

KUTCHER TELLS HIS OWN STORY

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THE MILITANT

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The Seven-Year War on Kutcher

An Editorial

James Kutcher's heroic fight to regain his job, protect his family from eviction, and now, to keep his veteran's disability pension has become symbolic of the whole struggle for civil liberties in the U.S. As the New York Times put it, the Kutcher case has become a "cause celebre."

The unbelievably savage, relentless and malicious persecution of the legless veteran of World War II by the government, under both Democratic and Republican administrations, has shocked the conscience of millions of people into the realization that a monstrous conspiracy is afoot to impose a thought-control strait-jacket on the United States.

The attack on Kutcher's pension has provoked a wave of nation-wide indignation and people are asking: Why has the powerful federal government waged its seven-year war against James Kutcher? Is it possible that they seriously think a crippled veteran and his aged parents are a threat to their rule and their policies?

The liberals say this is "palpably absurd"; that the outrageous hounding of Kutcher is the work of "inhumane and/or stupid bureaucrats" who "do not speak for America." (N. Y. Post, Dec. 23)

This is only half true. The "inhumane" government bureaucrats don't speak for the America of the working people, they speak for the American billionaires, brass hats and thought-control cops — and it is these forces that are in power in Washington and have been for a long time.

The powers that be have proven that they do fear Kutcher. They fear him because he is a man who insists he has a right to freedom of thought and speech.

Kutcher has dared to stand up and say: "I am a member of the Socialist Workers Party and proud of it." The Socialist Workers Party was arbitrarily placed on the "subversive" list by Truman's Attorney General in 1947 without a hearing and without ever having a chance to refute the charge.

The facts show that anybody, not only Kutcher, who dares to criticize the government, question its right to drag humanity into a total atomic war, or doubt the cold-war lies of the Big Business statesmen, is smeared as an "enemy of the United States," a "subversive" and a "security risk" and submitted to systematic persecution.

But that means nothing to the witch hunters. Kutcher, they are convinced, must be silenced, intimidated, hounded and broken. Kutcher must be made an example of. Every American who dares to think and speak freely must be made to feel the cold chill of fear and remember that opposition means punishment, that jobs, homes, pensions and freedom can be taken away unless one learns to keep mouth tightly shut.

Kutcher case is fundamental. If Kutcher wins his pension and job, it means that the "subversive" fundamental prop of the witch hunt is knocked down and why the witch hunters regard the wide support he has received from the American labor and peace movement with such apprehension. They fear they lose their fight with Kutcher the witch-hunt will take an enormous setback.

For the same reason the labor movement must rally to Kutcher to a greater extent than ever before. American who opposes the transformation of the country into a colossal concentration camp ruled by a handful of police must redouble every effort to win Kutcher's case.

CP Demands Removal of VA Officials

New York Communist Party leaders wired President Eisenhower Dec. 26 strongly urging "prompt removal Veterans Administration officials responsible for revoking disability pension of legless veteran James Kutcher." The telegram also demanded the President order the payment of disability pensions of ex-G.I.s Robert Thompson and Saul Wellman, the Communist Party veterans whose pensions were revoked by the VA after their conviction under the Smith Act. The wire states that "both pensions were revoked by the Veterans Administration under the identical law used in the Kutcher case."

The telegram, signed by George Blake Charney and Simon W. Gerson, chairman and legislative chairman respectively, of the New York Communist Party, erroneously assumes that Kutcher's disability pension has been fully returned. Actually, the move to cut off Kutcher's pension is still under way. Only the immediate suspension of his pension, even before a hearing took place, was revoked after the storm of public indignation broke. The next move in the fight will take place at a hearing in Washington.

In a new case of government flouting from a man what he has earned, the Social Security Administration stopped the old-age benefit pension of William Z. Foster, chairman of the Communist Party of the U.S. It was revealed by the Dec. 21 Daily Worker. The government further demanded that Foster at once return \$1,006.50 he had already drawn. Harry Sacher, Foster's attorney will appeal the SSA's decision at once.

