the way to the church. This process of personal and social annihilation is the most interesting and meaningful aspect of the film. But what do we have left at the end? Apart from externals, as far as his character shows through, Benjamin is still pretty much the same nice, cute, sensitive, and pretty shallow (Jewish) boy. (Parenthetically, either to broaden the scope of social identification or to protect middle-class Jewish culture from indictment, the film seems to be afraid of revealing the bourgeoisification of the American Jewish family. Consequently, a good deal of cultural confusion results, like the ludicrousness of Jewish mannerisms inside a Christian church.) After a while we get a bit weary of his eminently sympathetic way of reacting to worldly evils by innocently trying to be nice. What does this twentieth-century Billy Budd tell a cranky, sick landlord (the type that seems to have a monopoly on property around college towns, as if made to torment students) when he defiantly asks if he is not "one of them outside agitators." Oh no, Benjamin replies. And he is really telling the truth.

The romantic synthesis at the end, the film's "solution" to the problem of youthful bourgeois alienation, is itself as artificially contrived and as unreal as the story and the characters from which it is supposed to flow. First of all it is romantic in the worst sense -- having no basis in the objective reality of the play. What do we know of Elaine but that she is pretty, sensitive (capable of crying when taken to a burlesque show) and . . . what? Benjamin just falls in love with nothing, a subjective

abstraction, like the boy in "The Fantastics," only here the play ends with only half the day. And what little substance is revealed shows her to be hardly the stuff out of which rebels, even romantic ones, are made. Her change, or changes, come off as easily as her make-up. She's predictably upset over the revelation of her mother's affair (or, as she thinks, Benjamin's rape of her mother), but finally, with few psychological complications, she yields to Benjamin, only to be later whisked away to marriage with "Mr. Make-Out-Artist." It is a little wonder that one can only shudder a bit at the melodrama of Elaine screaming for Benjamin in reply to his screams in the church. There is simply nothing about Elaine that would indicate much more than a cute, rich, pretty girl at best escaping to nowhere, at worst changing her make-up for the night and putting on her Simon and Garfunkle (music for the film) record.

THE CRITIC'S CHOICE

And yet the film is the New York critics' hit of the year, second only to "Bonnie and Clyde," appearing on every critic's list of the year's top ten and nominated for ten academy awards. Its admirers include even so usually sophisticated and iconoclastic a critic as Stanley Kauffman. Part of the popularity of the film might be explained by the professionally comic performance of the acting and direction. The actors, especially Dustin Hoffman, turned in smooth, often even clever portrayals. But even as polished as the acting was, one could not help but be irritated by the way the simple and static quality of the characters, striking the same note over and over again, severely limited the scope and depth of actors obviously capable of much more. This was particularly true of Anne Bancroft playing Mrs. Robinson. The direction too, while very clever at times, revealed the essential lack of depth in the film. Mike Nichols' imprint was clearly, probably overclearly, stamped on seemingly every line, every gesture of the major actors. This overdirection, plus the rather clichéish managed movie techniques (fade in from Mrs. Robinson to Benjamin's mother) and theater-oriented directions (fade-outs on "frozen" actors in scenes, the timing in the comic scenes, the scream scene in the church), might be partly attributed to Mr. Nichols' orientation toward the medium of the legitimate theater. But, more importantly, I think his direction underlines the unfortunate substitution of professional cleverness for serious content.

Probably even more revealing than the surface dazzle in explaining the critical appeal of the film is a kind of will-to-believe, especially on the part of middle-aged critics vaguely uncomfortable about the bombs of Vietnam and the culture of Tarzana. The viciousness of the bourgeois family, even if portrayed as simply as in this film, makes even the most unreal escape seem plausible, if not desirable. It is this understandable will-to-escape the realities of bourgeois life, without too high a social or personal cost, that helps to explain this appeal, even in spite of the film's serious, and at times rather obvious, social and esthetic failures. And moreover this will-to-escape envelops many of even the most hardened student radicals who, even while they flinch at the Hollywood version of the Berkeley campus, will be with Benjamin and Elaine on that bus leaving the church.

But this sense of identification with the plight of a superficially sympathetic character cannot obscure the inadequacies of the film, failures rooted in a surface-romantic portrayal of youthful bourgeois alienation. For the alienated among us, the film is a welcome,

Fascism and Poetry

by Gary Hunt

THE REACTIONARIES: YEATS, LEWIS, POUND, ELIOT, LAWRENCE: A STUDY OF THE ANTI-DEMOCRATIC INTELLIGENTSIA

by John R. Harrison,

Introduction by William Empson,

Schocken Books, 224 pp., \$6.00

This is a convenient book to own, but a very disappointing one to read. It is convenient because John Harrison has conducted some useful research into the political theories of Yeats, Wyndham Lewis, Pound, Eliot and Lawrence, organizing his findings into five solid, well-written chapters. He makes few surprising discoveries. On the contrary, he confirms what most of us had already known: that several of our best 20th-century writers have been dreary reactionaries, even to the extent of supporting the fascist regimes in Italy and Germany. "What is important," says Harrison, "is to find out why they held such views."

