

ANVIL

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The Negro Fights for FREEDOM



Anvil and Student Partisan

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Where Anvil Stands...

Anvil and Student Partisan wishes to express the ideas, criticisms and proposals of students who believe in democratic socialism. We address ourselves to those who seek the preservation and extension of democratic values to all forms of political and economic life. We firmly contend that this end must be pursued without deference to the status quo of private property interests, social inequality and human oppression which are characteristic of Western capitalism. At the same time, we are fully aware that totalitarian collectivism, which presently dominates much of the eastern world with its new exploitation and oppression, is the very antithesis of the democratic and equalitarian society which we seek.

We further believe that democracy and socialism are inseparable. Guarantees of democratic rights to all people, without any restrictions, in a society based upon private ownership of the basic means of production and human exploitation, are as impossible as achieving socialism in any society where democratic control is absent from nationalized productive facilities. Socialism cannot exist without democracy. Democracy can only flourish when all human needs are satisfied. Furthermore, a socialist society can only be attained through the conscious thoughtful efforts of a majority of the world's peoples. For this reason we see our task today as an educational and propagandistic one. We seek to encourage a socialist choice as a solution to the power struggle which holds the world in continuous fear and anxiety. This socialist choice must reject both the Western and Communist blocs, neither one of which offers hope of democracy, peace and security. Consequently, the socialist choice is a third choice which must embody and express the hopes and desires of the world's peoples in order to triumph.

Anvil and Student Partisan is open to those who desire to critically examine the socialist tradition and to reevaluate those aspects of it which are no longer applicable. But as our name implies, we claim no impartiality on the major social questions of our time, nor the forces behind them. We will defend colonial movements struggling for freedom from foreign domination and at the same time we will extend our hand to those behind the iron curtain who seek to overthrow their oppressive masters. We will seek to create sympathy for the aspirations of working class movements throughout the world. And we will support the struggles of the American labor movement for a larger share in that better life of which socialism is the final consummation.

YOUNG SOCIALIST LEAGUE

2029 Turk Street

San Francisco 15, Calif.

Who's Who Amongst Our Contributors . . .

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George Post is a student of the American Communist movement.

Paul Kowles is our artist.

The Negro Fights for Freedom

The following section offers an analysis of the politics behind the Civil Rights Act, and four reports from the South. The first report deals with the crisis at a Mississippi Negro college which culminated in a strike of the student body demanding the resignation of a Negro professor who had become a spokesman for the segregationists. The student leaders of this strike were summarily expelled from school and the anti-segregationist President dismissed. The NAACP, while deploring any attempt to deny free speech, recognized that the situation was being used to stop any progress at Alcorn and came to the defense of the dismissed students and President. The second report is an account of the author's expulsion from Florida State University because he believed that the fight for Negro freedom was the task of all decent men. The last two parts of this section offer candid-camera shots of the simple people who are the heroes of this struggle.

I. The Civil Rights Act

The Congress of the United States has passed the first civil rights legislation in eighty years. This is a fact of major significance and meaning, even though the law finally signed by the president was a much watered-down version of the original measure submitted to the Congress, and inadequate to meet the entire problem of Negro freedom. The history of this legislation underscores the major facts of the current struggle for Negro rights.

One first must ask "Why was such a piece of legislation passed at this time?" What has changed in the political situation to force the Congress, hitherto "reluctant" to pass even the most moderate civil rights legislation, to adopt this bill? Is it a matter of "growing enlightenment" among the members of Congress? Have the old-time Republican stalwarts such as Representative Joseph Martin of Massachusetts suddenly become confirmed in the cause of civil rights? Have such Southern Democrats as Lyndon Johnson suddenly become civil libertarians? Or does the answer lie elsewhere?

One obvious fact clarifies all: the two political parties are bidding for the votes of the Negroes. And the bidding is not only for the Negro vote of the North, of recent years largely Democratic, but for the Negro vote of the South. The Negro has emerged upon the American political scene, not as in the past, as a pawn to be tossed from party to party in order to mask other, decisive operations, but in his own right, as a force that wields power.

There were, to be sure, long-range, subtle processes at work. The South is changing, is becoming industrialized, is becoming an equal part of the United States, overcoming its former status as an internal colony of Northern capitalism. The coming of industrial capitalism to the South has performed a progressive role, breaking the crust over the boiling cauldron of Southern life, and beginning the process of revolutionizing all former social relations. This must be understood.

The world is changing: the colored peoples, long suppressed under Western imperialist domination, are rising to nationhood, to freedom. This has deeply stirred the Negro people of the United States. And this has created a need for American capitalism, recognized by the Supreme Court's 1954 decision on integration in the schools, to convince the former colonial peoples that discrimination against and segregation of non-whites is a thing of the past. This too must be understood.

But while these provided the background, where the long-range processes, in and of themselves they were not enough. They only emerged on the social scene as moving forces through the conscious, militant participation of the Negro people themselves in the struggle for their own emancipation. The new South and the anti-imperialist struggles of the colored people have produced a new Negro—proud, militant, courageous, overthrowing all the older patterns of adaptive subservience to the white overlords. It was this new Negro who was present in the chambers of the Supreme Court when its historic decision on integration in education was read to the world. It was this new Negro who was present in the same room when the Court ruled against segregation in interstate transportation. And it was this new Negro who was present when the Civil Rights Act of 1957 was forged in the policy-making sessions of the Republican National Committee, in the Cabinet meetings, in the long hours of caucusing, in the meetings of Lyndon Johnson with the southerners who finally voted for the compromise bill.

The new Negro has been personified by the Reverend Martin Luther King and the Montgomery bus boycott; by the New Tallahassee, Florida Inter-Civic Council; by a fifteen year old Negro youth, Terrance Roberts, one of the Negro students who on the first day of school this year attempted to enter a formerly white-high-school in Little Rock Arkansas, only to be met with the armed violence of the state National Guard. (Roberts declared to a reporter, "I think the students would like me okay once I got in and they got to know me.") The new Negro is fifteen year old Dorothy Counts who was the first Negro student to be enrolled at Harding High School, in Charlotte, North Carolina. The new Negro is the thousands of trade unionists and church leaders who participated in last May's Washington Prayer Pilgrimage. The new Negro is the thousands who have gone and registered to vote throughout the South despite threats and actual violence, despite requirements and rulings designed to discourage the most stalwart.

The Negro has become a figure of consequence for both political parties and the bidding for his vote is underway. During the New Deal period, the Democratic Party successfully gained the support of the majority of Negro voters through a carefully and consciously waged campaign on the part of the Northern liberal wing of the party in league with such Southern Democratic liberals as Claude Pepper, Aubrey Williams and Frank Graham. The Negro vote in the North—the only place where there was a Negro vote—was combined with the votes of labor, the small middle-classes, and the small

farmer, to create the coalition that brought Democratic presidential victories from 1932 to 1948. It has been this coalition that has provided the congressional majority for the Democratic Party even when the Eisenhower-father image swept the presidential election. The Republicans have been trying to cut into this coalition for years but, being the first party of American capitalism, it has been unable to buy the votes for congressional elections of the small farmer and labor, although it has made some dent upon the small middle-classes. The Negro vote for the Republicans has become all important.

The Solid South Is Cracking

A new fact of American life has heightened the necessity for the Republican Party to win the Negro votes: due to the rapid industrialization of the South, a two party system is possible once again in such areas of the new South as Texas and Louisiana. The Republican Party is the party of industry and business, it is the first party of American capitalism. This has been its classic role since the 1870s. Thus, when areas of the South take their place as part of an industrial, capitalist America, the same social and political patterns prevalent elsewhere begin to appear there. The old hold of the Democratic Party in the south, a hold based upon an agrarian base, is shaken by the fact that the new industrial middle-classes and the new Southern *haut bourgeoisie* gravitate toward the Republican Party. For these new Southern classes, racism no longer plays the same role as it did for the older planter-merchant ruling class. While the tendency to allow racism to play its role as a factor dividing the working-class of the South is still operative among these new Southern urban middle classes, it is strongly counterbalanced by the need of capitalism for a trained and literate working class and by the revolutionizing tendency of capitalism to sweep away all old social relations. There is, consequently, a tendency in these new classes in the South to be less wedded to the older racist patterns. The racist patterns persist among those classes who have been least affected by the changes in the South, the rural classes and those sections of the Southern working-class who have been just yesterday poor-white farmers themselves. It must be acknowledged that those sections of the Southern working-class, yet to internalize the experiences of the new conditions of their existence, hold steadfastly to the most bigoted, racist patterns. It also should be understood, of course, that those sectors of the Southern working-class which are stable in their class position and who have been most affected by unionism tend to be among the more advanced, anti-racist centers.

The Republican Party has seen its opportunity and has gone after the main chance. There is no question that the Republican Party has become the party most identified with the struggle for Civil Rights. It was the party responsible for introducing a strong-civil rights measure; it was only due to the need to win the votes of Democratic moderates that the bill was watered-down. In the South, in particular, where the Democratic Party has been the traditional party of white supremacy and in which local Democratic party leaders, such as Governor Orval Faubus of Arkansas, have indicated that they will fight to preserve the ancient mores of Jim Crow, the Republican Party cannot help but emerge as the party of civil rights. The attempts of Lyndon Johnson and his caucus of moderate Southern Democrats to try to identify the Southern Democratic Party with a moderate civil rights program may be partially successful, but cannot counteract the strong showing that the Republican Party has made. Among northern Negroes, the issues are less clear; the gains of the Republicans

have certainly not been as great. If the voting in the recent Wisconsin senatorial election which sent Democrat William Proxmire to the Senate is any indication, the urban, Negro working-class vote has not moved at all into the Republican camp. In the minds of Northern Negroes the differences between the Northern labor-supported Democratic Party and the racist southern Democratic Party remain clear, despite the inroads made by the identification of the Republican Party with the Civil Rights Act have been partially wiped out by Eisenhower's greater concern for the golf-links than for the Negro struggle.

The history of the Civil Rights bill revealed one more thing of interest: the creation of at least a transitory alliance between Southern and Western Democrats. The betrayal of the civil rights bill by the bulk of the Western Democrats (including Wayne Morse who was allowed to salve his conscience by declaring that he voted against the bill because it was too weak) who, in return for southern votes for public power projects supported by the West, voted to weaken considerably the original bill, was one of the sorriest spectacles of the entire struggle. The alliance is, in the long run, not of much moment, but it does indicate how the current party structure in the United States lends itself to such opportunistic maneuvers. One cannot leave this subject without pointing out how the new darling of the "Television Liberals," Senator "Bobby" Kennedy, Presidential hopeful for 1960, with the sanction of a Harvard law professor voted to weaken the bill so that he might be able to command some southern support at the 1960 Democratic Party convention.

The controversy over the civil-rights bill has pointed out clearly once again the necessity for a basic restructuring of the political party system in the United States. The liberal-labor-small-farmer-Negro alliance cannot find a genuine home in the Democratic Party, a party wedded to the control of the Southern racists and the corrupt Northern machines. While this alliance can give its votes time and time again to preserve a Democratic majority in the Congress and to ensure that *racist Senator Eastland can be chairman of the all powerful Judiciary Committee*, and his fellow Southern Democrats chairmen of almost all other leading Congressional committees, it cannot have its progressive program adopted. Liberal-labor majorities may be piled up in the North for relatively decent Northern liberals; their voices are lost in a Congress dominated by the Southern Democracy and the Republican Party. Each time that their votes ensure nominal Democratic control of the Congress, the liberal-labor alliance deludes itself that it has won a victory. But if we are to know the victor by he who gets the spoils, then of course, Lyndon Johnson has swept the field. Northern liberal Democrats in order to gain support for part of their progressive program have to make corrupt bargains with the worst of Southern racism. Wayne Morse must link his arms with Lyndon Johnson, whose arms are entwined with those of James Eastland. The urbane, sophisticated, intellectual liberal Adlai Stevenson had to stand by while the Party whose standard bearer he was to be, adopted a weak civil-rights program. He must counsel "moderation" to the defenders of civil rights when the only "immoderates" are the Eastlands, the Fabuses and the White Citizens Councils. Decent men must become panderers and prostitutes to save their political hides; other decent men must become their syncophants in the endeavor to be "realistic."

The merry-go-round of American politics goes on. The Republicans win a round in the fight to become the party pur-

porting to represent progress and the people; tomorrow the Democratic Party will regain some of the lost ground. The show goes on and neither party brings forward a fundamental program to meet the many needs of contemporary America, needs for security, for equality, for peace. Both Parties represent much the same social philosophy, both support the *status quo*, even though different sectional and class forces support them. American politics becomes increasingly like nineteenth century Spanish politics where the two political parties, by agreement, alternated in office, neither one offering a program much differing from that of its opponent. Both political parties play a game of moderate one-upmanship in which there are small gains, but gains not commensurate at all with the mass social forces that brought them into being. The law of the conservation of energy has been repelled in American politics; the people put forth a large effort in struggle for their rights and it emerges out of the other end of the congressional mill greatly diminished in force. The American political party system successfully acts to thwart democracy.

A party, independent of the Southern Democracy and the Northern corrupt political machine, and representative of labor, the small-family farmer and the agricultural worker, the small middle classes, caught in the squeeze of inflation, and the Negro people, is the only political realism available in the United States today. The gentlemen who cry "realism" and by this mean "moderation" are dishonest at worst; absurd at the least. It is all like Lewis Carroll's poem "Jabberwocky." The words seem to have meaning, but in reality they do not, or at least the meanings are very private ones.

The impasse will continue until and unless the labor movement, the one organized force in society capable of the task, takes the lead in creating its own party. Anything short of this step is unrealistic. Anything short of this step will continue the game of one-upmanship. Anything short of this step will continue to make a mockery of the democratic process.

September 10, 1957

G. R.

II. Alcorn College, Miss.

Alcorn Agricultural and Mechanical College, Lorman, Mississippi, seventeen miles from the small town of Port Gibson, a landmark of Civil War fame, was, until 1941, the only state institution of higher learning for Negroes in Mississippi. In 1941, Jackson College became the second state Negro college.

Alcorn is physically isolated, there being no public transportation from Port Gibson to Lorman. The college is located in the midst of moss-covered woods, surrounded by clay hills and suffering farms. The soil is eroded and gives the appearance of being suitable only for pasture. It is obvious as one passes the Negro shanties along the highway leading to the college that the lives of the Negroes of the community have not been influenced by the college. Because of low salaries and the lack of assurance that Alcorn will continue to exist not a single faculty member owns a home or a piece of property within the immediate vicinity of the college.

When I arrived at Alcorn I had desired, as perhaps is the case of most young teachers, to disregard the pressure from the obscurantists and to teach firmly and objectively. I wanted to expose my students who had deficient educational backgrounds to the same rigorous training I had encountered in graduate school. I wanted to help them overcome some of the weaknesses in their preparatory educational preparation—weaknesses which stemmed from the segregated and unequal pattern of Mississippi education.

I believe my students were ripe for what I had planned for them. For the most part, they became adjusted to expect failures in my classes if they did not meet the high standards demanded, to the tremendous reading that I required, and to the rigid discipline that I imposed. My students had become ready for a total learning experience not previously available to them under the segregated educational system of Mississippi.

Even I was amazed at the courage, perseverance, and integrity that my students manifested as I saw them sitting in classrooms too crowded for comfort—classrooms that were dripping with water from a leaking roof, leaking steam pipes, and paneless windows. Indeed, I was amazed to find students in

modern America who would endure such a situation. In addition to the physical discomforts, books on national and world issues were unavailable, and teachers were so loaded with courses that the students could not possibly get adequate individual attention. Even more distressing was the difficulty of getting contact for our students with outstanding professional people. Because of the location of the college, the lack of funds, and state laws, my students had no contact with outside people other than religious emphasis week and commencement.

It is within this context that I must discuss the recent events at Alcorn, events which have received nation-wide attention.

The history of Alcorn has been a turbulent one. From the very beginning the college has been a center of controversy over the quality of Negro education. The issue was, and is, simple. Are Negroes to be given the opportunity to receive an education comparable in content and quality to that afforded whites or are they to receive a second-class and inferior education? Alcorn was founded in 1830 by Presbyterians as Oakland College for the education of white male students. It flourished until the Civil War when it closed its doors in order that the white youths could go off to defend the slavocracy. These doors were never reopened to white students. The school became a Negro university—Alcorn University, named for Governor James L. Alcorn, a Reconstructionist Republican governor—in 1871.

The first president of Alcorn was Hiram Revels who had served as the first Negro United States Senator, representing Mississippi during Reconstruction. Upon the election of Governor Adelbert Ames in 1874, the first step in the so-called "Redemption" of Mississippi into lily-white hands, Revels was removed from office. But Revel's successor as President of Alcorn met stiff opposition from the students. They struck and sixty of them left with Revels. The students' action was dubbed as a "Rebellion" against the state, and a joint legislative investigating committee was appointed. As a result, Revels was rehired, the annual appropriation was cut from \$50,000 a year to \$15,000, and a majority of the faculty was dismissed.

In 1878, Alcorn University was converted by law into "an agricultural college for the education of the Negro youth of the state" and renamed Alcorn Agricultural and Mechanical

College of the State of Mississippi. The law declared the purpose of the school to be

"The establishment and maintenance of a first-class institution at which the youth of the State of Mississippi may acquire a common school education and a scientific and practical knowledge of agriculture, horticulture, and the mechanic arts; also the proper growth and care of stock, without, however, excluding other scientific and classical studies, including military tactics."

This change in the course of Alcorn was part of the "Redemption" movement in which the gains of the Negroes in the Reconstruction period were wiped out and a second-class status reimposed upon them.

According to this law Alcorn was to follow the pattern established at Tuskegee by Booker T. Washington in which Negro education was largely restricted to agricultural and mechanical training. While Tuskegee ceased to adhere strictly to Washington's philosophy and developed a liberal arts curriculum in addition to the agricultural-mechanical course, Mississippi authorities have attempted to preserve Alcorn's status as an institution providing a special and inferior vocational education.

In recent years the struggle has been intensified as efforts have been made to improve the liberal and business courses at Alcorn. The segregationists have worked hard to preserve the existing situation. One of the recent presidents of Alcorn, William H. Bell, was forced to resign because of his sympathies with an improved liberal curriculum. "Bell was likeable," declared one trustee, "and possessed a pleasing personality, but was definitely uninterested in vocational training for Alcorn students, and leaned altogether towards arts and science." "As a land grant institution, Alcorn should emphasize a vocational curriculum for its students," this trustee continued.