The SSA letter to Foster, who is 74 years old and suffering from cancer, was received on Dec. 21.

Kutcher at CIO Convention



James Kutcher, legless veteran who was fired by Truman's "loyalty" purge, has fought for seven years to regain his job, defend his family from eviction, and now, against attempts of the Veterans Administration to cut off his disability pension. He is shown above at an information and literature table at the Cleveland CIO convention in 1949.

Gov't Move to Cut Off Legless Vet's Pension Hit by Storm of Protest

Dobbs Nails "Treason" Frame-Up of VA Board

(The following statement was issued Dec. 29 by Farrell Dobbs, National Secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. — Ed.)

The Veterans Administration's "Christmas message" to James Kutcher on Dec. 15, contained a lot more than the shocking news that his disability pension was suspended. In citing the reasons for cutting off the legless veteran's only means of support, the VA disclosed the opening move of a witch-hunt frame-up the like of which has not been seen in this country — not even during the worst days of the McCarthy hysteria.

THREE FRAME-UP COUNTS

(1) P. H. Moss, Acting Chairman of the VA's Central Committee on Waivers and Forfeitures, in his letter to Kutcher (published by the N. Y. Post, Dec. 28) declared that the government was acting under Public Law No. 144, passed by the 78th Congress which says, "Any person shown by evidence satisfactory to the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs to be guilty of mutiny, treason, sabotage, or rendering assistance to an enemy of the United States or its allies shall forfeit all benefits or future benefits."

(2) Moss says, "The evidence shows that you are and have been an active member of the Socialist Workers Party since 1938; that the Socialist Workers Party has been determined to be, by duly authorized officials of the United States of America, an organization which seeks to alter the form of government . . . by unconstitutional means; that your numerous activities over the years which have been instrumental in furthering the aims and objectives of the Socialist Workers Party appear to constitute a violation of the above-cited statute, in that it also appears that you rendered aid and assistance to an enemy of the United States or of its allies by espousing and defending the Socialist Workers Party's cause and thereby giving aid and comfort to the enemy by your influence upon others in undermining public interest and cooperation and confidence in the United States Government's administration of the war effort and hampering and obstructing such effort."

(3) Moss' letter cites a number of statements Kutcher is supposed to have made. These are of the type compiled from the crude scrawlings of a faceless informer in collaboration with an official who apparently gets most of his information about socialist doctrine from the comic books: "You stated that you liked the 'red' system of government; . . . that the Government of the United States is composed of cheaters and crooks who oppress the working people. . . It is further shown that you stated that . . . they (the government) should be overthrown and killed and then get a new government."

With this concoction the government wants to strip Kutcher of the compensation it promised him for the loss of his legs in the battle of Italy during World War II.

A DAY IN COURT

Haven't the VA officials heard there is still a constitution in the United States? If Kutcher is accused of treason, shouldn't he have his day in court, where witnesses must be produced, where they can be cross-examined, where a jury can decide on the basis of evidence?

It appears that the power-drunk witch hunters have forgotten all about such procedures. Here is the way they operate:

First, the Socialist Workers Party is cited by Truman's Attorney General as "subversive." The SWP never gets a hearing despite repeated demands. Then Kutcher is fired from his job in the Newark Veterans Administration, because of his membership in the arbitrarily blacklisted organization. Then the federal housing authorities opened a campaign to evict Kutcher which they persist in to this day. Now they want to strip Kutcher of his disability pension on the trumped-up charge that his membership in the SWP proves he was "aiding the enemy."

This is the way the vicious witch-hunt circle is closed — Kutcher is to be proven a traitor without trial, without proof, or visible evidence, or open witnesses because he avows membership in an organization which was stigmatized without trial, proof, evidence or witnesses.

Doesn't this show that there is the growth of a totalitarian cancer within the structure of formal democracy in the United States? If the political opposition of the SWP to capitalist war can be equated by arbitrary official fiat to treason, then we are going down the road to the kind of government Hitler built.

