

The New
INTERNATIONAL

A Test for Labor and Liberals:

***The Southern Negro's
Struggle for Democracy***

by H. W. Benson

Stalin Goes—His Minions Remain

by Albert Gates

A Marxist Approach to Art

by Michael Harrington

Israel's Laboristic Economy

by Albert Findley

Origins of American Communism—III

Books in Review

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Notice to Libraries and Collectors of Bound Volumes

During the past several years it had become our custom to print the index to each volume of the New International in the last issue of the volume. We decided, however, to bind the years 1953-54 (Vols. 19 and 20) together in a single binding, and hence prepared a single index covering these two years which was printed separately and bound in the front of the combined volume.

Libraries and individuals who wish to have their own bindings made for these two years will receive this index from us on written request.

In the future we are planning to continue the practice of binding two years (and two volumes) of the quarterly NI together, and of preparing indexes bi-annually for this purpose. They will either be printed up separately, or in the last issue of the series.

The 1953-54 bound volumes are available in unusually sturdy and handsome bindings, and we propose to continue to have them bound this way. The price may seem steep at first glance (\$6.00), but in view of the number of issues and the bindings it is actually a bargain.

Readers of the New International may look forward to some exceptionally informative and stimulating articles in forthcoming issues. Among them: H. W. Benson on Union Consciousness and Organization of the American Working Class; A. Giacometti on Social and Economic Conditions in Tropical Africa, and Hal Draper on the Arab-Israeli war, "The Beginning of a Tragedy." That is only a sampling.

L. G. SMITH
Business Manager

NOTICE

The series of translated excerpts from Alfred Rosmer's "Moscow Under Lenin" will be continued in the next issue.

Southern Negro and Democracy
Challenge to American Liberal and Labor Movement

Way down in America is the Southern Negro. His economic exploitation and political disfranchisement form the base upon which Southern reaction rules locally and bans social progress nationally. But the Southern Negro is rising; the brittle structure that rests upon his degradation begins to crack and a tremor passes through the country. This is the immediate effect of the fight to end segregation in the South, a struggle which prefigures a shaking-up of U. S. politics, surpassed in recent times only by the consolidation and victory of the CIO.

Consider 1952. The banner of liberalism was limply borne by Adlai Stevenson and John Sparkman; the labor movement rallied enthusiastically behind them. Skeptics who pointed dubiously to the Senator from the white state of Alabama were hastily assured that he was the prototype of emerging Southern liberalism, taking its place in the march of civilization. Through the election campaign and in the years that followed, the mind and spirit of labor-liberalism throbbed in sympathy and harmony with its appointed political leaders.

But abruptly, this slate became obsolete. The combination that seemed so glorious in 1952 had become politically impossible in 1956. Impossible? Yes. Not that ward-heelers and bosses couldn't rig up some such hodge-

podge again, which unions could conceivably support. But only at the cost of an utter debacle. It would prove impossible to rally the voters in the cities, the unionists and minorities who are the organized mass base of American democracy. For 20 years, American politics has moved steadily rightward; and, except for a fleeting few moments, the labor movement has trudged along. Now, for the first time, standard bearers of liberalism come under sustained attack from their followers not because they are too extreme but because they are not radical enough. Stevenson and Sparkman have not changed since the days when they received the plaudits of cheering admirers. What is changing is the mood of the nation. And the most portentous single factor in effectuating this change has been the movement of Southern Negroes for equal rights.

For 4 years Democratic leaders of every faction have strained their nerves to maintain "unity" at all costs in preparation for the 1956 presidential elections. Liberals chatted politely at party gatherings with reactionaries and racists. But this rotten alliance is suddenly torn apart when the victim of racism, overlooked before, stands up to demand his due.

NEGROES ARE DEMANDING their full rights as citizens in the South. Not

submissively and not pleadingly, but insistently. Their movement has all the characteristics of a profound, ineradicable, deep-seated popular movement. These people are stirred by a yearning for simple justice. But more. They sense that the mood and trends of our time combine to make this the decisive moment for action.

In Montgomery, Alabama, 50,000 Negroes boycott bus lines in a movement supported actively by 10,000, acclaimed nationally and internationally. While this is the most spectacular and perhaps the most effective mass action so far, it is only part of a pattern spreading throughout the South.

In Dallas and Houston, Texas, Negroes try in vain to continue what was started in Montgomery. Those who board buses and take seats in defiance of local segregation laws are arrested; but when a Negro pleads not guilty and makes clear that he is ready to go through a court test, his case is dismissed. It is not the Negro but the local authorities who shrink from the test and so far it has been impossible to bring a legal case to court.

In scores of small communities and big cities, NAACP chapters are formed. They concentrate now on mass petition campaigns requesting that schools be desegregated and Negro pupils admitted. Where they are refused, they institute court suits.

Early in February, a writer for the *New Yorker* magazine enroute to a national NAACP conference in Atlanta, Georgia, asked his traveling companion, Thurgood Marshall, national NAACP counsel, for a summary of the situation in the South. Marshall couldn't answer. "That's what I'm going down to find out," he remarked, "That's what the meeting's about." But, came the query, isn't the NAACP

leading the movement? In reply, he told this story:

A curious bystander watched a massive parade moving quickly down a broad avenue. As it passed he noticed one straggler dragging up in the rear straining to catch up with the crowd. The onlooker buttonholed the straggler and asked, "Say, what's going on?" "Don't stop me," came the frenzied reply as the laggard shook himself loose, "I'm the leader of that parade and I've got to get up front." That parade leader, Marshall pointed out, is the NAACP.

The NAACP rises to a national membership of 400,000. Of 1500 mass membership branches, 700 are in the South where it has gained a foothold even in Mississippi. Thus, the movement becomes organized, a symptom that this is not a passing flush of protest but a persistent, permanent campaign. Yet, it is not created and organized by officials above; it wells up from below as the NAACP is transformed from a committee of eminent citizens into a popular mass movement.

"The morale and militancy of local Negro leadership is such," reports Herbert Hill, NAACP labor secretary in the *New Leader*, "that spontaneous forms of dynamic action are developed and pressure is for the most vigorous challenging of the Jim Crow system."

"When I came to Miami in 1943," recalled Rev. Edward T. Graham, Negro Baptist, "Negroes were not supposed to be downtown or on Miami streets after dark. If a Negro was ever in a white neighborhood, he had a lot of explaining to do. Now a man can go where he wants to." But they not only "go," they demonstrate. Last fall, Negroes demonstrated at Sarasota for the use of municipally-owned Lido Beach. In Miami, they

organized a mass petition campaign for the use of the municipal golf links.

These are courageous men and women. Some face up to economic reprisals that threaten impoverishment. Others face death. Some are killed. In Mississippi, last year two NAACP leaders who had been rallying Negroes to register and vote were shot and killed; a third was critically wounded. In January, shot gun blasts were fired into the home of Rev. Hinton in South Carolina, a man who had been leading local protests against school segregation. In Columbus, Georgia, Dr. Thomas Brewer who had led the movement which tested the right of Negroes to vote in the Democratic primaries was shot by a white tenant in his building. In Montgomery, the homes of boycott leaders were bombed. An NAACP member in the Deep South risks far more than, say, an active Communist Party member in the North. But the movement goes on. "Marshall Says NAACP May Go Underground" reads the front page headline of the *Pittsburgh Courier* on March 17, reporting that laws enacted by five Southern states aimed to drive the NAACP out of existence. To the *New Yorker* reporter, Marshall explained that many NAACP representatives do not send in written reports. "Some are leery about putting everything they know on paper. And when they pick up the phone, and hear clicking on the line all the time, they get leery about that too. I can't blame them. It's not safe to be an NAACP leader in some parts of the South today."

When the murder of Brewer was announced at the sessions of the NAACP conference in Atlanta, a delegate from Bessemer, Alabama, said, "Everybody is armed there now—white and black both." And a Negro woman NAACP leader in Alabama

told reporters that she would start to carry a gun or get out of the state. Roy Wilkins, obviously anxious to calm his own followers lest their protest go beyond assigned limits, told reporters, "We will consider it a private dispute. We certainly wouldn't want you people to headline it as a racial killing."

In Orangeburg, South Carolina, site of the all-Negro State College, students, *Negro* students it should be remembered, hung in effigy the figure of white state representative Jerry Hughes who pushed through the state legislature a law making it illegal for state, county, or municipal employees of the Democratic state of South Carolina to belong to the NAACP. Hughes represents (shall we say) the city of Orangeburg. Negro students are boycotting dining halls, demanding the end of milk and bread purchases from local merchants who support White Citizens Councils. They insist that College President Banner C. Turner speak out in support of integrated schools; when he evades and squirms at student-faculty meetings, they pound their feet and refuse to let him continue. When the state legislature retaliated by dispatching a committee to investigate "communism" in the university, students replied by a four-day student strike.

In Houston, Texas, 200 Negroes picket outside the all-Negro university protesting the appearance of Governor Shivers as a speaker. Outside the South, such an incident would hardly appear remarkable. But here it is an event. This group of Negroes feels ready for a mass demonstration in Southland. That alone expresses the turn in historical situation. And a demonstration against whom? Against the white governor of their own state. And their action goes off successfully, not only without repris-

als from organized whites, but without the intervention of the state government. No police and no jails.

Scarcely more than a generation ago, the Southern Negro was literally whipped and terrorized like a cheap work animal. Now he demands not a civilizing tinsel on the chains of degradation, but nothing less than full rights. He challenges white supremacy and the political and social structure erected upon it. The Negro movement exudes self-confidence, a mood that is activated by the very air and spirit of the times. The South which yesterday was a united and closed world of white enemies, is now divided in itself and the Negro moves out for equality.

Here, in the heartland of the South, respect, deference, and humility before white rulers and white supremacy is disintegrating. Negroes fight as equals for equal rights. Although the struggle is only taking form, slowly enlisting wider sections of the population, the moral struggle of Negroes for equality has already been won; for they have affirmed it in action and wrested it from the ruling classes by their deeds. The Southern Negro will never again be reduced to the status of a pariah in political and social life. He emerges in combat into a key place in the politics of the South and thereby profoundly alters the political life of the whole nation.

Government and economy in the South are in the grip of white supremacists and segregationists; they dominate the state legislatures and executive chambers; they man the police force; they don judicial robes and run the courts. They own the textile mills, the tobacco factories. They own big cotton, tobacco and sugar plantations and processing plants. They own the Democratic party. They evict tenants and sharecroppers who try to exercise

elementary democratic rights. In one South Carolina county alone 30 families were thrown out of their sharecropping homes. Foreclosure, the denial of crop loans are powerful pressures against tenants and croppers never out of debt. In 1950, the percentage of farmers who were tenants in five southern states was as follows: Alabama, 41.4 per cent; Georgia, 42.8 per cent; Louisiana, 39.6 per cent; Mississippi, 51.6 per cent; South Carolina, 45.3 per cent.

Here are millions of families, Negro in their majority, never out of debt, always needing loans and advances who are at the mercy of the planters.

In the face of what would appear to be an overwhelming force, a combination of economic and political power that would seem invincible, the Negro demands democracy. What gives him the courage to begin and the stamina to persist in what appears, at first glance, an unequal struggle?

It is not only that the Negro has slowly and painfully won a position in society, that the inevitable encroachment of industrialism and civilization upon the Southern way of life has slowly created a place for the Negro; that sections have been educated, organized, and wrested a higher standard of living. Above all, they know they are moving with history; that a powerful and progressive movement of labor spreads through the nation and sympathizes with their struggles; that the moral feeling of the country and of the world is with them; that the international position of the United States and its world reputation weigh against the racists. They know that they are not alone but that they fight together with millions of others in their country and with tens, hundreds of millions throughout the world for freedom: at home for democracy, abroad for free-

dom from imperialist domination.

According to one observer, Reverend Martin Luther King told a mass meeting of Montgomery boycotters, "You know, whether we want to be or not, we are caught in a great moment of history. . . . It is bigger than Montgomery. . . . The vast majority of people of the world are colored. . . . Up until four or five years ago, most of the one and one-quarter billion colored peoples were exploited by empires of the West, in India, China, Africa. Today, many are free and the rest are on the road. We are part of that great movement."

Rooted in a world-wide surge for emancipation, the movement is irresistible. The Southern Negro who moves into action under the impact of world events and the rise of the labor movement shakes national liberalism out of its lethargy. Yesterday, the Negro was led and stirred by the rise of a labor movement. Today, he prods the labor movement forward pushing it inevitably into collision with their common enemy.

A fight begins for the end of segre-

gation in schools. But instantly, the broad question of democracy arises. The Negro must defend the right of the NAACP to exist, and his right to belong to it. He must intensify his drive to win political rights and to make his weight felt in government and in politics. But the whole Southern system, the class rule of white planters, merchants, and capitalists rests directly upon the disfranchisement of the mass of millions of Southern Negroes and to a lesser degree upon the disfranchisement of white workers. What is challenged is not merely segregation in schools, not even the oppression of Negroes in general but, the whole Southern social-system and the nature of its social and political rule.

The Negro challenge to the dominance of Southern reaction is already recorded in the struggle for the right to vote. According to Herbert Hill, 700,000 Negroes were registered voters in the South in 1948; in 1952, this figure rose to 1,300,000. Their break through is revealed in some state figures:

In South Carolina	35,000 voters in 1946; 1952: 130,000
Florida	40,000 voters in 1948; 1956: 120,000
Louisiana	60,000 voters in 1948; 1956: 150,000
Arkansas	85,000 voted in 1952
North Carolina	55,000 voters in 1948; 1952: 100,000

This is only the beginning. There are 6,000,000 potential voters among Southern Negroes. Southern reaction is based on their disfranchisement. It required only 100,848 votes for Mr. Eastland to return in 1954 as Senator from Mississippi, a state with a population of 2,100,000. To elect Senator Lehman from New York required 2,630,000, approximately as many voters as the whole population of Mississippi. But that is not the full

story. It required over 17 per cent of the New York population to send a Senator in an election in which 36 per cent voted. But Eastland's position is based on the votes of less than 5 per cent of the people of his own state. It is on such a thin base that Southern rule is perched. The Negro struggle against segregation, inseparably connected with a struggle to expand democracy, in fact to achieve it, threatens this whole system of narrow rule.

In 1943, the United Auto Workers published a study entitled, "Labor's Stake in Abolishing the Poll Tax." At that time, 8 states had a poll tax. But the Negro is barred from voting, not principally by the tax, but by intimidation and violence; hence, the UAW report presents a picture, ac-

curate in essentials, despite the inevitable changes in detail after 12 years. In sum: 12 per cent of the population voted in the poll tax states in 1936; 44 per cent, in the non-poll tax states.

The following table, based upon UAW figures, gives a state by state survey:

DISFRANCHISEMENT IN THE SOUTH

<u>State</u>	<u>Senator</u>	<u>year</u>	<u>votes received</u>	<u>voters disfranchised 1940</u>	<u>white</u>	<u>Negro</u>
Alabama	Bankhead Hill	1942 '38	69,000 131,000	463,000	521,000	
Arkansas	Caraway McClellan	'38 '42	137,000 99,000	426,000	271,000	
Georgia	George Russell	'38 '42	70,000 62,000	558,000	581,000	
Mississippi	Bilbo Eastland	'40 '42	143,000 51,000	238,000	564,000	
S. Carolina	Smith Maybank	'38 '42	46,000 23,000	326,000	384,000	
Tennessee	McKellar Stewart	'40 '42	417,000 160,000	568,000	309,000	
Texas	Connally O'Daniel	'40 '42	1,038,000 274,627	1,458,000	541,000	
Virginia	Glass	'42	87,000	574,000	364,000	

More voters were excluded from the polls than those who voted for the winning candidate. Even more pertinent to our subject, in most cases the winner received a smaller vote than the number of Negroes alone barred from the polls.

Thirteen Southern states elect 26 Senators and 120 Representatives. This alone gives them impressive power in a Senate of 96 and a House of 435. But mere arithmetic hardly tells the full story. In 1954, the Democrats won 49 Senate seats, a narrow majority which permitted them to organize and dominate all its committees. The South, by itself has a majority inside the Democratic caucus. (26

out of 49). And in the House (252 Democrats to 203 Republicans), the South again controls the Democratic caucus (120 out of 232). And so, after labor's "victory" in the '54 elections, the South dictates the choice of Speaker of the House (Rayburn of Texas); imposes its choice as majority leader in the Senate (Johnson of Texas); dominates party committees and decides the party's real line in everyday affairs. Not every Southern congressman is equally tied to the racist bloc, only 100 signed the segregationists manifesto; but the figure of a predominant Southern conservatism emerges nevertheless.

That is not all. Consider the so-

called customs and traditions of Congress. Chairmanships and prize committee seats are awarded by "seniority." We only just witnessed the grotesque elevation of Eastland to chairmanship of the Senate Judiciary Committee. The Supreme Court has ruled segregation unconstitutional; Eastland, a Mississippi cotton plantation owner, who arouses and organizes resistance to its decision, now occupies a strategic position to block civil rights legislations. Why? He is senior member of the majority party. And how did he accumulate seniority? In the Democratic South the election of white Democrats is guaranteed by guns and clubs. Thus, Mississippi terror reaches into the Senate chambers to decide what shall be lawful.

DISCRIMINATION EXISTS in one degree or another everywhere, North and South. Wherever it persists, it is pernicious and detestable, and must be eradicated. But in the South it is erected into a code of law imposed and enforced by the power of government.

In the South governmental power itself is erected upon segregation; social rule depends upon maintaining the Negroes' legal disabilities and upon their forcible exclusion from political life. Adlai Stevenson, in a futile effort to dodge the fight for democracy in the South, levels a finger at anti-Negro riots in his own Chicago. Does he contend that the rule of the Democratic Party in his state depends upon Jim Crow? Hardly. But it does in Mississippi and Alabama. The representatives of Southern planters and mill owners whose support Stevenson seeks, occupy seats in Congress only because the Negro cannot occupy unsegregated seats in buses, schools and polling booths. Grant the Negro full equality and they fade away. This is true nowhere, but in the South.

NEGROES ARE CONFIDENT of success. "Many years ago, we asked for school equalization," said Dr. C. J. Gilliam an NAACP leader in Baton Rouge to *Look Magazine* reporter Carl Rowan, "Then we couldn't get it. Now, we don't want it. We want nothing less than total integration in all facets of American life—and we won't stop until we get it." Rowan, reporter for *Look magazine* said "I found Negroes confident of victory."

And white racism? The mood is quite different.

Sam J. Ervin, Senator from North Carolina, writing on "The Case for Segregation" in *Look magazine* cringes before national opinion. "Southerners of both races," says he, "practise racial segregation in those areas of life which are essentially social in nature. There is little other racial segregation in the South." He hardly speaks like a man convinced of the righteousness of his cause. By denying the evident fact of segregation in all spheres of life, he becomes apologetic. He lies. A bold lie can inflame a movement, but not a shamefaced lie. By shrinking from a defense of segregation in general, he concedes, in effect, that it is not defensible—in politics, on buses and trains, on the job.

And why is he for segregation? "The reasons for my belief in social segregation based upon race are simple. They do not rest on any theory of racial superiority or racial inferiority." He just has a feeling that segregation is the natural way of life of humans and animals.

This man signed the Manifesto of Southern Congressmen; but he has neither the courage, confidence or conviction to proclaim the superiority of the white race. When Southern reaction could reach into the lofty realms of white superiority, it might

dream of standing on solid moral ground; pure civilization stood with rope and faggot against the pressures of savagery. But now, its security has vanished. It stands over an empty pit. Here, a Senator who signs the Southern call to action is ashamed to defend racial superiority before the nation's public.

Contrast the spirit of militant U. S. Negroes; they have no hundred Congressmen to sound the alarm; they control no governments; they run no political parties. Yet, every word and action trumpet: "We are right; you are wrong." When one side radiates rectitude and the other is driven to shamefaced lies—(Southern reaction still clings to the ludicrous claim that Negroes *want* segregation) the outcome of the struggle is determined.

Look at racist leader Senator James O. Eastland of Mississippi. Proudly and firmly he stands for the purity of America and its white man. In Congress he takes his position uncompromisingly against the liberalization of the McCarran-Walter Immigration Act. He will, if he can, preserve the South white, American, undefiled by modern civilization or other foreignisms. The man however, owns 4,000 acres of good Southern farmland: cotton, oats, soybeans, and corn. Under terms of the Refugee Relief Act he has already settled a Hungarian family on his land as share croppers and seeks to bring in another of Russian nationality. The call of humanity, liberalism, democracy, internationalism find no echo in his soul. But to the appeal of sordid economic gain he quivers in sympathy. If he only troubled himself to conceal the hypocrisy, he would show a certain respect for public opinion. This way it is too coarse, too crass. Such is the leading champion of the Southern cause.

Unlike the Negro, who is aware that his cause is spurred on by peoples the world over, the representatives of Southern reaction feel the glance of contempt, if not from a unanimous population, at least from that section of the population which is politically active and thinking. Thus, the "fear" that pervades the South, meaning the racist, white South. This "fear" is nothing less than the realization that national and world opinion stands against prevailing relations in the South and that these are on the verge of a momentous change.