CAPITALIST DEMOCRACY

But Harrison approaches his task with the perspective of a stolid liberal, almost wholly untroubled by the modern capitalist "democracy" against which all these writers found themselves in violent reaction. "Why is it," he asks on the first page, "that great creative artists can totally reject a liberal, democratic, humanitarian society, and prefer a cruel, authoritarian, bellicose society?" Needless to say, many have learned to distrust such naive dualisms, particularly when confronted with the specter of a society that practices near-genocide in Vietnamese jungles while claiming to be the world's foremost exponent of a "liberal, democratic, humanitarian" tradition. Nor would this irony have been lost on the writers in question. All of them except Yeats reached maturity during a war of unprecedented scope and brutality, a war fought for the most cynical economic reasons and yet accompanied by fine liberal rhetoric ("making the world safe for democracy," etc.). To this experience they responded in various ways. Yeats saw the war as belonging to that reality which the poet must struggle to deny, and thus concluded his "Meditation in Time of War" by affirming "that One is animate,/ Mankind inanimate phantasy." Pound attacked the economic basis of the war in terms reminiscent of the Populists, and his thinking was similarly clouded by simplistic theories and Jew-baiting. D. H. Lawrence reacted with his usual sense

Hollywood's Gift---

comic, enjoyable, but truly inadequate release from our seemingly self-encased world. To the oppressed and/or revolutionary among us, it offers well-executed diversions into the grotesque melodrama of the bourgeois family. And to the bourgeois, the film provides a non-threatening exploration into the neurotic fringes of another person's family. Truly, a film for the whole family

of personal outrage against the regimentation which the war produced in English society. But each of them recognized the emptiness of the liberal assumptions that define Harrison's own point of view. Emerging from the Victorian period with its facile equation of material progress with human value and personal freedom, they revived in new form the Romantic revolt against an entire culture shaped by the triumph of capitalism. As with the Romantics, the ground of their revolt was highly subjective and its political expression reactionary. It led almost inevitably to a Nietzschean scorn for the "botched masses" and a longing for strong, authoritarian leadership as an antidote to bourgeois individualism. But by organizing his study around the static, textbook opposition of "democracy" versus "totalitarianism," Harrison misses much of the point. He obscures the great emotional intelligence which underlay their reactionary politics, reducing those politics to a lamentable deviation from common sense.

His formula consists of isolating this or that foolish political theory in order to evaluate it in terms of its adequacy qua theory. Each chapter introduces us to a new series of perverse judgments, frequently accompanied by some unnecessary refutation on Harrison's part. After discussing Eliot's and Pound's anti-semitism, for instance, he assures us that "Jews are not only good at finance; probably no race is more widely gifted."

"The Jew has been the scapegoat for financial evils since medieval times. Pound is especially hard on him, and Eliot shares Pound's antagonism. The Jewish race has acquired a reputation for genius in matters of finance, and it cannot be denied that Jews often hold key financial positions in society. But to say that Jews are the cause of the importance of finance in the modern world is to misunderstand both the Jewish race and modern history."

Such rebuttals are pointless. Of course the Jew is not responsible for the importance of finance in the modern world, and of course Pound and Eliot were simpl-minded to think otherwise. What is significant is that they never used the Jew as a mere hate-object or tactical device, as did the fascists, but as a symbol (albeit an historically inaccurate one) for genuine, sincerely-felt problems: viz. the cultural confusion, vulgar materialism, artificial class distinction and alienation brought about by modern industrial capitalism. In "Gerontion," to take just one example, Eliot has a senile old man complain of the "Jew on the window sill, the owner,/ Spawned in some estaminet of Antwerp,/ Blistered in Brussels, patched and peeled in London." The lines are obviously not written for the sake of reviling the Jew, but rather to evoke the sense in which human heroism and excellence have atrophied in a world owned and manipulated by others, themselves victims of an even greater system of dislocation that uproots men from their origins and traps them within certain passive economic roles. The fact that Eliot and Pound erred in thinking the Jew was especially responsible for creating this state of affairs does not

undermine their critique of it.

THE ROMANTIC REVOLT

Of course from the moment that these writers tried to formulate political alternatives to the status quo, they became reactionary, utopian and elitist. During the 19th-century many poets, including Wordsworth and Tennyson, had longed for a return to the calm, ordered world of agrarian feudalism wherein each man's function might be strictly circumscribed so as to avoid the spiritual disasters latent in the new economic individualism. Among the writers in question, Eliot seems closest to this tradition of medieval revival. In both NOTES TOWARD THE DEFINITION OF CULTURE and the IDEA OF A CHRISTIAN SOCIETY, he develops the thesis that in order to preserve genuine religious life as well as a high standard of culture, it is necessary to create a stable hierarchy headed by an aristocratic elite. Similar ideas are reflected in Eliot's literary criticism, as for instance in his preference for Dante over Shakespeare or his famous notion of a "dissociation of sensibility." According to this theory, "thought" and "feeling" had been inseparable in the poetry prior to the late Renaissance, but were then rent asunder by men such as Milton in the process of trying to affirm a vital, God-centered universe against mounting odds. This is just another manifestation of Eliot's aristocratic bias. In a hierarchical period prior to the rise of science, technology and industrialism, it was possible for a single man to dominate his immediate environment in the sense that he could mentally encompass almost everything of significance within it.