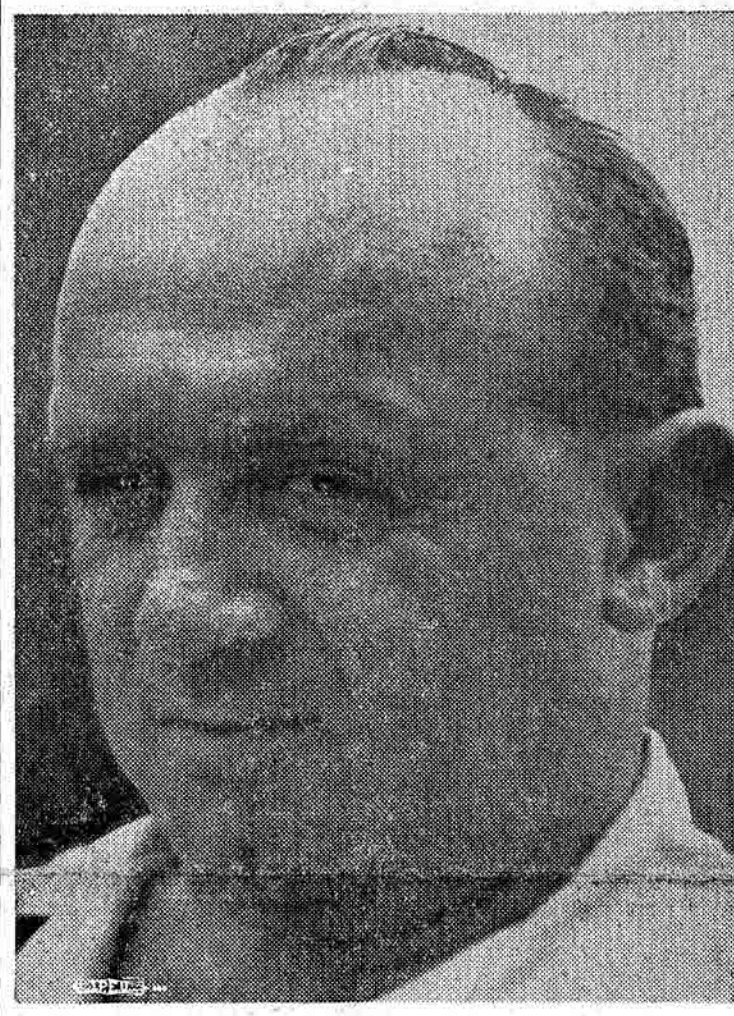
TREASON CHARGE

Americans are familiar with the charge of "treason." Only a short while ago Senator McCarthy's charge of "20 years of treason" against the Democratic Party, and against General Eisenhower, was ringing from one end of the country to the other. McCarthy never got the chance to act on his charge. But, if he had, his procedure would differ in no way from the procedure and method of the government in the Kutcher case. Only the victims would have been Democrats as well as SWP members.

If the government can get away with a test run of totalitarian practices in its despicable hounding of Kutcher, the most dangerous precedent for trial by accusation and conviction by decree will have been set.

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First His Legs, Then His Rights



JAMES KUTCHER

Westinghouse Scabs Kept Out

By Carl Goodman

DEC. 27 — The nation-wide strike of 55,000 Westinghouse workers is holding firm in its seventy-second day. The company has launched back-to-work movements, secured anti-picketing court injunctions, organized intervention by the clergy, offered bribes to strikers, and utilized Attorney General Brownell to smear the whole strike as "Communist dominated" by invoking the Humphrey - Butler - Communist Control Law against the United Electrical Workers (Ind.) — one of the two striking unions.

But the net result of the company's strikebreaking efforts is contained in the following admission of today's Wall Street Journal: "By far the biggest portion of (Westinghouse's) overall facilities are shut down."