Take for example, the careful admonitions of Louisiana Senator Allen J. Ellender. In radio address on March 17, he told his constituents, "What the South must avoid at all costs is violence, lawlessness, hatred, and bloodshed. The outside agitators who seek the subjugation of both white and Negro races in the South are hovering like greedy vultures for the time when racial antagonisms lead to chaos the breakdown of governmental authority, and general lawlessness. If this condition should occur, then all our people could look forward to would be a reputation of the reconstruction regimes which brought the South only oppression and self-seeking exploitation." (Irresistible habit compels him to pose as protector of the Negro, but his plight consists in this: everyone laughs. So we will not take it seriously.)

Nor can one take seriously his comic opera warnings of the impositions of "reconstruction" regimes upon the South. A hundred years after the Civil War, the social scene has altered. When Ellender and the narrow class stratum he represents are driven out of office and democracy extended to the South, they will be replaced by governments which rest not upon Northern bayonets but upon South-

ern masses. The aim of the rising movement in the South is to free the land from the domination and rule of an anachronistic class whose power is waning.

Southern reaction balances itself delicately in national politics and Ellender realizes that he can do nothing drastic to quell the Negro movement. The reconstruction bogey is a device for frightening his extremist followers from demanding of him what he cannot deliver. Not reconstruction by military rule from without, but the free play of social forces within the South—there is the doom of Ellender.

In a democracy, where issues are finally decided by the will of millions, the mood of contesting forces is crucial. A rising determination and confidence on one side; spiritual diffidence on the other is at last transmitted to the masses. At such times we say, the "mood" of the nation is changing. Such a change, for example began in 1929. Through the twenties, Republican "normalcy" prevailed; it was an era of conservatism, of open domination by big business, a "chicken in every pot," permanent prosperity and continued progress through the open domination of big business. Even in prosperity, the labor movement faltered, the AFL declined, liberalism declined, progressivism vanished. But the crisis changed everything; big business lost its own self-confidence in the crash and the mass of people came out from under the spell. The spiritual domination of the capitalist class was and remains mortally stricken. Even now, while Americans are ready to support capitalism, they reject whatever appears as the direct rule of capitalists. The mood of America, yes, even powerful capitalist America, changed. Just such a change of mood, in the South, is foreshadowed in the struggle against segregation.

It is a change that threatens to overwhelm Southern reaction.

But, if racism cannot hide the fact that even the South feels that its cause is morally rotten, can it perhaps hold on by violence bolstered by dilatory legalisms?

For a hundred years, the exploited mass of Southern Negroes has been kept in check by open violence and legal manipulation. The doom of the Southern system can be read in this fact: its room for juridical maneuver has been drastically curtailed while the resort to violence is ultimately hopeless. This is not to say that all matters will be settled peacefully and painlessly. Violence, or the imminence of it, remains as a threat, for example, to the Negro in Mississippi who wants to vote. The situation teeters constantly on the edge of violence precisely because a decaying ruling clique may be driven to desperate measures. In the end, however, it is futile. The Southern Negro probes for weak spots in racism and finds them. Any attempt to repress this movement by terror would succeed only in unleashing a nation-wide wave of revulsion and indignation.

A call for sending Federal troops to the South has already been voiced, conjuring up visions of the deposition of local governments by military rule. Rule from the outside has always tended to unite the local population against the occupier. But it can hardly ever come to this. A hundred devices are available to an aroused national democracy short of military occupation: federal laws and their simple enforcement; arrests of those who prevent citizens from voting; in sum, a program to make acts of discrimination, segregation, and anti-democracy a criminal federal offense. The days of Civil War and Reconstruction are over and with it the

impenetrable unity of white supremacy. Like the nation, the South is divided in itself: unions against employers; tenant against landlord; city against farm; reactionaries, middle-roads, liberals. So far, these antagonisms have not been forced to the fore in the course of the Negro struggle. But this seems clear: if it comes to an open struggle between a united national democracy and Southern reaction, there will be no united South.

Law offers as little refuge as violence for the legal climate has become dark and cloudy for them. Seventy years ago, planters ran the South, while outright tools of Big Business ran the country. Racism took shelter under Supreme Court decisions which perpetrated Jim Crow despite the 14th and 15th amendments. Now, there is a new "legality" and a new Supreme Court decision which undermine racism and stimulate the struggle for equality.

Nevertheless, for generations, the South held the Negro in bondage, exploited his cheap labor and robbed his political rights. If all that was possible despite the Constitution, perhaps it is still possible despite the Supreme Court. Such seems the illusory hope of Southern racism, as for example, Senator Ervin:

"The Constitution in other words does not require integration, it merely forbids discrimination. It does not forbid such segregation which occurs as the result of voluntary action. It merely forbids the use of government power to enforce segregation." Thus: one line of maneuvering is indicated. And he concludes literarily, "Thomas Carlyle said: 'Our main business is not to see what lies dimly in the distance, but to do what lies clearly at hand.' I believe, as he, that it is best to solve today's problems today and to leave tomorrow's problems

to tomorrow." Put off equality for another hundred years? Is it possible? If everything depended upon law and law alone, yes. From that viewpoint the racist view is not totally illusory. Stave it off five years; ten years; fifteen. Perhaps the world will change: perhaps the nation will change; perhaps the labor movement will decline; perhaps . . . who knows what? The factors that favor the Negro struggle are not etched in eternity. Just as reaction gives way before labor and democracy, so, alas, human freedom is sometimes forced back. The hope of Southern reaction lies in delay, in awaiting the unknown. The Negro movement on the other hand rejects "moderation" and "gradualism," fully aware that the time is ripe to strike mortal blows at Southern racism and perhaps exorcise it forever.

The possibility of delay lies in the very nature of the Supreme Court decision. Remember that *no law* has been passed to make segregation a criminal offense. And thus far, no one in authority pants impatiently for such a law.

Fred Rodell, Professor of Law at Yale University explains what this means in the April 3, issue of *Look* magazine. "Without a criminal statute, desegregation has no teeth—save only that a state official can be jailed or fined for contempt of court if he disobeys an order specifically and personally directed against him. Without more and more Supreme Court decisions, the South can go on using all manner of devices that get around the letter of the original ruling until each in its slow turn is forbidden." To end segregation merely under the terms of the Court ruling would take decades. There are 10,000 school boards in the defiant states, he points out. In each county Negroes would have to press for admission, in the face of local

intimidation from their landlord. They would have to appeal to the Court against local boards, then for contempt citations, and then? Years pass. The child who appealed for admission to elementary school becomes a man while the legal machinery creaks on. He grows old and dies, segregated as ever.

But all that is speculative, for the fight cannot be limited to "law."

The Court decision gave an impulse to the struggle for Negro rights, but did not create it. Quite the contrary. It would be more correct to say that the struggle created the decision: the minds of the eminent justices were not molded by a close scrutiny of old law journals. They overruled their predecessors who had sanctioned Jim Crow in the schools because the struggle of Negroes had pushed through into their consciousness. In the United States, the Negro was not quiet; during the war he had extracted an FEPC by a threat to march on Washington; and now, the whole world talked of Jim Crow. While America postured in the world as the champion of liberty, millions of newly freed colored colonial peoples knew that the American Negro remained legally oppressed.

The decision, prompted by the struggles of the past, becomes in turn the starting point for an intensified struggle. In the same way, section 7A of the NRA and the Wagner Act, concessions to rising demands of labor, stimulated it to new demands. The parallel is very close. Section 7A did not organize a single union; it established the right to organize but set no criminal penalties for violating this right. A cumbersome machinery was erected: appeals to Labor Boards; appeals to the courts to enforce the decisions of Labor Boards. Where employers resisted Board decisions, cases

dragged on for months, for years. One case, against Weirton Steel, finally reached a weary conclusion some ten years after it had been begun; by then, the union was dead. The NRA was dubbed the "National Run Around." The Wagner Act symbolized the new mood of the country; the breakdown of the morale of open shopism and the rising confidence of the working-class. Nevertheless, in the end, the legal logjam was broken, not in the courts but in the class struggle, as unionism won its decisive victories in sit-down strikes and on picket lines.

The Supreme Court decision does not in itself desegregate a single school. It puts the question in a new legal framework and prepares a thousand court cases. But equality can become a reality, the decision can be enforced only by unremitting pressure from below.

The issue then will not be resolved within the sedate walls of courtrooms, it will be fought out in politics. In Raleigh, North Carolina, 125 delegates at a state-wide NAACP conference mapped out a campaign to register and vote. A Negro weekly in Durham editorialized: "The job of defeating those who would deny Negroes the full right to democracy can only be done at the ballot box. . . ." But to bring these ballots to the Southern box, to have them counted, and to assure that governments will be based upon their will . . . that struggle will shake up the whole nation. It is already doing that.

AS THE SURGE OF NEGRO STRUGGLE widens, Herbert Hill notices, "An aspect of these developments that has ominous implications is that, by and large, the Negro has so far fought this battle alone. . . . With very rare and isolated exceptions, white institutions and individuals have not come for-

ward to join in the fight—even though now the Negro who demands his rights is acting within the law and the whites who insist on segregation have declared themselves outside the law. Where are the responsible and moral white people?" He might properly pinpoint his query: where is the labor movement?

Leadership in the fight for democracy in the South has momentarily passed out of the hands of the labor movement. In a certain sense the Negro does fight alone; but he is not isolated . . . it would be impossible otherwise to account for the high morale and determination of his struggle. It was the rise of mass unionism that paved the way for the big advance of the Negro struggle; in return, it is the Negro who paves the way for the next big advance by labor.

It was behind the banner of unionism that Negroes last fought the big battle for equal rights. As the CIO penetrated major industrial centers where Negroes worked by the tens of thousands—auto, steel, rubber, oil, packinghouse, racial barriers were torn down; Negroes poured into the labor movement with equal union rights; they won job security; they raised their standard of living; they became union leaders, trained and able. A dent was made in the prejudice of millions as white workers and Negroes joined in united class action as the CIO demanded equal rights for Negroes and condemned the poll tax. Negro and white steel workers marched together through the streets of Birmingham and in open defiance of local segregation ordinances sat together in the same hall to organize their union. It was a union leader, A. Philip Randolph, president of the Sleeping Car Porters, who emerged as one of the leading spokesmen for the Negro people and led the March on

Washington movement. The CIO "preempted" the struggle for Negro rights. In 1947, Rev. Horace White, Detroit Negro minister, commented, "The CIO has usurped moral leadership in the [Negro] community. . . . Sadly, I must admit, the Protestant Church gives no moral leadership in Detroit."

Men like R. A. Nixon, one of the leaders of the Montgomery bus boycott, were hard at work. He became president of a Sleeping Car Porters local. In his spare time, he organized Negro building trades and clothing workers. He became an active member of the NAACP and organized a pressure campaign to force election officials to place Negroes on Alabama's voting lists. His name has shot into national prominence. There are scores, hundreds like him all over the South; men reared in the labor movement ready to give leadership in the struggle for equality.

But the labor movement, after its initial burst forward, bogged down. It lost momentum, not only in the struggle for Negro rights, but in the struggle for democracy in general. First, the war; the unions fought their own battles less, cooperated with the government more and shunned all conflict. Then, the progressive section of the labor movement, above all, the CIO, remained a minority of the organized working class as conservative sections of the AFL moved in competition with it. Millions came off the farms and into the factories for the first time.

Now there is a united labor movement and in their unity AFL and CIO prepare to root out discrimination where it has taken hold in the unions. At the same time, it meets a strongly entrenched inner foe: organized racketeering and begins a campaign to break its hold. The new federation is

preoccupied with its own internal re-vamping, preparing itself to lead . . . perhaps *tomorrow*. But the struggle over the Supreme Court decision erupts *today* and the Negroes begin pressing hard. The labor movement which should be the spearhead, the rallying fighting center, confines itself to declarations of solidarity, moral support, and counteracting the agitation of racists in southern locals.

The most stubborn obstacle in the path of unionism has been its own political policy. In general, labor is paralyzed by its attachment to the Democratic Party. In particular, it is blocked in Congress by a Republican-Dixiecrat majority. Let us for the moment put all "prejudices" in favor of a labor party aside. Even within the framework of bourgeois politics, it would be simple common sense for the labor movement to insist that the liberals whom it supports break with the Southern reactionaries. But it has never risen to this elementary demand. Labor gives all for unity with liberal Democrats; liberal Democrats hold tightly to Southern reactionaries; and Southern reaction combines with conservatism generally to knife labor.

Negroes are intimidated in the South? So are labor organizers. Unionists are beaten by thugs or jailed by police in the South as a matter of routine.

In 1953, Louisiana sugar cane plantation workers struck during the harvest season. In October, after they had been on strike for 60 days, a state court issued a sweeping injunction at the behest of plantation owners, that made virtually all strike activity illegal. Two years later, the union's appeal reached the U. S. Supreme Court and lo! the state court was reversed; the injunction set aside. Regrettably, in that two years, the strike had been broken and the local union wiped out.

The legal victory was of some interest but hardly oversignificant to the plantation workers who were driven out of the area or to those who remain at a wage of 41½ cents per hour, the legal minimum set by the Secretary of Agriculture.

The labor movement protests. Its publicists pen indignant editorials and news releases which are privately printed in its own press. Telegrams and long distance phone calls pour in to the Attorney General's office demanding federal intervention. But nobody listens; it is soon forgotten. With such contempt an organized body of 15,000,000 workers is shrugged off . . . 15 million! almost as many organized trade unionists as there are Negroes. The union is ignored but not the Negro. Why? And when injustices fly thick and fast, where are the Democratic liberals? Busy with other things. It never occurs to union leaders to put it plainly and simply: we insist that you speak up in public and begin a fight in "our" party to rid it of the influence of Southern reactionaries.

But the Negro movement shows no such diffidence. Sensing its new power, it insists upon a strong and clear stand against the racists; no catering to reactionary pressure, no weasel words. Behind this insistence lies a threat, a threat that the compromiser will find himself deserted. If the Negro rejects compromise with Southern reaction, the labor movement can do no less. Stevenson felt the whip of labor hostility from George Meany. Significantly, it was not a complaint that he had ignored labor's big struggles: Westinghouse, Perfect Circle, Florida hotels, Kohler; rather, it came as an attack for compromising the struggle for democracy in the South. Now, the mass unions can support another compromise between New Dealers and Slave Dealers only at the risk of an unprece-

dented political split with their own Negro membership.

But there are limits. Like labor, the Negro is confined to the two major parties. Yet, no one can claim that he is indefinitely or permanently attached to them. In the heat of the fight, Adam Clayton Powell does not hesitate to talk of a new party if neither of the others will fight for democracy. He is a man whose slogans come and go. The fact remains that the Negro, fighting for equality in the South, pushes to free American politics from the doldrums where it has been becalmed for 20 years. That is its contribution to the fight for democracy. It is no small thing.

THE NEGRO STRUGGLE reminds labor of everything that it has left undone. For one thing, it has left the rule of Southern reaction fundamentally intact. The union movement has been dissuaded from its clear duty to itself and to the nation by simple homilies: the lesser evil; half a loaf is better than none; moderation and evolution. Now, the Negro too, is pressed to be modest and retiring in the name of "gradualism." Gradualism and moderation, how felicitous a thought in America, the land of the happy middle class. It is the ideal solution for a vexatious difficulty. Are we not all moderates except for "extremists"?

Yet, gentle and genteel liberals are astonished that the Negro movement, all its wings, rejects moderation; and not because they are extremists. The NAACP, respectably and cautiously led; the churches, calling for prayer; pacifists, unionists heap a unanimous ridicule upon the exponents of gradualism, sparing not President Eisenhower and his erstwhile chief rival, Adlai Stevenson. Clearly the issue cannot be "gradualism vs. extremism" but something else. Hear James Res-

ton, *New York Times* columnist. Eisenhower, said he, "has a vast body of moderate opinion working with him, but the extremists who want 'enforcement' and those who want 'nullification' are better organized than the moderates. . . ." The Negro becomes an extremist because he insists upon "enforcement"; meanwhile, "moderation" is counterposed to enforcement. (One side, in the service of human freedom, insists upon application of the Constitution; the other, in the name of racist tyranny, demands that it be set aside. It requires a finely developed sense of aloof impartiality to dismiss both as "extremists.")

Enforcement requires human action; politicians must do something: pass laws, see that they are executed, if necessary, jail those who disobey—a fate ordinarily dispensed without qualm to ordinary criminals, Communists, alimony shirkers, and pickets. It requires that an Eastland be repudiated and Montgomery boycotters be encouraged. But "gradualism" is far more lenient. It simply describes the slow accumulation of social forces, the decade and century long evolution in opinion, standard of living, intangible advances, unnoticed setbacks—all of which takes place autonomously, virtually independent of conscious human will. Above all, gradualism makes no demands upon politicians; it doesn't ask for patronage; nor does it demand that they take a stand.

Liberal gradualists are dismayed by the *struggle for equality*. But this is not to say that they oppose the *trend to equality*. Quite the contrary. They undoubtedly welcome it. Some, perhaps, only in private. After all, they are humane, civilized and . . . realists. But why, they bemoan, force us to act and press us to repudiate party colleagues like Eastland and the signers of the Southern Manifesto whose votes

we have always appreciated. There is a subtle difference, too, between the gradualism of the Southern liberal and that of his Northern brother.

Occasionally, the racist talks of "gradualism" but exclusively for national consumption. On home ground, he demands not the gradual advance of Negro rights but active resistance to it. But the Southern liberal is thinking of something else. Here, where tradition, public opinion, law, and plain physical force hold the Negro in bondage, "gradualism" becomes the refuge for those who cannot summon the courage to fight for their convictions in a hostile environment. Obey the Supreme Court, uphold the law, gradualism, moderation. . . this is their timid stand against aggressive reaction. The gradualism of the Southern liberal will not give active aid to the Negro struggle. But one thing is already certain; the Negro will not be disoriented by it. At any rate, it represents a deep fissure in the white wall of racist unity.

But the North? Here racism is not elevated into ruling government and liberalism dominates. It should be easy to stand up for democracy among democrats. Yet, Northern liberalism finds it difficult. Here, one can arouse popular indignation, rally support for the Southern fighters, protest, demand Federal laws, demand democracy in the South. In the North, in sum, the call for gradualism and moderation weakens and disorients not the racists but the fight for democracy. And why? Only because the Democratic party remains a party of New Dealers united with Slave Dealers and liberals have been determined to keep it so.

DEMOCRACY IS CHALLENGING Southern reaction. The elements of the challenge have been accumulating, grad-

ually, for generations, until the issue is at last posed: will the old rule be deposed or can it resist this assault until the surge for democracy recedes? This question cannot be settled "gradually." First, the fight for democracy must be won; then reaction and racism can be slowly and gradually liquidated. Or, the Negroes can be defeated and their fight for democracy demoralized.

Everything combines now to the advantage of those who demand a change: the labor movement is strong, united and overwhelmingly in solidarity with the Negro; Southern reaction is under pressure; the constitutional foundations of Jim Crow have been undermined; the cold war relaxes and attention can be focused on the inner battle for democracy; the United States is under irresistible pressure from the newly free, colored peoples of the world. Everything is ready and ripe for the final blows. The Negro seizes the initiative and brushes aside those liberals who call upon him to act with restraint. His public contempt for false compromise has thrown liberalism off balance. Yesterday, liberals and labor were content to wait for the self-liquidation of the Republican regime maintaining unity in the Democratic party with the Southern reaction. But now, the Negro will not permit it and this is the rejuvenating force in American politics.

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Stalin Goes—His Minions Remain

The 20th Congress and its Effects on World Stalinism

“Behold the man—the greatest and most significant of our contemporaries. . . .

“He towers over Europe and Asia, over the past and the future. He is the most celebrated and yet one of the least studied men in the world. . . .

“A man with the head of a scholar, with the face of a simple working man, in the clothes of a simple soldier. . . .

“He is a man of iron. His name describes him. Stalin—steel. He is as inflexible and flexible as steel. His power lies in his profound common sense, his extensive range of knowledge, *his amazingly ordered mind*; his passion for precision, his inexorable consistency, rapidity, certainty and intensity of his decisions, constant care in choosing the right people for the right place. . . .” Henry Barbusse. (Emphasis mine—A. G.)

This paean to Stalin by a French Stalinist literary hack is one of a library of similar effulgences. If it was not written on orders, it was in unconscious compliance with and flowed naturally out of the Stalinist ideology. The ritual of Stalin-worship was integral to the system so long as “the friend and liberator of the peoples of the world” was alive and demanding. But, especially in the light of the destruction of the Stalin myth by his erstwhile disciples, the paean is a stale rendering of allegiance and offensive to sight.

Khrushchev now says that Stalin was the victim of “phobia,” “not himself” and suffered from “delusions and derangements.” At the start, Khrushchev limited these aberrations to his “later years.” He was not phobic, deluded, deranged and “not himself” during

the decade when he destroyed the old Party, wiped out the revolutionary cadre and murdered the whole generation of Lenin’s co-workers! He couldn’t be, could he, since it was precisely in that period, and on the basis of the great purges, that so many of the present ruling class began their services as Stalin’s disciples?

We are told that *certain* trials and *certain* purges were frameups: that Stalin almost destroyed the Army; that the Stalin-Hitler pact was not just a mistake but almost proved the undoing of the nation; that the Vohzd threatened everywhere and everyone; that none were safe. Life described by Khrushchev seemed one prolonged nightmare.