Since 1945 state authorities have seriously considered closing the college. The *Mississippi Study of Higher Education, 1945*, completed under the direction of Joseph E. Gibson, Director of Higher Education, Louisiana State Department of Education, suggested that the location of the college be changed to a more accessible place where the soil would be more suitable to agriculture. The authors of this study further contended that it was necessary to move Alcorn because ". . . it will be difficult, so long as those stones [those of the old *white* Oakland College] yet stand, to make Negro students forget that they are living their daily life in the physical and spiritual presence of a classical college, devoted to the art of making gentlemen; and consecrated to the high endeavor of pursuing the seven liberal arts." The study went on to advocate an education which was based on "service to the masses," that is, vocational education. Of course, this is nothing but a proposal for class-education, with one system of education for the "masses," i.e., Negroes, and another for "gentlemen," i.e., whites. The authors of this report, to emphasize their point, criticized the "non-realistic . . . tendency on the part of Negro colleges to teach the classical and romance languages, history and theoretical science in lieu of developing programs more practically related to the needs of the people."

The controversy and indecision over what to do with Alcorn has had bad consequences for the school. Many teachers left in June 1955, for fear that Alcorn's instability would jeopardize their economic status. Sufficient appropriations for the college have been withheld and of the limited monies made available, a large amount was expended for salaries, equipment, and maintenance of the Departments of Agriculture, Homemaking, and Mechanical Industries. Students not major-

ing in one of these fields have suffered because of a lack of proper equipment, classroom facilities, and instructors.

Unappealing teaching conditions such as low salaries, overloaded schedules, unattractive classrooms, an inadequate library, and lack of teaching materials and clerical aid, have led to a rapid turnover of the faculty of the liberal arts departments. Even the Gibson study recognized that Alcorn received appropriations too small to attract qualified teachers. Added to the problem of low salaries, there has been much talk of cutting salaries even further. The consequent rapid turnover and instability of the faculty from year to year has directly affected the students. For example, with new instructors each year, unfamiliar on registration day with the courses offered, the students cannot receive proper advice on academic matters.

Despite this discrimination in favor of vocational education departments, Alcorn's students have flocked to the business and liberal arts departments. At present, Alcorn's agricultural and homemaking departments are well staffed, properly equipped, and have new buildings, but have less students than the business department which is inadequately housed, equipped, and staffed. The social science department has more students than the agricultural department, yet the staff is so loaded with courses in education that advanced courses cannot be taught to social science majors.

In the Academic Underground

I was engaged to be the director of student personnel at Alcorn during the last week of August, 1954. In this connection I made an inspection of the male dormitories. I sent a memorandum to the president advising him of the most unhealthy and disorganized living conditions and a consequent low state of morale among the students.

These conditions in the male dormitories continue at the present time. After discussing the situation with the president and learning that no funds were available to improve the living conditions of the students, I resigned from the Office of Student Personnel and resumed my teaching of history.

I found conditions in the social science department just as difficult as they had been in the personnel office. The social science office was located in a chemistry storeroom on the third floor of the science building. I asked myself as I sat at my desk in this office for the first time, "Is social science an underground unit of the college?" I was soon to learn that it was just that. There was but one chart of maps in the department, and it was outdated and torn from wear. In the library the most recent historical works had been published in 1940, the major encyclopedic work had several missing volumes, and there was no subscription to many scholarly historical journals. The storeroom of periodicals was flooded with loose pamphlets unassembled and unarranged because of lack of library personnel.

During my first year at Alcorn I organized regular Wednesday evening convocations featuring faculty members who spoke on such subjects as "How to Write," "How to Read," "How to Use the Library." In my second year, with full knowledge that our action might collide with a new policy of the Board of Trustees to "screen" all outside visitors before their being permitted to appear before an audience at Alcorn, several outside speakers were invited. Unfortunately, the entire atmosphere at Alcorn worked to damage the program we attempted to set up. Thus, a professor at Howard University who had been scheduled to speak but had not yet been screened cancelled his speaking engagement at Alcorn. "Acting on the advice of many friends," he declared, "I have decided to cancel

my trip to Mississippi because of the tension that prevails there.”

We scheduled our first speaker, a professor at Dillard University of New Orleans, on November 16, 1955. This scholar spoke on the subject “A Portrait of the Cuban Jose Marti.” News of this lecture was released from Dillard University to a New Orleans newspaper. The day after this information was printed someone called the college and reprimanded the administration for allowing a person to speak on such a “non-practical” subject. As a result, the administration dissolved the Convocation Committee and ended its activities at least for that school year.

We faced further embarrassment when a professor from Mississippi State College, the white land-grant college of the state, came to our campus to lecture on the subject of “Migration from Mississippi.” Mississippi has a law that Negroes and whites cannot eat and sleep under the same roof. Therefore, this professor was given accommodation in the practice apartment in the Home Economics building although, normally, visitors are housed in the president’s home. Because of the Mississippi law most of our faculty were afraid of entertaining the speaker even though he had been invited to spend the night. The college even had difficulty finding someone to go and sit with him while he ate his dinner alone in the college dining hall.

Although the appearance of non-Alcorn speakers before the student body has been restricted, I have been permitted to go before my classroom and teach what I thought was proper and what I had been trained to teach. Evidently, the authorities never realized that effective instruction could come from the faculty; they were only concerned to keep non-Alcorn people from appearing before the student body. What they fortunately failed to see was that Alcorn had some instructors who were willing as well as qualified to teach what they believed the truth to be. Indeed, I am happy to have worked with many of these instructors, though many eventually left the college.

Students Reject Uncle Tom

The students of Alcorn began to react against the conditions they were forced to live under—and against the racist philosophy which underlay these conditions—long before March of 1957 when the Alcorn situation received national publicity. They had suffered much because of the quarrel over the purpose of Alcorn and had thus come to be conscious of the specific injustices inflicted upon them. They had realized that the least Alcorn could do was to furnish toilet tissue, light bulbs for the shower rooms, decent and comfortable living quarters, and a place for recuperation when they had become ill or had an accident. They must have come to realize that the fifteen dollars a month they received for their labor—sixty hours per month—as working students was insufficient and unjust in this day and age. They must have remembered the incident in October of 1956 when a student had been denied permission to recuperate in the college infirmary after being released for that purpose from a Vicksburg hospital. They must have been reminded also that this student withdrew from the college to rejoin the army in protest against his treatment at Alcorn.

If these things are understood, then one cannot reprimand the students for protesting. After months of mistreatment and neglect, a show of unanimity in protest helps. In October of 1956 the Alcorn students had attempted a protest strike

against the general conditions under which they suffered, but the administration effectively broke it up.

This strike was the warning that the Alcorn students were ready to take action in their own behalf. They had long waited for the moment when they could openly struggle against those responsible for their plight. They were looking for a vent through which they could protest and they were successful in finding it in Clennon King’s error of using pictures of six of their equals, without their consent, in connection with his eight articles in the *Mississippi State-Times* supporting segregation, the system that made for their suffering.

King had a long record of supporting segregation and racism. He dealt with his students as if all Mississippi Negroes were incapable of thinking about national and international problems. It was felt that King was at Alcorn as an agent of the pro-segregation forces in Mississippi rather than as a teacher of Alcorn’s students. He visited the office of the pro-segregation Mississippi Sovereignty Committee on several occasions prior to the printing of his articles, articles obviously inspired by this propaganda arm of segregation and racism. It was believed, therefore, that King was a conspirator, acting as an agent of a power outside of the college to coerce his colleagues on the faculty into defending segregation.

King’s first article appeared in the *State-Times* the day after the students of Alcorn had organized a celebration in appreciation for the stand of President Otis of Alcorn in behalf of a liberal education for Negroes. At the celebration a plaque was dedicated to President Otis commending him for his struggle for “quality education, his undying faith in academic freedom, his untiring struggle to make education possible for students that have financial difficulties and his serious efforts to make scholarly contributions to knowledge.” The articles by King were obviously designed to counteract the impact of the celebration.

Professor King attacked the principle that a Negro college should provide the same type and quality of education as do colleges for white students. And he falsely tried to give the impression that a portion of the Alcorn student body supported him in his attitudes. Therefore, it was not surprising that the students protested against Clennon King who worked to maintain the conditions that made for their inequality and suffering. His articles were simply the last provocation, the spark that touched off the student demonstration. Unfortunately, Clennon King had not taught long enough at Alcorn to learn the significance of her history and to sense the increasing pains of the students.

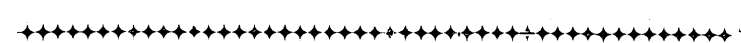
George E. Cunningham



American Freedom Fighter

“We may be beaten but not licked. We may be wounded but not dead. We may be down but certainly not out. We’re going to hold our heads up and press the fight. We are front line soldiers in the battle of America . . .”

These words were spoken by Rev. F. L. Shuttlesworth after he was beaten by a racist mob. The beating, which sent Rev. Shuttlesworth to the hospital, occurred as he escorted a group of Negro children to school in Birmingham, Alabama.



III. Florida State University

THERE ARE TWO ATTITUDES present in the state of Florida in the current struggle against racial segregation. The southern part of the state, in which most of the population is concentrated, has a relatively liberal attitude towards the problem; in fact, the legislative district including Miami sends an adherent of integration to the state legislature in Tallahassee. However, owing to antiquated legislative districting and to a powerful strain of conservatism, the balance of power resides in the more rural northern part of the state. Almost all governors and state supreme court justices have come from this area, which presents the same picture of racial injustice that prevails in the neighboring portions of Georgia and Alabama.

All three of Florida's state universities are located in this area, and are dominated by its attitudes in their administrative setups. These schools are the University of Florida at Gainesville, and Florida State University (FSU) and Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU), both in Tallahassee. The first two schools are limited to whites, and the third to Negroes, in open defiance of the Supreme Court ruling that racial segregation in all publicly supported institutions of education is unconstitutional.

A year ago the U. S. Supreme Court ordered the University of Florida to admit without delay Virgil Hawkins, a Negro applicant to the university's law school. However, the Florida Supreme Court has with astounding audacity refused to recognize the validity of the U. S. Supreme Court's decision, and Hawkins is still not registered at the university. "The maintenance of public order" is pleaded as an excuse for this deliberate contempt of the Constitution.

I enrolled at Florida State University in September 1955, intending to obtain a Ph. D. degree in theoretical physics. During my first year at FSU my support of integration consisted mainly of letters to the editor of the student newspaper, the *Florida Flambeau*. During that year, a poll was taken at the three universities of student attitudes on integration of the schools. The survey, which was conducted by means of unsigned forms sent to each student and mailed back, showed that 60 per cent of the student bodies of the white universities favored either immediate or gradual integration of their schools.

In June of 1956, shortly after I left for the summer, the bus boycott in Tallahassee began under the leadership of Tallahassee Inter-Civic Council, whose president is the Rev. Mr. C. K. Steele. Upon my return to FSU in September, I refrained from riding city buses in sympathy with the boycott.

One of my extra-curricular activities at FSU was my membership in the International Students' Club, an organization of about 150 students from all countries. Shortly before the club's annual Christmas party on December 11, 1956, I thought that we should invite the three Negro foreign students who attended FAMU. I made this suggestion to Juan Lopez of Cuba, the club's president. Sr. Lopez, who had been expelled from Cuba for his opposition to the Batista dictatorship, accepted this idea with enthusiasm, and, as spokesman for the club, asked me to invite the FAMU students. He also suggested that I tell Mr. Frank Bean, the adviser to foreign students and to the International Students' Club. Mr. Bean also thought this plan a good idea, but thought that some university regulation might forbid inviting these students. He got

in touch with Dean of Students R. R. Oglesby, and later informed me that Dean Oglesby had also had no personal objections, but had mentioned to him that the Board of Control (a state body governing state institutions) might feel that the presence of these Negro students as guests of the club would violate a university regulation. I received the impression that Dean Oglesby had referred the matter to yet higher authority for further consideration. At no time did I receive any direct communication from Dean Oglesby on this matter until my expulsion.

Since it seemed to me on the day before the party that no decision had been reached, I decided to go ahead and communicate the club's invitation to the three FAMU foreign students. It is true that regulations exist forbidding students of either university to visit the other campus; however, these regulations have the purpose of maintaining racial segregation and have therefore been rendered obsolete by the U.S. Supreme Court decisions cited above. They must necessarily be regarded as completely unenforceable relics of the days when racial segregation in public education was believed to be legal.

I communicated with the FAMU students through Dean of Men Perry, who thanked me for inviting the foreign students, and who brought them over on the evening of the party. At this party the FAMU students met many foreign and American students of FSU. The club members made sure that their guests were made to feel welcome. There was no objection to their presence, not even on the part of Dr. Doak S. Campbell, president of FSU, who was present with his wife. I did not speak to Dr. Campbell at the party; however, Miss Laura Lee of the FSU art department later told me of his reactions to the presence of the Negro foreign students. She told me that he had asked her where these foreign students were from. She gave him their countries of origin, and also told him that they were students at FAMU. She later told me that he had had no objections to their presence, and had ventured the opinion that the whole troublesome situation would eventually blow over. (President Campbell has since denied saying this.)

As the party broke up, I had no idea that the universally welcomed presence of these students would be made the excuse for my expulsion from FSU, and for the restriction of student freedom of speech and assembly.

The Dean and the Student

There were absolutely no repercussions from this incident until January 14, 1957. On this date I was called in by Dean of Men Sam Neel and censured for my pro-integration activities. By this time I had attended several meetings of the ICC, beginning with that of December 30, 1956. (The ICC holds mass meetings on Sunday and Wednesday evenings in Tallahassee's larger Negro churches.) I had brought four other FSU students and white non-students with me to the meeting of Wednesday, January 9. In cooperation with three of the other students, I put a letter in the *Florida Flambeau* of Friday, January 11, urging FSU students to come to the ICC meeting of Sunday, January 13. On that same afternoon, all four of us received messages from the Dean of Men's office, asking us to see him as soon as possible. Since I did not receive any word of this until Friday evening, I went in to see Dean Neel on the following Monday morning. In the meantime, about twenty FSU students had attended the Sunday evening meeting of the ICC.

During this conference Dean Neel mentioned the Christmas party incident. He informed me then that no action would

have been taken had I not continued in my pro-integration activities after the Christmas party. In other words, my action in bringing the FAMU students to the Christmas party was not wrong at the time, but only became wrong after I engaged in other activities opposed to racial segregation. This is particularly interesting in view of the fact that Dean Oglesby asserts that the Christmas party incident was his principal reason for asking me to sever my connections with Florida State University.

Dean Neel also told me that I had been wrong in using the student newspaper as a medium through which to ask FSU students to come to ICC meetings. His reasoning here completely escapes me. The student cannot isolate himself from the affairs of the community, state, or country in which he lives. Urging students to attend a meeting of the ICC is no different from urging them to attend a meeting of the City Commission or a March of Dimes rally.

Campus Democracy?

The Dean of Men also warned me that if I did not cease my activities, it might be "necessary" to suspend me. I told him that opposition to segregation was only the duty of a citizen. However, he was apparently unimpressed by the importance of the United States Constitution and the equality of all men before the law, and he informed me that such fundamental human rights as freedom of opinion, speech, and assembly must be limited in the case of Florida University students by the policy of the Florida Board of Control. In his own words, "A college campus is not a democracy."

Furthermore, he threatened my professional career with vague intimations that he would be "forced" in the future to answer requests for references for me by saying that I could not be relied upon to obey regulations. Finally, he told me that my support of integration obviously indicated mental instability. (This statement is an ominous foreboding for southern integrationists or even moderates, who may find themselves incarcerated in mental institutions for doubting the wisdom of southern racism.)

Since Dean Neel had mentioned the possibility of expulsion, I felt that my best defense was to acquaint the students of FSU with the limitations on freedom of speech and assembly which he supported. This I did in a letter to the *Florida Flambeau*, which was printed in the issue of Tuesday, January 15. In this letter I first, on behalf of the signers of Friday's letter, thanked the students who had attended Sunday night's ICC meeting, and then urged the election of a pro-integration candidate in the then current campaign for a seat on the Tallahassee City Commission. The main part of this letter was devoted to an account of Dean Neel's words to me, and their implication as regards the future freedom of students to speak out on segregation and other current issues. The editorial staff of the *Flambeau* offered Dean Neel space in the next edition of the newspaper, in case he felt he had been misquoted or misrepresented. However, he apparently did not feel the need to make any such statement.

I attended another meeting of the ICC on Sunday, January 20. Over thirty FSU students were at this meeting, including the editor and news editor of the *Flambeau*. At this meeting, the Rev. Mr. Steele announced that the meeting of Wednesday, January 23, would be conducted by students of FSU and FAMU. After the meeting, the students had a chance to meet one another and get acquainted. The artificial wall which had been built between the two universities was breached that

evening, and many people of both races discovered that their common interests as students were far more important than incidentals like skin color.

On Saturday, January 14, five students and one non-student had been arrested for seating themselves on a city bus in violation of an ordinance designed to continue segregated seating. On Tuesday, January 22, the Chairman of the Board of Control of FSU released a statement to the press. (This statement was not put in any campus publication at FSU, and no effort was made to acquaint any students with it, not even the ones who had been most prominent in the integration movement.) This statement read:

"Attention of the Board of Control has been called to the fact that activities relative to the local controversy over bus transportation in Tallahassee tends to involve students of our two universities located in that city. Participation by students in demonstrations or other activities calculated to, or having the effect of, inflaming the public, or inciting strife or violence will be considered as endangering the welfare of our universities. "The Board requests the presidents and other administrative officers of the Universities to take note of this statement. "We hope, of course, that our students, both as individuals and through their organized activities, in the interest of preserving the peace and good order on campuses and in the community, will see the wisdom of maintaining such conduct as will protect the universities against unfortunate incidents or unfavorable criticism."

The second sentence is the crucial statement in this decree. It is primarily aimed at the students who attended meetings of the ICC, as can be seen from later statements by Dean Oglesby. Yet its rubber phrases can be stretched to cover any student activity to which any segregationist might choose to take heated exception. Since the work of the ICC has been directed toward eliminating the racial tensions which have been set up during the past sixty or seventy years by the system of racial segregation, and especially since the ICC has stressed from its founding the use exclusively of non-violent, legal means of action, participation in these activities could by no stretch of the imagination be regarded as inciting strife and violence. The wish to avoid "unfavorable criticism" is hopelessly unrealistic; no human activity can possibly avoid this.