The striking workers know what they want and why they want it. They don't want a five-year contract. They don't want a speed-up. These issues are at the core of the strike inasmuch as the Westinghouse corporation refuses to grant a wage increase or reach any other settlement without these two features.

The speed-up demand of the company is contained in a clause providing for time studies for non-incentive workers. The introduction of such a study touched off a three-day national strike last September, sparked by a 16-day strike conducted by Local 601 of the CIO-AFL International Electrical Workers Union in East Pittsburgh.

Workers interviewed by the N. Y. Times in a special Christmas-Eve roundup of the strike made it abundantly clear why they considered their sacrifices of a gay Christmas justified. George H. Merz, Jr., one of 800 members of Local 456 UE on strike in Jersey City described his personal stake in the fight as a "reasonable job without a clock watching over me."

Explaining his opposition to the five-year contract, he said, "It's a long time, and you are under an iron hand. Anything could happen. One or two words in some clause could change the whole set-up."

The UE, which Merz belongs to, was the organization cited by Attorney General Brownell before the Subversive Activities Control Board. Brownell claimed that he wanted to help UE members "clean their organization of Communist dictators." It is clear from Merz' statement that it is from dictatorship of the company that he and his fellow strikers want to be free.

"WE ARE GOING TO WIN"

Mrs. Elsie Shaw, Local 449, IUE member in Trenton, N. J., told the Times interviewer "We are going to win this strike. I'm not going to go back and work the way I did before. I have to handle 1,200 bulb parts an hour and now they want to make me handle 1,350 at less money. When my machine breaks down, and that's too often, I make nothing."

Length of contract and speed-up were the issues in the wildcat strikes in auto last June. That they are also the issue in the Westinghouse strike indicates that for mass production workers, job conditions have come to overshadow wage rates in importance.

On its side, the Westinghouse Corporation — which is complaining of "declining sales and dropping profits" according to the Dec. 24 N. Y. Times — wants to be able to drive the workers within an inch of their lives in return for the wage increase it has offered. And it is out to smash the union, if it cannot have its way.

In this show-down class battle over working conditions the entire labor movement must rally to the aid of both the embattled Westinghouse workers unions.

Public Indignation Opens Up Hearing To Newspapers

By Daniel Roberts

DEC. 29 — In its second retreat in five days in the face of public indignation, the Veterans Administration agreed yesterday to grant James Kutcher a public "loyalty" hearing tomorrow. Up to last night, the government had maintained that the hearing would have to be secret. The VA is currently trying to take away a \$329-a-month disability pension from the veteran who lost both legs in World War II. Last Saturday, the N. Y. Post exposed the government's vindictive action against Kutcher and public reaction forced the VA to reinstate his pension pending the outcome of the hearing. His pension was originally to have stopped as of Nov. 30.

Earlier yesterday Senator Estes Kefauver (D-Tenn.) demanded that Kutcher be given a public hearing on the accusation of "treason." The basis of the charge is Kutcher's openly admitted membership in the Socialist Workers Party. Although the SWP is a legal political organization whose candidates participate in U.S. elections, it has been arbitrarily cited as "subversive" by the Attorney General.

In his statement appearing in the N. Y. Post, Kefauver said: "I think Kutcher, not only as a veteran with a gallant war record, but simply as an American citizen, is entitled to a public hearing and a full opportunity to confront his accusers. He has the right to defend himself and to tell his side of the story."

In effect Kefauver supported the protest sent to the VA by James L. Rauh Jr., attorney for Kutcher, over arrangements for secret proceedings on the case.

RAUH TELEGRAM

Rauh, in his telegram of protest to the VA, after his original demand for a public hearing was refused, said: "No one should be tried under charges of treason in a star chamber proceeding and of least all one who has given so much for his country. Kutcher has nothing to hide. Unless the Veterans Administration does have something to hide or is ashamed of what it is doing in this proceeding it will welcome the press at this hearing."