Ten and twenty years ago, on the sixtieth and seventieth birthdays of Stalin, the very men who now talk and write like archeologists making a prehistoric discovery, expressed themselves with an energy surpassing all their previous panegyrics to the man they say they dreaded so much. The sickening sycophancy had the quality of totemism.

On Stalin’s sixtieth birthday, V. M. Molotov, forever first in line of Stalin’s idolators, wrote:

Under Stalin’s leadership, we have successfully demolished the enemies of the people, have cleared, and will continue to clear, the state apparatus of hostile elements, of spies and wreckers. As we know, such measures help greatly to improve the work of our organizations and to clear the way for the promotion of fresh, honest and politically enlightened cadres, and for the consolidation of our state.

This remark was made during the celebration of Stalin’s great strategic

achievement, the pact with Hitler, so Molotov continues: “Comrade Stalin’s initiative and guidance have played a cardinal role in all those decisions in our home and foreign policy which have ensured tranquility and prolonged peace to the peoples of the Soviet Union. . . .” And that is why “Comrade Stalin enjoys the profound love and trust of the working people.”

How the times did mock his cardinal role in the struggle for peace! But, Khrushchev now reveals that he suffered Stalin’s emasculation of the army in silence! An afterthought! For then, the picture-book marshal, Klementi Voroshilov, Stalin’s official military biographer, declared:

One cannot speak or write of Stalin, without speaking or writing of the heroic history and heroic battles of the Red Army, just as one cannot speak or write of the Red Army without speaking or writing of Stalin. . . . That is why today, when our whole country, united in an outpouring of love and appreciation, is celebrating the anniversary of Comrade Stalin’s birth, all the men, commanders, commissars, the entire political personnel—all who make up the armed forces of the Soviet state—greet our great Stalin with a feeling of profound gratitude and joy.

And so, once more, “Long may our Stalin live, to the joy of the peoples of the Soviet Union and of all progressive humanity.”

What of Lazar Kaganovich? Having read, heard or been told that Marx said that “revolutions are the locomotives of history,” he proceeded to describe Stalin as the greatest locomotive engineer of all time, whether of steam or diesel. He “boldly [opened] the throttle still wider,” and “drove the locomotive of history down and up steep inclines and over sharp turns and curves; he left in the firebox only what was valuable as fuel to create driving power and promptly threw

out the slag, without, however, littering the track.”

Isn’t that a beautiful image! You think that is all? Oh, no.

By choosing the exact moment to put on speed Comrade Stalin ensured the construction of a firm foundation. . . . had theoretically to plan the track and lay the rails so that the locomotive could move on other routes for which the theoretical rails had not yet been laid and for which even the track had only been generally indicated.

But above all, Stalin “smashed the enemies!” He is “the greatest organizer of a Party and a state in history” and “every leader must assiduously learn, learn and learn from Comrade Stalin.”

What of Mikoyan? “Today, our country and toiling humanity all over the world are doing honor to their leader, father and friend—Comrade Stalin.”

Stalin is the . . .

universally recognized leader, but also a great theoretician. . . . created the theory of the building of socialism, which is enunciated in the Constitution of the Soviet Union. . . . enriched our theoretical science with his principles of organization. . . . illuminates the practical path of struggle with the rays of theory. . . . [is a] theoretical and organizational genius.

Mikoyan ended with: “May Comrade Stalin live many, many years, and remain as fresh, as young and as vigorous as ever!”

Khrushchev, too, entered the lists. Presumably unknown, he was yet important enough to be included in a volume of the leaders ordered by Stalin to pay their respects to him.

Today, on the sixtieth anniversary of Comrade Stalin’s birth, all eyes will be turned on our great leader of nations, on our dear friend and father (!) . . . In Comrade Stalin the working class and all toilers, possess the greatest man of

the present era, a theoretician, leader and organizer of the struggle and victory of the working class . . . an outstanding authority in many fields.

These are but a few representative samples from a mountainous material produced in the greatest effort man has ever seen to make a genius of one so plain in everything except malevolence based on police power. Did these men believe all they wrote? What difference does it make? The history of it all is indelibly recorded and the present destruction of the Stalin myth has to be sought, just as the myth itself, in the nature of the Russian social order, in the ideology of that new class society.

AS WE HAVE OFTEN written, the Stalinist parties throughout the world, were mirrors of the Russians. As the Russian party was totalitarian, so were they. Each had a national Vohzd. In France, Thorez; in Italy, Togliatti; in England, Pollitt; in China, Mao; and in the United States, Foster. The party hierarchies were identical to the Russian. Each leader had his own coterie of hangers-on. Each party reflected the same totalitarian practices. In each, the same lack of freedom, lack of discussion, lack of debate, and the same deadly unanimity and abject conformity that characterized the Stalinist party in Russia.

If Stalin's birthday was celebrated in Russia and in all Stalinist parties, Foster's is celebrated in the United States, Duclos' in France, Mao's in China. The system had operated for so long that the conduct of the parties was automatic in their subservience to the events, instructions, and the forever changing strategies of the Kremlin.

Thus, when Khrushchev, Mikoyan, Bulganin and even Stalin's heir, Malenkov, took to the hustings to open up

their hearts on what a monster Stalin was, a disorientation for the entire Stalinist movement *seemed* to follow. And why shouldn't it have? Think of all that has been poured into the Stalinist mold for the past two decades and it will be understandable. But Khrushchev was not really taking a chance. He knew the stuff this movement is made of. He knew that though there might be some dissatisfaction, perhaps even some disaffection, in the main, the movement, created, trained and educated in the image of the parent, would rally behind the new leadership of "Mother Russia."

Who knows, the de-deification of Stalin might even give the movement some new life and the ranks a new confidence and a new attachment to Russia. But more important than this, the needs and interests of the Stalinist parties are subordinate to the Russian and, finally, there is no real chance of a serious disintegration or opposition inside these subject parties. In any case, what they are getting is a new myth!

It would be unbelievable if the Stalinist parties were not momentarily or partially stunned. This in no way contradicts the above. The great Stalin—the sun, moon, stars, nay, the whole firmament—is suddenly smashed by men who were his closest associates. Not one of them has a record of having opposed Stalin in anything, certainly not the very acts for which he is so bitterly denounced.

In all countries, reports have it that this or that individual leader was surprised and dissatisfied, and questioned the whole business. The common question asked: where were the present leaders when Stalin dominated the scene? Khrushchev answered the question in a way, even before he was asked: we were all

afraid; we didn't know who was going to be shot next.

It remains now for the Fosters, Duclos, Togliattis and their brethren to supply the explanations. In the United States, furthest from the frontiers of Russia, the Stalinist Party and its Daily Worker have opened a discussion to explain to their followers what it is all about and to "enlighten" them. The discussion began with self-questioning by its editor Alan Max, who wrote about how jolted he was by the news. He, too, wanted to know where the party leaders were during all this, and whether or not they are "giving proper weight to the achievements of Stalin." He continued:

. . . we went overboard in defending things like the idea of Stalin as infallible, in opposing any suggestion that civil liberties were not being fully respected in the Soviet Union, in discouraging serious discussion and criticism of Soviet movies, books, etc. As a matter of fact, while the defense of the Soviet policy as a policy of peace was proper and necessary for the welfare of the American people, going overboard on these other matters was wrong and hence, self-defeating.

This was followed by a letter from Ring Lardner, Jr. in which he attacked the "near deification of Stalin (!)" and "the cloying panegyrics."

"I wonder," wrote Lardner, "if some of the rather maudlin testaments to William Z. Foster on his recent birthday are really the most mature and effective way of acknowledging the respect due America's outstanding working class leader."

Afraid of his own daring, and wondering where this will all lead to, Lardner suspects that "any expression of doubt regarding Soviet judicial procedure" could be "an unforgivable sin." It would bring into question all the trials held in Stalinist

Russia during the successive purges. What then would be left to a faithful believer in the cause? Anyway, this kind of public posturing might lead to God knows what, and "America's outstanding working class leader" joined in the discussion to steer it away from dangerous channels.

With the same abjectness with which he accepted the denunciation of the former hero Tito as an imperialist agent, Foster accepts Tito's exoneration on the say so of Khrushchev. He is toeing the line for the new Vohzd as he did for the old.

Foster asks a series of questions (they are only rhetorical for he is not really interested in the answers). Khrushchev's policies are to him a "theoretical reevaluation." He wants to know to what extent was there "a failure to develop a real collective leadership." Above all "what, if any, decisive political mistakes were made by Stalin? What alternative policies to Stalin's were suggested by others and rejected? What resistance was made in top circles to Stalin's trend [trend, mind you] toward supercentralization and denial of collective leadership? Were injustices committed during the purges?"

It would be pointless taking Foster's questions seriously. He knows the answers to each of them as well as do those of whom he asks for answers. Even so, he offers a few answers in a feint at independence, which, even before the *Daily Worker* reached the newsstands, already required a new reorientation by him in order to fall in line.

Foster explained Stalin's "excessive stress upon individual leadership" by the

prolonged struggle against the inner and outer party opposition, the long-continued, monumental effort to industrialize the country; the formulation and appli-

cation of several five-year plans; the carrying through of the bitter world war against Hitlerism. . . .

But Foster, you see, wants to be quite fair about this whole business:

Stalin, in his earlier years earned an outstanding reputation as a Marxist by his great fight against the Trotsky-Zinoviev-Bucharin traitors, especially in the big struggle around the elementary [everything is so elementary to Foster] question of building Socialism in one country. . . .

But, Stalin did make mistakes:

. . . in any event, mistakes would have been made in handling the many immense and complex tasks that the USSR has had to face ever since its establishment.

What sycophancy! All these years we have heard nothing but that Stalin made no mistakes. He was the Father, the Benefactor, the Locomotive, the Genius, the Great Man of All Times. Foster even wrote a book entitled *From Bryan to Stalin* in order to emphasize his complete devotion to the bloody tyrant. How now mistakes? It is "elementary:"

The essence of Stalin's errors is that he multiplied, complicated and intensified these mistakes by his virtual liquidation of collective leadership and by the atmosphere of omniscience and the extreme adulation with which he surrounded himself.

. . . the general effect was, more or less, to weaken the work of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government. This fact inevitably produced the present down-grading of his reputation.

How does Foster know what is the "essence of Stalin's errors?" When did he learn all this? On March 27, the day before his new article appeared in the *Daily Worker*? Or had he known it all the time? If he did, then he was a sniveling coward for having kept quiet, and an unconscionable bureaucrat because he imitated, advocated and defended the Stalinist system. Or,

is he accepting the word of Khrushchev in exactly the same way he accepted Stalin's?

In either case, he remains a faithful Stalinist *chinovnik*. He does, however, grasp the essence of the attack on Stalin in that the present pack "did not deem it necessary to reverse the basic policy of the Party." This is what is important in the whole situation and the theme to which we will return further on.

Foster's leap into the discussion was, from the point of view of the American Stalinist summits, unavoidable. In a rash of "democratic" posturing, the *Daily Worker* opened its columns to a discussion of the "down-grading" of Stalin. Letters from readers reveal the stupefying effect on Stalinists of lower rank.

Even one of higher rank, Howard Fast, joined these writers in a brash display of his sophisticated cynicism. Fast finds refreshing interludes in the discussion. He is so enthralled that he felt it necessary to address a letter to Joseph Clark, an outstanding *Daily Worker* hack, to explain his wonderful feelings. Fast finds that "if there were no errors there would be no self-criticism and no correction. There would also be no life and no motion."

"We in America," he writes, "still have a criminal feeling about errors. . . . How many people have we both known who have felt that the admission of an error is the one unforgivable sin."

What Fast means is "we American Stalinists" have a criminal feeling about error because "error was impermissible. Error was sabotage; error was the agent of imperialism; error was the espionage technique of the British, the French, the Germans and the Americans. Error was "wrecking;" error was the use of infectious germs.

We knew all through the years, as the Stalinists are being told only today, that the victims of "error" were really the innocent victims of frame-up, whose corpses were an offering to the insatiable blood-lust of Stalin.

Then, what is all this Fastian talk of error for? Merely to excuse his Stalinist associates and himself from a devious, and murderous past of their own, so that he could employ Mark Ethridge's defense of the New Deal: "For what in hell should we apologize?"

Another writer discovers that Stalin's greatest mistake was to permit "that creature Beria to influence him." This faithful follower, still under the narcotic of an older official line says: "It is my belief that Beria was behind every colossal blunder that Stalin made. What prevented the USSR from failing were . . . (among other things) . . . the determination of Joseph Stalin in spite of Beria's influence."

Poor Beria! Never in his most halcyon days did he believe that he was anything more than Stalin's hand-picked subordinate. Never in his wildest fantasies could he have believed that on his death he would rise to the greatest power in Russia, even above the Holy Father.

Other letter writers are frankly puzzled. Some attacked the lack of democracy, others the unquestioning acceptance of any line from above. One, however, quite pointedly writes:

These leaders who today rise like great new giants and hurl denunciatory rocks at the body of the dead Stalin must have been very willing to let that same Stalin make the decisions then. They did not dare assume the responsibility in those fateful critical days. Otherwise Stalin could not have attained such frightful, overwhelming personal power. But they were the eager and willing water, as it were, that, inevitably, made the Stalin plant grow.

Now, they howl with vast, righteous indignation! It would become them much better if they would, first, publicly make slashing, punishing attacks upon themselves.

I think it would have been far wiser and much more constructive to let a later generation (from which they would be excluded) to be the judge of Stalin. . . . The mind cries out: If there was so much self-serving invention substituted for fact all along, not, as far as we know, opposed by the present leaders, how do we know that they are telling the truth now?

As for us, the supreme lesson in this whole horrifying and shocking business is not to be creatures dancing to the (often unintelligible) grimaces of others, but to use our brains in our right, creatively, never abdicating individuality. Otherwise, the sun and the stars, the heavens and the earth—the whole universe placed in our pockets would be worthless.

This is honest indignation. One feels the outrage of the person who wrote the above letter. How strikingly refreshing it is to the dreadful conformity and depthless hypocrisy of a Foster calling for continued rank and file allegiance based on nothing more than faith. It was Foster who wrote that what really happened can be understood "most authoritatively only by those leaders who have worked closely with him [Stalin] in the top circles of the CP and the government of the Soviet Union."

This call upon faith and belief contains within it also a plea by Foster not to be too hard on him because, after all, that is what he lives by. He has faith and belief in his Russian masters. He exonerates himself because he, too, only followed their gospel. What difference does it make whether a week ago it was Stalin; yesterday, Malenkov; today, Khrushchev; and tomorrow . . . ? The important thing is to play the game, to have faith and belief . . . in the Russians.

III

THE CURRENT EVENTS in Russia demand more than just a game of speculation in which so many of the so-called Russian experts love to play. The character of Stalin is quite important in understanding present events, and so, for that matter, are the characters of the new leaders. But the important things about Stalin, theoretically, politically and personally, have already been said thoroughly enough by Trotsky, Souvarine, Wolfe and even Deutscher. Khrushchev, Mikoyan and their friends have added nothing. Indeed, they have said much less than has been said by others for several decades.

No doubt, the de-ikonization of Stalin has only begun. Where it will end, we do not know. It is not too important. Khrushchev goes back to the purges, the Stalin-Hitler pact, the Great War itself. It is now announced that Stalin was anti-Semitic and organized the frameups against Jewish party leaders and members and Jewish intellectuals and suppressed Jewish culture. Today, they say even as far back as 1922 Stalin was opposed to the genuine and justifiable aspirations of Russia's national minorities when he proposed the incorporation of Ukraine, Byelorussia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia into Great Russia.

Yes, they may go even much further. The question still remains: why?

Everyone has noted the individuals who have been rehabilitated after death—their names, that is. Some are well known, others are obscure figures. Yet, throughout the world, a most insistently asked question is: What about Trotsky? They also ask what about Zinoviev and Bucharin? But most of all, what about Trotsky?

Mikoyan faced this interrogation in India and all he could reply was: "There were ideological questions." By which Mikoyan meant that the fight with Trotsky was a struggle between two antagonistic class forces in Russian Society.

This is not involved in the present drama, that is why this dethronement of Stalin has for the people of Russia, only a limited value. The de-ikonization of Stalin's ghost flows from the current needs of the present bureaucracy, from its efforts to fortify and strengthen its own rule over the backs of a discontented population. That is the only way to understand what is going on in Russia.

In the rise of the Stalin dictatorship, which no one at the time but Trotsky understood fully, it was a pastime to seek an explanation of Stalin's rise to power on the basis of his tougher character in a conflict of personalities. The bourgeoisie even saw Stalin as a moderate fighting against Trotsky the extremist. They hailed the victory of Stalin over Trotsky because they felt an unconscious kinship to Stalin in his fight against the socialist opposition.

Trotsky explained Stalin's rise to power as the product of the specific social relations in the new state, to which the personalities involved unquestionably lent their influence. The latter determined the techniques and mechanics of the struggle for power. But, in objective, historical terms, Trotsky said, the struggle reflected the conflict between the revolutionary elements of 1917 and the new rising bureaucracy. Stalin was the personification of the bureaucracy, the bureaucrat *par excellence*.

The Russian bureaucracy emerged triumphant through a counterrevolution far bloodier than any revolution in history. Stalin's victory was

the defeat of the Russian Revolution.

To insure the rule of the new bureaucratic ruling class in the new bureaucratic collectivist society, Stalin liquidated the entire old party of Lenin. In this liquidation, a new generation of leaders came to the fore with Stalin as godhead. The new bureaucracy was without revolutionary, socialist, internationalist traditions, culture or aims. It was a national phenomenon, christened in a state of a defeated revolution, without ties to Czarist capitalism, and without ties to the socialist ideal.

The new bureaucracy rested upon a collectivist economy, and its well-being, prosperity and future was determined by it. Five-year plans, as an expression of planning in economy, were without socialist aims, but purely class objectives of the new power, initiated to strengthen its own rule and to fortify its own aggrandizement.

The industrialization of the country could only proceed, in the absence of socialist policy, by the ruthless exploitation of the masses, both proletarians and peasants. This required the perfection of the police state, and the Russian State under Stalin evolved into the most thorough and ruthless totalitarian state that the world has ever seen.

Being neither socialist nor capitalist, the new bureaucratic state looked upon both bourgeoisie and proletariat as its twin enemies. The general strategy of Stalinism was the struggle against both. Internally it meant not only the destruction of all forms of organization and expression on the part of the masses, but it required the destruction of the nations comprising the union. Great Russian chauvinism run triumphant, created a deepgoing national resentment, just as the intense exploitation and suppression of

the working class and the peasantry created an immense mass dissatisfaction and disaffection in the country.

Under Stalin, the intense police surveillance of the country, the periodic purges which became a matter of state policy, the creation of a phobia of imperialist intervention, the transformation of the party and the GPU as overseers of the people, kept the regime in power over the years. It was absolute power used absolutely.

Thus, the industrialization of the country, immense as it has been and continues to be, arose not as the end based on an equilibrium of industrial expansion and a corresponding rise of the living standards of the masses, but by a depression of those standards and by the maintenance of agriculture in a permanent state of crisis.

To maintain the Stalinist system, a series of punitive legal measures was enacted to insure the enslavement of the population, under which the free movement of the workers and peasants was made impossible. Whatever movement did exist was illegal, or government-sponsored, the latter directed primarily to the multi-million-inhabited slave camps. State decrees on overtime, incentive pay, and intensification of production all fortified and guaranteed the most brutal exploitation in modern times.

Purges were the norm in Russian society. There were periodic, extraordinary, spectacular mass purges. But behind those were the steady daily unabating purges everywhere against tiny groups, families, individuals. There was no discrimination in the victims to be purged: bureaucrats, workers, peasants, soldiers—every segment of the population. This was a new type of "democracy," we were

told. Indeed it was. A democracy of the knout which spared no one. But of free speech, free organization, free press, free discussion, free election, free decisions, there were none. Yet this "democracy" was proclaimed by the Stalinist of the world and their cynical intellectual supporters who fattened themselves on bourgeois democracy.

The Russian masses have only endured it. They endured it because of force, naked and unashamed force, employed against them. They endured it in fear that a worse fate awaited them in the invasion of foreign interventionists and conquerers. But there is not the slightest doubt that they hated it. The cynics who defended this police regime on the grounds that it was all right for the Russian masses who, in any case, never knew a better life, were accustomed to it, as it were, merely exhibited their own depravity.

Even before the war, in the first onrush of Hitler's troops, tens of thousands of Ukrainians, White Russians and even Great Russians, soldiers and civilians, went over to the enemy—such was their hatred of the Stalin regime. After the war, returning veterans from the Eastern European battlegrounds brought back stories of the enormous contrast between the living standards of the people in these backward or second grade capitalist nations and those of the Russians. The bureaucracy had to warn the people not to listen to the "tales" of the returning soldiers for fear that discontent might give rise to even more serious rebellions by the people.

The end of the war was in fact a turning point. Not only were fascist Germany and military Japan, the two foremost threatening invaders destroyed as powers, but the capitalist world as well entered a new stage of crisis. The danger of foreign attack

and dismemberment of Russia was no longer threatening. Russian power grew enormously. The new power of the nation was presented to the people and the whole Stalinist world as the supreme and exclusive achievement of Marshal Stalin.