In ordering students not to support integration, the Florida Board of Control has arbitrarily set itself above the Constitution of the United States. In the future, this body should clarify its policy by informing faculty members and students of Florida's state universities which opinions they will be permitted to hold and act lawfully upon, and which will be forbidden to them.

The "Moderate" Governor

The complicity of Governor Leroy Collins in this matter is clear, although not openly evident. As in most southern states, all administrative machinery is a personal appendage of the governor's political machine; although Governor Collins himself preaches the pallid counsel of "moderation," none of the recent administrative measures taken in Florida against integration could have been brought about without his direction. His action in shutting down Tallahassee city bus service while a new city ordinance could be drafted to preserve segregation under a "seating assignment" law when the U.S. Supreme Court declared bus segregation unlawful, as well as his refusal to intervene in the recent firing of a public health official who ate lunch with a Negro, are evidence of his firm opposition to any moderation of traditional racism.

Since the Board of Control decree was too vague, and since

in any case it was designed to preserve the unlawful system of segregation, I attended the January 23 mass meeting of the ICC in company with about 15 or 20 other FSU students and several hundred FAMU students. There were seven or eight student speakers, including myself. Since I was a registered voter in Tallahassee, I urged the election of the Rev. Mr. King Solomon DuPont, who was campaigning for the Tallahassee City Commission on a pro-integration platform. Other speakers also urged the Rev. Mr. DuPont's election, or stressed the duty of college students to work for integration.

On the evening of Friday, January 25, the White Citizens' Council held a meeting in Tallahassee. This vocal fringe group, which in cooperation with the Klu Klux Klan has supported extreme measures to preserve segregation, has apparently led responsible community and university leaders to believe that it represents a sizable segment of public opinion.

Racists Intimidate Educators

At this meeting, the Council passed a resolution urging that pro-integration students at the two universities be expelled. On the next morning, Dean Oglesby accordingly expelled me. His promptness in responding to the Council's demands indicated the willingness of FSU administrative officials to pander to the demands of the lawless dregs of southern society.

When I reported to Dean Oglesby's office on the morning of Saturday, January 26, he began by recounting the "charges" against me. He claimed that I had been under explicit orders not to bring the Negro students to the Christmas party. He also said that, despite the fact that the pressure to expel me was based on my activities at ICC meetings, the ostensible reason given would be the Christmas party incident. However, from his own statements and from the White Citizens' Council's demands, it was clear that the actual reason for my expulsion was the speech I made at the ICC meeting of the 23rd, urging the election of the Rev. Mr. DuPont. When I participated in the political affairs of the community in which I was a registered voter, I was expelled from FSU.

Since I was doing research at FSU under a National Research Council assistantship, Dean Oglesby also accused me of violating Florida's so-called "Little Hatch Act" by making a political speech, although I was not being paid out of state funds, and he was scarcely competent to indict or try me under this act, whose applicability and constitutionality are both open to serious doubt.

Before pronouncing sentence upon me, he offered me a chance to recant my opinions and to promise to cease my support of integration. Since this would in effect require me to cease my support of the Constitution of my country, I naturally refused.

However, Dean Oglesby graciously permitted me to finish the semester, which ended on February 1. The official judgment was that I was not being permitted to re-register for the spring semester because I invited three Negroes to a campus social affair. That these students were there as guests of the International Students' Club, and that all university segregation regulations are obsolete and legally unenforceable, has apparently not occurred to the university administration.

I appealed my expulsion to President Campbell, who informed me that he was the court of final appeal on this matter, but like his subordinates he set his petty personal prejudices above the Constitution of the United States and came to the rescue of Jim Crow by supporting Dean Oglesby's action. The resulting damage to the reputation of Florida State Uni-

versity as a community of scholars thus became his responsibility.

I do not intend to let this expulsion stand as a blot against my academic record without a fight. I am filing suit to get permission to re-register at FSU, claiming a violation of my civil rights.

I left Tallahassee in mid-February, having decided to continue my studies at Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, N.J. I had already written to Prof. W. H. Bostick, chairman of the Stevens Tech. physics department, who had sent me information about the Stevens graduate research program and assured me that they would be glad to have me with them at Stevens. However, when I sent to FSU for a transcript of my academic record, Dean Oglesby decided to follow up his vindictive attitude. Accordingly, a letter was sent to the nearest large newspaper, the *Jersey Journal*, in hopes that an article in that paper on my plans to enter Stevens would attract the attention of someone of influence in that school who would object to my presence there. The scheme worked beautifully: Prof. Bostick was informed by Dean of Students Merrill that my presence as a student at Stevens would bring "adverse publicity." Information sent to the Stevens admission office by FSU Assistant Dean Carr also contributed to this job of character assassination; if this material had not been sent under the confidential conditions customary in academic references I would have had good grounds for a defamation of character action. Prof. Bostick and the other members of the Stevens physics department backed me up strongly, but their efforts were unsuccessful. I have since discovered that Stevens Tech. uses the quota-system in discrimination against applicants of Negro, Jewish, or Italian ancestry, which explains this catering to the demands of southern racism.

The Future

Some of his former students, faculty members at Stevens, advised me to get in touch with Prof. P. G. Bergmann of Syracuse University. I did so, and conferred with him about the possibility of my continuing my work in relativity at Syracuse under his direction. I sent in an application and transcripts to Syracuse, and Professor Bergmann explained the circumstances to officials there.

The dean of the Syracuse graduate school decided to write to FSU and get a statement on my expulsion from a responsible official there. Upon receiving a reply, he came to the conclusion that there are no responsible officials at FSU, and my application for admission was processed in normal order. I am now working towards the Ph. D. degree in theoretical physics, under the direction of Professor Bergmann.

The fight against racism at Florida State University and throughout the South, of course, goes on, even though the Florida State University administration apparently felt that since I am no longer a student there, FSU had been rid of the possibility that it might someday be integrated. However, the results of last year's student poll, and the continual legal efforts being made to enforce the Constitution in the South, ensure that the twentieth century will soon be brought to Florida and Florida's universities. In their futile attempt to coddle a fringe element of fanatic racists, the administrators of public education in Florida have set themselves against the future. They will not win.

John Boardman

IV. Montgomery, Alabama

No one can say with any assurance what history will say about the Southern Christian Leadership Conference which gathered together here yesterday in loose, formative federation 96 leaders of the dozens of scattered, almost spontaneous organizations which Southern Negroes have painfully put together in the back streets of their battlegrounds over the last few years.

One of them was Martin L. King, of this city, whose name the world is said to know; the rest are obscure people, the leaders of boycotts which have gutted out or smouldered on without resolution, the founders of groups with names like the Mobile Non-Profit Voters League, the Alabama Christian Movement for Christian Rights, or just the Shiloh Christian Church.

They have lost most of their battles—Montgomery shines for them alone as a clear-cut victory—or still fight them on to no certain or early decision. They have never quite managed to duplicate Montgomery—which was not a thing which could have been planned by anyone, moving as it did through a kind of communion of the creative spirit into the beauty which still glows over its memory.

Their arguments, their formal decisions, their program, their \$60,000 annual budget—to be raised by collections in country churches—for sending missionaries into the rural counties to teach the field Negroes how to vote; all that, of course, is the paper of news stories, and may be the paper of history. What lives and breathes is the conversation at lunch in the basement of the New Brock Holt Street Baptist Church, which rises handsomely above the dust of a street of wooden houses and deadfall shanties with names like “The Little Palace” and other unchanging features of the Southern ghettos.

W. C. Patton used to be Alabama field secretary of the NAACP, whose Birmingham office was padlocked by the state attorney general by court order last winter. It will take two years of appeals before the NAACP can function again in Alabama, Patton thinks. While he waits, he sits in an office in the Masonic temple across the hall from that padlocked door, and works to register Negroes as voters in Alabama.

“We have 500 block workers canvassing Birmingham house by house seeking Negro registrants. We started to put the plan into effect last Monday. Last week, two Negroes registered all over Birmingham; just on Monday, we got 13 by.” There were 5,400 registered Negroes in Birmingham’s Jefferson County in 1954; there are 7,000 now. There are 121,510 Negroes in the county. On such short rations can these men live and hope?

“Of course, it’s hard,” said Patton. “There are counties where a Negro cannot register unless he has a white sponsor. Bibb County is still one. But in Greene County, not long ago, we found a white man who sponsored six of our people. The sheriff came to see him, the merchants came to see him; all he answered was that they were qualified and that he had promised. They were registered.”

These men, feeling as they do deserted by the North, have turned much of the force of their hopes on the ballot. Every one of them knows in his head the exact total of the Negro voters in his town; the Rev. William H. Borders, of Atlanta, was saying that his city’s 26,000 Negro voters represented just a sixth of the potential.

The Rev. Mr. Borders is a man of regal carriage past his middle-age. He came to this frontier first last spring when the NAACP asked the local ministers to do something about bus segregation. They had a series of prayer meetings, and then he took six Negroes to sit in the front of the bus. The consequences of that display waits on the courts; in the meanwhile, the bus company has taken down its “white” and “colored” signs, and Negroes are allowed to enter and leave the bus by the front. So little are the gains so carefully noted by both sides.

They are not sure where they are going; their voices could be heard on the street outside raised in argument kept from heat by the breakthrough of laughter. A CIO leader came out saying that this kind of thing wouldn’t be permitted at a union convention. “The chairman is too soft on them. The abuses these fellows can inflict in the name of a point of order!”

The Rev. Mose Pleasure, the new executive secretary of the Montgomery Improvement Assn., said the visitor should talk to the New Orleans delegates. The visitor said he had no hope for New Orleans. “I came from New Orleans,” said Mose Pleasure politely, “and I would rather live there than in Boston.” The things the Southern Negro has done were possible because home means more to him than the country of uncaring strangers. And the tumult inside had ceased and the Southern Christian Leadership Assn. was proceeding to elect Martin Luther King as its president. Suddenly, a voice unidentified came out of the hall crying its pride that all the South was awaking as Montgomery had awakened, and that we shall carry young King on our shoulders and there was moving and shaking and the rhythm of promise. When it had finished, King came forward and said quietly how gracious these words had been. If he has a cult, he does not belong to it.

He was putting on his coat to face the strangers of the white press. Montgomery Negroes were filling up the church for their mass meeting still two hours away. King came into an ante-room and sat down at the table, and fiddled with his papers, waiting to say that he had a statement. The great load of the prospect of explanation to strangers was upon his young face.

To have so little time to self and retreat, to have to live every hour conscious of the charge to be wise as a serpent and gentle as a dove, to have to be the face of the Southern Negro, not just to the world, which is easy, but to the white South, which is the most difficult and the most important—to such a hard life have chance and his time called him.

Murray Kempton

V. Rock Hill, S. C.

Alene Austin, a maid-of-all-work, boarded one of Paul Knight’s buses to go home late Monday afternoon last July 16. She found it full except for one seat half occupied by a white passenger, her name unknown.

It is Alene Austin’s recollection that the white passenger suggested that she sit down beside her. She did so and rode that way for two blocks until driver B. T. Fundaburk ordered her to the back of the bus. After some dispute as to his rights and hers, Mrs. Austin got off and walked and has not boarded a bus since; and now no Rock Hill Negro rides that way to work.

Alene Austin will not talk to reporters about this action whose consequences are so disturbing to Rock Hill. "It's not because I'd lose my job," she says. "I'm a good worker and I'll never need a job. It's because the lady I work for has been good to me, and I trust her, and she says I shouldn't talk about it."

Her employer drives her to and from work every day. It is her employer's fear her neighbors will therefore think she is giving comfort to the boycott, and Mrs. Austin therefore feels it best that, on her side, she keep quiet.

Rock Hill, or any other Southern town, is, I suppose, about these two women, one white and one Negro, one servant and one mistress, and the divided loyalties which each one feels. It is that division of loyalties which makes Cecil Ivory, chairman of the bus boycott, insist that Rock Hill is a good town, and explains why Thomas Murdock, a volunteer driver in the boycott, left Detroit, where he was an Auto Workers organizer—"I tell these people they haven't seen strikes"—and came home to live.

It is this division of loyalties which afflicts the life of Mayor Emmett Jerome as he gropes for some solution to this, the latest of the troubles which have shadowed his administration. Mayor Jerome is at once conscious of the Negro's grievance and conscious that Paul Knight gave the city of Rock Hill bus service when nobody else would take it over. "That was big of Paul; he said he'd do it even though there wasn't any money in it." Now Paul Knight says that he will never restore bus service except on the fundament of segregation. "Paul's a country boy," says Mayor Jerome sadly, "and he feels too deep about this thing to talk about it."

The boycott is the latest of a series of troubles which have been the burden of Emmett Jerome's last year in office: the long losing CIO Textile Workers' strike at the bleachery, the burgeoning of the Klan, the immolation of the moderates. In the spring of 1956, Emmett Jerome was proud because he had brought Rock Hill's Negroes and whites together in a Council of Human Relations to discuss gradual solution of their mutual problems; the council withered away against the first hot breath of an issue.

One of the issues which destroyed it was the Nature Museum in Rock Hill's Fewell Park, a handsome brick structure from which Negro children have always been barred. It is a place not without reverence for persons of color; Rock Hill is very proud of the Indians who lived there in 1700, and has a birchbark diorama of the tribes then extant on the Nature Museum's face. A visitor who went by after closing hours looked in to see the image of a brown body in loincloth spearing a fish. The Nature Museum is a sort of zoo of native fauna; the voice of a captive mocking bird could be heard from inside, its lightness, its ease, and its irony reminding the ear of nothing so much as the voices of the Negroes of Rock Hill relaxed at their meetings in their churches.

It is not good or evil but only tragic that men should cease to communicate because they cannot agree as to the rules of admission to a building dedicated to children.

The Klan, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the CIO Textile Workers—these are the disparate bodies symbolizing the troubles of Emmett Jerome. And there too loyalties conflict and are divided; there are estimates that 20 per cent of the Textile Workers in Rock Hill are or have been members of the Klan. There were fist fights at Klan meetings because the speaker criticized the union; Ray Berthiaume, the Textile union's director here, says that dozens

of his members left the Klan because it was against the AFL-CIO. "I've got members who still go to meetings and believe in everything they say, but call me up and tell me what the Klan says about us."

Ray Berthiaume has sinned not once but twice: he is not only a CIO organizer but he sends his son to St. Anne's Parochial School, the only one in South Carolina where Negro children and whites study and play together. The Klan has twice burned a cross outside St. Anne's; Ray Berthiaume's name and his sin and the name and sin of all the other white parents with children at St. Anne's are read out at every Klan meeting.

"Our union members who are Klansmen say lay off me," Berthiaume says. "I'm wrong but I'm theirs."

Mayor Emmett Jerome is one of a dozen white South Carolinians who took part in a symposium gathered by two young Episcopal ministers calling for moderation and understanding on the race issue. His message then was that there can be no segregation at the foot of the cross. This sort of proposition, which hardly seems debatable to civilized men, has cost him a great part of his popularity; he will not run again—the sophisticated view is that he would be unlikely to win. He goes out of office in February, and he feels himself a failure.

"I'm not looking for sympathy," he said yesterday. "I know I can find it in the dictionary. But I had hoped when I began that, as mayor, I could do something to bring people together. And now it seems worse than ever." It seemed beside the point to suggest that he would not have ended much worse for being bolder. It seemed more important, but hopeless, to suggest that merely by standing there, a symbol of divided man, he had held up what little light remains for the children of South Carolina.

Murray Kempton



The Editors Speak . . .

FOR FIFTEEN YEARS NOW, the American socialist movement has been so isolated from American life and so fragmented that it has been difficult indeed to call it a movement at all. A half-dozen little sects have existed, all reduced to preserving their programs, and all remote from real political influence in the society they hoped to change. The sects have talked to themselves and each other in language not easily interpreted by the uninitiated; they have struggled over each intra-socialist squabble as if it were "the final conflict" itself.

It was not always so. In the first decade and a half of this century, there was in the United States a Socialist Party having a hundred thousand members and popular enough to receive more than ten times that number of votes for Eugene Victor Debs, its presidential candidate. It was a party of considerable strength and influence in the trade union movement, and it was a party capable of leading important working-class struggles. It was a party containing within its ranks members who represented the entire range of that day's socialist opinion, from municipal reformers and right-wing social democrats such as Victor Berger of Milwaukee, to revolutionary socialists like Debs. It was *the* party of American socialism, in which all socialists, despite widely differing points of view, could function loyally.

Even though this form of the Socialist Party was under attack throughout the heyday of the movement, it was the Russian Revolution which finally divided the SP. Out of the turmoil of 1917, the Communist Party was born; the Socialist Party declined in strength and militancy. There were now two parties on the scene representing American socialism.

By the end of the nineteen-twenties, the Communist Party had become completely Stalinized, completely under the domination of the Russian Party. It expelled from its ranks all those who would not be the agents of the new ruling class which had risen from the perversion of the October Revolution. Those who were expelled—followers for the most part, either of Leon Trotsky or of Jay Lovestone—attempted to set up and maintain their own organizations.

In the nineteen-thirties, under the impact of the depression and the threat of fascism, there was a large turn to the Left in American politics. The Socialist Party grew in size and influence, and contained within itself once more a most heterogeneous group of individuals and tendencies. Most of the several groups expelled from the old Communist Party were attempting by the mid-thirties to work within the Socialist Party, but due both to their own mistaken notions of the imminence of a radical and revolutionary turn in world politics, and to the hostility of the right wing of the SP, that attempt failed. Every one concerned had still a great deal to learn about the needs of American socialism.

The Communist Party also gained in importance and numbers in the thirties, and became the stronger of the two largest parties purporting to represent American socialism. The strength of the Communist Party largely rested on one fact: its ability to identify itself with the Russian Revolution. In a world where capitalism was in a deep economic crisis and where it was degenerating into fascism, Russia appeared as the bastion of resistance and progress. The paradox is that many Americans began to look toward Russia at precisely the

time that the Stalinist bureaucracy was consolidating its totalitarian control over the Russian people and destroying the last vestiges of the the socialist character of the Russian Revolution. The Communist Party grew upon the myth it propagated concerning Russian "socialism," and upon its jettisoning of socialist politics so that it could better perform the tasks required of it by its Russian master.

Since the end of World War II, the American radical movement has been decimated by the pressures of the Cold War, which displayed themselves in anti-radical hysteria and a more general spread of conformity in the United States.