"Second we insist that Kutcher be confronted by his accusers. Whoever says Kutcher has committed treason in rendering assistance to an enemy should be willing to stand up before Kutcher and tell him and the Veterans Administration in what manner Kutcher committed this crime."

Rauh also cited Article III, Section 3 of the U.S. Constitution which specifically states, "No persons shall be convicted of treason unless on the testimony of two witnesses to the same overt act or on confession in open court."

Proposals for Congressional investigation of the government's attack on James Kutcher were made during the past week by Rep. Olin E. Teague (D-Tex.) and Sen. Margaret Smith (R-Me.). Teague, chairman of the House Veterans Committee, stated on Dec. 24 that his committee would investigate the VA's actions in the Kutcher case. Teague, himself a wounded veteran of World War II, said the government would have to prove a disabled veteran was guilty of a very serious offense to warrant having his pension stopped.

WIDELY PUBLICIZED

Once the Dec. 23 N. Y. Post broke the story exposing the government's suspension of Kutcher's pension, it was immediately picked up by the press throughout the country.

(Continued on page 3)

INTERVIEW WITH LEGLESS VET

"All America Was Calling" Kutcher's House

By George Lavan

NEW YORK, Dec. 28. — Jimmy Kutcher, the legless veteran whose pension the government is now trying to take away, has been much interviewed in the past few days, but he gladly consented to answer questions for the Militant.

How does the situation about his pension look to him at this moment? "Well, it's a bit early to say. It's encouraging that they had to back down a little bit — you know the pension was immediately suspended and then a little later was restored pending the ruling of the committee on forfeitures of pensions in Washington. I say it's encouraging that public opinion seems to have made itself felt that much. But I wouldn't want to make any predictions as yet on how its going to come out."

LETTERS OF SUPPORT

What about public feeling? Has Kutcher personally noticed the interest in his case? "Oh yes. Lots of people have spoken to me on the street and called me up. The newspapers published my address and I've been receiving letters of encouragement. When I got the news that my pension had been ordered temporarily restored, I called up my family in Newark to tell them. My mother already knew. She said, 'All America has been calling here.' Then all the newspaper people that have talked to me have been very friendly."

"You know in the fight to get my job back, I got a lot of support from the unions, Negro organizations, civil liberties groups and so on. But in this fight for my pension, it seems that everybody I meet — even the most conservative people — wish me well."

A convinced socialist since the mid-1930s, Kutcher regarded the loss of both legs in combat in Italy as a personal tragedy that he could surmount. He thinks he did this fairly well, learning to walk on two artificial legs and holding down an office job in the Newark Branch of the Veterans Administration. Loss of his legs was beyond his control and he salvaged as much of a normal life as could be expected under the circumstances. Moreover, his personality did not change — he did not become embittered.

But loss of his job, loss of his pension, and the threatened eviction of his family from a Newark Housing Project, are things which he considers not beyond his control. He feels that he can do something about these blows — at least he can try to do something. That something is to fight back.

REFUSES TO QUIT PARTY

Today Jimmy Kutcher admits that he had no idea of the magnitude of the task he was taking on back in the summer of 1948 when he decided to fight against the witch hunters. "Then," he says with a rueful smile, "I thought my case would be over within a year, or two at the most. I never dreamed that almost eight years later it would still be going on. Besides, more things keep

happening. They tried to evict my mother and father from our house because my Dad couldn't sign the 'loyalty' form. It's not that he ever belonged to one of the black-listed organizations, nor my mother. Neither one of them is interested in politics.

"It's that he would have to swear that no one in the house belongs to an organization on the Attorney General's blacklist and, as you know, I have belonged to the Socialist Workers Party since 1938 — before that I belonged to the Socialist Party — and nothing anybody is going to do will make me quit my party as long as I'm convinced it's right."

"One way out would have been for my parents to kick me out of the house. That was suggested by some people. But my parents refused to do that. They decided to fight the Gwinn Amendment — that's the law making all tenants in federal housing projects sign these 'loyalty' forms or get evicted. Incidentally, I just heard that this Rep. Gwinn has been down South making speeches encouraging the white supremacists to fight the Supreme Court ruling on school desegregation. So you can see how witch-hunting and racism go hand in hand."