In fact, each of these writers except Lewis chose his own period out of the past to exemplify aristocratic "wholeness" as opposed to the fragmentation and alienation of the bourgeoisie. For Yeats, it was Byzantium during the 9th and 10th centuries: "I think that in early Byzantium, maybe never before or since in recorded history, religious, aesthetic and practical life were one." For Pound, it was China during the life of Confucius; and for Lawrence, it was some pre-Christian period when "the blood of the individual was given back to the great blood-being, the god, the nation, the tribe." They did not construct these reactionary utopias because they despised mankind (as Harrison suggests), but precisely because, reverencing man and recognizing the awful threat which urban democracy posed to his potentialities, they wanted to save him from himself, from his own worst instincts. If they were anti-humanitarian, it was the sterile 19th-century humanitarianism of a Bentham that they scorned.

Aside from its obtrusive liberalism, Harrison's book is marred by the lack of any genuine historical sense. If we really want to understand how these writers came to embrace fascism in the 1930's, we must start by investigating the actual historical circumstances which each of them encountered in the course of his maturation, as well as the inherent limitations of the neo-Romantic poetic which dominated the literary scene during their early years. Several pages of the "Introductory" are devoted to a general discussion of conservative trends in 19th-century thought (Nietzsche, Carlyle, Ruskin, etc.), but Harrison does not connect this background in any specific way to the writers in question. As a result, he ends up documenting their sympathy for fascism rather than explaining it. He proceeds by culling through their poetry, essays and letters in search of announced attitudes, but

fails to penetrate beyond them to formative elements in their own experience. For instance, had Harrison bothered to investigate the history of the Irish independence movement with all its violence, banality and liberal failure, he might not have been so hard on Yeats for embracing the aristocracy while writing political poems filled with despair at the inability of the people to govern themselves. Yeats's disillusionment with the politics of democracy did have certain objective origins, but Harrison would rather attribute it to some defect in his personality: "There are numerous references by people who knew him to his lack of human sympathy, his coldness and aloofness."

MYTH OF THE ART-GOD

One final point. It is true, as Harrison says, that these writers were drawn toward aristocratic utopianism and even fascism because they thought it essential to maintain the welfare and integrity of the Artist, even at the expense of the masses. But this was not due merely to some kind of personal arrogance. It was the inevitable outgrowth of the whole complex of neo-Romantic assumptions which they had inherited from the Symbolists and Imagists -- assumptions which have dominated art in one form or another since the emergence of industrial capitalism in the late 18th century. From the moment that Blake, Shelley and others claimed access to kinds of knowledge unavailable to the masses, a very dangerous myth was born. The myth was exacerbated by Nietzsche, who systematically replaced ethical categories with aesthetic ones, so that the "Good" became identified with that which was at once vividly perceived and profoundly organized. Both metaphysics and morality fell increasingly under the providence of the suffering Artist who, isolated from society, engaged in a lonely quest for imaginative insight into Truth. The greater the burdens thrust upon him, the deeper he needed to retire into his own subjectivity in search of bedrock.

Under the banner of "classicism," T. E. Hulme, Pound, Eliot and the older Yeats rejected the accouterments but not the essential premise of Romanticism. They insisted upon a "hard," "dry" verse which would avoid flamboyant subjectivism, sentimentality and formlessness. At the same time, each of them felt that the poet ought to write out of some "objective" dogma rather than his own feelings. But it is essential to understand that whether we are dealing with Pound's Confucianism, Eliot's Anglicanism or Yeats' private mythology, the ground of commitment remained entirely subjective, and the poet was so aware of this fact that he had to write poem after poem validating his choice. In other words, the artist still had godlike powers and responsibilities. He retained the right to assert his own vision and continued to demand that the reader acquiesce in his personal response to experience. It is hardly surprising, then, that in formulating his politics, each of these artists should have opted for a society which he thought would make the least encroachment upon his right to "own" and administer reality as he saw fit.

The past 30 years have seen tentative signs of the death of the Art-God and the rise of a genuine post-Romantic period which recognizes the need for humanist values, not as a determinant of artistic subject-matters, but as a new foundation for reason and feeling. Let us refrain from damning our forebears for postures they could not escape. Meanwhile, let us not only reject the reactionary postures of our forebears, but also critically understand and struggle against the society that produced them.