But at last there is a change for the better in the air. The immediate and most obvious cause of this change is the shattering of the grip which the Communist Party held upon many who were attracted to socialism, but were caught by the Stalinist lie. The Khrushchev "revelations" and the heroic insurgents of Hungary and Poland served to demolish the myth of a socialist, workers' Russia. The Communist Party of the United States has, by its own admission, lost at least half of its membership in the past year. The CP's loss of some of its brighter lights, like Joseph Clark and Joseph Starobin, former foreign editors of the *Daily Worker*, and the novelist, Howard Fast, is another indication of the tremendous force of the explosion of the myth.

This development has taken place at a propitious time. It has come at a time when a large part of the United States is in ferment, due to the struggles of the Negro people for freedom and equality. It has come at a time when the colonial revolution, especially in Africa, has taken on a new, inspiring life. It has come at a time when the McCarthyite hysteria has passed and the repression of radical ideas, while still present on the American scene, has lessened. It has come at a time when the tensions of the Korean, Indo-Chinese, and Formosan conflicts have ceased. It has come at a time when students are beginning to stir out of a long slumber of conformity and complaisance.

In this context, there has been much talk among the various socialist groups about the possibility of regroupment. Unfortunately, some have learned nothing from the past, and define "regroupment" as meaning that everybody else should join *them*, and adhere to *their* entire program. And there are others who, while they have clearly indicated their opposition to Stalinism on concrete political issues, insist that the only way to regroupment is to take no position on the Communist world which might offend those who have supported it and continue to support it in many important aspects.

The editors of ANVIL believe that there is one road toward socialist regroupment which offers real promise of creating a healthy and alive socialist movement. We envision a party which would stand for socialism and democracy *everywhere*, which would make clear its opposition to all totalitarianism, and which would not be compromised in any way by Communist totalitarianism. It would appear unequivocally as the defender of socialism and democracy on *both* sides of the Iron Curtain. As a broad party—loosely structured and not a tight, highly disciplined organization—membership would be open to anyone who would be willing to subscribe to the general program of socialism and democracy. Theoretical differ-

ences and differing estimates of many historical events could exist side by side in the same party, because the party would allow all rights to free discussion and democratic decision.

The Socialist Party-Social Democratic Federation forms the framework around which this party could be created. It is the one party which is the heir to the major democratic socialist tradition in the United States, the tradition of Eugene Debs. For the average American, unversed in the Talmudic refinements of radical politics in the United States, the Socialist Party is the socialist movement. Thus, the SP becomes the natural center for a unified American socialist movement, even while being as small as all the other socialist groups that exist today.

Such a party could attract numbers of people who are not now in the democratic socialist movement because they had been deluded by Communism or because they had become tired of the sectarian past. It would also attract those who are coming to socialism for the first time. We believe that this revived Socialist Party would be in a position to make a special appeal to the youth and students of the United States. It would offer an organization which would work to end the era of quietism and conformity on campus, would rekindle the spark of social idealism among the youth.

Before such a party can come into being, a great many steps will have to take place. We recognize this, but do not propose to detail them here. We do, however, express the firm support which ANVIL offers to the movement for a united Socialist Party. We hope that ANVIL will play a role in bringing together the democratic socialist youth—one of the important steps in rebuilding the socialist movement in the United States.



STOP THE TESTS! BAN THE BOMB!

A growing sentiment for peace has crystalized around these two crucial demands. A world that seemed to have assimilated the horror of the A and H-Bombs has begun to protest the production of these monstrous weapons.

Significantly, the impetus for this movement comes primarily from the immediate danger of radioactive fall-out produced by the testing of nuclear weapons. When scientists pointed out that the tests could have serious consequences for yet unborn generations, since genetic mutations might occur with the increase of radioactivity, when the highly radioactive rains fell throughout the world—then the protest mounted. These palpable, obvious facts made a more powerful impact than all the scientific non-fiction that attempted to depict the unimaginable horrors of a World War III.

Fall-out has been the fact which has brought the world to a new consciousness of the dangers of the Bomb; yet the consciousness extends beyond a concern with the here and now. The immediate problem has made the future danger all the more real.

This became clear when the "clean Bomb" was announced and promptly ridiculed for the horror that it is. One reader of the N. Y. *Post* wrote that it reminded him of the suggestion that bullets be tipped with mercurochrome so that if they did not kill a man, they would keep him from getting blood poisoning.

Since the clamor to stop the tests and ban the bomb continued after the "clean Bomb" plan was made public, the fall-out problem clearly represents only the occasion of the protest, and not its substance. The core of the protest is the latent and buried sentiment for peace itself, crystalized in the more dramatic question of the Bomb. As socialists we whole-

heartedly support this extremely progressive movement to stop the tests and ban the bomb.

Yet this anti-Bomb movement is a formless, inchoate kind of refusal to go along, it has a mood but no program. This vague orientation means that dangerous pitfalls lie ahead, most seriously in the form of illusions about the Cold War and the way to fight for peace.

The end of the tests and even the banning of the bomb **WILL NOT NECESSARILY LEAD TO PEACE.** For who will enforce the ban, or effectively assure that all stockpiles have been destroyed? Indeed, the *possibility* of a nuclear Third World War would still remain.

The reason for this lies in the nature of the Cold War. This struggle between the capitalist and Communist blocs is a massive struggle of social systems; it is a fight over the domination and organization of the world.

On the one hand, the Western camp, led by the United States, is the defender of the *status quo*, of capitalism, imperialism, reaction. Under its "democratic" banner stands almost every non-Communist dictator and reactionary in the world. On the other side is Russia, opposing the Western imperialism, speaking a socialist rhetoric, and actually representing a new totalitarian society which enslaves all peoples who fall under its domain. Thus we find the world caught in the grip of a power struggle and on either side stands oppression for the people: where American power is dominant, the government is in the hands of those who maintain exploitation on a capitalist basis; where there is Communist power, the national governments are subordinate to the needs of the international totalitarian Communist bureaucracy.

Such a struggle is over the goods of this world, over which ruling class will have the right to exploit them. The Cold War is not a case of evil men, either simple "Wall Street Imperialists," or "Communist Conspirators." As such, the uneasy armed truce cannot be negotiated away. To take one example, how can there be a lasting "agreement" on whether the Kremlin or Washington is to have control over the oil resources of the Middle East? There can be none—thus real peace, as differentiated from all forms of armed truces, from "co-existence," can only be secured when the causes of war are eliminated.

Even if stopping the tests and banning the bomb remove only the most terrible of the weapons at the disposal of the governments, even if the Bomb is only a manifestation and not the root cause, **ALL THE TESTS MUST BE STOPPED!** That is the first, but important and crucial, step that the peace movement must make, and there must be no equivocation on it. And the peace movement is making this demand.

But to repeat: if this peace sentiment is to become politically significant, it must become conscious that its basic demand, although excellent, is limited—it must face the broader problem of peace and war in the Twentieth Century.

For example, as some of the leading figures of the Socialist International have proposed, all troops should be withdrawn from Europe—both Russian and American. Such a suggestion goes beyond the immediate demand to end the tests: it moves toward meeting the causes of war itself. For it would mean the end of Communist rule in Eastern Europe and the diminishing of American intervention in the affairs of Western Europe.

Today, the clamor to stop the nuclear holocaust is a momentous first step which all socialists support. But tomorrow, this peace movement must become broader—it must face, and propose solutions for, the myriad problems which confront us in this period of armed truce.

September 10, 1957

THE EDITORS

The Existentialist Agony

—The Lonely Men and Politics

WILLIAM JAMES once said that Hegel's systemized universe was like a seaside boarding house, without privacy, where he faintly suffocated. He could not exist there as a living human being.

As early as the 19th century, intellectuals like Kierkegaard and Herzen thought that the theories of the blind development of the *Zeitgeist* or history were drowning out individual uniqueness and suffering. James' remark was only a succinct summary of this existentialist revolt.

Even Belinsky, the 19th century Russian critic who is usually regarded as an Hegelian, at one point cried out:

... if I should succeed in creeping up the developmental stairs to attain the topmost step I would endeavor, even there, to take into the reckoning all the victims of misfortune, of superstition, of the inquisition of Philip II; and so on—and in default would hurl myself headlong from the summit.

Once the revolt began, it was impelled toward a basic questioning of the value of science, indeed of the power of discursive reasoning itself. According to the existentialists, science, by its lofty abstractions and empty formulae, looks down at and minimizes individual human experience—this man slowly dying from a cancerous liver, this child bombed into nakedness, crying in the midst of a rubble street, that lonely girl jumping off a bridge at midnight, the day-by-day exploitation and dehumanization of each workman—in its cold calculations and analysis science loses the feel of earthy existence, of these inner human experiences. This is what the existentialist suspiciously distrusts—this explaining which can so easily degenerate into explaining away.

In attempting to grasp reality, the existentialist counterposes phenomenological description to the scientific method; that is, the attempt to clarify data as originally given, rather than the interpretation of given data. Instead of trying to "prove," "analyze," or "interpret" as the scientist does, the

existentialist is content with simply "stating" and "describing."

Along the same lines, the existentialists, especially Sartre, feel that language is losing its meaning as a conceptual tool to portray reality. The British analytical school, with its fine dissections of the meanings of words, is an extreme example of this failure; it is like the man who gets so engrossed with the scratches on his glasses that he forgets that glasses are made to be seen with. And this failure is not simply limited to an esoteric philosophical school, but is found also in literature and art. There is the Joyce-like divorcement of words from reality, and at the opposite pole, as in the Dadaist movement, the infusing of images with so many concrete things that again reality is lost. But the existentialist is not unique in his criticism of this distorted use of language: even a scientist could condemn it.

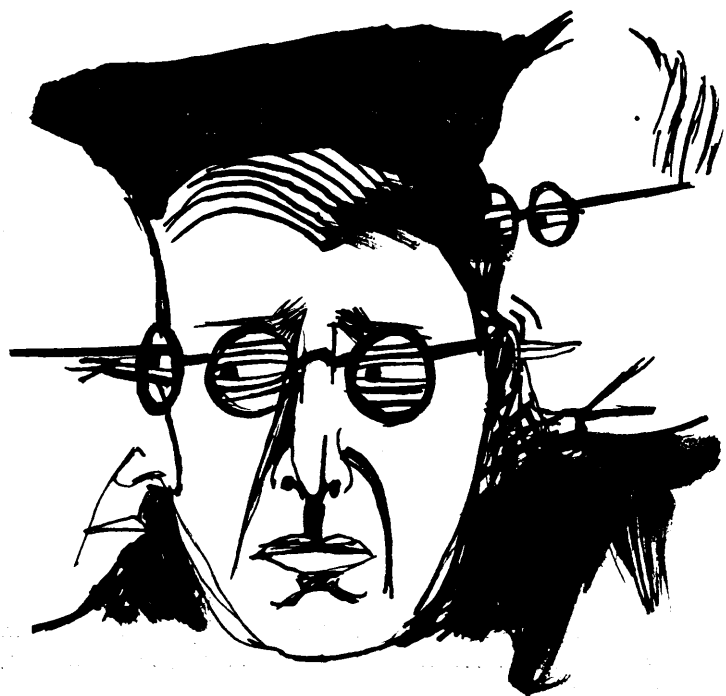
The existentialists go far beyond the simple affirmation that our language, our human dialogue, is in a state of sickness; they challenge direct communication itself, and in doing so they come into a basic conflict with the scientific method.

Direct communication depends on universal concepts which are abstract and partial, never able to grasp the whole of the concrete. "Table" applies equally to all tables; *this* table, in all its uniquely individual ways, can never be exhausted by the universal concept. And the universal concept cannot begin to grapple with individual concrete acts of existing in all its subtle nuances of inner emotional experiences. These must be lived alone and can never be directly communicated. This difference between the universal and particular is, of course, perennial in the history of philosophy. But the existentialists have taken a radical attitude toward it: from within their distrust of the systematic, they have challenged the very validity of universals themselves.

Doesn't this mean being reduced to a silent world where the existentialists themselves would be unable to communicate even their own philosophy? To escape the dilemma, Kierkegaard developed the famous "indirect" communicative technique. People can communicate, but only in an imaginative and emphatic way, vaguely, through inference, by literary illustrations of personal experience, by metaphor and through allusion.

Thus the two modes of existentialist communication: phenomenology, a method which bases itself on describing rather than interpreting, stating rather than explaining; and indirect communication, discussion through metaphor, inference, implication. It is easy to see why so many existentialists are literary stylists like Kierkegaard, novelists like Camus, playwrights like Sartre. Their very philosophy tends to turn art into a more significant means of communication than science, for everything depends on the dramatic particular, on the nuance, the implication. But if this general attitude unites the existentialists, there are a whole series of questions which divides them. The very distrust of universals, of formal conceptual discourse, the hatred of rules, opens up the way for an almost endless diversity within the single school of existentialism.

Consequently, let us turn to two particular existentialists, Sartre and Camus. They are all the more interesting because in them the unresolved tension between their philosophical



attitude and political conscience is extremely marked.

Camus believes that the universe, the world, society are chaotic, strange, unlawful, and hostile places. Man, on the other hand, is a rational animal; further, he is always trying to instill his reason into the universe. He attempts to place order and structure into this world which is unique in that it has no order or structure. This is an absurd relationship—little man, besieged by an engulfing, overwhelming universe, trying to force his reason upon it but always unable to accomplish this task.

One can meet this absurd situation in many ways, by turning to religion, killing oneself, turning away in utter despair, hoping for a miraculous solution, simply ignoring the state of affairs, and so on. Camus rejects all such responses, for he believes that all these “solutions” are only escapes—they evade the question of realistically facing the absurdity.

Only one attitude (weak though it may sound) will enable a man to brave his impossible plight. And that is a “meta-physical revolt” against the absurdity, the facing of the absurd relationship with lucidity, with defiance, a “constant confrontation between man and his obscurity.” The rebel always clearly, without any illusions, fights to order this chaotic world and establish the reign of justice. And in the 20th century the struggle for the reign of justice necessitates the struggle for the classless society.

Anti-Social Determinism

Sartre states these ideas in a more complicated and complex way. He starts from a basic duality between Being (matter) and Consciousness (mind), a duality which rules out any merging of the two. Strictly in accord with his acausal assumption, Sartre posits Being as inert, heavy, without movement or direction. Consciousness is its negation—it is fluid, fleeting, nothing. The future remains an opportunity, pure chance, undetermined for man: he makes his future by his chosen actions. Thus consciousness is defined by its “futureness,” by its projects. This brings us immediately to Sartre’s famous notion of “freedom.”

While Consciousness is completely free to choose for the future, it always seeks to gain the firmness of thinglike being, even while still retaining its own transparency. This striving is the attempt to become God and is of course unattainable, but all consciousness strives toward Godhood nevertheless. In this attempt to become both Being and Consciousness, the artist has a special role. He can fuse the immediacy, the solidity, of an object with the freedom of his own eye and make of the two an image which is both specific and endlessly suggestive. As Sartre puts it, art “is a task set to freedom.” Then, basing himself on the notion of good will, he goes on to maintain that this gift cannot be the property of the single artist. Rather, it is the province of all artists: and eventually, man himself must realize this freedom in the achievement of all his potentialities.

Sartre’s complicated argument takes a peculiar form. He does not try to prove his point; he merely states it in good phenomenological style. Indeed, there is a shifting of meaning in the very word, “freedom,” which he uses. This minor flaw is only incidental. The major error in both Sartre’s and Camus’ thinking lies in their rejection of *all* notion of a lawful world where past and present have an influence in determining future events, where one can predict developments, causally explain events, and rationally participate in social movements. Viewing man as someone who finds himself in a situation not

of his making, but who can still act as a free being undetermined by that situation, enables both Sartre and Camus to view history as a struggle where instrumentality, choice, and pragmatic tests rule. But this anti-social determination makes it extremely difficult—I am tempted to say logically inconceivable—to orient man in a common framework from which he can attempt to eliminate precisely those terrible conditions in which he finds himself today; or to be more exact, there is no way of telling which framework is the most fruitful one to achieve this emancipation. And since this anti-social determinism is held by all existentialist thinkers, it isn’t surprising that everyone of them moved in different social directions. Heidegger flirted with the Nazi movement, Marcel was baptized a Roman Catholic in mature life, Sartre began rationalizing Stalinist barbarities, Camus remaining a staunch moral defender of democracy. You see, if the world is wild and unlawful, there really is no way of verifying whether Heidegger or Marcel or Sartre or Camus is right in his particular political reactions to absurdity.

On the other hand, do not get the impression that social determinism is a panacea, that all one has to say is “I’m a social determinist” and, presto, all problems are solved. No, on the contrary, being a determinist solves nothing in and of itself. Haven’t the conflicting, often contradicting, determinist theories indicated that? Its advantage lies in the *possibility* of verification via the lengthy process of scientific analysis, in the testing of one theory against another by practice. This type of verification is inconceivable for acausal existentialism whose claim to truth can *only* be by appeal to moral and ethical standards. Such an appeal, however, is at best a slippery criteria for truth.

Not only is the matter of verification involved. How relate to other people in this mad world? Sartre’s conception of all men vainly striving to become God means viewing others with hostility and as enemies, but even without this unique Sartrean twist, the tendency of the existentialist is to view man as a lonely, asocial, isolated individual moving through a social setting like a random atom. And this means a hostile attitude towards social man, harkening back to nihilism.

But Politics Persist

Yet both Camus and Sartre are highly political (and thus social beings). They do not want man to be the atom they portray, and to evade their own outlook they are forced into inconsistency. This inconsistency is present in both their literature and politics.

Sartre’s first novel, *Nausea*, is the perfect example of the naked pattern of human existence as he sees it. It shows the lonely individual divorced from society and all other human beings. It is the picture produced by the asocial, existential Sartre.

On the other hand there are the characters Brunet and Schneider in *Roads to Freedom*. Brunet is the simple Communist Party worker who unreflectively identifies himself with one concrete project, the goals of the Party. Sartre shows a real respect for Brunet as a person (but not for his ideas) even in the first novel of *Roads to Freedom*, *The Age of Reason*, which was written long before Sartre started flirting with the C.P. In one scene, after the central character of the novel, Mathieu, has refused a request by Brunet to join the Party, Brunet leaves the house, and Sartre glowingly portrays him walking down the street, the hero of the people, self-confident, without any doubts.

Later, Brunet meets an ex-CPer in a Nazi concentration camp. The ex-CPer, Schneider, is gentle, humane, sceptical, wise, and still an independent socialist. Brunet changes under his influence and Sartre is obviously enthusiastic. But when they attempt to escape, Schneider is shot and killed. The symbolism here is foreboding in terms of Sartre's later political development, but Sartre's early respect for these characters typifies the inconsistency with his existentialist ideas. In any case, the respect as well as the foreboding symbolism is immediately covered by Brunet shouting an existentialist slogan: "No human victory can efface this absolute of suffering: the Party has killed him, even if the USSR wins, men are alone."