LONG FIGHT

Does Jimmy Kutcher ever get discouraged in the long fight he has been putting up? "I must admit I do have my low spells," Kutcher replied. Sometimes I get the feeling it will go on forever. The twelfth appeal on the case to get back my job is coming up any week now in Washington, D. C. The eviction case has been through four or five hearings, and through something of a legal victory has been won, it will probably have to go through a lot more. And now I am just beginning the fight to keep my pension.

"The thing that gets me down most is the effect it all has on my family. My mother and father are both in their seventies and not well. My father recently had a leg amputated because of his diabetes. Then they're scared most of the time."

They were scared when I lost my job and it was in the newspapers. By now they've become convinced I'll never get a job again. They are scared by the attempt to kick us out of the housing project. Not only because it's low rent, but because at their age the idea of moving seems like the end of the world.

"Then when my pension was suspended they were afraid about how I'd manage to live. Worse than that, they imagine all sorts of terrible things. For example, they live on a social security pension. They think that maybe that will be taken away from them because their son is 'subversive.' You know they've read



"Somebody has to stand up sometime and call a halt to these persecutions. If, by my stand, I can save any veteran or government employee from government persecution in the future, I will consider my fight worth while." — James Kutcher, at a press conference in August, 1948.

about these guilt-by-family-association cases. My mother gets almost hysterical sometimes and says the government will put me in prison yet for my ideas."

ARE PENSIONS CHARITY?

How do Kutcher and other disabled veterans feel about pensions? Are they a form of government charity to be granted and taken away at will?

"No I never regarded it as charity — I think that's a wrong idea of it — and I don't think any other disabled vets do. I remember when I was in Walter Reed Hospital sometimes the fellows would talk about it and also several times army officers spoke to us of the philosophy behind the pension system. I remember one major saying: 'You lost your legs in the government service and the government is trying to make up for it the best that it can for the rest of your life. We know we can't really repay you for the loss that you have sus-

tained but the government will do the best it can to make up for it.' Of course, I can't remember what he said word for word, but that's pretty close to it."

"Then the fellows used to say that it wasn't charity, the government simply recognized that because of your injury you couldn't compete for jobs as well as workers who weren't disabled. Besides living is more expensive in a lot of ways when you're disabled. So the pension is sort of a financial bond that the government gives you to make up for the damage that happened to you while in government service."

"Of course, there are some disabilities that disappear after a while. The pension is reduced or taken away. That's fair and I never heard anyone say otherwise. After all the pension is just an attempt by the government to compensate for the handicap the veteran suffered and also to make sure the vet doesn't become a drain on his family. That's one

thing the fellows always used to say — 'No matter how bad off you are personally, at least you won't be a financial burden on any one.'"

COMMUNIST PARTY VETS

Did Kutcher know that the government had already taken away the pensions of two disabled veterans who belonged to the Communist Party?

"I didn't know that till just the other day when I read about it in Murray Kempton's article about my case. I'd like to say I think it's just as unfair in their cases as it is in mine. I'm against the whole witch hunt and the persecution in any way of the Communist Party people for their ideas, even though you know how strongly I oppose their ideas."

"But I think taking away pensions goes even beyond the witch hunt. When a man gets badly injured in the army, there aren't any ifs, ands or buts about it. He's disabled. If that disability continues he can't compete or get along as well in life as other people. Pensions should be granted — and I always thought they had been — without any ifs, ands or buts. They should be above politics because the disability is above politics."

"It's the same with old age pensions. Old age is a sort of disability as far as earning a living is concerned. I think it is heartless to take away old people's pensions as a form of political persecution."