The masses, in the light of the real achievements in the war, had hoped for an upturn of their fortunes. But such was not forthcoming. For now, the nation faced the cold war and once again, or, in continuous form, the people were asked to live on as before. So long as Stalin lived the regime remained unchanged. And so long as he lived, the hatred of the masses for him must have been enormous. The smashing of the idol would be inexplicable if that were not a fact.

With his death a new stage in Russian politics became inevitable. For even though it is unquestionably true that the regime reflected the nature of the Russian society, the character of the dictator gave it the particular stamp it bore. It was a hard, cold-blooded and murderous regime. Even the bureaucracy was nettled by it: once grown large and prosperous itself, the bureaucrats felt stifled by The Boss, who could not but appear somewhat of a paradox, an anomaly, and ancient force in their lives. The Stalin who led them to power, a power now vastly secured, was undoubtedly an impediment to their further existence and expansion. Most of all, they had lived in dreaded fear of the "psychopathic," "phobic," "deranged" chief.

After Stalin's death the fight for secession was truly not a momentous one. Malenkov did not last long enough to accomplish anything. But he did sense the restiveness of the nation when he made a gesture to the masses by promising an increase in

the production of consumers goods and a rise in their standard of living.

Malenkov, however, was a parvenu. He was not in tune with the bureaucracy. The bureaucracy, it is true, enjoyed the lion's share of Russian production and their living standard was so high in comparison to the masses, that the gap between them and the population was and is greater than the gap between the bourgeoisie, or parts of it, and the working masses of the United States. But it is not willing to rest there.

With its new power in the world, the bureaucracy is entering a new phase of competition with the capitalist world, an economic competition. The bureaucracy cannot afford to disturb the present equilibrium of the economy by increasing the share of the masses in production. All it can do is promise a reduction of the present 48-hour-week to 42 . . . in 1957!

The bureaucracy, in the image of its Father, gives the masses no hope for material improvement of its lot. It was one of the characteristics of the Stalin regime to initiate purges and blame the conditions of the masses on spies, saboteurs, counter-revolutionaries who literally took the bread from the people. So the Khrushchev regime shoots Beria, demotes Malenkov, threatens Molotov and warns Kaganovich and Voroshilov and now—it gives the country the corpse of Stalin. That, we have no doubt, is a popular act!

WILL THE RUSSIAN MASSES accept this gratuitous gift in place of a real change in their conditions? Only under force of the police regime. Surely, the people must ask: How was it possible for the evil Stalin to do all this, to commit such horrors and crimes and yet to receive no rebuke from anyone? Where were all those who pres-

ently decry Stalin as a frame-up artist, a murderer, an anti-Semite, an enemy of the national minorities?

They know their Stalin and they know the forces that brought him to the helm of the country. They are the same forces that have now dethroned him. They know now, too, if they had any illusions about it, that there will be no genuine and lasting change of their own lot so long as the fundamental nature of the bureaucratic regime remains unchanged.

In all the huff and puff of the dramatic destruction of the Stalin myth, what real, decisive and fundamental change has been made in the structure and function of the regime? None, absolutely none! And what is more, none has been promised either. Isaac Deutscher, who forecasts a new democratic stage in Russia, notwithstanding, there has not been one decisively important step taken toward what he described as a fact, namely, a democratization of the regime and the country. The only democracy that has been given, is the democracy to attack Stalin.

What difference does it make if Khrushchev dances a solo or, if Khrushchev and Bulganin dance a *pas de deux*, or if they and a Zhukov, or someone else, do a *pas de trois*. The sharing of power by a new group would imply merely that no one single individual has reached a point of personal triumph in the dictatorial regime. But the essential totalitarian character of the state power remains. In that regime, Khrushchev, the party secretary, is the most powerful.

In that, too, there ought to be a lesson for the muddleheads who see in every Kremlin conflict "new" forces asserting themselves in the struggle for power. Once it is the secret police. Another time, the army. A third . . . well, when the fog leaves, the party,

no other force but the party, rules supreme. In the one-party dictatorship, it is the party and always the party that dominates. It is the party, because the party is the organized bureaucracy, its brain, its force, its ideologue, to which all other aspects of the state are subordinate.

The great discussion in the Stalinist world, so closely and justifiably watched by the entire world, can be misleading if one takes seriously the overinflated, repetitious obeisances paid to "collective leadership" by all the little Stalins of the Stalinist parties. The language and the ideas behind the language, "traitors," "democratic centralism," "re-evaluation," "discipline and centralization," are part of Stalinist homiletics. They serve the conscious purpose of creating confusion and avoiding a discussion of what is real. What is real is the warning of *Pravda* that the humbling of Stalin does not mean a free discussion; that the party will not tolerate the criticisms of "rotten elements." We are not told exactly, but it is easy to guess who the rotten elements are. It is those who misinterpret the meaning of Stalin's dethronement. *Pravda* warns against "slanderous statements directed against the party's policy and its Leninist foundations...hackneyed slanderous inventions of foreign reactionary propaganda . . . provoca-

tive anti-party statements" and the "Bucharinite" views of an economist. one Yarishenko.

This is endemic in Stalinism. Words and deeds, denunciations and liquidations are Stalinist in essence. The system is Stalinism without Stalin. *Pravda* is warning that the bureaucracy intends to remain in power without relinquishing a single decisive aspect of that power.

The action of Khrushchev, nonetheless, has already had an enormous significance. It has affirmed all that Trotsky and those who supported him had said about the regime; not only they, but a host of other observers. It has stirred sections of the ranks of Stalinism and it has strengthened the anti-Stalinist socialist movements. It can well have consequences that Khrushchev has not taken into consideration. He took a chance, a calculated chance in an effort to soothe the passions of the Russian masses. And thus, it may serve to carry the regime and its policies along for another period. But there are limits to human endurance in exploitation and oppression and the Russian people are at an exhaustion stage. If the great leader Stalin was all that the present leaders say of him, and they stood silently by, what of them? We have no doubt that the people are thinking of that.

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Israel's Laboristic Economy

A Discussion of its Strength and Weakness

On September 23, 1955 Israel was swept by a wave of enthusiasm inspired by an economic discovery. Oil was struck for the first time in Israel. It promised to be an excellent source which might save the country \$50,000,000 in foreign exchange.

The company that discovered oil was the Lapidoth Oil Company, financed jointly by Ampal—the Histadrut and Labor Zionist investment organization and Solel Boneh—the Histadrut contracting and manufacturing concern, and by a "Federation group" of United States and Israeli private investors.

The Histadrut, a labor organization, is now in a position to control a basic natural resource and a developing new industry in Israel. The role of the Histadrut in the discovery of oil only highlights the development of what can legitimately be called a labor economy, which has had a tremendous growth in the last 15 years.

For years we have heard hosannas sung to the "socialist" character of Israel; singled out were the "socialist Kibutzim." Marxists discounted much of it. The country is small and poor in natural resources. The "socialist economy" existed locally on the charity of bourgeois Zionists throughout the world. The socialistic forms of economic organization did not control any decisive sectors of the economy. Even in agriculture, they hardly had a foothold in the profitable citrus culture. The boastings of the propagandists therefore bred a feeling of caution in the socialist observer. This was especially true for socialists trained in the Trotskyist tradition

whose vigorous polemics against the theory of "socialism in one country," was so tragically confirmed by the horrors of developments in Stalinist Russia. Socialism in one country—Israel—or as sometimes represented by its more naive advocates as socialism in one Kibutz—did not impress them.

The developments of the last decade, however, demand a new assessment of the Israeli labor economic setup. A new analysis of its nature, problems and extent is therefore necessary, to lay the groundwork for a proper evaluation.

IF ONE WERE TO CONCEIVE of the Israeli economy as divided into three main categories, (a) agriculture, (b) light industry and commerce, (c) basic industry and finance, a significant generalization could be made. Labor or Histadrut units (owned, controlled or heavily influenced) dominate the field in the two fundamental sectors, agriculture on the one hand and basic industry and finance on the other. Only in light industry and commerce does private capital have a predominant position.

A discussion of the Israeli labor economy is of special interest to the Independent Socialist League. The ISL has been among the pioneers in studying the relationship between nationalized industry and democracy, developing the only scientific description of Russia as bureaucratic collectivism, a new type of social system. It has called attention to incipient bureaucratic collectivist developments in industries nationalized by the British Labor government, and in state

economic developments of many newly free countries. There are no lack of such points of similarity in the Israeli labor economy. A truly interesting manifestation of the law of combined development.

The economic organizations in Israel referred to as "socialist" or "labor" are in the main not nationalized or government owned. There is little or no tendency in Israeli labor circles to give the state the predominant role in social ownership. Their historic road has been the development of labor-owned or controlled cooperatives, settlements, etc. It has been the General Zionist Party — conservative party of free enterprise—that has raised the cry of nationalization. The reason being, to deprive labor of some of its power by placing these economic functions in the hands of the government that the bourgeoisie may now influence and hope to control in the future. They have demanded the nationalization of education, health, employment, transportation, etc. Mapai—the Social Democratic Labor Party of Israel—the leading party of Israeli labor—has conceded to the General Zionists in the field of social services. It has nationalized education and is ready to nationalize other social services. Should Mapai find it expedient to form another coalition government with the General Zionists, they stand ready to nationalize more of the social services.

A discussion of the Israeli labor economy must therefore start with a discussion of the Histadrut. The Histadrut, or to give it its full name—Histadrut Haklali shel Poale Eretz Israel—General Federation of Jewish Labor in Israel—is not only a trade union federation in the same sense as the American Federation of Labor or the British Trade Union Congress. The Histadrut is that, but it is also

much more. It is the largest employer in the Near East. It is the cooperative society of Israel. It is the largest social agency of the area, and the largest insurance and banking organization in Israel. Sometimes, the Histadrut, itself, enters candidates in local elections, and thereby influences politics directly. More often, it has indirect political power through the political parties that base themselves on the Histadrut membership. The Mapai, the leading party of the Histadrut, has been the dominating party of the various governmental coalitions since the formation of the state of Israel. The present government is composed of three workers parties: Mapai, Mapam and Achdut Avodah, all based upon the Histadrut. In addition the Hapoel Hamizrachi and the small Progressive Party are in the coalition.

Opponents have, with some justice, called the Histadrut an octopus. Friends, with equal justice, have called it the all-inclusive labor movement of Jews in Israel.

How was the Histadrut formed? How is it governed? To what extent is it democratic and to what extent has it become subject to bureaucratization? The reference here to democracy is to the responsiveness to, and identification with its own electorate. I will not deal with the shameful and undemocratic attitude of the Histadrut toward Arab workers. That is a subject for special treatment.

The Histadrut was formed in 1920 by the representatives of labor parties and agricultural supplements. Only a few urban trades such as printers and construction workers, were represented. Real trade unions developed later. National union centers of a trade or industry, equivalent to the American International unions, came much later and have had their greatest de-

velopment in the last decade since the decision of the 1946 convention.

Organization and even membership is therefore centralized. In theory, at least, one becomes a member of the Histadrut directly and, therefore, eligible to join a local or a constituent body such as a trade union or a cooperative. Dues are paid to the Histadrut which keeps a portion for itself, and then distributes the rest to subordinate organizations.

Wage policy is set by the Histadrut and despite the organizational autonomy of the trade unions, they only adapt the general policy to their own needs. This is true despite the fact that the trade unions form only a small portion of the Histadrut membership. Local trade unions operate in a still more restricted sphere—more as grievance committees than as bargaining agents. They can only apply the Histadrut policy adapted by national trade unions to the local scene. No strikes can be called without the sanction of the Histadrut. There have been wildcat strikes, but these have been comparatively few, e.g., seamen, doctors, and have been met with harsh organizational and economic measures by the Histadrut leadership.

The basic governing body of Histadrut is the general convention. Convention delegates are elected nationally by proportional representation. Each political party of the country puts up its own slate for the convention. Politics are not hidden, but form the basis of organization. In the last election to the Histadrut convention, even the General Zionist Party put a ticket into the field with a platform for a "giveaway" of most of the Histadrut organizations and functions. The daily functioning of Histadrut is the responsibility of the General Executive Committee which meets once every two weeks. It is

elected by the convention on a proportional representative basis. The Executive appoints a Secretariat that meets once a week and is headed by a General Secretary.

Local labor councils with jurisdiction over local matters are elected by all local organizations of the area in the same democratic manner. What happens if the local is controlled by one party while the General Executive is controlled by another? Representatives of Histadrut rule out serious conflicts on the assumption that in national questions the center has final jurisdiction and in local matters the local organization has jurisdiction. There is a court of honor to settle all disputes in the Histadrut. If the court of honor fails to settle matters, the question goes to the General Executive for adjudication. The General Council has other extensive powers to intervene—in practice, these interventions seem to be rare. Whether this is due to the democratic setup of the Histadrut or to the fact that one party, Mapai, has had a majority in both the national and in important local centers, is difficult to say.

The Histadrut is also the cooperative society of Israel. It has a parallel organization that conducts or supervises all of its economic activities—Chevrat Ovdim. Membership and organization of Chevrat Ovdim is almost identical with that of the Histadrut. The convention of Chevrat Ovdim is the same as that of the Histadrut. Until recently the General Executive of both organizations was also the same. Now a separate executive is elected for the Chevrat Ovdim, fifty percent of whom are also members of the Histadrut Executive, and the rest are appointed from the various companies, institutions, etc. Representation on the council is in accordance with the proportion of votes each

party has received in the elections.

The economic organizations of the Histadrut show a great variety as to form, size and principles of organization. They include the world known Rochdale type consumer cooperatives, producer cooperatives, agricultural settlements varying in degrees of cooperation from joint marketing to communal living, banks and factories organized on conventional private enterprise lines but owned by Histadrut, and last but not least the mixed companies. It is these last categories, and particularly the mixed companies that have had the most spectacular growth.

In the Histadrut affiliated cooperative settlements land is owned by the Jewish National Fund, leased to the individual farmer, but the members are not allowed to employ hired labor, and they usually buy and sell through cooperatives. These are known as Moshavim.

In addition there are the Kibutzim, about whom a great deal has been written. They are agricultural settlements where all economic activities are joint ventures. Land is leased from the Jewish National Fund to the group, not to the individual, and is cultivated in common. The harvest is divided in complete equality. In most of the Kibutzim there is communal living, eating, child rearing, etc., depending on the principles of the political group that runs the Kibutz. Recently, there has developed a new form of Kibutz, the Kibutz Shitufi which retains the economic features of a Kibutz, but has abandoned communal living. The growth and development of the Kibutz is due to the meeting of two currents. On the one hand, Zionism needed to settle people in Palestine as economically as possible, to utilize people who did not have the ability to farm on their own.

A large cooperative effort of settling many people as a single community promised the best results. A German liberal Zionist was the father of the idea. It was given flesh and blood because it practically coincided with the social aspirations of the Zionist Socialist groups. Together with the smaller initial investment of capital, went a division of labor, and a greater use of machines and fertilizer than was possible on an individual farm.

In recent years many Kibutzim have been compelled to resort to hired labor. This practice has deeply worried the leaders of the Kibutz movement since it is contrary to the fundamental principles of self-labor. A special company owned by the Union of Kibutzim, Yitzur Upituaach, now employs hired help to work at various points in the Kibutzim, and devotes all profits to further land development. In addition to their agricultural endeavors, the Kibutzim have about 300 small industrial enterprises, employing about 4000 workers. These workers have the same rights and privileges as other members of the Kibutzim.

SINCE THE ARAB-ISRAELI WAR, a new large-scale factor has entered into labor controlled agriculture. Until the war, cooperative agriculture in all its forms, had only a small share of the most profitable sector of Israeli farming: citrus culture—the raising and processing of oranges, lemons, etc. The war changed that. The government took over and the Jewish Agency ran the former Arab orange groves. The Histadrut also greatly expanded its contracting services through which it manages and cultivates private land on a contracting basis. At first the Jewish agency and the Histadrut each had its own contracting organization. The two have

since been merged and now control about 25 per cent of the citrus industry, and about 15 per cent of the canned food industry of the country.

The relative position of the Kibutzim in the "socialist" agriculture has suffered a sharp drop. The reasons being, the policy of the Mapai government which now favors the Moshavim, the reluctance of new immigrants fresh from the barracks of concentration camps to enter communal living, and to the relative growth of hired labor working in the Histadrut controlled agricultural contracting organization.

Taken together, all forms of labor agriculture control 58 per cent of cultivated land and raise about 78 per cent of the crops.

Tnuva — a cooperative marketing agency—controls 72 per cent of the marketing of all food in Israel. Cooperative canning and food processing is only at its beginning, with different Histadrut organizations entering the field.

The most important wholesale organization in Israel is Hamashbir Hamerkazi which supplies its own members, agricultural settlements, Histadrut industries, etc., and together with the consumers cooperatives has entered the field of department stores. It also has its own export company and processing plants, the foremost (Shemen), being for the production of edible oil. In addition, Hamashbir has a considerable interest in Fertilizers and Chemicals Ltd. for the development of raw materials extracted from the Dead Sea.

Co-op retail distribution, until recently limited to the villages and agricultural settlements, is now expanding into the cities as well. Nearly half a million customers, that is a third of the population were served in

1953 by cooperatives which employed 3000 workers.

In transport, the producers cooperatives control the movement of passengers and occupy an important position in the movement of freight. The government, of course, owns the railroads. Chevrat Ovdim, however, is a leading partner in the development of the merchant fleet and participates in the development of air transport. Zim, Israeli Navigation Co., Ltd. was formed jointly with the Jewish Agency in 1945 and now owns 20 cargo vessels and four passenger ships. Zim employs over 1000 workers. Chevrat Ovdim is also an important factor in the provision of port services, and in the repair of ships in port. In conjunction with El Al Israel Air Lines, the national civil aviation company in which Histadrut has minority participation, Chevrat Ovdim in 1950 formed a special internal aviation company, Arkia, with the object of opening up a network of internal air services.

In finance and banking the Histadrut has many organizations. First, there is the Workers Bank which is capitalized entirely by Histadrut, and which is the depository of the funds of the various Histadrut bodies. This bank is second only to the national bank run by the government. In addition, there are numerous credit unions, welfare funds, special mortgage companies, etc., that add to the financial resources available to the Histadrut enterprises.

Closely related to finance is insurance. The funds deposited in insurance companies are a source of capital for new and old enterprises. Hasneh, Histadrut owned insurance companies, writes 50 per cent of the regular insurance of the country. In addition, labor and group policies which are "mutuals" are also written

by affiliated Histadrut organizations. Introduced as a form of social welfare, these "mutual" policies now total more than seven times the value of all regular insurance policies.

Control of such financial means of investment partly explains the rise of the Histadrut industry. In addition, funds have been received from the United States through Ampal, an American investment company, a subsidiary of the Workers Bank organized by the Labor Zionists to recruit capital.

A major source of funds has been the government and the Jewish Agency. These funds coming from charity, foreign loans and German reparations have been used in various ways. In agriculture, the Jewish Agency directly gives the settlers land, funds and equipment. In industry, these funds are invested in partnership with Histadrut or private companies.

THE PERCENTAGE of gainfully employed people earning a living in the labor economy varies from year to year. In 1952, 236,000 people or 57 per cent of the gainfully occupied, worked for labor enterprises or for the government. Approximately 35 per cent of all workers were in labor enterprises. The percentage in the various fields varies from 16 per cent in light industry to 40 per cent in building and construction. A fair figure of the percentage of workers in all industry employed by the Histadrut is usually given as 20 per cent.

These percentages alone do not tell the whole story. Israel is not a highly industrialized country with large scale development. The industry that does exist is small and decentralized. In the fields that it operates, Histadrut companies are, relatively speaking, large concentrations. Solel Boneh, that engages in building contracting, em-

loys over 15,000 people in that one field, a large figure even for an American contracting firm. In the metal working and electrical industries there are 485 firms employing 13,000 workers. However, two subsidiaries of Solel Boneh, Vulcan and Hamat, employ about 3000 workers. This represents only 25 per cent of the metal and electrical industries, but the relative weight of these two companies is obviously much greater.

A similar pattern is present in cement where one Histadrut organization employs 900 workers, in glassware 500, in concrete pipes, 650. For Israel these are large and concentrated industries. After the British-Jewish corporation for the exploitation of the Dead Sea chemicals failed, a mixed company was set up to "mine" the Dead Sea. A mixed company with minority Histadrut participation is now in control of this basic chemical industry. When the influence that these relatively large and basic units of industry are added to the political influence of the Histadrut and then capped by the power of the Histadrut as the bargaining agent for the employees of its rival firm, one gets a glimpse of the Histadrut as a powerful factor in Israel.

HOW DID LABOR in Israel begin on the road of the ownership and control of industry? What factors aided its growth?

What gave rise to the spurt of the last decade?

Here too, we find a meeting of necessity, improvisation and ideology. The first steps were taken, to form a contracting organization, in order to provide work for members of the Histadrut.* "Building the country" was

*A secondary but very important aim was Kibush Avodah—Conquest of Labor, i.e., drive out Arab labor from the Jewish economy of Palestine.

and is the main aim of the Histadrut. How better could this be done than by entering into the actual work of farm settlements, contracting etc. Then came the depression of the 1930s. Some factories failed. Histadrut members would be unemployed, Jewish immigration would fall off. Unlike the U. S. where the Hatters' Union and the ILGWU finance the private employer to open a factory or remain in business—the Histadrut bought a controlling interest in Vulcan (1936), Phoneyca (1940)—two bankrupt factories. Did not the Histadrut stand for labor's ownership of the means of production? The action of the Histadrut with its then meager resources received the applause of all. It satisfied the workers, the Zionists, the government. It even satisfied the former owners.