Camus' literature is even more interesting. In *The Myth of Sisyphus*, Camus' first major essay, the duality is clear. The first half of the essay posits the absurd relationship, the various ways people can react to that situation, and some illustrations of "metaphysical revolt." In the concluding section the hero, Sisyphus, enters the story. It is here that the other half of Camus' divided soul is shown, the wish to be for social man. This is obvious even though the language is still couched in existentialist terms. The hero is defiant, proud, unconquerable. Sisyphus is tragic, but overpoweringly majestic in his tragedy: "Sisyphus, proletarian of the gods, powerless and rebellious, knows the whole extent of his wretched condition. . . . He, too, concludes that all is well. This universe henceforth without a master seems to him neither sterile nor futile. . . . The struggle itself toward the heights is enough to fill a man's heart."

An even more obvious example of the social "compartment" that resides in Camus' thought is a passage from *The Rebel*:

. . . the spirit of rebellion finds few means of expression in societies where inequalities are very great (the Hindu caste system) or, again, in those where there is absolute equality (certain primitive societies). The spirit of revolt can only exist in a society where a theoretic equality conceals great factual inequalities. The problem of revolt, therefore, has no meaning outside our Occidental society.

The passage is of course shot through with social determinism and analysis. But in the passing years Camus has reverted more and more to the language of Sartre's *Nausea*.

Beauty and the Humiliated

Actually the situation with Camus is more complicated, because, besides his dichotomy between existentialism and determinism, he has been faced with the dilemma of artist or socialist. In 1952, he remarked that, "Yes, there is beauty and there are the humiliated. Whatever may be the difficulties of the undertaking, I should like never to be unfaithful either to one or to the others." Of late he has completely concentrated on the beautiful, with only minor remarks on the humiliated.

The Fall, Camus' latest novel, shows his tiredness, his shift away from the social struggle, his reversion to *Nausea*.

After the heroic Sisyphus, the illustrative character in *The Fall* has become more subdued, less objectionable, almost sordid. The voice of a former well-known Parisian lawyer speaks to you from his retreat in an Amsterdam bar. He has finally gained the insight that his whole life was self-deceptive, all his good acts and kind deeds were sham, covering his cowardly self-love. He has moved to Amsterdam to reign as the judge-penitent. The hero is again the asocial atom: even the monologue technique subtly suggest this withdrawal from the social battle.

Politics is another barometer of the existentialist's inconsistency. In this case it is expressed in the differences between Camus and Sartre.

Camus has always been the moral socialist denouncing all oppression, while Sartre cynically toyed with the Stalinists, at one point even refusing to publish information on the Russian concentration camps which he knew to be true.

Different Approaches

Even today, when the Hungarian Revolution has begun disintegrating Sartre's ties to Communism, there is still a great difference in their approaches. In the second letter to the Russians by Sartre and other French intellectuals (published in *Dissent*, Winter, 1957), while denouncing the Russian armed intervention, Sartre could still use language such as ". . . it appears to us that . . . your government itself has without doubt been badly informed of the real conditions . . ."; or better yet, "It seems to us that such a meeting and inquiry [between the Russians and French intellectuals on neutral soil to determine what happened in Hungary—M. S.] as we propose would constitute the best means of arriving at that complete truth whose pursuit remains our objective just as much as yours."

Here is Camus' response, published in *Encounter*, April, 1957.

It is perhaps expedient for a Communist newspaper to say that all the people of Hungary are Fascists except Kadar, his police, and his executions. But the factual truth is that we have witnessed a revolt of workers, intellectuals, and peasants who wanted national independence and personal liberty. Real Fascism, to speak plainly, is that of Kadar and Khrushchev, who crushed a popular revolt along with its soviets.

Sartre's political behavior has been described by Koestler in *The Age of Longing*, in a chapter entitled "The Witches' Sabbath." Although it is at best a caricature, it underlines, even in distorted form, the way in which Sartre argues. The gist is contained in the following gem: ". . . equally undeniable that it [the Commonwealth of Freedomloving People, i.e., Russia—M. S.] was an expression of History's groping progress towards a new form of society, whence it followed that those who opposed this progress were siding with the forces of reaction and preparing the way for conflict and war — the worst crime against humanity. . . ." Is it conceivable that Sartre, along with almost the entire French body of intellectuals, participated in an attempt to form a socialist movement opposed to both capitalism and Communism in the late 1940's? Yes, but it only once again illustrates the confusion that racks this existentialist mind.

On the three levels of methodology, epistemology, and social philosophy, the existentialists tend toward unverifiable subjectivism, caught between the logic of their position and their desires as social beings, between subjective isolation and political reality.

Yet we must not be led astray by this brief critical sketch of the existentialist inconsistencies and dilemmas from the important contributions the existentialists have made. Even though their philosophy negates its literary expression, that literary expression remains in all its vividly bitter descriptions of human misery, suffering, degradation, cruelty, of the underground, lonely, and alienated man. They have hammered it home in their plays, essays, and novels, so that we should never forget. And a well-grounded world view must include this existentialist sympathy for the individual and his plight. Then we will have a socially determined, scientific analysis and a regard for the uniqueness and pain of each man. Then we will have a tool to deal with reality!

MEL STACK

George Lukacs

—*The Dialectical Career of a Dialectician*

IT IS STRANGE that one must begin an essay on George Lukacs by telling who he is. Strange, because Lukacs is one of the finest literary critics of our time, certainly the greatest Marxist aesthete of all time, and a man whose life has been incredible in itself: a member of Bela Kun's Hungarian Soviet Government after World War I, a faithful Stalinist, and one of the intellectual leaders of the recent Hungarian revolution. Yet he is little known in the English-speaking world. When Herbert Read wrote in his defense a short time ago in the *New Statesman*, he noted that he was going largely on a reputation, not on the basis of having read Lukacs' work.

For Lukacs the theoretician, the world moves hugely, yet dialectically, by means of countless contradictions. For Lukacs the man, the theory is a projection of an autobiography. To understand him, one must be as dialectical as his criticism, for in him life imitates an ideology.

As a Marxist critic, Lukacs stands in the very first rank. His best work is marked by a sensitivity to the complex, by a hatred for all the aesthetic mechanics who would make of literature a snapshot of history. He has taken the early radical Dos Passos to task for being too schematic; he has had words of praise for the insights of a Nietzsche. And at the very same time that he was writing his brilliant, subtle studies, Lukacs was praising the genius of Stalin in philosophy, linguistics, aesthetics. At times, his groveling approached absurdity—as when he wrote that the Stakhanovite movement represented the millennial achievement of Marx's dream of an age when work would be the labor of love, and not a burden.

In this context, the climax of Lukacs' political life last October was both totally unexpected and completely predictable. That he would break with the years of obedience and become a revolutionary, this is inexplicable in terms of his devotion to Stalinism. And yet, it is predictable, too, for in the long night of his spiritual abjection he was never able to snuff out the innate subversiveness of his own genius.

Lukacs is worthy of study on his own merits, as a social critic of literature. But more, he also stands as a symbol of those Communists who were able to make every twist and turn of line for years, yet who still retained, somewhere deep inside, the basic revolutionary instinct which brought them to the Party in the first place. In this perspective, the contradictions of Lukacs' life are not private nor public only in a literary sense; they are the expression of a phenomenon which must be understood by all those who are concerned with the developing revolt of the intellectuals within Stalinist society.

Lukacs began his literary career as a precocious Neo-Kantian who had established a reputation by his early Twenties. The period of World War I drove him into despair and toward expressionism. In his *Theory of the Novel* (published in 1920), he was writing of the "unbridgeable abyss" between the "I" and the world, of the chaos of existence, of the disappearance of the "totality of life." Out of this time, and these themes, came his conversion to Marxism.

In 1923, Lukacs published his seminal Marxist study, *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein*. In it are contained the basic theories which developed into his double life. Here, in

embryo, is the beginning of his sensitive, complex criticism, of his humanitarian sympathy; and here, also, the ideas which were to lead to his slavish adherence to the Party.

The book is permeated with the most humanistic categories of Marx, particularly those of the younger Marx just emerged from his Hegelian studies. For Lukacs, the condemnation of capitalism is in terms of the deformation it works upon the human spirit, its alienation, its specialization and division of labor. And, again like the young Marx, he places tremendous emphasis upon the self-transforming potential of the workingclass: "In relation to the proletariat, historical development is not automatic; for the proletariat prevails only in so far as it realizes—as the old mechanistic materialism could not—that it must be, itself, the agent of its transformation and liberation."

But side by side with this emphasis on Marxian libertarianism, there is another theme: Marxism as the total science of human relations. In part, this is of a piece with his criticism of capitalist society. For Lukacs one of the most damning things about the bourgeoisie is that it lacks any sense of the whole, indeed, that it is precluded by its historical position from a theoretical understanding of the very society which it created. And to this deformed consciousness, he counterposes the consciousness of the workingclass (Marxism) which is a complete and total world-view.

Thus, Lukacs writes, "The leading role of the economic motive in the understanding of history is not what decisively differentiates Marxism from bourgeois science; rather the vantage point of totality . . . the category of totality . . . the rule of the whole over the part. . . ." And, as a result, "For Marxism, in the last resort there is no independent science of law, of national economy, of history, etc. but only a single, unified . . . science of the development of society as a totality." And the keeper of this consciousness—that is the Party.

"He's a Professor"

At the very beginning, then, Lukacs' thought was torn by a basic contradiction. On the one side, there was his humanistic longing for wholeness (a feeling which later expressed itself in a vision of classic Greece and the Renaissance as a modern democracy); on the other side, an affirmation of totality as interpreted by the Party. In the libertarian passion there was the tendency toward totalitarianism.

During the Fifth Congress of the Communist International in June of 1924, Lukacs' book was denounced by Zinoviev as a dangerous revision of Marxism. As Lukacs name was read out, someone in the audience shouted derisively, "He's a professor." The practical men were taking over, and there was no longer any room for talk of the "self-transformation" of the proletariat. In face of this fundamental choice, Lukacs chose the Party. Later, he was to denounce *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein* as "expressionist," "idealist," lacking in understanding of the role of the Party. No detail was spared him. He was even forced to recant the footnote in which he took issue with Engels, denying that the dialectic was a law of natural, as well as social, science. For him, the Party could no

longer be simply the interpreter of political wisdom; now it contained the key to all knowledge.

Lukacs capitulated—yet he was too brilliant to capitulate completely. During the long years in the prison of Stalinist ideology, he carried out the dictates of the line, yet at the very same time, he continued to develop his own complex, careful analysis of literature and society. And so the paradox, that the most brilliant Marxist critic of our age wrote from within a movement which honored a sentimental, bourgeois representationalism as “socialist” realism.

The dialectic was both Lukacs' course and his salvation. It had led him, through his theory of totality interpreted by the Party, into a commitment to what he knew was untruth. Yet, it kept him the implacable foe of the mechanistic, of the schematic presentation of literature as a simple social function. Above all the theory of the dialectic meant for Lukacs that reality, and literature, were contradictory, in movement, that they could not be easily formulized. If, because of the Party, he at times adopted the easy formula, he (alas) knew what he was doing.

He wrote, of course, that literature develops in relation to society. But, “it is a completely impermissible narrowing of the problem . . . to confine the study of literature and art to a characterization of the social basis of each literary stage. Moreover, it is a misunderstanding of ‘uneven development’ when one derives the goodness (progressiveness) or badness (reactionary quality) of an individual work from a social analysis.” As a result, “it doesn't matter whether the writer deduces the right conclusions” from the material which he presents. Rather, it is a question of his presenting a felt, a deeply felt, world.

In the very same essay which contains this attack upon a mechanistic rendering of literature as the simple product of a society, Lukacs wrote that Stalin, in his theory of “Socialist Realism,” had deepened and developed the work of Marx and Engels. He knew, of course, that this was not true. Indeed, a few hints of his that all was not perfection in Russian literature did lead to a demand that he recant in the late Forties. And this he did, yet never was he able to still the voice of his genuine convictions, no matter how he distorted and prostituted them.

The Double Life

Dealing with the past, Lukacs was afforded a greater freedom. With it, he was able to develop unorthodox analyses while maintaining his schematic obedience to orthodoxy: the praise of Stalin was the price he paid for his serious work. Thus, in Swift's lacerations he finds “a passionate love of life and man.” Only through such a basic emotion, Lukacs felt, could Swift see so clearly into the deformations of man. Of Walter Scott, he wrote, “Paradoxically, the greatness of Scott is tightly bound up with his narrow conservatism.” And in treating Flaubert, Baudelaire, Zola and Nietzsche, he saw them as bourgeois in spite of themselves, of affirming, in their negation, the power of the very values which they so detested.

This approach is the basis for another, fundamental principle of Lukacs: the irrelevance of a writer's politics to what he writes.

“A politically and socially reactionary world-view,” Lukacs held, “cannot impede the rise of a masterpiece of realism, and, at the same time, a progressive political point of view can take a bourgeois literary form which hinders the development of a realistic treatment.” Consequently, Lukacs had only contempt

for those critics who evaluated novelists on the basis of their politics. To him, they constituted a tremendous block to the emergence of a genuine Marxist criticism.

And yet, with Lukacs there is always the paradox of his double life. The view that the test of a work is in the work itself, and not in the politics of the author, is basic to all of his serious writing. It follows logically from his most fundamental notions of the relation of literature to society, and it is an essential and integral element in his polemic against the mechanistic social critics. To say this is only to prepare for the inevitable fact: that Lukacs denied this crucial principle time and again both in theory and in practice.

In 1949, he was “self-criticizing” himself for his lack of attention to contemporary Russian writers (actually, he was repenting some perceptive remarks he had made about Stalinist literature). He wrote of his lack of concern with the Party books, “This attitude has grave consequences: those who are opposed to Soviet civilization and literature discern in my position . . . a confirmation of their erroneous position. . . . They think that there is an official literary line—open and declared—and another line, that of Lukacs. They think that they can accept this latter line and become true socialist writers without recognizing the value of Soviet literature. . . .”

In this mood, Lukacs was capable of holding that Gorki's greatness was a function of his anti-capitalist, socialist politics. More, he found that the literature of the popular front constituted a massive and important turn in German literature, that it was an event of world importance. This latter judgment followed only a few years after he had insisted upon the necessity of the proletarian novel and denounced Franz Mehring for literary “Trotskyism” because of his denial of it. And he could write, in contradiction to his basic position, “. . . great literature has a powerful historic mission: to be the vanguard fighter for the people's culture for real democracy. From Whitman to Anatole France, from Ibsen to Shaw, from Tolstoy to Gorki,” this is the high road of art and literature.

But again, it is important to return to the subterranean Lukacs, who smuggled his genius past the Party line like so much contraband. If the Stalinist aspect of his work is of political and psychological importance, his genuine and fundamental discussion of literature and society, particularly in his treatment of form, is a major contribution in itself.

Unlike most social critics, Lukacs has concerned himself at length with the problem of form. He maintains, of course, that changes in society are behind the rise and fall of genres and pose new problems of form to the artist. He agrees with the conventional judgment that the novel develops out of a thickening of life and with the disappearance of the “public” spheres of royalty which were so central to the epic and tragedy. But he does much more than that because he makes the formal, structural development which emerges out of the social transformation an important, even a quasi-independent, category.

Thus, for Lukacs, the epic is the presentation of a total whole of society through episodes. Its form is consequently quite loose. But the drama is all movement, economy. In tragedy, for instance, there is the basic inter-relationship, the basic collision, and all that does not relate to it is superfluous. And he writes, “. . . in drama, all turns around critical moments of crisis, the high-points of life. . . . The driving power of life is presented in drama only in so far as it leads to the central conflict. . . . In the epic, life appears in a greater fullness.”

And although Lukacs finds the crisis central to the drama, and related to a moment of change and unrest in the society

as a whole, he does not make the absence of choice, the "no-exit" quality, decisive. On the contrary, the tragic drama for him "in the very midst of the self-laceration of man . . . expresses an affirmation of life, it creates a glorification of man's greatness. . . ." In a brilliant insight, he charges the moderns with a failure to understand this point, with a surface conception of tragedy as ending in the simple impossibility of choice which does not contain the positive knowledge which results from the tragic passion.

With the novel, the formal problem has changed radically. There is no longer the question of the episodic totality of the epic, or of the concentrated crisis of the tragedy. Now life has become far more complicated, it has lost its mythic and unifying symbols, its kings. And the writer must create so that the "reader is struck by an impression of all society in its movement," and "any notion of a 'simple' copy of nature must therefore be discarded." And the means of meeting this new situation is realism, a complicated, deeply felt presentation of the inter-twined reality of contemporary society.

For Lukacs, the central indictment against the greatest (and he regards them as great) of the current novelists, is that they have failed to solve this problem of fictional form. Their inability to do so is, of course, related to their incapacity to face the full meaning of the social reality which they confront, but the most immediate consequence of this fact is the breakdown of form. This is how he describes the literary decadence (and notice how the category of totality, first raised in his *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein* remains central): "Life is no longer whole. The word becomes sovereign, and . . . the phrase dominates the paragraph, the paragraph takes on life at the cost of the whole, the whole is no longer whole. . . ."

In many ways, this discussion of the development of literary form, and particularly the analysis of the contemporary novel, is strikingly similar to the one offered by Erich Auerbach in *Mimesis*. Both agree on the distinct quality of modern realism, its decisive emancipation from the canons of the classic separation of styles. And although Lukacs does not deal with Medieval realism, as Auerbach does, his general approach would tend toward a similar judgment. But the difference between the two lies in Lukacs insistence on relating each new turn in the history of form to the development of society in a way which is much more specific than Auerbach.

As a result of this complex approach, Lukacs is able to follow out his own principle that the social critic cannot judge simply on the basis of a social analysis. Given his conception of the relation between form and society, he is able to make incisive formal criticisms once he has laid out the historical groundwork of the problem. The failure of a Schiller, for example, is both formal (abstract characterization) and social (in the sense that he represents a theory of tragedy at a certain historical moment).

Humanism—The Party

This rendering of the Lukacsian view is necessarily brief and somewhat schematic, yet it is sufficient to make the important point: that even in the midst of his commitment to Stalinism, Lukacs was able to make contributions to critical theory which are important in and of themselves.