PENSION FIGHT

What was Kutcher's first reaction when he got the official letter telling him his pension was to be stopped? "Well, I felt pretty bad. Sort of all hollow in my stomach. One of the newspapers says that one of my first reactions was to ask a friend bitterly whether the government would take my legs back, too. That's not true. I asked the question, but I was serious. I wasn't being bitter. You know the letter says all benefits. That's not just the pension, but everything. Now my legs were given to me by the government and I think they're still government property. If so, they could take them back from me. I don't know if you realize how complicated and expensive artificial legs are. It takes months to get them fitted."

"Besides, all benefits would include hospitalization which I get free through the VA up to now. A few years ago I had to have about an inch and a half trimmed off one of my stumps. If I lose all benefits then I couldn't get such hospitalization if I needed it. Anyhow my first reaction about the letter wasn't just about losing the pension. I was most afraid about my artificial legs. Some of my friends have told me that my reaction was psychological and that no one will take them away — because even the witch hunters wouldn't demand that and besides it would be bad publicity for them. Whatever the reason, I hope that's so."

"Also I hope that I won't lose

any benefits at all. Of course, this is largely selfish on my part. I want to keep them. But also I think that in a way my case helps protect all disabled veterans. Or at least any of those who at present hold minority viewpoints on politics or other subjects. And even those who don't now, but someday might."

"I think that if I win this fight it will help establish the principle that disability pensions are above politics. Who knows, if McCarthy or someone like him should ever come to power in the U.S., they might make it a rule that New Deal Democrats were 'subversives.' Then vets who were guilty of such views might have their pensions endangered."

"I DECIDED TO FIGHT"

"You know when I started this fight back in 1948, I had a choice. I didn't have to fight. I could have just quietly resigned before the 30 days they gave me to answer were up. Then there would have been no stigma about my being fired for 'disloyalty.' I decided to fight. I decided it that way because I wanted the job. It was the first one I had since I got out of the army and was happy in it. Before that I had come to feel useless — nothing to do — trying to kill time. I was getting like a vegetable. When I saw I could do a useful job, that it wasn't made work, that I was useful to myself and the world, I began to feel for the first time since the amputations like a normal person again."

"So I wanted to fight for the job I had and which I had shown I could do. I also saw it was my duty to fight against the witch hunt. If there's anything I believe about politics it's freedom. I saw the whole witch hunt was aimed at American freedom. So the fight for my job and my duty to fight to defend civil liberties coincided. My case, you know, is unique in that I never denied membership in the Socialist Workers Party, but I said the whole 'loyalty' program was unconstitutional because my party and all the other organizations had been arbitrarily blacklisted without a hearing or anything."

"Some people have said I was just asking for trouble when I challenged the witch hunt. That I'll just get in deeper and deeper. That because I keep up the fight the government keeps finding new actions to take against me and new charges. I don't know if there's any vengeance in the whole business or whether it's just that the government machinery impersonally just keeps on cranking out new penalties. In any case even though I sometimes get discouraged, if I had to make the decision again, I'd do the same thing — decide to fight."

PLANS FOR FUTURE

What are Kutcher's plans for the immediate future? "Well, that isn't so much up to me as up to the government. In a few days I have to appear before the Committee on Forfeitures of Pensions in Washington, D. C. and I

"The Gov't vs. James Kutcher"

(New York Post Editorial, Dec. 23, 1955)

The U.S. government has resumed its war against James Kutcher. We have no doubt that Kutcher, who lost both his legs fighting for the U.S. government in Italy 12 years ago, will survive the newest assault. But millions of Americans will feel a sense of shame and apprehension about the condition of a government which can move to deprive this man of his disability pension. For details of the gruesome efforts, see Murray Kempton's exclusive story on Page 4.

It is hard to believe that the Veterans Administration will be able to sustain its decision once the news gets around.

The inhumane and/or stupid bureaucrats who handed down this verdict do not speak for America; surely not one American in ten thousand would agree that a man who had lost two legs in his country's service should be denied a disability pension, no matter how unorthodox or inflammatory his ideas may be. Yet that is exactly what has happened in this case.