That was the beginning. As the Jewish settlement in Palestine grew, the Histadrut grew in membership and means. The same forces that brought about the original step continued to favor its development, except that the bourgeoisie now grew alarmed and began to raise the cry of "Monopoly" and discrimination against the Histadrut.

But it was too late. The Histadrut now could offer real advantages over the small entrepreneur. The same advantages that large scale industry everywhere has to offer: greater efficiency, stable management, funds to take advantage of opportunities, better bargaining power, etc. Then came World War II and the Nazi extermination of the Jews. Partition, Arab-Jewish war, independence and mass immigration followed. Private capital was not forthcoming in any great amounts but public capital in form of charity, loans etc. met the gap. Who but the Histadrut with its network of organizations, institutions, trained

personnel, experience and its own supplementary capital would be able to do the job. The result was a tremendous growth of the entire economy, particularly its labor sectors.

At the current reading of the crystal, the future of Histadrut industry is a favorable one. Unless the political situation alters radically the labor economy should continue to grow. It has recently mastered the art of reinvestment of its profits. It has the efficiency, management and capital, to make it almost indispensable to a country which does not have an abundance of private capital—domestic or foreign. Israel is unlikely to have such capital as long as the present state of no war-no peace with its neighbors persists. Such a state, however, increases the supply of charitable and organizational funds that find their way to Histadrut enterprises.

The "ownership" of the labor economy is difficult to estimate as the strands of ownership twist and turn and are extremely difficult to unravel for the reader. There are corporations owned outright by the Histadrut like Solel Boneh, Vulcan. There are companies owned jointly with the government or Jewish agency or where the partner is either AMPAL or private investors. Companies where a producer co-op or a Kibutz is joint entrepreneur, where a parent company sets up a new corporation in conjunction with one of its subsidiaries. The Workers Bank, Credit Unions, etc. also are partners. The Histadrut has, however, followed a policy of taking 50 per cent of any venture it enters (with one or two exceptions). The 50 per cent includes all Histadrut affiliates and subsidiaries. The "alien" 50 per cent refers to government, private and Jewish Agency funds.

This kind of financing and ownership raises the social question: who is the *real owner and controller* of this industry. As to the present there can be little doubt. The Histadrut is in control. The labor parties have a majority in Israel. Even in a coalition with the bourgeoisie, the Mapai dominates. There is prosperity in the country, with room and need for all to expand. The conflict of interests exists, but it is not too sharp. What would happen in case of economic reverses? If the political control of the state or of the Jewish Agency fell into hostile hands? Where would the labor economy with its 50 per cent deals be? Who then would be the real social power? Histadrut members, whether Mapai or Achdut Avodah or Mapam are sure that Histadrut would remain on the top.

A great deal, however, depends on policy in this case. We have seen Mapai give up education to the state and subordinate the workers' wage policy to that of the government. We know—it has said so—it is ready to trade the labor exchanges and other social services. It is safe to assume that given a concerted attack by the Jewish bourgeoisie, the reformist labor leadership will react according to pattern. It will make far reaching concessions. However, there are things it will not do, and that is to give up completely its share of industry on which its power rests, except in case of the development of a real Israeli fascist movement. How the Israeli labor movement will react, in a future conflict with its bourgeoisie depends on the relationship of forces between reformist Zionist and militant tendencies in the working class. One thing seems clear: without political power, the entire edifice can easily be reduced to its pre-1936 position. A great deal therefore depends on

Histadrut control of or influence on the Israeli government and the Jewish Agency.

WHAT IS THE POSITION of the worker in the labor economy? Does he enjoy greater benefits? Has he a voice in the running of his industry? The position of the employed member depends upon what kind of organization he is employed in. If he is a member of a Kibutz, he shares equally with other members the products of the organization. He has full and equal rights in deciding policy. While there is also a tendency for the elective jobs of secretary and manager of the Kibutz to rotate among a relatively small number of people, they are not the sought after jobs.

Equality exists, however, only within the Kibutz with a wide variation in the wealth and income between one such cooperative and another, even within the same federation of Kibutzim (of which there are a number, organized by the political parties). There is some attempt at general equalization, but it is primarily in the form of a tax for the formation of new Kibutzim. The basic problem of inequality between Kibutzim though frequently discussed, remains unsolved.

In the producers' cooperatives, the members have, of course, full control of their activities with the theoretical exception that they cannot exploit labor. Their earnings, like that of a private partnership, are dependent on the amount of business they do. In transportation where the cooperatives have employed hired labor the Histadrut had to step in. In one instance, it forced the organization of a separate cooperative for the mechanics. In another, Histadrut took 50 per cent of the cooperative's shares and allowed it to continue hiring labor,

on the basis that the profits from hired labor will go not to an individual, but to the entire working class—the Histadrut. There is, of course, no sharing or any form of equalization between different producers cooperatives. The General Executive, however, tries to keep an eye out so that one does not get all the cream while the other starves. In some instances, producers' cooperatives have withdrawn, and turned into conventional partnerships.

In Histadrut owned companies the problem of workers democracy is ever present. For the Histadrut itself is the owner, the manager and, at the same time, the bargaining agent for the workers. The managers are supreme and have the same rights and privileges that their counterparts in capitalist corporations have in the management of their industry. Wages are not higher, but conform to the general wage standards set by the unions. Of course, they are often used to set the pattern. They sign the labor contracts first. In addition, there are usually a few more fringe benefits when one works in a Histadrut industry and to a certain extent there is a greater feeling of fraternity.

This huge (for Israel) concentration of economic wealth obviously can be a basis for the development of vested interests for the leaders either as individuals or as a group. In the U. S. we are quite familiar with those labor officials who use their position to enrich themselves. (A prime example was the case of Maj. Berry, who used his control of the Pressmen's union to acquire a \$2,000,000 playing card concern.)

Israeli labor, however, seems well protected from the danger of an individual exploiting his position for his own enrichment. One of the unique and most interesting features of the

constitution of Histadrut is that *no* person can be a member if he employs labor for hire. While an Israeli labor leader may enjoy privileges or possibly embezzle, he cannot amass a large fortune if he wants to retain his central source of power.

In addition, labor in Israel, because of its socialist ideology and the pioneering character of the country, is very sensitive to all forms of ostentatious living and is strongly in favor of austerity in personal life. When a member of the cabinet, Levnon, built a 5 room house, a scandal broke out in Israel. After much furor, he proved that he had inherited a few thousand pounds from a deceased relative and that he used the house as a study. Nevertheless, the dispute contributed to his being dropped from a reorganized cabinet. Another Mapai leader, Shapiro, had to resign from his post as Member of Parliament because, as a lawyer, he drew up the incorporation papers of one of the oil companies and instead of a fee, he took oil shares. When oil was struck, he became rich overnight. As a result, he had to give up his position.

The different labor parties are ever on the alert to ferret out corruption. Al Hamishmar declared that it uncovered a racket whereby Histadrut officials belonging to Mapai, would take control of parcels of land and in the name of pioneering, land development etc., have the Histadrut agricultural contracting firm operate it but the offending official would pocket the profits. This was not wholly proven but in cases where there was some elements of truth the matter was rectified.

The Histadrut also had a unique salary structure for its officers and employees. At first all received the same salary plus an allowance for dependents. Later a system of classifi-

cations was introduced. A small percentage of Histadrut employees remained unclassified until 1955, so that, in some cases, a messenger with, say, 10 children received more money than a manager with one or no children, despite the latter's higher scale. In 1955, all employees were put on a straight salary in one of 12 classifications. The range of pay is £300-500 a month for Histadrut professional employees and it compares to £180-200 per month average wage of manual and clerical workers in Israel.

WHILE THE LIKELIHOOD OF ISRAELI labor leaders turning into a privileged class of private capitalists is very small, there is the danger of the development of a collective privileged group of labor bureaucrats.

All life in Israel is highly partisan. The very pioneer settlements are organized, run and composed by members of the same political party. Political separation is often followed by economic and often physical separation from original village and home. Ordinary factory and agricultural jobs are distributed in the labor exchanges in proportion to political representation in the Histadrut convention. Other groups like the religious labor groups, receive their proportion according to a ratio fixed in agreement between their organization and Histadrut. The individual dissenter without a patron party would find life very difficult.

The key positions in Histadrut political parties and the economic organizations remain more or less in the hands of the same people, depending on the number of votes the Party gets. The Mapai has long been the dominant party in the Histadrut and has been open to constant charges of favoritism and discrimination. In addition, there has been a growing ten-

dency for Histadrut and Mapai officials to take government jobs in addition to their labor positions. There have been charges of favoritism also in the allocation of Histadrut funds, government funds and contracts to Mapai institutions. All these factors tend to develop and maintain the hold of one group over the Israeli labor organizations and labor enterprises.

In the discussions by the labor critics of Histadrut and Mapai, one is struck by the fact that there are few suggestions for a change in Histadrut structure. The cry is usually that Mapai policy is not good, that it is subverting the Histadrut by-laws and that all that is necessary for complete democracy in Israeli labor is the scrupulous observation of the constitution and by-laws.

That there is democracy at the center, elections, opposing slates, proportional representation, etc., can not be disputed. But is that enough? How do the workers feel in Histadrut plants? The economic journals show that the leadership is concerned with this problem. The general consensus is that the workers have been developing an attitude of indifference, that they feel no greater responsibility or sense of participation in a labor enterprise than they do in a conventional capitalist factory. Mapam and Achdut Avadot have loudly protested the undemocratic nature of the Histadrut owned companies. This writer, however, found no concrete proposal for reform. In the entire month preceding the last Histadrut election, Al Hamishmar—only once referred to the question of democracy or workers control in Labor enterprises, and that only in a general way.

At the top of each corporation, there is, of course, an advisory board to management consisting of repre-

sentatives of the control bodies of Histadrut and appointees of the unions employed. These bodies are purely advisory. They have no real voice in management nor do they directly involve the workers in choice of representatives.

With the introduction of piece and incentive work and the policy of raising production in all plants, Histadrut plants also witnessed the formation of labor-management committees. These committees, however, did not give the workers a sense of participation. In many cases workers looked upon them merely as instruments of speed-up. The producers' cooperatives have suggested to Histadrut that they convert their plants into cooperatives. One representative of the Histadrut told this writer that Vulcan will be used as an experiment and turned over to the workers. In what manner he couldn't exactly say. One factory, Homa, has been set aside for experimentation in worker participation in management. However, the majority of opinion in the leadership is violently opposed to turning Histadrut companies into producers' cooperatives, citing all the drawbacks of cooperatives, virtually accusing them of not belonging in the category of labor or socialist enterprises.

In a recent conversation this writer had with American supporters of Histadrut, in response to a question about profit sharing for the workers, I was told that the enterprises belonged to all labor and that no individual should benefit. Election of management was also repudiated by the same individuals on the ground that experience has shown that it does not get the most efficient managers. I asked whether workers in Histadrut enterprises have the right to strike. The reply was "no" and the reason given was that the workers would be

striking against themselves! I pointed out that in the early days of the Russian Workers Government the Bolsheviks permitted the right to strike. There, too, the workers were in a sense, striking against themselves. The reply was to the effect that in the case of the Histadrut, a strike can be called, theoretically, but not without the sanction of the Executive Committee. But as the Executive Committee, is the overall manager it would not sanction a strike. How about giving the trade union section complete autonomy in the question of striking? That has not been considered, as yet.

In the long run, the question of workers democracy will be decisive for the future of the economy. Without workers voluntary participation, the labor economy will not be able to surpass capitalist organization. With workers democracy, the worker will achieve new status, initiative that will contribute both to a more "human" person and to raising the level of production and material well being. The party or group which pays proper attention to this question, elaborating a program acceptable to the workers can become the spokesman of the Israeli workers. The crucial importance of this question cannot be overestimated. ALBERT FINDLEY

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A Marxist Approach to Art

The Complex Relation between Art and Society

... distinctions should always be made between the material revolution in the economic conditions of production which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the juridical, poetical, religious, aesthetic, or philosophic—in short, ideological forms—in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out.

The Preface to the
Critique of Political Economy

This is where a Marxist critical theory must begin—with a warning that art is different, that it isn't "just" an expression of society. We are dealing with a phenomenon which involves consciousness, in a particularly intricate way, and we shall understand it, not so much by assimilating it to that to which it is related, but by seeing it in its own distinct qualities. To distinguish art in this way from any exact correspondence to the dynamics of economic development does not mean that we make it independent of society. Rather, we must look for a subtle inter-action of the creativeness of man's consciousness and its social context.

Such an introduction may seem to be the simple repetition of ideas so fundamental that they are clichés. But, alas, these ideas have too often been reserved for the ceremonial occasion—a quote from a later Engels letter is produced to refute a charge of vulgar materialism and is then forgotten as soon as an actual critical problem arises. Because of this, reiteration is a necessity if the insights of Marxism are to be an instrument for understanding art.

FIRST, THE BASIC principle of a Marxist criticism must be developed in some

detail: that art stands in a *unique* relation to society.

In his famous letter to Conrad Schmidt, Engels describes the action of consciousness in the realm of ideology. He writes, "I consider the ultimate supremacy of economic development established in these spheres (those of ideology) too, but it comes to pass *within conditions imposed by the particular sphere itself*; in philosophy, for instance, through the operation of economic influences (which again *generally only act under political etc. disguises*) upon the existing philosophic material handed down by predecessors. Here economy creates nothing absolutely new (*a novo*), but it determines the way in which the existing material of thought is altered and further developed, and *that too for the most part indirectly*, for it is the political, legal, and moral reflexes *which exercise the greatest influences upon philosophy*." (My emphasis.)

This statement is fundamental to a Marxist critical theory. To begin with, it gives to consciousness—or more specifically, the history of consciousness—a weight of its own, a certain limited autonomy. Secondly, it warns that the relationship between art and a society will be subtle, devious, indirect. And finally, if we can analogize Engels' comment on philosophy to aesthetics, it grants to this area of autonomy the "greatest direct influence" upon the development of art. Marx made an even more extreme statement of the same point when he wrote, "It is well known that certain periods of the highest development of art stand *in no direct connection* with

the general development of society, or with the material basis and the skeleton of its organization."

And yet, paradoxically, it is precisely here, where Marx and Engels are most aware of the way in which art can be independent from a society, that they are basing themselves upon their most profound insight into the social nature of art. In 1844, Marx wrote, "Only through the objectively unfolding richness of the human being is the richness of subjective human sensuousness, such as a musical ear, an eye for the beauty of form, in short, senses capable of human enjoyment and which prove to be essentially human powers, developed and partly created." The growth of society, social life, is the bed-rock upon which the aesthetic builds: "The formation of the five senses is the work of the entire history of the world up to now."

In the *Political Economy*, Marx went into this point in greater detail. Greek art, he remarks, can be accounted for as a product of Greek society—but how then do we explain *our* reaction to it? Why is Jupiter still significant in the age of the lightning rod? Marx's answer is a curious one. He compares this experience to a man remembering his childhood, and locates it in a certain sense of nostalgia, a reaction to that which will never be again. But in the last resort, he is forced to posit an "eternal charm" for Greek art. In other words, the experience of art, as distinguished from an objective analysis of its causation, is not *felt* as being dependent on time and place. In this one area, man, his consciousness, is transcendent of history—this is the truly unique character of the aesthetic experience.

Thus, for Marx and Engels the role of consciousness in relation to art was

dual: in one sense, it separates art from society, granting to it a certain autonomy of development; but in a deeper sense, the source of this autonomy is, exactly, social life, the historical development of the five senses. The latter point is important to a Marxist philosophy of art, the former to a critical theory. Given all of Engels' qualifications, we can arrive at a sort of negative rule: that we cannot argue from the existence of a certain kind of society to the *necessity* for a certain artistic style or even content. We will always be faced with an empirical problem in which the economic influences, but does not determine, the aesthetic. As Arnold Hauser has remarked, "... the same style can be connected with very different social forms ... the same social system can be connected with the most various styles of art ..."

Two concrete cases should suggest the actual workings of this complicated relationship of art to society.

In *Historical Materialism*, Bukharin attempted to defend a fairly mechanistic theory of art and society, insisting that style is a social determinant. In doing this, he wrote, "With the growth of the bourgeoisie, with the battle and victory, a new style was brought forth, the best representative of which is, in French painting, David. This style was the embodiment of the bourgeois virtues of the revolutionary bourgeois." But here is Plekhanov on the same point: "The example of David shows better than anything else that French classicism at the end of the Eighteenth century was conservative ... only in *form*. Its content was entirely steeped in the most revolutionary spirit." Thus, for Plekhanov, it is possible to have a conservative form contain a revolutionary content, and to do so in a period of ... social revolution.

Plekhanov's description is more in accord with reality than Bukharin's. As Hauser points out in his *Social History of Art*, David's painting was supported before the revolution by both aristocracy and government. He also notes that bourgeois taste would seem to have been more logically impelled toward the sentimentalism of Greuze or the naturalism of Chardin. That this did not happen, he argues, was a function of the specific needs of the bourgeoisie at that time (the development of the heroic, "Roman" virtues). Thus, the complexity of the matter, Bukharin notwithstanding: an unbourgeois form made the transition from ancient regime to revolution and in doing so was transformed in content so as to become the revolutionary expression of the bourgeois spirit.

To take a second example. In his *Studies in Iconology*, Erwin Panofsky writes. "The Middle Ages were by no means blind to the visual value of classical art . . . (but) classical motifs were not used for the representation of classic themes, and conversely, classical themes were not expressed by classical motifs." And, "It was the privilege of the Renaissance proper to reintegrate the classical themes with the classical motifs." Here again, perhaps even more dramatically than in the case of David, we have the subtle role of the past in the relation of art to society. The classical consciousness persists in a distorted manner (form separated from content) in an age which was the very antithesis of the classical period. There is a reintegration in still another period in which the classical model is understood according to the needs of a non-classic age.

But does this then mean that artistic form, and even content, are completely independent of society in their development? Not at all. As Wylie

Sypher observed in his *Four Stages of Renaissance Style*, "If style is a mode of representation, yet the artist is bound to represent the world in which he lives, to which he belongs. Therefore not all kinds of style are available at any given time, since a style is modified by the artists' own vision, and his vision in turn, by the world he inhabits" (my emphasis). In other words, there are certain broad limits. The development of art and Elizabethan society did not provide a basis for the novel, this was a fundamental limitation. Yet within this broad structure, it made it quite definitely possible for Shakespeare to be something much more complicated than an expression of "the dynamic force of individuality" (Caudwell's phrase). One need only contrast Henry V with Lear to see the point.

Let me conclude this part of the discussion with an example of an excellent analysis of the massive and complex inter-relationship of art and society. The quotation is from Panofsky's *Meaning in the Visual Arts*. "In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, for instance . . . the traditional type of the Nativity with the Virgin Mary reclining in bed or on a couch was frequently replaced by a new one which shows the Virgin kneeling before the Child in adoration. From a compositional point of view this change means, roughly speaking, the substitution of a triangular scheme for a rectangular one; from an iconographical point of view, it means the introduction of a new theme to be formulated in writing by such authors as Psuedo-Bonaventure and St. Bridget. But at the same time it reveals a new emotional attitude peculiar to the latter phases of the Middle Ages. A really exhaustive interpretation of the intrinsic meaning or content might even show that the

technical procedures characteristic of a certain country, period or artist, for instance Michelangelo's preference for sculpture in stone instead of in bronze . . . are symptomatic of the same basic attitude that is discernible in all other specific qualities of his style."

We could not predict the development which Panofsky describes, even in the broad sense that we can say that where there is capitalism, there is a free wage worker. We cannot formulate a precise term, "late feudal art," simply by analyzing the social conditions of the period. But given the actual art of the time and its social context, we can see a maze of inter-relationships, we can gain a new perspective—ultimately, we can see the art better. And that is the task of criticism.

SO FAR WE HAVE BEEN discussing art as one type of ideology, whose development, like that of all ideology, differs from, and yet is related to, the development of society. But we must probe deeper. Some time ago, R. P. McKeon, the Chicago philosopher, summarized the current critical situation in *Modern Philology*. He wrote, "The basic question among present day (critical) oppositions, perhaps, is whether one discusses art adequately by discussing something else, or by discussing art, for in the former case, other oppositions turn on what precise subject other than art should be discussed and, in the latter case, of what art itself is." How does a Marxist criticism address itself to this formulation? Is it simply a "reductive" theory which discusses art as something else? Does it have a conception of "art itself?" The crucial point is how the Marxist conceives art as apart from all other ideological forms, where he locates its specific difference,

its particular quality. Once this is defined, we can return to McKeon's opposition and place the Marxist theory in relation to contemporary criticism.

Once more, let Engels introduce the subject. In a letter to Minna Kautsky, he described successful didactic literature (citing Aeschylus, Aristophanes, Dante, Cervantes, the contemporary Russian and Norwegian novel) and then went on to say, "I am by no means opposed to tendentious novels. . . . But I believe that the thesis must inhere in the situation and action, without being explicitly formulated, and that the author is under no obligation to provide the reader with the future solution to the historical conflict which he describes."