But what is the larger, political import of the dialectic career of Lukacs? Does it signify anything of importance for the whole question of the revolt against Stalinism?

In a sense, this contradictory and paradoxical man can stand for an entire process. With Lukacs, as with almost all of

the intellectuals who had broken with Stalinism during the revolution in Hungary, the initial commitment to Stalinism developed out of an honest struggle. His *Geschichte* is a classic in the best humanistic spirit of Marxism. It is suffused with a faith in the democratic meaning of socialism. And yet, it led to an acceptance of the Party rule, of adulation of the dictatorship of Stalin.

This, too, must be understood as an honest commitment, at least in the beginning. Behind it lay a mystique of the Party, an identification of all that is good in Marxism, of all the humanistic aspirations, with an institution. And part of this development was a process of ironic self-doubt on the part of the intellectual. In his later Stalinist period, Lukacs was to describe his earlier "errors" as a result of his petty-bourgeois idealism, of his over-glorification of the revolutionary potential of the people. In a sense, what he admired about the Party was precisely its contempt for him.

In this, the case of Lukacs is not unlike that of Brecht, the most brilliant Stalinist poet. For both of them (particularly the Brecht of *Die Massnahme*), the Party acted, that was the confirmation of its historic mission. It was not, as they felt themselves, subtle, complex, filled with self-doubt. Rather, it was hard, decisive. And once they had made the initial commitment, no indignity, no act of prostitution, was too much to ask. Indeed, each intellectual submission, each betrayal of the private truth to the public lie in the name of the higher good, was itself a further confirmation of the rightness of the Party. Thus, the spectacle of a genius like Lukacs humbling himself in his 1949 recantation; thus Brecht agreeing to the publication of two "Collected Works," one for East Germany, one for West Germany.

The Rubashov Problem

Yet, the initial commitment to Marxism, to the vision of the self-transforming quality of the workingclass was not destroyed by Lukacs. For decades, its only expression was the contraband of truth which he smuggled into his literary criticism. But it remained there. Indeed, during the 1949 crisis over Lukacs' failure to treat of contemporary Russian authors, one of the charges made against him was that he had never really eradicated the deviation of his early years, that his work was a totality from which the effect of *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein* could never be expunged. The Lukacsian point urged against Lukacs was a telling one.

But why, then, did Lukacs make his capitulation in the first place? Strangely enough, Lukacs himself gave the most compelling answer in the course of a recantation. His early Marxist work dates from the period of the tremendous revolutionary upsurge which followed upon World War I. The Russian Revolution, the Soviet Republic of Bela Kun (in which Lukacs participated), the German Revolution—all these events made it seem that the final conflict was actually at hand. In this atmosphere, Lukacs developed his insistence upon the self-transforming capacity of the proletariat, his vision of the people in movement. But then came the stabilization of European capitalism, the beginning of the destruction of the Russian Revolution. The immediate historical basis of the revolutionary faith disappeared.

On one side, Lukacs saw the collapse of the avante garde, the emergence of a bitter, hopeless expressionism. And on the other, there was the Party. The derisive shout of "He's a professor" at the Fifth Congress of the International must have struck home; it must have penetrated into the recesses of his

intellectual irony and self-doubt. Whatever the actual psychological process, the end of the revolutionary upheavals marked the decisive turning point. It was then, and only then, that Lukacs made his terrible peace with totalitarianism.

And yet, the commitment could not totally corrupt. In the midst of his betrayal, Lukacs maintained a certain integrity. And it ramified. In East Germany, for instance, the intellectual leader of the resistance against Stalinism, Wolfgang Hairich (recently sentenced to prison for his activity) was a Lukacsian. In Hairich's program, there is a typical Lukacsian emphasis: upon a return to the basic tradition of Marxism, of contact with the intellectual greats who have so long been anathema. In the list of those who are to be read, there are the names of Bucharin and Trotsky—and the name of Rosa Luxembour, the hero of Lukacs' youth, the victim of Stalin's lies. And by a strange twist, Brecht, according to Hairich, had joined in this new movement before his death. He, too, had perhaps begun to tear down the bars.

There is, of course, no sense in glorifying the lies and evasions of a Lukacs (or a Brecht). Yet, the development of Lukacs is an insight into a process, a ground for hope. If the rationalization of Koestler's Rubashov in *Darkness at Noon* seems to have found flesh and blood in the life of a Lukacs, then we know something more about Lukacs-Rubashov: that their capitulation, their slavish self-sacrifice to a gigantic lie, never did still the voice that first brought them to Communism. The democratic values of Marxism persisted through the years, continued behind the back of all the untruth. And given the moment—the ferment in Hungary—that subterranean

force came to the surface. The historical faith which was lost in the defeat of the Revolution at the end of the First War became revolutionary, historically so, over three decades later.

It is even possible that Lukacs will make still another turn, that he will make his peace with Kadar, the murderer of the Hungarian Revolution. Indeed, there have been rumors to that effect in the French press. And yet, he can never efface the great truth which his life symbolizes. He could find no honor, no humanitarianism, none of the tradition of Marxism, in the Stalinist movement. In order to return to his early dedication to the cause of socialism, he was forced to break with the Communist Party, with Stalinism and—to make a revolution. One hopes deeply that he will not go back on this courageous action. But even if he does, it will be the action of an old man who is weak, it cannot destroy that profound truth which he rescued from three decades of a commitment to political untruth.

Yet, one must see the complexity. His dialectical life is no one thing, it is a maze and mass of contradiction. Lukacs is not simply Rubashov, he is also one of the finest social critics of our time. If he is honored in years to come for his role on the barricades of Budapest, he will be read for years to come, even in those books written in the very depths of his commitment to Stalinism. Indeed, this man is most dialectical.

Michael Harrington

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The Uneasy

—*Youth in the Soviet Union*

WHAT IS THE ATTITUDE of the young generation under Communism? How do Russian youth feel about the system under which they live and the regime which rules over them?

These are the questions; this is the test. The outlook of young people in any society provides an important index to the strengths and weaknesses of that society and illuminates its future. Not that youth is a category apart from the rest of the population, but rather because young people mirror the feelings and views of the people as a whole in an active and discernable manner. Upon the shoulders of the young falls the burden of either carrying forward the world as they find it or of refashioning it anew.

More specifically, the existence of a youth problem in a totalitarian system would indicate the failure of that system to cope with one of the critical challenges which confront it. Total despotisms rule through terror, but at the same time find it necessary to attempt to enlist the support of the people. The youth are of special concern in this regard, for if their minds cannot be influenced and manipulated, the future holds serious threats in store for the dictators. The existence of widespread unrest among Russian young people, the emergence of political opposition among students and intellectuals, would constitute an extremely significant development.

Until recently two answers predominated in regard to all questions about youth under Communism. Or more precisely, two sides of the same answer. The Communist mythology pictured young people in Russia as specimens of the "new socialist man," as happy creative people who basked in building "a new world." Between the youth and the Communist system there existed a satisfactory harmony. Most anti-Communist opinion, on the other hand, declared that Russian and East European youth wholeheartedly supported Communism and the ruling regimes in Communist countries as a result of indoctrination. Young people under Communism were "brain-washed," conforming automatons. Communist and prevailing anti-Communist opinion united in precluding dissent and rebellion from developing among such young people.

The role of the Hungarian youth and intellectuals as initiators of the October Revolution in that country, and as the formulator of that revolution's program served to place a large tombstone over such theories, at least as far as East Europe was concerned. However, many people still regarded them as valid for Russia, even though political logic would indicate that the situation could not be too much different in the heart of the Communist world from what it was at the fringes of the Russian empire. Now, however, there has accumulated sufficient evidence to clearly prove the existence of a vast youth problem in Russia and of conscious political opposition to Communism among students.

months ago by the publication of a letter written by a Russian student which had been smuggled out of that country. Originally published in the Austrian magazine *Forum* and then reprinted in a number of American periodicals, it described then reprinted in a number of American periodicals, described a number of turbulent discussions among students at Lomonosov University in Moscow. Starting with an analysis of the

Hungarian revolution, the students proceeded to an examination of Russian society, concluding that it was a class society, divided into exploiters and exploited. In their discussions they raised the slogan of a "socialist revolution against the pseudo-socialist state."

These discussions clearly represent an advanced stage of thinking; hence the astonishment among students of Russian affairs at the appearance of the letter which reported them. If the ideas presented in this letter were not part of a wider political opposition to Communism, if the events reported in it were isolated ones, then it would have been a startling phenomena, as well as a not-too-important one. Precisely because the events at Lomonosov University constitute a development based upon widespread political unrest among Russian students, and a stage in the growth of disaffection, the "letter from a Russian student" is *not* startling and *is* of the utmost significance.

Awkward Questions

One of the simplest and earliest forms of political opposition among Russian students during the past few years has consisted of mass absenteeism from University and college classes and lectures. This phenomena, which was especially wide-spread in 1955 and early 1956, occurred on too wide a scale to be merely "class-cutting" based upon individual whim. According to the Russian press, which by paying extensive attention to the problem testified to its seriousness, mass absenteeism from school lectures frequently resulted in empty classrooms. Moreover, a number of expulsions for truancy were announced by the rector of Moscow University. Clearly involved in these incidents was an organized or semi-organized pattern of political protest, most likely in response to the intellectual poverty and outright untruthfulness of Russian education.

After the Twentieth Congress of the Russian Communist Party, the Russian press began to complain about a new phenomena in the university: students were asking what were described as "awkward questions" about such matters as "the cult of the personality" and Khrushchev's revelations about Stalin. Russian newspapers condemned the questions as "provocative" and as "phrase-mongering," but at the same time rebuked teachers for not being able to satisfactorily answer them. The press complained that too many teachers simply ran away from the issues raised by the students, preferring to turn to noncontroversial subjects.

The feelings to be found among Russian students during this period of asking "awkward questions" was summed up by one student, as reported in the *Manchester Guardian*, as follows: "We were not allowed . . . [to speak up] until recently; soon the old restraints will be reimposed, but now we can raise these questions and so we do."

At the same time, students began to organize their own discussion groups, in which they pursued the various problems raised by the Twentieth Congress. Associated with these groups were a number of illegal hand-written or mimeographed publications which began to appear in the universities and which were circulated among students half-clandestinely

and half openly. As early as the fall of 1955 an illegal organ entitled *The Fig Leaf* was produced in the Lithuanian University of Vilnius. This sign of political awakening was condemned by the Russian Young Communist League newspaper, *Komsomolskaia Pravda* in December, 1955. Subsequently, the YCL paper reported—and railed against—the appearance of an illegal student magazine, *Azure Bud*, at Leningrad University. Still other such papers and magazines were published at other schools and colleges.

The turbulent events in Poland and Hungary in the fall of 1956 gave a fresh and insistent impetus to student unrest. The questions asked by Russian students became more and more “awkward”: the regime-controlled press showed greater alarm, as did the CP and YCL themselves. *Komsomolskaia Pravda* complained of the failure of YCL members to attend Komsomol meetings. *Soviet Lithuania* reported that “student unrest in Lithuania reached proportions bordering on hooliganism.” The Leningrad Communist Party Central Committee held a special meeting to consider the problem.

New student publications appeared; these with titles indicating a bolder and more politicized outlook. In December, 1956, students of the Librarians’ Institute in Leningrad published a journal called *Heresy*, while those at the Leningrad Railway Engineering Institute were bringing out an organ entitled *Fresh Voices*. The latter apparently achieved wide popularity and more-than-local circulation, for it was subject to especially heavy attack by the CP and the press. In addition, students began to utilize wall newspapers at Moscow and Leningrad universities for the expression of student dissent. It was widely reported that during the Hungarian revolution BBC news bulletins on the events in Hungary were written down and displayed on the wall newspapers at Moscow University.

The Impact of Hungary

Open turmoil reached a high point in November and December, 1956, with the emergence of mass political meetings of students, primarily in Moscow, but also elsewhere. These meetings were of two kinds: those in which the students “took over” regime-sponsored gatherings of various kinds, such as YCL or student club meetings, by shouting the speaker down, ignoring the officials and the agenda, and organizing the discussion they were interested in; and those organized outside of the framework of legal, recognized groups or associations. The events at Lomonosov University reported in the aforementioned “letter” included both varieties.

On November 30, 1956 a discussion broke out in this school in a class on “Marxism-Leninism” on the meaning of the workers’ general strike then still in progress in Hungary. The students inquired as to how a general strike could take place in a socialist country, given the fact that such a strike was a workingclass weapon, and not an instrument utilizable by exploiting classes. In reply, the teacher (one Professor Syroechkovich) quoted from the daily press about the “terror caused by Horthy-Fascist officers and the diversionary activity of Western imperialists.”

Writes the student: “. . . but his words were drowned by the storm of protest which rose among the students, who proved to him with a flood of quotations from Lenin that he had not answered the question put to him. . . . At this point, the discussion turned into rowdy confusion and the Professor withdrew from the scene.”

News of the incident spread throughout the student body,

with informal discussions going on all day and into the evening, during the course of which Hungarian students studying in Russia were asked questions about conditions in their country. On the next morning hand-written notices appeared on the Komsomol bulletin boards demanding the truth about Hungary. The Komsomol leadership called a meeting of the organization to discuss what it called the “shameful behavior” of the previous day. The students gathered at the meeting quickly voted to remove this point from the agenda and instead to take up “The Hungarian Problem in the Light of Marxism-Leninism.” Resentment against the lack of freedom was poured out by student after student, over the protest of the YCL leadership, which at a certain point withdrew from the hall. That same evening, a hastily-gathered group of students and young writers met at the Literature Building to resume their discussions, during the course of which the view that Communist society is an exploitative, class society was widely expressed, and the slogan of “socialist revolution” against that society emerged.

Similar scenes occurred in other schools in Moscow; also in Leningrad, Kiev, Kharkov, Svedlosk, Novisibirsk, Tashkent, Baku, Minsk, Kishinev and other cities. Unrest was particularly great in the Baltic states, according to reports printed in *Leningrad Pravda*. A total of 140 students were expelled from Lomonosov University in this period, with similar expulsions undoubtedly occurring in other schools as well. Manifestations of rebellious activity in most schools appears to have begun with a rejection by the students of official explanations of the Hungarian events, broadening from there into wide programmatic critiques of the Kremlin regime and of the Communist system itself.

Lastly, as the most extreme expression of student unrest, there seem to have taken place a number of demonstrations and riots. The extent and exact nature of these cannot be determined since information is scanty. Students clearly played an important part in the riots which swept Tiflis and other cities of Georgia following the revelation of the attacks on Stalin at the Twentieth Congress. Exactly what attitudes and feelings these disturbances expressed is not known but their significance as manifestations of anti-regime hostility is not diminished even if they involved, as was alleged, pro-Stalin sentiment. Other student demonstrations were reported to have taken place throughout 1956 and in early 1957 in Vilnius, Kiev, Moscow, Stalingrad and Leningrad.

What do the Russian students want? What are they protesting about in these increasingly overt forms of political opposition? What questions have they been asking, and what answers have they themselves been supplying in their discussion groups, protest meetings, clandestinely-circulated newspapers and magazines, and in scribbled notices placed upon the school bulletin boards and wall newspapers?

The Protest of Boredom

A number of different levels of non-conformity and opposition can be distinguished. For many, unrest remains a passive, apolitical, inarticulate discontent with the *status quo*. Mass absenteeism from university classrooms reflects the widespread boredom felt by Russian students in the face of the vacuous, untruthful propaganda dished out to them by the school in the form of courses on “Marxism-Leninism.” The elimination of such compulsory courses from the school curriculum was one of the programmatic points demanded by Hungarian students during the revolutionary days in that country last October. This resentment clearly exists in Russia

too. In a recent article in the *Times*, Marvin L. Kalb, a C.B.S. news writer who spent a number of years in Russia as a press attache of the American Embassy described this phenomena as follows:

"I was the only Westerner at a lecture on current events in the Lenin Library. The speaker, of course, talked the straight party line. Whenever he used a typical propaganda phrase like "the glorious, mighty, genius-full Soviet people," almost without exception the young listeners around me either yawned loudly or made crude, sarcastic comments, or continued to read books or newspapers. Ninety-five per cent seemed to be bored with such phrases and showed cynical disbelief."

Still other students are mainly concerned with escaping from participating in the all-embracing range of societal and group activities prescribed by totalitarian society. They want to be let alone, they wish to be able to slip out of the straight-jacketed confines of the total regimentation of all phases of life which is one of the essentials of Communist totalitarianism. "We do not want anything and we will do nothing," according to *Komsomolskaia Pravda*, was the attitude expressed by a group of students at the Leningrad Pedagogical Institute in response to the efforts of the regime to mobilize them for the "World Youth Festival."

Student protest, however, has in the last two years been characterized by an increasing political coloration. The sentiments and ideas expressed in the course of that protest have stretched over a wide variety of issues and matters, including literature, education, politics and social questions. These ideas, moreover, have two things in common: they all involve direct or indirect criticisms of the regime and system, for all aspects of social life are subsumed under the category of politics in the totalitarian Communist system; and they all involve a demand for democracy, because, as Djilas puts it in his recent book, "In Communist systems freedom has become the main . . . general problem."

Great dissatisfaction has been voiced over the character of education, over the fact that classroom lectures and discussions, and textbooks in philosophy, political science and economics courses are propagandistic tracts devoid of any value from the point of view of learning. Students have called for the right of the existence of views other than the official ones on such questions, and the underground emergence of distinct ideological trends of an "heretical" nature is reported in the press—reported in the form of warnings against them. Another classification of student complaints relates to questions of personal and social behavior, involving a rejection of the rigid norms of dress, behavior, etc., prescribed by society. It is reported that in 1955 a law student at Moscow University created a stir by calling for the individual's right to freedom of taste in his social behavior. According to *Molodoi Communist*, some "demagogues" expressed approval of the "freedom of the individual" in such matters to be found in capitalist countries.

An important category of protests closely allied to the feelings of hostility to the character of Russian education consists of demands for the end of censorship of all kinds and for accurate information, especially on current affairs. This demand was most urgently expressed during the Polish and Hungarian revolutions, when Russian students made it quite clear that they had no confidence in the "news" presented in the press. According to *Trud*, wall newspapers in Moscow University were not only used to display BBC news bulletins, but also for "crude and slanderous attacks on the Soviet press, copied from bourgeois newspapers." This same desire for

honest information undoubtedly accounts for one phenomenon observed by foreign visitors to Russia, and especially noted during the recent "Youth Festival," the eagerness with which Russians ply foreign visitors with questions about their countries.

Most important and, from the regime's point of view, most dangerous, has been the rash of political criticism aimed at the government and at the very foundations of the totalitarian Communist social system. A manifesto displayed on the bulletin boards of Moscow University called for the replacement of the Supreme Soviet—as Russia's rubber-stamp "parliament" is erroneously called—by a genuinely democratic body based on free elections, according to a report in the *Manchester Guardian*. This same manifesto condemned the "bureaucratic degeneration" to be found in Russia. And, most advanced of all, is the analysis of Russian society to be found in the discussions which occurred in Lomonosov University in the letter from a Russian student heretofore cited.

What kind of system do Russian students desire? Return to capitalism? The answer has already been supplied us by the slogan raised in the discussions at Lomonosov University. What the students condemn is the discrepancy between the official myth that Russian society is socialist and life as they see it around them; what they call for is the bringing of reality into accordance with what the system purports to be. They stand, in the words of the students themselves, for the "socialist revolution against the pseudo-socialist state."

Max Martin Dombrow

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The Disenchanted

—*British Youth Today*

IN EACH DECADE since the first world war youth has been given an epitaph: the Lost Twenties, the Radical Thirties, the War Forties. For American youth of the fifties it has been suggested that a proper label is "The Silent Generation." One possibility for British youth is "The Disenchanted."

The years immediately following the Second World War saw a tremendous wave of hope and enthusiasm for a new world and a new society emerging from the chaos created by capitalism. Faced with a grave economic crisis, the new Labor government did its best to overcome the difficulties—within the framework of utilizing only limited weapons. The British Labor Party, while nationalizing certain sick industries and creating a system of virtually complete social security, did not push beyond this necessary first step. The labor government managed to weather the storm of economic chaos, but the half-way measures made inroads into the old regime without basically changing it. The hopes that had been raised were not fulfilled, and the way was laid open for cynicism. This is the legacy of British youth in the 1950's.

The Welfare State

The British Welfare State has been in operation for over ten years, and a question now arises: What is the attitude of British youth toward the experiment? The first consideration to bear in mind is that the majority of people under twenty-five are not touched by it. National Health Insurance, family allowances, housing and pension schemes benefit primarily families, the sick, and the aged.

After ten years of operation there are criticisms but no violent objection from either Conservatives or Socialists. The young Tories, having accepted it grudgingly, work only to contain its growth and influence. There are still a few who maintain that the Welfare State gives something for nothing and tends to "soften" the people. But this view is not widely held nor paid much attention. Most Conservatives see that there is little difference between a Tory or a Labor government administering the Welfare State.

Among young Socialists the feeling is stronger. The idealism of the early days of the experiment has been drowned in its long-run operation. British Socialism stopped short of the expectations; a transformation of society did not take place. Class privilege and barriers are as high as ever, and nothing close to freedom of opportunity exists. Socialists do not feel a part of the experiment of the Welfare State, and for them Socialism does not exist in Great Britain.

What does exist is the Welfare State, conceived and operating under a concept of charity, and the payment for this charity is high. A factory worker earning ten pounds a week (below the average for the country) pays 15 per cent of his wage for income tax and national health and pension plans. A young person who comes in contact with the Welfare State finds it impersonal, bureaucratic, and monolithic. It presents a drab face and a dull routine.

This does not mean that young Socialists would abandon the experiment. Rather, the call is for expanding it, combating

bureaucracy, and creating genuine socialism. A major target is the educational system. The present system of state-supported and private, euphemistically called public, schools perpetuates snobbishness, class barriers, and unequal opportunities. In preparatory schools such as Harrow or Eton the fees are high and the education is admittedly better than in the majority of the state grammar schools. The public school graduates move on to *the* universities, Oxford and Cambridge, and from there to the higher posts in industry, the professions, or government service. The "red brick" universities, more recent and modern, such as the London School of Economics, the Universities of London, Birmingham, and Manchester, place their share of graduates in these jobs, but all too often an Oxford or Cambridge degree far outweighs ability as the major criterion for success.

Toward the public sector in industry there is the same attitude of disappointment. In its best years, 1945 to 1947, the Labor government nationalized a number of declining industries—coal, railroads, and utilities. The program stopped far short of achieving Socialism, and its operation is beset by red tape, bureaucratism, boards, and councils. It does not even complete the first step toward state control of basic industries, and the ideal of workers' control is a long way off.

Already the society in which a bit of state control exists has fossilized. The control boards, commissions, and councils created by the system have a vested interest in maintaining the *status quo*. It is charged that even the unions, backbone of the Labor Party, will not press for changes.

Young Socialists are faced with a growing wall of reaction on the one hand and on the other, a growing complacency among the working class. The transformation of society as envisaged in 1945 seems farther away than ever.

Idealism and Economics

Many young Socialists who do not go on to the universities go directly to work after they leave the grammar or technical schools, and after a few years into trade union work either as shop stewards or organizers. Unfortunately the opportunities in this field are limited, and the salaries are very small relative to the time and responsibility involved. One of the most powerful men in the British trade union movement, the President of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, earns about \$2,550 a year, or a few pounds more a week than the average factory worker. This pattern is even more pronounced in the lower echelons of union work.

In this period of relative social disillusionment and social stability, the trade union movement is not attracting many of the capable young workers that it has in the past. Only in a period of social optimism, idealism and militancy can there be any major expectation of talented youth being eager to devote their energies to the unions. Instead, many of the young workers who begin in the unions are bought off by management's superior financial and status inducements.

Consequently the unions are faced with the dilemma of losing the promising young workers to management while recognizing the dangers of trying to match the opportunities of-

fered by the other side. By raising the wages of officials and functionaries, the unions themselves run the risk of increasing the trend toward bureaucracy and vested interest which is so dangerous to the life of the movement.

Radical idealism is rapidly vanishing among young people in Great Britain. In its place is a growing frustration. Even among those who have been the most militant, working-class youth and university youth alike, there is discouragement and disenchantment. The disillusion in the case of the university youth is more verbal, but no more directed, than that among young workers. Whether the attitude is complacency or ridicule, the result is inactivity.

The Angry Young Men

No play in recent years has impressed and shaken Britain, and particularly British youth, as John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*, first presented in 1956. It was acclaimed by some, scorned by many, ignored by very few. The play articulates a mood prevalent among young intellectuals in Britain today. It has also established a cult—The Angry Young Men. Osborne is not the first to write of the disengagement of contemporary life, but he has been one of the most forceful spokesmen.

The play itself is bitter and uncompromising in tone. The hero, Jimmy Porter, lashes out at the smugness, the falsity, the complacency of bourgeois existence. "Nobody thinks, nobody cares. No beliefs, no convictions and no enthusiasm." He delights in flailing the sacred cows; he cries out against lethargy and non-attachment. But most important is the lack of commitment and cause. ". . . people of our generation aren't able to die for good causes any longer. We had all that done for us, in the 'thirties and 'forties, when we were still kids. There aren't any good, brave causes left."

The frustration of Jimmy Porter both reflects and has given substance to the mood of disillusion and disengagement of the 1950's. The great post-war enthusiasm, felt by intellectuals and workers alike, has burned itself out. The new society was not born; the old one was patched up for another round. Those who worked for the change are now tired. And those who were then growing up have seen their ideals slip away, leaving nothing to take their place. The drama and the challenge are gone.

Behind the mood of discouragement there is another important factor, pointed out in a recent article by David Marquand.* This is the emergence in Britain of the intellectual who is cut off from his family, his background, and society. Changes in the educational system since the end of the war have made it possible for a large number of working-class students to complete their university education. Marquand states:

"Such people are banished from the class from which they come. But they cannot just accept bourgeois decorum, patiently acquire the table manners and speaking voices of the languid young smarties they meet. . . . To do so would be treachery to their own backgrounds and their own earlier selves. More: it would be treachery to their own values for . . . they're glad they're not the upper classes."

This "new intellectual" has not been assimilated into society; instead he is an Angry Young Man who finds himself isolated, bitter, without purpose, and without the ability to act. He has become cynical of all action, and while wanting a Cause, he seems to reject minor issues as unworthy. The effort needed to revitalize and re-radicalize society is too great. In many respects the Angry Young Man is the Outsider analyzed by Colin Wilson. Osborne's protagonist looks out from his

isolation and swings a battle-axe at the entire landscape, while Wilson carefully probes the causes of the isolation.

Both writers reflect the suspension of the times, but Wilson attacks the sense of futility and nihilism. In a short essay he comments that Osborne presents the past and the present man. What is needed is an outline of a future which can be reached only through the analysis and examination of experience. Although he does not exclude the possibility that there is no solution to the problem of isolation and disengagement, Wilson's approach is positive and constructive.

Because of the difference in approaches, Osborne has been the more popularized. Both cults exist, but it is easier to wield a battle-axe than a scalpel. The Angry Young Man movement appeals to a diverse section of the young population. As Marquand says, the attitudes expressed by Osborne, Kingsley Amis and others are more widely held than "the ponderous philanthropy of the traditional Left or the conventional smugness of the traditional Right."

The respectability of the right wing of the Labor Party cannot hold these critics of a society. The support for "Bevanism" which once held the amorphous left wing has collapsed entirely in the last few months. There seems to be very little for the criticism to focus upon and no place for the critics to go. John Osborne has both captured and generated the spirit of the times. However, one hopes that *Anger* is not his last word.

Bourgeois critics have fallen back on the expedient of tarring Osborne. "What this young man needs is a swift kick in the pants." This attitude completely ignores the factors which have produced the Angry Young Men and their valid criticism of society. It strikes only at their lack of commitment and action. Left-wing sentiment in the country also dismisses the cult by saying: If they are angry, let them do something to change the society they dislike so heartily.

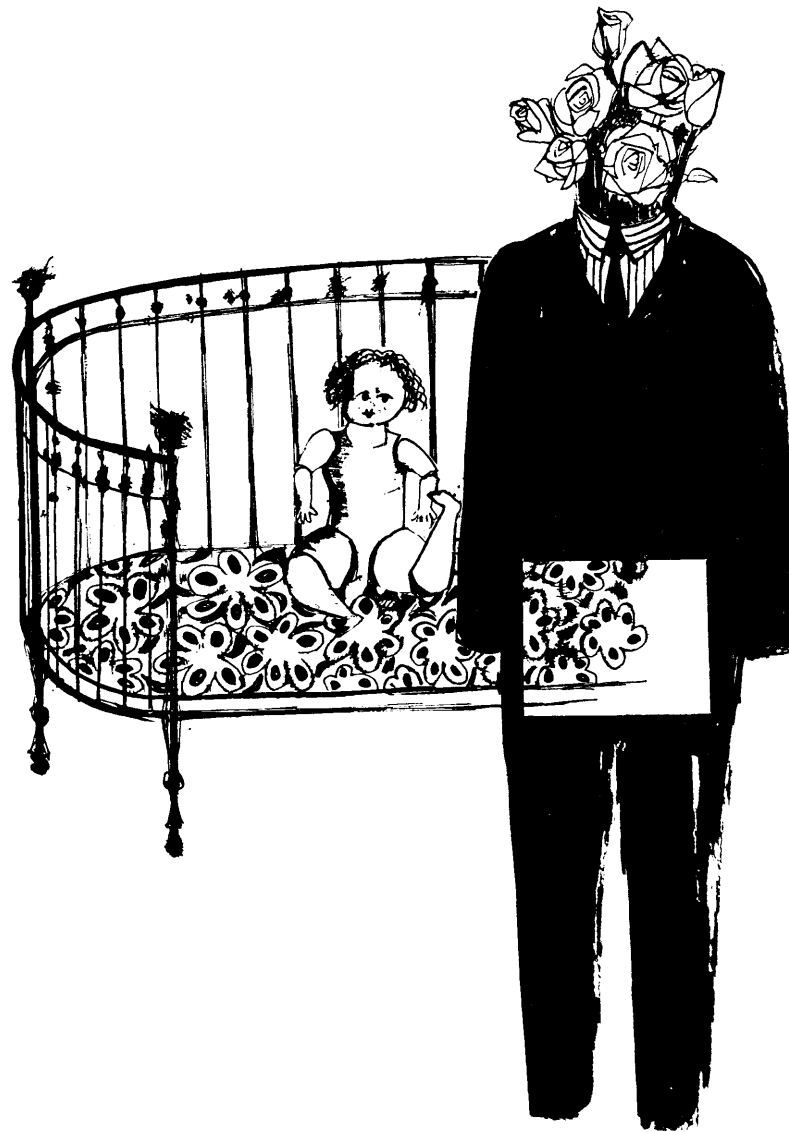
Revival on the Left

There seems to be no concrete solution for the Outsiders at the moment. Joining the Labor Party with its duties of collecting subscriptions, helping with annual fêtes, and canvassing for elections does not appeal to the rebels. Nor would they make good party members in the usual sense. One possibility for them is to join and work in one of the left-wing sects, or to create one for themselves. In so far as the members of the cult are politically oriented this is happening. An excellent new magazine, *Universities and Left Review*, which published its first issue this spring, has gathered many of the dissident intellectuals. It is edited by students at Oxford, several of whom are ex-CPers, and contains articles on diverse topics of wide interest. It offers new life and a new approach. The *Review* sponsors discussion meetings which draw from four to five hundred young people.

The channelling of criticism and activity into a revitalized Left is certainly encouraging. However, such an answer is possible for only a limited number of the Angry Young Men, for most of them have rejected organized political action as a solution to the stagnation of society. In so far as they see a role for themselves, it is merely as vitriolic critics, not as participants in any regeneration. No one can ignore the importance of the social critic, but neither should he be deified. The Angry Young Man runs the risk of growing old while still swinging his battle-axe and carrying a large placard reading: NO EXIT.

GRETCHEN WINTERHOFF

*David Marquand, "Lucky Jim and the Labor Party," *Universities and Left Review*, Spring, 1957.



The Baby and the Doll

—A Story of the New South

Ezra Pound, in a gesture somewhat less than magnanimous, finally managed to make his peace with the bouyant spokesman of American democracy:

I make a pact with you, Walt Whitman—
I have detested you long enough.

It is time that the American intellectual make a similar pact, in the same grudging spirit, with Hollywood. For if Hollywood can turn out a film like *BABY DOLL*, even once a year, it can almost be forgiven for the poisonous fare with which it ordinarily regales the public.

The plot of the film is deceptively simple, taking place during two eventful days on a ramshackle plantation in "Tiger-Tail County," Miss. The household consists principally of Archie Lee, the new owner (played by Karl Malden), and Baby Doll, his child bride (played by Carroll Baker). We learn at once that the marriage has not been consummated, according to an agreement shortly to expire on Baby Doll's twentieth birthday.

Family relations are currently in a crisis because of Archie Lee's inability to make payments on the furniture. Their

financial troubles have in turn been caused by the recent construction of a large cotton gin which has driven Archie Lee and the other independent farmers out of business. In an act of desperation, Archie Lee burns down the Syndicate's gin. The manager, a tough Sicilian named Vaccara (played by Eli Wallach), decides to take his own revenge, and he begins by disarming his enemy with a contract to gin his cotton.

A sexual triangle develops, which provides the dramatic focus of the film. Archie Lee and Vaccara are both static (though not flat) characters. The film turns on Baby Doll, who changes significantly during its course. The full weight of symbolism rests dramatically on her choice between the two men; the value-conflict which the film presents is resolved in these terms. What, then, do these men represent?

Archie Lee is middle-aged and alcoholic; like everything around him, he is a mess. What is immediately striking is his *impotence*, both sexual and economic. Ostensibly an authority-figure, he is forever shouting orders which nobody obeys.

In the role of husband, he is a failure both as lover and provider. The key to his relations with his wife is *sterility*; this is the meaning of the empty nursery—empty except for

the crib in which his child bride sleeps. This is the key also to his relations with Aunt Rose Comfort (played by Mildred Dunnock), the useless old spinster whom he evicts in a fit of pique. The traditional role of Aunt Rose is to make herself useful when babies come; she is useless and superannuated in this household. Behind Archie Lee's sterility, of course, is a strong suggestion of incest ("She's my baby, all mine"), with its social connotation, in the South, of generations of inbreeding.

On the social level, too, Archie Lee's relations with "his" Negroes suggests the failure of paternalism: "When we gonna gin out some more cotton, Mr. Archie?" He has no answer, for his equipment is dilapidated and his methods obsolete. The Syndicate, Baby Doll reminds him, "has an up-to-date gin, not an old pile of junk like you've got." The Syndicate, moreover, mixes black and white workers in its operations, as we learn from a contemptuous remark of Archie Lee. He himself is a racist ("get on your pink feet," he shouts at his colored workers). This becomes painfully apparent in the final stages of his quarrel with Vaccara, when he turns to vilification as a last resort.

"Gone in the Teeth"

Archie Lee, in a word, is a symbol of the old South. Bent on self-destruction (his alcoholism), he embarks on an aimless rampage of violence at the end of the film, as he feels his power slipping away. The whole civilization which he represents is gone in the teeth. The dominant visual image of the film is the old plantation and its accoutrements—old mules, old Negroes, old houn'-dawgs, and an old maiden aunt who moves painfully about the house. Against these are set the youth and energy and playfulness of Baby Doll and Vaccara.

Vaccara is the antagonist of the old society; he is manager of the Syndicate Plantation, a symbol of efficiency and modernism. Significantly, he is from Corpus Christi, Texas, the most advanced sector of Southern industrialism. He came primarily to grow cotton, and built a gin only after inspecting the equipment of such as Archie Lee and finding it to be rotten. Resented by the community as a "foreigner" and an innovator, he is nevertheless praised by a pompous Senator for bringing a record crop from "this blessed soil of Tiger-Tail County."

After the fire which destroys his gin, Vaccara encounters determined community resistance in the form of the Town Marshal, who refuses to take his charge of arson seriously. (The whole town, in fact, enjoyed the conflagration.) As they argue in the Greasy Spoon Cafe, the Marshal calls rudely to an old colored woman, "Jenny, sing us a song." The song, "I Shall Not Be Moved," is suggestive of the stand-pat pig-headedness of the old South.

Vaccara is also instrumental to the film's oblique attack on white supremacy. "I'm a Wop," he says when introduced to Baby Doll, and he serves throughout as the vehicle for an outpouring of Hollywood liberalism. In subtle ways, he is linked to the Negro: "My people [the Sicilians] are an ancient people." He has an affinity for Negro music (the rhythm and blues piece, "Shame, Shame, Shame"), and for Negro food ("colored folks call this potlicker"—as he dips bread with great gusto into the juice of boiled collard greens). He is certainly not a white man to Archie Lee, who pleads with the Marshal "as one white man to another" not to leave him "alone on the place with my wife." In a climactic passage, when Archie Lee threatens to "wipe that grin off your greasy Wop face," Vaccara asks Baby Doll, "Is my Wop face greasy, Mrs. M.....?" She

replies by kissing him. In its emotional logic, in short, the film is a plea for a democratic solution of ethnic difference in the South.