In another letter, to Margaret Harkness on Balzac, he went even further, writing, "The more the opinions of the author remain hidden, the better the work of art." Clearly, Engels is here making a sharp distinction between art and all other ideological forms. The relationship of a philosophy, or an economic analysis, to the solution of the historical conflict which produced it is an essential, if not the controlling, element in the Marxist evaluation of them. But here, the "situation and action," posed in an almost Aristotelian sense, present a reality independent of even the author's own intention and politics. We have then, at least from Engels' point of view, a unique mode of communication.

The clearest instance in which this attitude operated was, of course, Marx and Engels' admiration of Balzac. Balzac was pro-feudal, reactionary, legitimist, anti-workingclass . . . and, in their opinion, the greatest novelist of his time. To be sure, Marx and Engels had a tendency to treat him as a social document rather than as a novelist (Engels said that he

learned more about French social conditions from Balzac than anywhere else), but even then as a peculiar, special kind of social document. And this has a tremendous bearing on a Marxist critical theory.

It might be argued that just such a distinction is present whenever Marx discusses an ideology, for he sees every ideology as a truth upside down—as in a camera obscura, in Engels' phrase. But the example of Balzac goes beyond that. In the case of other ideologies this fact is tolerated only so long as it is necessary. Religion is conceived as a legitimate, even a profound, expression of man's cry of alienation only in pre-scientific times. In his own day, Marx saw it as a reactionary mystification. And yet, he also recognizes that a Greek art based on a hopelessly unscientific mythology retains its appeal—it is even a standard of excellence—in a scientific age. And Balzac is admired even though he is classically reactionary, a pro-feudalist in the era of the bourgeois revolution.

In this attitude toward Balzac and Greek art, in Engels' letters to Minna Kautsky and Margaret Harkness, there is the basis of a fundamental generalization: that art communicates in a unique way; it is, in a sense, "beyond" politics, beyond other ideologies. This is not to imply that either Marx or Engels were New Critics. They were men of their time and place, and limited by the fact: their bias was toward a realism beyond politics. That particular bias must, I think, be recognized for what it is, as a limitation. But more important, the way in which they conceived art opens up broad possibilities for a Marxist critical theory.

Christopher Caudwell realized some of those possibilities. In his essay on bourgeois aesthetics in

Further Studies in a Dying Culture, he saw that art was "not 'just' a social product," that it had its own "peculiar quality." This, he felt, derived from the fact that it dealt with affective material, that it "creates a mock world which calls into being a new affective attitude, a new emotional experience." In a talmudic sense, one cannot justify this attitude in terms of what Marx and Engels actually wrote about art. But taking their suggestion from their attitude toward Greek art and Balzac, it is consistent with their general theoretical approach.

This is not to say that a total disjunction is made between the cognitive and the affective, with science on the one side and art on the other. That is a tendency which develops out of contemporary criticism's penchant for making the dichotomy between the symbol (which refers only to itself, inwardly) and the sign (which simply designates an external referent) absolute. This attitude has deep social roots (which will be discussed in the next section), and it is on the critical high road that proceeds from Coleridge's definition of poetry in the *Biographia Litteraria*. It must not be confused with a Marxist theory, for it makes art, this affective communication, totally autonomous, it fails to perceive the delicate inter-relation of form and meaning, of art and society.

One modern critic, Elisio Vivas, has however made a statement similar to Caudwell's, and it is worth quoting. In *Creation and Discovery*, he wrote, ". . . what poetry uniquely does is to reveal a world which is self-sufficient. It does not communicate in the ordinary sense of the term. . . . But by means of the self-sufficient world (it) reveals, we are able to grasp, as the poem lingers in memory as a

redolence, the actual world in which we live." The crucial point here, as in Caudwell, is that art is saying something about the world, not so much directly, but in the way in which it changes our own perception: that we see differently because of it.

Take Balzac. At his best, he is not simply a documentor, he is an artist. Cousin Pons is a petty-bourgeois monomaniac, to be sure, but not simply that. He is also a uniquely presented human being, a tragic figure, there is something in his situation and action, a truth, which is beyond all these. Ideally, Pons sees the world for us, he changes us. Again, it must be said that this particular notion has no textual—and talmudic—justification in either Marx or Engels, yet it is, I think, a realization which can easily be contained within the framework of their general conception of art.

Now to apply this to cases. In his *Studies in European Realism*, George Lukacs wrote, ". . . which of the two, Balzac or Flaubert, was the greatest novelist, the typical classic of the 19th century? . . . The question arises whether it is the unity of the internal and external world or the separation between them which is the social basis of the greatness of the novel." To begin with, note an interesting equation: that the "greatest novelist" is the same as the author of the "typical classic." But beyond that, is Lukacs' generalization sound? If we take it as an attempt to derive artistic worth from an examination of the artists' ideology, then the Marxist must answer, no. It can be true only if it means that other things—including genius—being equal, that a certain vision of the world makes it more possible to create a masterpiece. But if it is used as a way of evaluating the actual Balzac and the actual Flaubert,

it amounts to an ideological criticism, and one which we must therefore reject.

Moreover, Lukacs attempts to hedge on Balzac—perhaps in order to pay his respects to his Stalinism. In dealing with Balzac's reactionary politics, he writes, "Only illusions motivated by the social environment depicted, i. e. illusions—often tragic illusions—which are historically necessary, do not prevent the writer from depicting social reality with objective truth." But what does this mean? If Lukacs is simply saying that Balzac's illusions are historically necessary since they develop out of his class position, then all illusions are historically necessary. If he means only illusions which are necessary for progress, then he isn't talking about Balzac.

But then, what of a Stalinist like Brecht? Or an anti-Semite like Pound? To a certain extent, their politics mar artistic value simply by being too loud and obnoxious (and this is often true of writers who have democratic politics). But at times, this does not happen. Brecht's "To Posterity" or Pound's "49th Canto" are magnificent poetry. In both cases, they are not talking about their politics, they are on a more fundamental level of the affective apprehension of reality. And when this is true, we must say, just as we do with Balzac, that their politics are irrelevant to their art. (This is not to pass judgment on the public act of awarding the Bollingen Prize to Ezra Pound.)

To return now to McKeon's opposition. A Marxist theory does not recognize "art in itself," if by that is meant the independence of art from society and from meaning, "pure art," the mysticism of art. Yet neither does it say that art is simply something else. It is a dualistic theory, granting a certain autonomy to the develop-

ment of art, especially in terms of form, but relating it, however uniquely, to society, both as an influence and as an audience to which art has meaning. In McKeon's terms, such an approach will emphasize the social, grant it a particular relevance, but it does not consider this as an exclusive mode of apprehension, i. e. it can legitimately concern itself with the formal, the psychological, and so on.

However, it must be made clear that McKeon is speaking from a position of critical pluralism. His distinction between art as something else and art in itself is not that of the New Critical disjunction between cognitive and affective, it is not a theory of pure art. Where such theories are proposed—Ransom, for instance—we can only answer as Christopher Caudwell did in *Illusion and Reality*, "If anyone wishes to remain entirely in the province of aesthetics, then he should remain either a creator or an appreciator of art works. Only in this limited field is aesthetics 'pure.' As soon as one passes to the criticism of art, it is plain that we pass outside art. . ."

Finally, the experiential nature of the aesthetic judgment must be underlined. Critical systems are either a preparation for, or a description of, the fact of the art work, but the actual judgment is existential. That the judgment may also be seen as socially (or psychologically) conditioned is true, but as an experience it escapes systemization. For a Marxist, the theoretical appreciation of this lies in Marx's insight on Greek art: the "eternal charm" of art, its (in a limited sense) a-historical character.

I would conclude this section with a brilliant summary of the duality which confronts the social critic which Lionel Trilling made in *The Liberal*

Imagination: "What is proposed is not a treatment of art as a document, as a curiously unstatistical abstract, whereby all the power of the aesthetic organization of the material is disregarded in order to reach the paraphrasable content. Rather, it is to present the content in all of its achievement, its form, values, attitudes, emotions, necessarily paraphrased, yet deriving their particular kind of affective meaning from precisely their form."

WHY SHOULD ONE BE a Marxist critic at all? If Marxism is not an exclusive method of aesthetic understanding, if it must be supplemented even by reference to the New Critics, isn't it, then, just one approach among many which one chooses out of personal taste?

In one sense, the answer is yes, a Marxist criticism is simply one approach among many, it cannot be exhaustive of the work of art and it must make use of other critical methods. But in another sense, there is a particular relevance to a Marxist critical theory today which makes it, not merely a method among other methods, but rather the ground of a fundamental synthesis. This does not follow from any abstract speculation; it is a deduction from the fact of the crisis of modern art. For the actual relation of the social and aesthetic is, today, just as complicated as it has always been, yet it has an immediacy and importance that is new. The particular relevance of Marxism in this situation is that it gives a larger unity which deepens our comprehension of all the other critical approaches.

First, turn to contemporary aesthetic reality. Here are three generalizations about it, each on a different level of analysis (form, content,

society). In them, we should see how one factor, the social, is the basis of the other two.

In a brilliant article, "Spatial Form in Modern Art," Joseph Frank sketched the broad lines of development for current artistic form. Basing himself on Lessing, he begins with a distinction between spatial form, the natural form of the plastic arts in which there is an instantaneous juxtaposition of elements as in painting, and the consecutive form usually associated with narrative literature. Frank sees all of modern art—literary as well as plastic—moving toward spatial form. In *Madame Bovary*, for instance, there is the famous scene at the County Fair. In it, three levels continually inter-relate: the voices of the crowd, the speeches on the platform, and the meeting of the lovers, Emma and Rudolphe. As a result, the scene does not unfold a sequence, its time is not the straight line of a narrative with beginning, middle and end. It is more a painting of a moment, a circle in which the various voices turn around a single instant, each completing the other. This is a case of spatial form in literature. Similar techniques can be found in Proust, Joyce, Faulkner, and so on.

Frank concludes his description of this tendency, "The objective historical imagination, on which modern man has prided himself, and which he has cultivated so carefully since the Renaissance, is transformed in these writers into the mythical imagination for which historical time does not exist—the imagination that sees the actions and events of a particular time merely as the bodying forth of eternal prototypes." The most extreme instance of this would be, of course, *Finnegans Wake*, a book which begins on the last page and ends on the first and which can be

begun in the middle.

A similar—though even broader—comment was made by Ortega y Gasset in his article, "Point of View in the Arts." For him, what Frank calls "spatial form" in modern art is the culmination of a process which has been going on in Western society ever since the Renaissance. The object (the theme), he argues, has been continuously dissolving into the subject, the thing seen has become the one who sees. Contemporary non-representationalism is a final moment in this development, the end product of a "progressive dis-realization of the world. . ."

Finally, this is the description which Ralph Fox makes of this phenomenon in *The Novel and the People*: "Man is no longer the individual will in conflict with other wills and personalities, for today all conflict must be overshadowed by the immense social conflicts shattering and transforming modern life, and so conflict also disappears from the novel, being replaced by subjective struggle, sexual intrigues or abstract discussion."

This is the basic, underlying reality of at least one of the main traditions of modern art, indeed of the dominant tradition. In form, the spatial juxtaposition of painting; in content, a transition away from the object and toward the subject; in relation to society, the function of an overwhelming crisis. From Flaubert on (he wanted to write a novel without a subject), this tendency has been pervasive. To understand it—to understand modern art in its depth—it is necessary to see its relationship to the tumultuous history of a century. The movement which can be described by such a study is every bit as massive as the one which Panofsky found in the quattrocento.

In the *Voices of Silence*, Malraux describes how this entire process has made us see the past differently. Precisely because we live in a world in transition, he believes, we are all the more sensitive to the past, for the prejudices of a stable and ordered existence are not ours. An excellent case in point is the emergence of the critical term, "mannerism," to designate a period of pessimism and introspection following upon the affirmation of the High Renaissance. Shakespeare's dark plays, *The Last Judgment*, *El Greco*, all of these are put in a new perspective because of the present. In a sense, we see these works for the first time several centuries after they were created.

But this is all part of what we could call an aesthetic crisis. One of its chief symptoms is a change in the very way in which we define art itself. From Bohemia through Mallarme's salon to Bloomsbury and the English poetic sur-realism of the Forties, the practice of art has changed the theory of art. The artist is no longer the imitator, art is no longer mimesis. This does not mean only that representationalism has been rejected in some areas—mimetic theory need not be representational. It means that art has, in theory, wrenched itself out of the world. The artist is a god, art is a creation *ex nihilo*, a gratuitous event which is too often stripped of its essential human relevance. This phenomenon must be understood, and the first thing one must do if one is going to understand is to place it in its social context.

It would be impossible to develop this social relationship in such a short space. All that can be done is to give a general indication of the kind of factors which are involved. Let me suggest only a few of them, taking most

of my material from Erich Auerbach's brilliant study, *Mimesis*. He begins by noting a separation of artist and society which occurred in the nineteenth century. "It can be safely said that, with few exceptions, the significant artists of the later nineteenth century encountered hostility, lack of comprehension or indifference on the part of the public. . . . This phenomenon was never so general and so extreme in the past." The case of this was the taste of the new bourgeois society, that middle class philistinism whose denunciation takes up so much space in the French novel from Balzac on. The result was two arts ("water-tight compartments," Malraux calls them), one for the bourgeois, one for the artist. Here is the beginning of modern art, an aristocratic art without an aristocracy.

In the twentieth century, another factor came into play. The opposition of the artist and bourgeois society was complicated by a period of gigantic social upheaval. Auerbach writes, "The widening of man's horizon, the increase of his experiences, knowledge, ideas, and possible forms of existence, which began in the sixteenth century, continued through the nineteenth at an even faster tempo—with such an acceleration since the beginning of the twentieth century that synthetic and objective attempts at interpretation are produced and demolished every instant." Consequently, "At the time of the first World War and after—in a Europe unsure of itself, overflowing with unsettled ideologies and ways of life, and pregnant with disaster—certain writers distinguished by instinct and insight find a method which dissolves reality into multiple and multi-valent reflections of consciousness."

Let these few brief quotations from Auerbach stand as an indication of

an underlying reality. They are sufficient, I think, to provide the basis for arguing the particular relevance of a Marxist critical approach today. The very intensity of our social and cultural crisis has resulted in such a proliferation of form and disintegration of content that a prior act of the historical understanding is necessary if one is to appreciate either form or content and their achieved unity. Otherwise, modern art as a whole, and the individual works within it, will simply appear as gratuitous and fragmentary, and so will our new vision of the past.

The relation of art to society is complex, dialectic, special. To determine it, one must confront the actual work of art in all of its concreteness, its individuality, and in the web of a larger existence too. Genius, say of a Picasso, has its own autonomy, it is not merely the expression of social cataclysm—but it is *also* such an expression. This is particularly true today, thus the particular relevance of a Marxist critical theory, for, as never before, all things, and art among them, are now caught in history.

MICHAEL HARRINGTON

Origins of Communism in U.S. — III

The Formation of Two Rival Communist Parties

In our previous installment we examined the political character of the communist left-wing in the Socialist Party. In this issue our discussion is continued with a review of the events leading to the organization of two rival Communist parties and a summary of the main factors responsible for the decline of American radicalism in the post-war period.—J. F.

The Left Wing Splits

The first split in the American communist movement took place before its birth; what finally emerged out of the womb of the Socialist Party were twins; similar though not identical organizations with no fraternal love lost between them.

Prior to the formal organization of the left wing, its generally accepted tactic was to consolidate and organize its forces for capturing the Socialist Party. Largely due to the insistence of the left wing the party leadership called an emergency national conven-

tion to open in Chicago on August 31, 1919. It was there that the left wing planned to make its bid for power. As we have already seen, however, the Socialist Party leadership in an effort to retain its hegemony expelled or suspended more than a third of the party's book membership. The problem then posed for the left wing was whether to continue in its efforts to capture the party at the convention which would require the seating of elected delegates from suspended and expelled sections or to ignore the SP convention and prepare a founding convention of a communist party.

At the June National Conference of the left wing this question split the party opposition in two. One-third of the 90 delegates, led by a bloc of Russian Federation and Michigan SP leaders, walked out on the conference when the majority agreed that despite expulsions and suspensions it was necessary to try to win the party for the left wing. The majority's strategy was

outlined in the *Revolutionary Age* as follows:

All state and local organizations of the Socialist Party (whether expelled or suspended) must elect their delegates to the Emergency Convention. Not to do this is to abandon the struggle in the party, to surrender to the bureaucracy.

If the Emergency Convention refused to rescind the disciplinary actions of the party leadership and seat the disputed delegates, then and only then, "all left wing delegates will secede and organize a new Communist Party." The Russian-Michigan bloc's refusal to participate in the SP convention was condemned as striking "directly at the left wing and revolutionary socialism." The majority set up a National Council as an *administrative* body to carry out the political and strategical line adopted at the Conference.

The so-called minority of the left wing, which claimed, not without some justification, to represent more individuals than the Conference majority, organized its own leading committee, the National Organization Committee (NOC). The NOC issued *The Communist* (not to be confused with the *New York Communist*), first appearing in July, 1919. It was published in Chicago and edited by Dennis E. Batt, a prominent Michigan socialist. In *The Communist* and in *Novy Mir*, the official organ of the Russian Federation, the Conference majority was roundly condemned as "centrists" and "capitulators" for its policy aimed at capturing the SP. Whatever chance did exist for the left wing as a whole to win the party was lost by the uncompromising activities of the Russian-Michigan bloc.

The alliance between the Russian-led federations and the Michigan left wingers was an unholy affair. While they both condemned the Conference

majority as centrists, the Russian federationists and the Michiganers had least in common, politically and temperamentally, of all the groups within the left wing. The Michigan left wingers, as we have seen, were opposed to the theory of mass action which was the political pride and joy of the Russians and of the left wing majority. They also had a much more modest—and accurate—appraisal of the receptivity of the American working class at the time to revolutionary agitation. The Russian Federation, on the other hand, was the most politically extreme tendency in the left wing under the delusion that it was the American counterpart of the Russian CP. These two tendencies were held together in their assaults on the left wing majority by their determination to split the Socialist Party. Once this had been accomplished and a Communist Party organized, the frail basis of their collaboration dissolved and the Michigan socialists split away from the Russian Federation-dominated CP to form the Proletarian Party.

The attacks of the Russian-Michigan bloc were not without effect. The Russians posing as the most authoritative representatives of Russian bolshevism surrounded themselves with an air of revolutionary glamor which, in a few months, was to prove irresistible to a majority of the left wing's National Council. On July 26-27 at a conference initiated by the Russian-Michigan bloc (NOC) a "compromise" was worked out with the National Council which, in effect, was a submission of the Council to the NOC. A joint declaration was issued which called for the organization of a new party on September 1, but still left the door open for participating in the Socialist Party convention. Shortly thereafter the door was closed

and all talk by this new left wing alliance of attending the convention was dropped.

This reversal of the decision of the National Left Wing at its founding conference by its National Council was politically wrong and undemocratic. The National Council was elected as an administrative body to carry out the decision of that conference to make a determined effort to win the Socialist Party for communism which it had no right to countermand.

As late as August 2, the *Revolutionary Age* ran articles advocating the position taken by the left-wing majority at its June conference. More than a week later, less than two weeks before the SP convention, this influential left-wing paper somersaulted and became a spokesman for the Russian-Michigan view. Fraina, the paper's editor, who had argued with convincing dexterity for attending the convention now denounced his earlier views as though he had never held them. When the *Revolutionary Age* capitulated to the Russian-Michigan bloc, John Reed, Benjamin Gitlow and Eadmonn MacAlpine resigned from the paper's staff on August 23, accusing Fraina of unscrupulously abandoning his views in order to ingratiate himself with the Russian Federation.

Thus the left-wing majority was reduced to a minority. But it still had a substantial number of left-wing socialists and a majority of the left wing's English-speaking supporters who still aimed at making a fight for their views at the SP convention on August 31.

Early in August the National Organizing Committee issued a call together with the National Council (in violation of the June Conference de-

cision) for the formation of a Communist Party in Chicago on September 1st—one day later and in the same city as the SP convention. The call declared that "Those who realize that the capturing of the Socialist Party as such is but an empty victory will not hesitate to respond to this call and leave the 'Right' and 'Center' to sink together with their leaders." The "Center," i.e., the left wingers who remained loyal to the plan of the June Conference to capture the SP, were in a hopeless position. They could not possibly overwhelm the right wing at the convention. But the attempt was made. Their strategy was to appear at the SP assemblage and demand of the convention that its first order of business be the question of the legality of the expulsions and suspensions which deprived the left wing of so many voting delegates. The contested left wing delegates attempted to take their seats as the convention was convened. With the aid of the police, summoned by SP leaders, the unrecognized left wing delegates were removed from their seats. Despite this, the left wing caucus decided that it would not as yet bolt the convention. A move was made by left delegates to take up the question of contested seats. The right wing made the empty gesture of offering to seat all contested delegates except those from Ohio and a number from New York whose cases would be reviewed later on by a committee headed by Jacob Panken. As this would still give the right a majority the left withdrew from the convention and met to organize the Communist Labor Party. Chicago became the site of three radical conventions—the Socialist Party, the Communist Party and the Communist Labor Party. It was the beginning of the protracted decline of the American socialist movement.