On Archie Lee's plantation, midway in the action, Vaccara comes close to making an overt statement of the film's theme.

As he sees the garbage-littered yard, he remarks, "Ignorance, indulgence, and stink!" In a thoughtful mood, he espouses a philosophy of change, aimed at the pathetic attempt of the old South to resist change, to bestow immortality on its former way of life. In a powerful passage he flogs the Southern tradition as essentially destructive: the old mansion, he asserts half seriously, is haunted by "spirits of violence, cunning, malevolence, cruelty." Of the fire he asserts, "I see it as more than it appears on the surface . . . , as a manifestation of demons of hate and destruction." Here, surely, is a new note in the literature of Southern decadence, written by Southerners!

It may be instructive to pause for a moment to compare Tennessee Williams' view of the Southern scene with that of William Faulkner. Faulkner uses the Snopes family to symbolize such as Vaccara—"white trash" who have gone into business as the advance guard of a coming industrialism. To Faulkner, the Snopes clan is a race of money-grubbing vulgarians. He looks to the feudal virtues of the Southern aristocracy to redeem the South, and has nothing but contempt for the petty bourgeoisie. Tennessee Williams knows that the feudal South is rotten to its very marrow, that nothing can be expected of it but an orgy of destruction. Unconsciously, no doubt, he comes close to a Marxist view of the rising middle-class as a progressive force, whose historic task is to sweep the remnants of Southern feudalism into the Gulf of Mexico. It is good to have an articulate Southern spokesman for this viewpoint.

Sexual Awakening

In stressing the social symbolism of the film, I do not mean to overlook its psychological level. The fact is that Tennessee Williams achieves that fusion of character and symbol which is the aim of every mature writer. The point can best be made with reference to Baby Doll and the all-important theme of awakening sexuality.

Early in the film, Baby Doll is presented as a clinical study of regressive infantilism. This is projected visually through her oral eroticism: she is forever sucking a thumb, a coke bottle, or an ice cream cone. On the social level, this characterization suggests an infantile society (consider, e.g., the South's childish attitude toward the War Between the States), ignorant and backward (she never did learn long division), and possessing unfulfilled material demands (the furniture). The film is, on its primary level, the story of her coming of age. But this psychological process is bound up inextricably with her choice of a mate; her choice, that is, between Archie Lee and Vaccara, with all of its social implications.

For reasons well motivated by the plot, it is Vaccara who takes upon himself her initiation into adult sexuality. With minor exceptions, and Cardinal Spellman to the contrary notwithstanding, this aspect of the film is handled with great artistic sensitivity, subtlety, and restraint. Essentially the sexual maturation of a young girl is telescoped into a series of semi-symbolic tableaux. There is first the hypnotic scene on swing and porch which, let us admit at once, contains some impressive panting, aroused in part by Vaccara's riding-whip, whose symbolic value is established beyond dispute in the hobby-horse sequence in the nursery. Here the virginal touch-me-not motif is combined with a pleasurable, giggling ticklishness to

produce a charming portrait of adolescent girlhood. This frisky-filly image dominates the scene throughout the frolicking game of hide-and-seek which follows.

The next tableau takes us to the nursery: Vaccara takes a nap in Baby Doll's crib, while she soothes him to sleep with a lullaby. Note the reversal of roles for Baby Doll; she is no longer a child, dependent upon a protecting father, but is herself the maternal protector. The camera appropriately emphasizes her bosom; she has been small-breasted early in the film. Vaccara's boyishness in the preceding scene helps to prepare us for this development, and later on, Archie Lee pays tribute to her transformation: "That what they call a Mona Lisa smile you got on your puss?" With considerable subtlety, Williams and Kazan convey the idea that the awakening of the maternal instinct precedes sexual fulfillment in women.

It is necessary, in view of the conventionally suggestive Hollywood fadeout, to stress the fact that nothing else happens in the nursery. Ironically it is Vaccara ("You're just a child," he says on the stairs) who is truly chivalrous, while Archie Lee, who affects the old Southern code, is lecherous and depraved. Similarly it is Vaccara who treats Aunt Rose with kindness and respect; Archie Lee's pretensions to gentility are false. It is later on, during the dinner scene, that Baby Doll for the first time responds to Vaccara as a *woman*—this in the form of a passionate kiss.

BABY DOLL is a carefully constructed work of art, tight and economical in the extreme. It is only the second time 'round that one notices the chorus of the harmonica blues: "Baby, please don't go." It is sung unobtrusively by an old Negro as Archie Lee returns anxiously to the house, after learning that he has been tricked by Vaccara. Later Baby Doll sings it (of her baby) as Vaccara prepares to leave with Aunt Rose. A fine touch, early in the film, is the contrast between the old-fashioned doctor and the young dentist, which echoes the basic contrast between Archie Lee and Vaccara. Aunt Rose provides another echo of the main action as she, like Baby Doll, moves from Archie Lee to Vaccara. Examples are endless: discover them for yourself. But be assured of this in advance: whatever is, fits.

A word should be said about the humor of the film in

general, and the treatment of Negro humor in particular. In spite of its high seriousness, the tone of the film is light and even farcical. To a considerable extent, this tone flows from the personality of Vaccara as Eli Wallach plays him. Vaccara, though he has his serious moments, does not take himself too seriously. He likes to play, and this prevents the author's larger meaning from becoming oppressive. Negro characters supply their share of humor, too, but in a completely inoffensive way. This is a difficult trick, and it is accomplished successfully, I suspect, because the joke is always on the white folks. The Negro characterization in this film is in fact exemplary: no stereotypes, which we have a right to expect; no *counter*-stereotypes, which was almost too much to hope; just "some people of Benoit, Miss." whom even a Harlem audience will immediately recognize as authentic "down home."

A closing comment on the actors' performances is definitely in order. It is difficult to choose among the three principals, all of whom rise commendably to the occasion. Karl Malden is impressive as the nervous, defeated, ultimately pathological Archie Lee. Miss Baker manages persuasively to be thoroughly disagreeable for one-half of the film and thoroughly winsome for the rest. But Eli Wallach as Vaccara surpasses even these performances. Vaccara is a particularly unlikely romantic lead, for as far as we know his sole motive in approaching Archie Lee's wife is revenge. The film is three-quarters over before the audience decides that he is not a sinister figure. The part demands a lamb in wolf's clothing, and Mr. Wallach handles the assignment with finesse. Mildred Dunnock, incidentally, scores a notable assist as Aunt Rose.

The censorship, of course, has been incredibly vicious—carried out with all of the noise and ignorance for which some sectors of American Catholicism are so justly famous. It is reassuring to note that this time, at any rate, attempts at suppression vary directly in intensity with artistic integrity. Perhaps Cardinal Spellman, whom cynics accuse of enjoying a retainer from Kazan, has paid the producers his supreme compliment. Let all who are hopeful that Hollywood, like Baby Doll, may one day come of age, return the compliment at the box-office!

BOB BONE

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BOOKS —IN REVIEW

Theodore Draper, *The Roots of American Communism*. New York: Viking Press, 1957. \$6.75.

FOR YEARS ALMOST EVERYONE in America has had an opinion as to what the American Communist Party was and is. "Experts" on Communism have appeared in every nook-and-cranny of the United States. Full-blown theories of the Communist movement have been propounded by college professors, journalists, clergymen, advertising executives, other savants, and bartenders. And yet there has been until now scarcely any serious attempt to study the Communist movement. The Fund for the Republic, concerned with problems of civil liberties in the United States, has endeavored to fill this gap by sponsoring a twelve-volume study of American Communism. The initial study has now been published—the first of two volumes by Theodore Draper analyzing the internal history of the Communist Party from 1919 through 1945.

Theodore Draper's book unfortunately only begins to fill the need for an understanding of the history of the early Communist movement. While everyone concerned with this subject must, of course, become familiar with his study, it has major weaknesses which cannot be overlooked. While for some reason that is unknown and seemingly unknowable some have attacked the book for propounding some sort of "pro-Communist" theory, the glaring flaw is that it has no explicit general theory of the subject.

It does, however, have an implicit special theory which creeps out throughout the book. The basic picture that emerges is of the Communist Party having been from its inception a grouping of foreign-language speaking people, Russian nationalists, screwballs, crackpots, hyperthyroid cases, visionaries of the most unreal sort—leavened by an occasional John Reed or Louis Fraina who somehow did not belong—all intent upon outdoing one another in their subservience to the Russian Party.

There is no question that the subservience of the American Communist Party to the Russian Party was a fact long before the Stalinization of the Communist International. However what Draper fails to point up clearly is that the American Party became particularly susceptible to the Communist International's intervention before the CI was Stalinized because the CI had been forced to intervene in the affairs of the American Party in an effort to bring it out of its absurd sectarianism. That is, the intervention of the CI which was eventually to lead to horrendous consequences for American radicalism was originally motivated by a desire to perform a necessary and useful service for American socialism—ending its sectarian isolation.

The major weakness of the book is that it avoids discussion of the context in which the CP was born, of what was going on in the United States. If one of the characteristics of the sectarian spirit is its tendency to look inward, rather than outward to the wider world, then Draper's volume must be considered, in this sense, to be a sectarian study. There is no mention of what was probably the greatest strike wave in American history, culminating in the great steel strike of 1919,

other than as an event important only for the fact that William Z. Foster played a major role in the steel strike. There is no discussion of the continuing widespread agrarian discontent. There is no talk of the growth of the power of American monopoly and finance capitalism which finally "came of age" in the 1920's—characterized by scandal and chicanery and an enormous increase of its social power. There is little emphasis on the disillusionment of the intellectuals that had followed upon the end of the war "to make the world safe for democracy." Draper does not concede that the early Communist Party had any mooring in reality, was basically concerned with real issues, had any reason to believe that America was on the verge of an extreme intensification of the class struggle. He fails to portray the genuineness of the revolutionary passion of those who participated in the early Communist movement. The task of the historian is to attempt to portray the context within which men acted, trying to understand the motives of men, no matter how erroneous their estimate of the situation they faced now may appear. Draper, by offering only a one-sided story with the emphasis upon the Russian context, has failed to provide the reader with this essential understanding.

The heroes of Draper's book are two very different personalities, Louis Fraina and John Reed. Fraina, who broke with the Communist Party early, but remained an independent Marxist, was the leading theoretical light of the movement. John Reed, journalist and adventurer, was Fraina's opposite. Unconcerned with doctrinal and theoretical questions, a sensitive nature with a reporter's flair for the importance of the particular, and a thoroughgoing Byronic-romantic, Reed, according to Draper, was breaking with the Communist Party before his early tragic death. Unfortunately, one gets the feeling that Draper is trying hard, too hard to make this point on the basis of some very circumstantial and unsubstantial evidence. Draper's obvious fondness for the personality of Reed makes him too prone to have Reed see the evils of Stalinism—even before those evils were more than transitory phenomenon which had not yet hardened into a full-grown bureaucratic collectivist social system.

Ubiquitous Sectarianism

Draper's major contribution is his portrayal of the sectarianism of the early Communist Party, despite the fact that he certainly exaggerates the matter. His picture of this sectarianism has an important lesson for present-day American socialists for sectarianism and ultra-leftism are matters which plague the socialist movement in every generation. A reading of Draper's discussion of the Communist movement in the period between 1918 and 1924 is further proof of the fact that for the sectarian words become reified and become substitutes for objective reality. Nothing matters but the words and slogans. The slogans of the sectarian are actually valid—or invalid—for 1919, 1933, 1940, 1950, 1957, in the United States, England, France, Indo-China, and Tierra del Fuego. A sampling of some of Draper's examples of the sectarianism of the CP in the period of its birth will help us make our point.

The sectarian wing of the Communist movement in 1920 opposed any support to the American Federation of Labor, any attempt to get into contact with the masses, if that meant "compromising"; any dilution of the "finished program": they abhorred recruitment into the party except on the basis of full agreement with a carefully articulated program. Thus one of the internal documents of the sectarians opposed "swamping" the party "with politically immature masses." Indeed, they tiraded, "The Communist Party, if it is to learn anything from

the bitter experiences of the past, cannot afford to attempt to get 'contact with the masses' at the expense of sacrificing communist principles and tactics." The Party adopted the following principle of operation in the American Federation of Labor: "A Communist who belongs to the A. F. of L. should seize every opportunity to voice hostility to the organization . . ." This line it was believed would convince the workers of the revolutionary message of the Communists! Draper quotes the leader of the Communist International, Zinoviev, on this infantile leftism. At the first meeting of the Comintern in 1919 Zinoviev said:

On the one hand, the English and American comrades are very optimistic. The social revolution is coming from today to tomorrow; we have the victory of the social revolution in our pocket, and so forth. But now that we are dealing with the trade unions, we suddenly and immediately see an unheard-of pessimism with regard to the working class. Here is what they say: we will do away with the Morgans and the Rockefellers but we will never be able to do away with the bureaucracy in the trade unions.

Unfortunately, Zinoviev's words, unchanged, are applicable to certain socialists at the present time who combine the same two absurdities—ultra-leftism and social pessimism. A working class, according to these types, so weak as to have corrupt and bureaucratic leaders, will, at the same moment, be strong enough to create the socialist transformation of society. Zinoviev understood the patent absurdity of such a position and Draper has fortunately brought the matter to our attention.

Thus, there is much useful and interesting material in Draper's volume. He scrupulously tries to make available to the reader as much as possible of the concrete documentation for his generalizations so that he may judge the adequacy of the conclusions. Therefore, while we may find ourselves questioning the conclusions of the volume, it still remains of considerable use to us. While there are many gaps and weaknesses in the Draper volume on questions of theory, context and interpretation, it still remains a useful and well-written source for study of the history of the American radical movement.

GEORGE POST

Politics and the Novel, by Irving Howe. New York, Horizon Press, 1957. 251 pp. \$3.50.

When Irving Howe, one of our first rate critics, writes a new work, it is a major event. When compared to the New Critics with their attempts to disembowel all social meaning from literature, Howe's recent *Politics and the Novel* is particularly refreshing. Moreover, it is an important study in its own right of the relation between politics and literature. Howe opens up whole areas of new ideas and stimulating speculations.

Politics and the Novel consists of an introductory analysis and eight subsequent chapters on the novelists whom Howe uses as illustrations of his major themes. The first task is to delineate the political novel, to set its boundary lines. The problem is not easily solved, and in his first approximation to a definition in the introductory chapter, Howe is not completely successful. He begins by setting up the most flexible of rules: "By a political novel I mean . . . a novel in which we take to be dominant political ideas or the political milieu."

Howe is not really as arbitrary as this sentence may lead one to believe. He has a much more disciplined view of the type of novel he is investigating, but this only comes to light when he is more closely fixing the boundary lines. For instance, when dealing with the differences between the social and political novels, Howe writes that the political novel began when "the novelist's attention had necessarily to shift from the gradations within society to the fate of society itself." And then more precisely: the political novel arises when "the idea of society, as distinct from the more unquestioned workings of society, has penetrated the consciousness of the characters in all its profoundly problematic aspects. . . . They now think in terms of supporting or opposing society as such; they rally to one or another embattled segment of society; and they do so in the name of, and under prompting from, an ideology."

Howe eventually comes even closer to a working definition of the political novel. He points out that the "ideal" novel deals

with the feelings and behavior of human beings, a very concrete type of portrayal. The political novel compounds this by adding the abstractness of ideology—in fact the mark of a good political novel is how successfully it has absorbed "into its stream of movement the hard and perhaps insoluble pellets of modern ideology." The challenge, the problem is to make the ideologies come to life in their interaction with men.

A further refinement of this idea concerns the political as against the apolitical composition of the political novel. That is, how much, and in what way, does apolitical material enter the political novel? And Howe rightly indicates that a truly great political novel actually depends on how well these two aspects are integrated in the work. For instance, recall *Darkness at Noon* with its powerful "I" as the "grammatical fiction." Or even in that most total of political novels, *1984*, the relief is drawn by non-political themes—Smith's attempt to reconstruct an old, forgotten tune about bells.

One can continue to draw distinctions and nuances of the political novel, but its essence is only made clear in approaching the works themselves. Howe deals mainly with twelve novelists, drawn from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. They are Stendhal, Dostoevsky, Conrad, Turgenev, James, a group of American novelists, Malraux, Silone, Koestler, and Orwell. He admits having left out a number of important writers like Twain, Tolstoy, Pirandello (and I might add Mann and Spenser), but argues that as he was not concerned with a comprehensive work, but only with a certain approach to the subject, the sampling he made was adequate.

Howe analyzes the major shift that occurred in the political novel in its passage from the nineteenth century to today. In all the nineteenth century writers—and this includes Dostoevsky's *The Possessed*—politics may go so far as to dominate the whole of a character's life, but never so far as to permeate every aspect of life in general. Yet this is precisely what happens in the case of the twentieth century artists, both

in their personal lives and in their artistic creations. Simply juxtapose *Nostromo* to *Fontamara* or the life of the seaman Conrad to the life of Silone as a professional revolutionary: the shift not only becomes evident, but is positively amazing.

It is true that there are a number of minor difficulties in *Politics and the Novel*. The worst of these is a tendency of Howe's style, which is generally in the best of the old *Partisan Review* tradition, to become a little too heavy-handed. The sharp rhetoric tends to grate on one's nerves. It is only when Howe becomes personally involved, when you feel that he is extremely interested in the work at hand, that he rises above his own style. This is especially the case in the essays on Silone and Orwell. But at the same time, Howe always has extremely interesting ideas and this alone should be enough to stimulate the reader until he arrives at the parts where Howe approaches brilliance.

Another minor fault is the ending of the book, for it leaves the reader hanging in mid-air. Howe concludes his penetrating analysis of *1948*: the time has come to sum up, to draw the conclusions, tie in all the loose ends, and at least formalize the underlying theme of the increasing domination of politics in the political novel. But no, one turns the final page looking for the epilogue and finds the words are unwritten.

But all this criticism is not major. Whether you will agree with Howe's particular analysis or not, whether his irony will sting or bore you, *Politics and the Novel* is required reading for every serious student, everyone interested in ideas, literature, politics, and life.

M.S.

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