The failure of the left wing to make a unified effort to win the name and prestige and machinery of the Socialist Party was a calamity for the early Communist movement. It was typical of the hopeless sectarianism of this left wing that it could not work toward this objective intelligently and responsibly. It wasn't poor tactics or poor organizational leadership which was at fault—though both were the case. The problem was ideological. The politics of the left wing were such that its supporters could not regard the Socialist Party as anything more than a sinking vessel worthy only of being scuttled. The left wing conducted a political campaign against the SP and its leadership which often bordered on vilification. It exaggerated the failings, hesitations and misdemeanors of the party in a political manner and technique that could only be reserved for the parties of European social democracy but not for the Socialist Party of America. The Socialist Party did falter in its anti-war stand as we have shown, but it never repudiated the St. Louis resolution and never rallied workers to the armies of imperialism as did the major socialist parties in Europe. For its stand, party leaders here were hounded, persecuted and jailed by the government while leaders of European socialism were rewarded with ministerial posts for their supineness. In Germany, social democracy crushed the revolution of 1919 while in the United States the SP defended the Spartacists and welcomed the revolutionary upheavals of 1919. Despite all this, the left wing coupled the Socialist Party of America with the parties of counter-revolution and its leaders were dubbed "Noskes," "Scheidemanns" and "Kerenskys." Instead of a reasoned and forceful criticism of the leadership, the left wing, moved

by its revolutionary optimism, engaged in a frontal assault on the party which contributed to its disengagement from militants inside the Socialist Party and from the labor movement as a whole. Thousands of the best party workers were understandably repelled by the tactics of the left wing. In describing the procedures of the SP convention of 1919, for example, William Gross Lloyd, a charter member of the Communist Labor Party made some parting remarks about the SP which summed up the distorted image the left wing presented of that party. (Lloyd's remarks were inspired by the screening of delegates to the SP convention by a special committee which interviewed all delegates to weed out those from suspended and expelled sections. The recognized delegates were given a special card. The color of the card was white.) Lloyd wrote:

The card was white, historically symbolic of the work of Finland's White Guards and her bloody fields and streets, or Berlin's streets red with workers' blood spilled by our "comrades" Scheidemann, Ebert and Noske; symbolically prophetic of the part for which the Socialist Party of America has cast itself.

In the same article Lloyd referred to "'Comrade' 'Seymour Stedman Noske'" and declared that the Socialist Party would be "financed by capitalism."

The methods employed by the party leadership to secure its control at the convention were no less revolting than its conduct during the entire fight with the left wing. But nothing done before or during 1919 justified this amalgam of white cards, White Guards and the SP. In fact the resolutions adopted by the SP at this split convention mark the revolutionary high point in the life of the Socialist Party. In its Manifesto the conven-

tion "unreservedly" rejected "the policy of those Socialists who supported their belligerent capitalist governments on the plea of 'National Defense'" during the war and the party went on record with a pledge of "solidarity with the revolutionary workers of Russia." And if the party leadership was opposed to unqualified support of the Third International, the overwhelming majority of the party revealed their support of the Comintern in a referendum vote on the question of international affiliation. These were not the statements or actions of a party preparing to drown the American revolution in workers' blood. The outburst by Lloyd was more than the product of a post split-convention fever. It was in the tradition of left wing discussion of party program and party personnel for the previous six months.

The thoughtless abandon with which the left wing castigated its opponents in the party grew out of its expectation of an approaching revolution in the United States. Those in the party who did not make similar prophecies and adapt themselves accordingly were not only blind fools but against the revolution and in the camp of "Sausage Socialism."

What would have happened, we must ask ourselves, if the left wing modulated its voice? If in a unified and considered manner it took the party to task for its confusions and hesitations and directed its energies toward winning the Socialist Party to communism at its 1919 convention? The answer is speculative, of course, but not without its lessons for the future. The probability is that they could have succeeded. The left wing would have been even stronger numerically, it could have won the support of many old-time socialists, and it may have even won over sec-

tions of the moderate leadership. With a realistic program and a reasonable factional strategy its political and moral position in the organization could have been so strong that, despite expulsions and suspensions, the party might have been won by the left. Instead, the entire socialist movement was set back by the chosen course.

On August 31, 1919, there was one socialist organization (we discount the SLP); a few days later there were three. And in each of the three parties disunity reigned supreme. In the SP there remained a strong left wing which was to split away on several occasions in the next two years. In the Communist Party convention there was dissension from the start between the English-speaking members and the bulk of the Russian-led federations over what attitude to take toward its simultaneously organized rival, the Communist Labor Party. The former group, led by those members of the National Council which violated the decisions of its parent body, the Left Wing June Conference, sought unity with the "Centrists" now in the Communist Labor Party. But the Russians were prepared to go it alone and opposed unity negotiations with the CLP on an equal footing. The Russians prevailed, at first, as they were in a position to claim the leadership of 35,000 foreign language communists out of a total membership of 58,000. (Both figures are unquestionably exaggerated although the ratio between foreign and English speaking book members is probably accurate.) This convention had its political problems, too. Differences between the Michigan Communists and the majority of former SP left wingers came to the surface. Two political manifestoes were contested, with the Michigan po-

sition presented by Dennis Batt, firmly repudiated. The two most important posts in the CP went to Charles Ruthenberg (who flitted between the two communist conventions) elected National Secretary and Fraina (until a month earlier associated with those who formed the CLP), was chosen International Secretary.

The convention of the Communist Labor Party did not fare much better. It was not a homogeneous affair and its political platform presented by John Reed ran into considerable opposition, winning by a 2-1 vote. The CLP claimed approximately 20,000 members, a figure no less inflated than that of the CP. Alexander Wagenknecht was elected Executive Secretary and John Reed picked as International Secretary.

Neither Communist convention was smoothly run, although the CP conclave had much more the air of a machine organized affair. Delegates made the rounds of the three conventions unsure of their own allegiances and often without any mandate from the rank and file. One day Charles Ruthenberg was introducing a resolution at the CLP convention and several days later he was elected to the highest post in the CP! In principle, the political programs adopted by the two conventions were essentially the same. All the sectarian traits of the left wing reached their climax in both conventions' documents. There were differences between the two organizations, though, which would be obscured if we judged them only by their common errors. The CP manifesto was particularly harsh in its tone, abounding in clichés and pseudo-revolutionary "daring," while the CLP document, in principle the same, was softer in language and less addicted to jargon. They were literary differences of political importance.

The political dialect of the Communist Party, led by the Russian Language Federation, revealed a party much further removed from the American political scene. The Communist Labor Party, on the other hand, had a leadership and following which was more closely attuned to American conditions and this was reflected in the idiom of its declaration and proven in the subsequent history of both organizations.

Immediate Causes of Communist Decline

THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT in this country was cursed at birth with a "crisis in leadership." Both the CP and CLP were led by individuals only a few of whom had the necessary experience in the American working class to lead such ambitious movements; and a large number of whom seemed as much given to intrigues, maneuvers and manipulations as to socialist idealism. It was, also, a socially heterogeneous leadership and one that had not been cemented by extensive personal collaboration. Among the leaders of the CLP, for example, were John Reed, a graduate of Harvard, recently won to the cause of revolutionary socialism, a brilliant journalist and courageous idealist but not really equipped to lead a communist movement; Jim Larkin who arrived here in 1915 from Ireland as unofficial emissary of the Irish Republican movement, jailed in 1920 and deported to his native land a few years later; William Bross Lloyd, scion of a millionaire family whose revolutionary career was shortlived; Louis Boudin who never survived the CLP founding convention; Ludwig Lore, one of the most gifted early communists with long experience in the socialist movement, expelled from the communist movement six years

after its inception. The leadership of the CP was no more cohesive or durable in its formative years than the CLP. Louis Fraina, the party theorist, lasted two years in the party before he disappeared from the Communist movement with an enormous sum of Russian communist funds; Charles Ruthenberg, an "organizational man," whose reputed organizational talent could not mean much given his political line and the organizational policies pursued by the CP under his leadership; Isaac Ferguson dropped Mass Action when released from jail to take up a more sedate profession as a lawyer writing briefs instead of manifestoes; Dennis Batt and John Keracher called it quits after six months as CP leaders and left with their followers to found the Proletarian Party.

With this lack of a cohesive, continuous leadership, the communist movement operated from the outset under a serious handicap. If the leadership of the movement was unstable, it was no less true of the bulk of the rank and file. The membership of the Russian Federation in particular was not one which could resist government terror and the demoralizing fact that the European revolution was ebbing. And it could not be impervious to the internecine warfare the CP leaders from the Russian Federation waged against others in their own party, and the rivalry between the CP and CLP which had no basis in principle. The Russian Federation toward the end of 1919 claimed around 10,000 members. Even if this figure is highly exaggerated, it had a substantial membership. But just three years later the Workers Party* claimed less than 700 members in its Russian-lan-

*The Workers Party was the broader, legal organization established by the underground communist movement in 1922.

guage section. Apart from government repression, the Russian born worker communists in 1919 lacked the political education to withstand the reaction in the United States and in Europe. What was true of the Russians was also true of thousands of other left wingers who had been recently recruited to the socialist movement via the left wing of the Socialist Party. They left in droves when the promised "spontaneous" revolt of the American working class failed to materialize. It is interesting to note in this connection that the Communist Party in 1923 was composed in its majority of those foreign-language socialists who went over to the communist movement from the Socialist Party in splits subsequent to 1919. The Finnish Federation, for example, was accredited with nearly 6500 of the 12,400 members the Workers Party claimed in 1922. But the Finnish Federation, with a long history in the socialist movement, refused to leave the SP with the left wing in 1919. It was composed of more politically educated workers who had been active in the American labor movement and were, consequently, highly critical of the sectarianism of the 1919 left wing.

TOMES HAVE BEEN WRITTEN on the exceptional economic and political strength of American capitalism as the root cause for the inability of socialism to establish itself as a significant, independently organized force. As an explanation for the miniscular size of the present socialist movement this theory is beyond debate. No reasonable person could deny that under American capitalism today the effect of the relatively high living standards of the American working class has been to keep it in a politically dependent temper.

Those Marx-slayers, bourgeois and ex-radical historians, who are so fond of dwelling on the economic power of American capitalism, not only project this strength as a permanent characteristic which dooms socialism as an archaic, historically irrelevant utopian ideal and a living refutation of the Marxist concept of the class struggle, but generalize back into the past. To give the present strength of capitalism an appearance of permanence, a certain glamor and mythical power is attributed to its history designed to prove that socialism in this country was always engaged in a predetermined futile siege of the impregnable fortress of *American* capitalism. We would be the last to deny that even in the early history of the American labor movement socialists were limited, when compared to their European comrades, by the enormous rise in American productivity as a result of which the working class, not without struggling for it, was able to benefit. But this was not the fundamental social-economic reason for the decline of socialism shortly after the first war. In 1912, when the economic muscles of capitalism were bulging, new industries and new fortunes springing up throughout the nation, one out of every fifteen voters cast their ballot for the Socialist Party. And seven years later there were several hundred thousand workers in the socialist movement and in syndicalist and socialist conscious unions. But by 1921, the IWW was a declining organization, the Socialist and Communist parties reduced to large sects and the labor movement as a whole was on the defensive.

There was certainly nothing dynamic about the severe depression of 1920-22, the two years which witnessed the virtual collapse of the once proud and feared socialist movement

in this country. Workers weren't blinded to the appeals of socialism in those years because they were getting bigger slices of that famous economic "pie."

There were, in this writer's opinion, four related reasons for the decline of socialism in the decade of the twenties: government repression, the defeat of the European revolution, the rise of Stalinism and growing prosperity at home. But what was the weight and relation to one another of these factors? Did the revolution in Europe fail because of the objective strength of American capitalism? Obviously not. But what about the converse of this proposition? How was the stability of American capitalism affected by the defeat of socialism in Europe and the degeneration of the Soviet Union? The answer to this should be clear to everyone. *The ability of the American bourgeoisie to entrench itself firmly in the twenties and to cut the ground from under a socialist movement was predicated on the defeat of the European revolution.* Had socialism been victorious overseas not even Daniel Bell would have been able to write today of the dynamic genius of American capitalism. Exactly how the course of American history would have changed is impossible to determine but it is a certainty that the American movement would have grown enormously. The U. S. was the only nation to emerge victorious out of the war and this combined with the narrow triumph of European capitalism over the working class, *permitted* the American bourgeoisie with all its given advantages of geography, natural resources, labor supply, etc., to attain its national and internationally dominant position.

The correct causal sequence—socialism defeated in Europe and capitalism victorious at home—is not only

missed by most writers on the subject of American socialism, it is practically ignored. How could it be otherwise for either a crooked Gitlow or a scholarly Bell? They assign themselves the same task, performed in different ways of showing how romantic or useless an expenditure of energy it has always been to fight for socialism in the United States. And history has lessons for the present and future which they prefer to overlook. If the economic superiority of capitalism was a necessary but not sufficient cause for the defeats of socialism here, if it required the defeat of the European working class and the rise of Stalinism for American capitalism to prove itself in the twenties, then what merit is there to the theory which asserts the future stability of U. S. capitalism and the alleged failure of Marxism by way of production and income figures. America's post World War I crisis was resolved fundamentally by *European* events, its ability to pull out of the depression of the thirties was made possible by an *international* crisis—the Second World War and its political preliminaries, and the fate of American capitalism today is no less contingent on *international* developments, faced now with the impossible task of insuring a favorable world wide political and economic position.

THE AMERICAN BOURGEOISIE understood the threat to its security stemming from the European revolution. And it reacted in the only way it knew how: repression and terror.

Mass persecution of non-conformists, however, predated the Bolshevik revolution. Immediately before and during U. S. participation in the war, wholesale arrests took place and anti-radical mob violence was encouraged. Through the Espionage Act the so-

cialist press was largely put out of commission by Post Office censorship. From April 6, 1917, to November 11, 1918, there were nearly 5,000 prosecutions, with 1,500 jail sentences handed out in civil liberties cases. Five leading members of the SP were tried and convicted in February, 1918, of conspiracy to create mutiny. And in Chicago, 101 members of the IWW were found guilty of interfering with the war effort with sentences handed out up to twenty years and fines levied totaling \$2,620,000. Bill Haywood was kept in jail for almost a year before his \$25,000 bail was accepted. Debs was arrested in June, 1918, and sent to jail 10 months later.

Serious as the anti-socialist campaign was during the war it did not match the violence of the bourgeoisie immediately before, during and after the European revolution reached its crest. City and State sedition and criminal syndicalist laws were added to the federal Espionage Act as basis for arrests and convictions. And added to the local mobs and patriotic societies during the war were the activities of the American Legion and the reviving Ku Klux Klan. The weight of the intensified reaction was now heavily concentrated on the IWW and the communist movement. Benjamin Gitlow, Harry Winitsky, secretary of the N. Y. CP, James Larkin, Isaac Ferguson and Charles Ruthenberg were all convicted and jailed for their roles as Communist leaders. In 1920 the Communist movement, particularly its Communist Party wing, was virtually driven underground by the government. Deportations were added to war-time repressive techniques. In the two years following the war about 600 were deported as "anarchists." In the raids organized by Attorney General Palmer in January, 1920, thousands were

arrested with and without warrants, and Secretary of Labor Wilson, ruled the Communist Party an illegal organization.

Thus, the concrete contribution of American capitalism toward overcom-

ing socialism, and all radicalism, immediately after the first world war was not economic largesse or political democracy. It was repression.

JULIUS FALK

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Hofstadter's Dilemma: To Reform or Conform?

THE AGE OF REFORM: FROM BRYAN TO F.D.R., by Richard Hofstadter. Alfred A. Knopf. New York, 1955.

Richard Hofstadter's reputation was made by his volume *The American Political Tradition and the Men Who Made It*, which first appeared in 1948. This volume, perhaps the most brilliant study in American history to appear in recent years, consists of a series of essays on leading symbols of American eras from the Founding Fathers to Franklin Roosevelt. In this book Hofstadter clearly acknowledges his debt to Charles A. Beard. The disciple, however, surpasses the master in his ability to discern subtle shades of difference in an analysis which locates the dynamic of American history in conflicts of economic classes and material interests. Hofstadter aims his arrows at the American inability to discern that there is more to political conflict than is summed up in an image which has the Good Liberals pitted against the Bad Conservatives throughout history. He ends his essay on Franklin D. Roosevelt on a note indicating that he was more than an academic realist, that he understood the political im-

plications of his evaluation. Hofstadter wrote:

Roosevelt is bound to be the dominant figure in the mythology of any resurgent American liberalism. There are ample texts in his writings for men of good will to feed upon; but it would be fatal to rest content with his belief in personal benevolence, personal arrangements, the sufficiency of good intentions and mouth-to-mouth improvisations, without trying to achieve a more inclusive and systematic conception of what is happening in the world.

With the excellence of this earlier work in mind we have looked forward to Hofstadter's recent volume, *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F.D.R.*, only to be disappointed in the author's revision of his earlier views, including his present critical estimate of Beard. Our disappointment, it must be emphasized, is relative to Hofstadter's past achievements, and does not deny that there is positive value to his book.

When compared with such bits of confused liberalese as Louis Hartz's recent *The Liberal Tradition in America* (which Hofstadter significantly praised in a review for *The New York Times*), or much else that has come out in recent years, Hofstadter's work is a masterpiece of clarity, accuracy and theoretical insight.

Hofstadter sums up what has long

been apparent to many: Populism was not a "peasant movement" if by this we conjure up images of the German Peasant Wars, the Jacquerie, or the Russian Populists. Essentially the Populist movement was an attempt of agrarian speculators and their town allies to restore profits in the face of an unfavorable world market situation and a bursting in the 1890s of an over-expanded speculative bubble. Agricultural expansion in the United States came at precisely the same moment as the wide advance of industrial capitalism—that is, at the very time when in England and on the Continent there had been contraction in the agricultural sector of the economy. The expansion of agriculture based upon the small yeoman farmer in an era of increasing monopoly capitalism was an incongruity which produced a social movement wrapped up in a rhetoric reminiscent of a Jeffersonian and Jacksonian idealization of the yeoman farmer. With the relative decline of the population engaged in agriculture after 1900, and the creation in certain sections of a landless rural proletariat the same middle-sized and large farmers, and the merchants of the rural towns who had been the backbone of the mid-western Populist movement, became members of the conservative Farm Bureau Federation. This bureau sought and eventually received in the form of parity payments the subsidy of privilege much in the same fashion as other subsidized sectors of American capitalism. While the rhetoric of Populism was often radical, with attacks on Wall Street and the bankers, at the same time it was not anti-capitalist, seeking rather a share in capitalist privilege.

THE PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT was Populism's successor in time, if not in

program or class composition, of the movement to reform capitalism. Hofstadter's analysis of the class background of Progressivism links it to the "status revolt" of the middle class, the lawyers, doctors, professors and ministers, a class in revolt against a new capitalistic society which did not afford them the accustomed marks of status. These old middle-classes, cut off suddenly from the source of power in society, attempted to insure "reasonable" and gradual social change. In particular they placed their greatest emphasis on controlling the bigness of the corporations—and to do this they had to advocate increasing the power of the state over the economy.

Hofstadter quite perceptively observes that if the power of the state had to be built up, two things would have to follow. In the first place, the state would have to be conceived of as a neutral state "which would realize as fully as possible the preference of the middle-class public for moderation, impartiality, and 'law.'" It would be a state which would not be anti-business, not even anti-big business, but rather "neutral" toward the "special interests of society." As Hofstadter intimates, it would be a state which guaranteed that equality which Anatole France discussed, the equality in which all men are free to sleep under bridges. It would regulate monopoly, and expand credit in the interests of farmers and small businessmen.

In the second place, it would have to cope with what was then universally referred to as the "social question." If political leadership could be firmly restored to the responsible middle-classes who were neither ultra-reactionary, nor in Teddy Roosevelt's phrase, "wild radicals," they would establish certain minimal standards of

social decency, and thus fend off radical social change. Progressive leaders like Roosevelt were often furious at the plutocrats because their luxury, their arrogance, and the open, naked exercise of their power constituted a continual threat where social resentments would find expression in radical or even "socialistic programs."

Populism was wiped out when the results of the industrial revolution caught up with the agrarian sector of society. Progressivism, according to Hofstadter, was finished by its identification with participation in World War I, an identification which in the great revulsion against the war in the nineteen-twenties, worked against it.

When dealing with the New Deal, Hofstadter makes two major points missed by liberal students of the New Deal. The latter present the Roosevelt administration as the heir of American reform movements from Jackson to Wilson. Hofstadter, on the other hand, recognizes that the New Deal was unlike other reform periods because instead of coming roughly coincident with a period of prosperity and related to it, it came as a result of the most severe crisis American capitalism has known, and its dynamic was related to that crisis. In response to the crisis, the state had to enter into the operations of the economy in wholesale fashion, taking over many functions from individual capitalists.

In the second place, Hofstadter points to the fact that the 1930s marked the mass unionization of the American working-class and witnessed the rise of the CIO with a new wave of militancy characterizing the class struggle in the United States. As a result, the American working class emerged as a powerful force, and made demands which had to be met. "The demands of a large and

powerful labor movement, coupled with the interests of the unemployed, gave the later New Deal a social-democratic tinge that had never before been present in American reform movements. Hitherto concerned very largely with reforms of an essentially entrepreneurial sort and only marginally with social legislation, American political reformism was fated henceforth to take responsibility on a large scale for social security, unemployment insurance, wages and hours, and housing."

Despite these aspects of his analysis, Hofstadter's mood has changed since he wrote the *American Political Tradition*. There is a tired tone to *The Age of Reform*, and Hofstadter admits to being influenced by the "new conservatism." Liberals—and he clearly indicates that he is talking about himself—Hofstadter explains today,

find themselves far more conscious of those things that they would like to preserve rather than they are of those things that they would like to change. The immense enthusiasm that was aroused among American intellectuals by such a circumspect and sober gentleman as Adlai Stevenson in 1952 is the most outstanding evidence of this conservatism. Stevenson himself remarked during the course of his campaign that the liberals have become the true conservatives of our time. This is true not because they have some sweeping ideological commitment to conservatism (indeed, their sentiments and loyalties still lie mainly in another direction) but because they feel that we can better serve ourselves in the calculable future by holding to what we have gained and learned, while trying to find some way out of the dreadful impasse of our polarized world, than by dismantling the social achievements of the past twenty years, abandoning all that is best in American traditions, and indulging in the costly pretense of repudiating what we should not and in fact cannot repudiate.

Hofstadter apparently is being overtaken by the mood of the great ma-

jority of American intellectuals who, despite their protestations that they are happy in suburbia, nonetheless, are "alone and afraid in a world we never made." Those "independent critical intellectuals" who do not come forward with programs of their own eventually submit, by almost imperceptible steps and in an uneven fashion, to the mood of the moment, succumbing to the present rather than struggling with it.

This drive of intellectuals to conform today intrudes on much of Hofstadter's analysis of the past. Granted that Populism was a movement of agrarian businessmen and speculators who eventually became the conservatives of the Farm Bureau Federation, this does not mean that Populism did not have its genuinely radical side, did not attempt to create an alliance with the working class against monopoly capitalism. Yet, Hofstadter, although not as crude as other recent critics of Populism who transform it into a quasi-fascist Know Nothingism, tends to throw out the radical baby with the speculative bath. Like many other intellectuals he has discovered to his chagrin that the programs of the intellectuals and the reality of the masses are in a certain contradiction one with the other, that reality is not as "pure" as the images the intellectuals conjure up about it. Hofstadter, again in the preface, indicates that he was one of those liberal intellectuals, with rather well-rationalized systems of political beliefs, who tended "to expect that the masses of people, whose actions at certain moments in history coincide with some of these beliefs, will share their other convictions as a matter of logic and principle," and thus falsely sentimentalized "the folk." Reacting against this, Hofstadter is going to be the "ultra-hard," who not only will not

sentimentalize "the folk" and their political movements, but will almost completely disavow any kinship with them.

And then there is the conceit of the term "status-revolt," a term which Hofstadter has taken over from the New Sophisticates, the Sociologists, who are daily finding new terms for old concepts. America according to these savants has not had "a class struggle," but rather a "status struggle." Besides for the alliterative delights of "status struggle" there is nothing in *their* usage of the term that is superior to the term "class struggle" in the way Marxists—and not Stalinist hacks and the liberals who go to them for their image of Marxism—have always used the term. While allowing them the delights of coining a new phrase and of thinking they have discovered a new theory, it may not be merely captious to point out that Engels and Marx themselves realized that matters of social prestige were often involved in the particular forms that the class struggle takes in particular situations. Thus, Engels wrote in the preface to the English edition of *Socialism: Scientific and Utopian*, that in "England, the bourgeoisie never held undivided sway. Even the victory of 1832 left the landed aristocracy in almost exclusive possession of all the leading government offices. . . . The fact was, the English middle class of that time were, as a rule, quite uneducated upstarts, and could not help leaving to the aristocracy those superior government places where other qualifications were required than mere insular narrowness and insular conceit, seasoned to business sharpness."

The current attitude of the Sophisticated Sociologist is to concede that Marx was a perceptive guy, but nevertheless inadequate. Therefore, they

substitute new terms for Marxian ones—and usually do nothing more. And these are the people with whom Hofstadter obviously travels—and can one blame a man for adopting the language of his fellow-travelers? After all, when in Rome. . . .

And thus the more friendly tone toward the New Deal; not that one can fully accept the New Deal nor fully commit oneself to its defense. For it too shares in the sins of the flesh, as do all politics. But, still, in a sorry world it was better than nothing.

All this may be a warning to those who believe that in order to “get with reality” they have to retreat to the happy isolation of the academy. Perhaps this is possible for the scholar who concerns himself exclusively with basic research, with going through tons of primary material, in an attempt at historic reconstruction. Thus someone like C. Van Woodward can function as an academician, cut off from politics, without degenerating. But the grand-synthesizer, such as Hofstadter, who seems unwilling to do basic research is in danger of becoming the straw that can be blown by the current ideological breeze.

GEORGE RAWLINGS

A Farewell to Politics

THE TRAIL OF THE DINOSAUR,
by Arthur Koestler, Macmillan.
\$3.50.

In a recent issue of *The New York Times*, an article reported on the campaign in England for the abolition of capital punishment. And there, in the position of the movement's polemicist, was Arthur Koestler. In the preface to *The Trail of the Dinosaur*, Koestler's latest book, he announces, “This book, then, is a farewell to arms. The last essays and speeches in it that deal directly with

political questions date from 1950, and are now five years old. Since then I felt that I have said all I had to say . . . Cassandra has gone hoarse, and is due for a vocational change.”

The *Times*' dispatch would seem to suggest that Cassandra is not quite *that* hoarse. But such conjecture is hardly needed to establish the point, since the last essay in a book which Koestler describes as a farewell to politics is about . . . politics. And this in turn leads to a crucial point about Koestler, pervasive in this new collection of articles, that he is torn by a furious desire for commitment, for the Cause, and an equally furious fear of commitment. He has paid his *devoirs* to Stalinism, Zionist Revisionism, the Royal Air Force and American imperialism. Opposition to capital punishment is somewhat less grandiose, but it is part of a pattern.

As often happens in such attitudes toward Causes, there is a tremendous romantic element in Koestler which is always being shattered by reality. Thus, his criticisms against the British Labor government are subsumed under the title of his essays: “Land of Virtue and Gloom.” He notes that when the coal mines were nationalized there was little imaginative celebration of the event, and adds, “What a pageant Hitler or Mussolini would have staged to impress upon the people's memory this historic event! What a glorious ballyhoo, if it had happened in America.” (The point is not, of course, that Koestler has any sympathy for Nazism or fascism; it concerns, rather, his romanticism which is more similar to that of the Daughters of the Confederacy than to any totalitarian movement.)

The same point emerges in another essay in which Koestler discusses what he considers to be the failure of socialism. He centers it upon “the col-

lapse of the cosmopolitan *elan* in the Socialist movement.” Again, this is not to say that the shattering of international working class solidarity, its cosmopolitan *elan* if you will, is unimportant. It is to point out that Koestler requires the dramatic, the epochal, the general, that he is, in this aspect of his personality, uncomfortable when faced with the problem of drawing up an immediate program.

In this regard, the manifesto which Koestler drew up for the Congress for Cultural Freedom is illuminating. It consists of a ringing declaration against totalitarianism, much of which any socialist would accept. But two amendments were added by other members of the drafting committee. They introduced a thought which Koestler had omitted: “The defence of intellectual liberty today imposes a positive obligation: to offer new and constructive answers to the problems of our time.” And where Koestler had come out in favor of preserving freedom, they added that it must be extended. Koestler's omissions are not, I think, accidental. They flow from the romantic, epochal commitment which he regularly generates within himself, from his lack of concern with immediate program, his addition to the generality.

But this, the romantic and epochal side of his personality, does not exhaust Mr. Koestler. If he is Ashley Wilkes, the Confederate officer, he is also Rhett Butler, the blockade runner. It is in his Rhett Butler guise that he has given his support to American imperialism.

The rationale for this point of view Koestler has applied to both World War II and to the cold war. He writes, “History knows no perfect causes, no situation of white against black. Eastern totalitarianism is black; its vic-

tory would mean the end of our civilization. Western democracy is not white, but grey. To live, even to die for a perfect cause is a luxury permitted the few. In 1942 or '43 I published an article which began with the words, ‘In this war we are fighting a total lie in the name of a half truth.’ . . . Today we face a similar emergency and a similar predicament.”

It is on this basis—that of the hard-headed acceptance of grey, a grey which he so roundly criticized in Labor Britain—that Koestler supports American imperialism. It is, he finds, a holding action. And he defends the holding action in the name of *realpolitik*, sophistication, etc., that is, in the name of all the qualities which Koestler the romantic finds abhorrent. If this were simply a case of personal schizophrenia, it might simply be a personal tragedy. But it goes beyond that.

For Koestler, like many liberals and ex-socialists, has accepted pro-Americanism in the name of the lesser evil, and has thereby cut himself off from the possibility of evolving any real kind of program against what he himself calls the total evil. His position is so based on the sophisticated defense of the *status quo* that it sees no possibility for anything beyond the present. In this guise of his personality, Koestler, and those like him, have stopped thinking of alternatives, i.e., they have stopped thinking of politics. In this sense, Cassandra has indeed become hoarse.

But in his final essay in this book, Koestler's other self gives him new voice. The romantic conquers the hard-headed cynic. As a substitute for a political alternative to the stagnant struggle of American imperialism against Stalinism, Koestler invokes . . . time. He writes, “But if the deadlock lasts long enough, an unexpected mu-

tation of mass-mind may occur, the inevitable choice [between two camps] no longer appears inevitable, passion drains away, and people simply become interested in something else."

This "unexpected mutation" of the masses which is Koestler's only answer to the obvious failure of the position which he holds is linked to his hope for an unexpected mutation in man's nature allowing for a new religion. Not, to be sure, for any of the old institutionalized churches, not for dogma, not for any of the immediate programs about God which theology makes, but simply for religion. Here is the final outcome of the romantic espousal of the cause and its cynical rejection: a hopeless hope.

In this book, Koestler has said his farewell to politics even while he continues, ever so hoarsely, to talk about . . . politics. There remains, in terms of practical action, only the campaign for the abolition of capital punishment.

EDWARD HILL

Statistics and Formulas

COMMUNISM, CONFORMITY, AND CIVIL LIBERTIES by Samuel A. Stouffer. Doubleday and Co., Inc., New York 1955.

GRAND INQUEST by Telford Taylor. Simon and Schuster, New York, 1955.

Communism, Conformity and Civil Liberties, by Samuel Stouffer, is a statistical survey—financed by the Fund for the Republic—which attempts to find out the degree of tolerance in this country for unorthodox political and religious opinions.

The following figures are a sample of the attitudes revealed by some five thousand individuals and selected community leaders: 58 per cent of the cross-section and 84 per cent of the

selected community leaders would permit a socialist to talk in their town; 37 per cent of the former and 64 per cent of the latter would allow an atheist to speak. Most revealing, perhaps, was Stouffer's finding that "The number of people who said that they were worried either about the threat of Communists in the United States or about civil liberties was . . . less than 1 per cent."

One of Stouffer's conclusions is that "A new and searching study . . . is needed . . . especially to test the allegations that a climate of fear has subtly permeated the executive branch of the government, not only in the State or Defense Department, but even in agencies which are not handling classified materials. . . . Curbing excesses in the administration of security regulations *if such excesses actually occur.*" (Italics mine—A. R.) A very cautious man.

TELFORD TAYLOR, AUTHOR of *Grand Inquest*, on the other hand, *knows* that there is demoralization in the State Department. Former Ambassadors Norman Armour, Robert Woods Bliss, Joseph C. Grew, William Phillips, and G. Howland Shaw have all said so. He knows that there is demoralization among government scientists. Dr. Vannevar Bush and Dr. James Killian, President of M.I.T., have testified to it.

Taylor is concerned with Congressional Committees of the "un-American activities" which, he says, "are an immediate and major cause of the internal crisis of confidence in which the United States is presently gripped."

The book is an interesting history of legislative investigations in the United States from their origins in England to now, and an examination of their place in our legal system.

Taylor argues that only two ends may be properly pursued by a Congressional committee: gathering information for the purpose of making laws, and investigating the executive branch. The power of Congressional investigation is also limited by the Constitutional guarantee of the right of the citizen to privacy, by the pertinency of the questions to the subject under investigation, by the federal system (some powers are delegated to the states) and by other Constitutional rights of the individual which are found in the Bill of Rights and the 14th Amendment.

All of these limitations on the investigating powers of Congress are soberly discussed by Taylor with references to appropriate court decisions and official documents.

How have McCarthy and others been able to abuse their powers? Taylor argues that the popularity, in the thirties, of such investigations as the Pecora and Truman probes led to an "illusion of legislative omnipotence" bolstered also by the writings of Frankfurter and Woodrow Wilson during the "New Freedom" era.

It seems to this reviewer, however, that in the cases that Taylor cites the people whose rights the courts protected had one thing in common: their total support of the status quo. But political deviationists were treated as if they were outside the law. Despite some dissenting judicial opinion, most of them went to jail for contempt.

The author falls into an indiscriminating use of the term "the Communist conspiracy":

"But when in 1951 the constitutionality of the Smith Act came before the [Supreme] Court, the majority justices found the classic language [Holmes'—'clear and present danger' ruling] ill adapted to the issues raised by the

world wide highly organized *communist conspiracy.*"

It would seem, however, that the words of so conservative a judge as Charles Evans Hughes, in 1937, as quoted by Taylor would give pause:

Thus if the Communist party had called a public meeting in Portland to discuss the tariff, or the foreign policy of the government, or taxation, or relief, or candidacies for the office of President, members of Congress, Governor or state legislators, every speaker who assisted in the conduct of the meeting would be equally guilty with the defendant in this case, upon the charge as here defined and sustained. The list of illustrations might be indefinitely extended to every variety of meeting under the auspices of the Communist Party although held for the discussion of political issues or to adopt protests and pass resolutions of an entirely innocent and proper character."

Taylor offers a new "verbal test" to replace the "inadequate" "clear and present danger" principle. Taylor's approach is in substantial agreement with Judge Learned Hand's view that it is necessary to examine "whether the gravity of the 'evil,' discounted by its improbability, justifies such invasion of free speech as is necessary to avoid the danger." Or, as Taylor mathematically diagrams it: "gravity x $\frac{\text{probability}}{\text{improbability}}$ = necessary scope of abridgement [of civil rights]."

According to Taylor, the "gravity" is great; and as Taylor himself talks of the "world wide communist conspiracy," its probability certainly outweighs its improbability. Therefore the answer to the equation is: a whole lot of abridgement.

Taylor, like all liberals, is flexible. He realizes that one must change with the times. That is why radicals never get anywhere; they are too rigid. So he wholeheartedly endorses this new formula. If things get just a little bit worse, the formula may become even

more simplified, perhaps to something like: some abridgement=need for more and more abridgement.

JOHN W. PARRIS

Behind the Myths

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION CONSIDERED AS A SOCIAL MOVEMENT, by J. Franklin Jameson. Beacon Press. 105 pp. Ind.

A revolution usually means an attempt to tear down or overturn a government or wreck the existing institutions of a country. The American Revolution did none of these things; on the contrary, it was a war fought to *preserve* the principle of the colonial governments, it was fought to *maintain* the liberties of the colonies which George the Third had tried to take away. Americans abhor the kind of revolution which destroys and overturns, which murders, loots and burns.

This fanciful writing comes from a "Manual of Citizenship" issued by the Daughters of the American Revolution for free distribution to potential citizens. All of which led James Street in his demythizing book, "The Revolutionary War," to say:

"Those Liberty Boys dressed like Indians and throwing tea into Boston Harbor might snicker at that.

"Those revolutionists burning their neighbors' houses and barns because their neighbors were Tories might laugh out loud.

"And the ghosts hanging around the gibbets where necks were stretched surely would get a kick out of the lesson to aliens."

For, as Street points out: ". . . we revolted. Make no mistake about that. We were rebels. We overthrew a government as that government affected us and by bloodshed, by looting and burning. We set the pattern of revo-

lution that is rocking the world today."

While Jameson's valuable monograph does not quite deal with the above aspects of the Revolutionary War except in passing, but more directly on the question of confiscations, it is important to bear the above in mind, for the book takes off where the revolutionary struggle ended.

The central theses of the book is that The Revolution was not just a political struggle for power between "our" heroes and "their" villains, but a social struggle that helped to shape the post revolutionary world. In that sense, although not with exactly the same degree of consciousness, it takes its place alongside the French Revolution and as a matter of sequence, preceded it.

Jameson was one of the first to break with the old historiography which treated all the great events in American history from the point of view of immediate and transient politics, based on the hero and villain theory in which the exploits of the military assume dimensions out of all proportion to their contributions.

He looks behind the myths of the American Revolution for the source of the movement for independence, the men behind it, the objectives of the struggle and the means by which the revolutionaries achieved their objectives. Although much has been written since his book came out in 1925 (a year before the *Beards Rise of American Civilization*), it was just about the first book of its kind.

Jameson points out that while not all of the participants were fully conscious of the meaning of the struggle, there were many who were; the outstanding figures did know what they wanted and were ready to fight to the end to achieve their great aims of a

democratic revolution that embraced a vast social as well as political reform.

The outstanding figures of The Revolution, Jefferson, Madison, Hamilton, Hancock, and so on, were young men, under the age of forty, and many under thirty. "As is usually the case," writes Jameson, "the revolutionary side was more frequently espoused by young men, the conservative cause by their elders." Not only that, "But the fact remains that the Revolutionary party knew what they wanted. They had a definite program, they had boldness and resolution, while those adverse to independence were divided in their counsels, and paralyzed by the timidity which naturally cleaves to conservative minds."

And so, against what appeared to be overwhelming odds, the indifference of most of the colonies (at least one-third was Tory and another third indifferent), the frightful poverty of the Revolutionary Armies, intrigue, cowardice, bumbling errors and despair, the leaders drove forward to the end. No doubt British strategy played into the hands of The Revolutionaries, but the incessant drive of the leading figures, Sam Adams, Franklin, Jefferson, Hamilton and others, with Washington as more passive follower of the Continental Congress, prevailed.

The actual war for independence is interesting in itself. Jameson does touch on it, because he was more concerned with the aims of the Revolution and more importantly, what it brought in its wake as an aftermath.

While it is true that self-interest played a role for many of the great figures of the day, the Revolution was a plebian struggle of the vast propertyless or small property holders in an agricultural economy, for by and large it was ". . . the bulk of property

owners who belonged to the Tory Party, and it was strong also among the middle classes of the towns and among the country population." Jameson was at this point referring specifically to New York, but the same held true for all the other colonies as was borne out in the vast confiscations in every colony which followed the victory.

The democratic Revolution was not felt fully after the military struggle and the establishment of the new government. Only with the adoption of the Constitution was basic progress to be made. But the major directions were already set. These changes were to be felt in all aspects of economic and social developments, in relation to slavery, agriculture, industry, education, democratic rights, etc.

While slavery was not nearly the powerful institution it became in the South after the invention of the cotton gin, it existed in all the colonies, except Vermont. Already, in the midst of the Revolution, the colonists were laying the groundwork for its abolition. It took place in the North first. Yet, even Virginia voted down the institution.

Political franchise based on property was gradually destroyed. Education, almost non-existent before the Revolution, made its beginnings thereafter. Commercial and manufacturing advance, held in the vise of a series of Crown Acts, was freed for national development which was destined to create the greatest capitalist economy in the world

Foremost, of course, was the revolution in the land and the break-up of the great estates. It made possible a redistribution of the land and the creation of a nation of small farmers which, in that period of social development, served as a basic force in the democratic evolution of the country.

But this was done in a thoroughly revolutionary way, by the willful destruction of the old order and the confiscations carried through by the new government against all those who opposed the Revolution. It was estimated by the American Tories that they had lost lands in the value of eight million pounds, although Parliament, trying to reduce the claims of the allies, estimated it to be three million pounds sterling.

Ten years after the Declaration of Independence, "every state had abolished entails, except two, and those were two in which entails were rare. In fifteen years, every state, without exception, abolished primogeniture and in some form provided for equality of inheritance. . . ." Jameson, to bear out his thesis that the political nature of the revolution reflected its economic base, points out that while the thirteen colonial legislatures had such difficulty agreeing to the Constitution, they all acted "with one accord making precisely the same changes in their landlaws. Such uniformity must have had a common cause, and where shall we find it if we do not admit that our Revolution, however much it differed from the French Revolution spirit, yet carried in itself the seeds of a social revolution?"

Oh, yes, we Americans had a revolution. Indeed, we had two of them, for the Civil War was another revolution in the development of the Capi-

talist United States. That they were violent revolutions, political revolutions, goes without saying. But they were, above all, social revolutions.

A paradox of our times is the Daughters of the American Revolution (and the Sons, too), in their individual and collective selves, shuddering at the memory of that great historical past and their own inheritance. Since they cannot change their name, they try to change the meaning of the event itself. Small comfort to George III bones.

ALBERT GATES

IMMIGRATION AND THE UNITED STATES, *edited by Poyntz Tyler*. H. W. Wilson Co., 201 pp., \$2.00, 1956.

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