We trust it is unnecessary to argue the legal or technical merits of the matter. If VA officials conscientiously believed that Kutcher could not lawfully receive his pension, they could have come out screaming for a change in the law — and we are certain they would have won the argument. They didn't.

Instead they drafted a bill of particulars which included the solemn charge that Kutcher has suggested in a public place "that the Government of the United States is composed of people who are cheaters and crooks who oppress the working people."

A government which robs a veteran of his disability pension for saying such things invites even more intemperate rhetoric. This is not the first time the government has rewarded Kutcher with treatment somewhat less generous than the Purple Heart he received for service in the battles of Italy. In 1948 — in the time of Harry Truman — the Veterans Administration Loyalty Board dismissed him from his job in that organization; his fight for reinstatement is still pending in the courts.

But the attempt to take away his disability pension even more violently caricatures the madness.

At the very least the government would seem obliged to return his legs before cutting off the \$70-a-week bounty he has received in token recognition of his loss.

The facts about Kutcher's politics are plain and uncontroverted. He is a member of the Socialist Workers Party — a tiny radical sect devoted to the doctrines of Leon Trotsky and, therefore, regarded by the Communists as a major menace to the true Communist faith. The notion that he and his associates constitute anything resembling a clear and present danger to the republic is a palpable absurdity.

But we must frankly admit that we do not believe this is the vital issue. We would oppose what the VA has done if Kutcher were a Communist or any other form of pro-Russian man. We oppose what it has done to Communists like Robert Thompson and Saul Wellman who, no matter how much we loathe their present politics, earned their disability pensions serving in the United States Army.

No government and no Administration has the right to rewrite the history of a war, and to claim retroactively that men who served us well must be denied the repayment of a national debt because we do not like what they are doing now.

As Kutcher has said, the fact that he lost his legs is not the great point of the debate. The point is that he has lost his rights. But because he lost his legs his case dramatizes finally and beyond dispute the cruelties and injustices of the security program.

Surely the Kutcher decision must be reversed. Beyond that, the country has a right to meet the men who made the decision, and to ask why the fate of the nation's veterans is in their hands.

don't know what will happen after that. Any week now the case to get my job back will be coming up in court.

"I've been trying to learn a trade. It's been tough trying to get a job since I was fired from the VA in Newark. There are only certain kinds of jobs I can do. Sitting down jobs. Then I have no special skill."

"Also I've been branded a security risk by the government and that makes almost three strikes against you when you're job hunting. What I've been doing is going to a printing trade school where I learn proof reading and all-around work of a sitting-down nature. I hope when I've finished the courses I can get a job in that line."

Does the government pay for those courses? "No, I've been paying for that myself, so I

guess they can't stop me from finishing that."

How does Kutcher feel about the coming hearing? "Well I'm glad and I'm a bit nervous."

How is that? "Well I'm glad that it's so soon. I told you my job case has been dragging on for eight years now. I figure that with a fast start on the pension case it may not drag on so long. I'm nervous about getting down there and having all sorts of questions fired at me. You know I was never on the stand in court or anything in my life until my case started in 1948. Since then I sometimes feel that I'm expected to be a walking encyclopedia to try to answer all the questions fired at me. I was never a good debater and it's hard to keep your words from being twisted around when you're under cross examination."

Rauh Blasts "Unfounded Charge"

[The following are excerpts from the letter of protest sent to the Central Committee on Waivers and Forfeiture of the Veterans Administration, Dec. 22, by Joseph L. Rauh Jr. and John Silard, attorneys for James Kutcher. — Ed.]

Mr. James Kutcher is a totally-disabled war veteran who lost both his legs in battle fighting for the United States at San Pietro in 1943. In a letter dated December 12, 1955, you propose to deprive Mr. Kutcher of his veteran's pension and thus leave him without any means of livelihood or support for himself or his aged parents, all because he has made public speeches critical of the United States government and because he actively supports the Socialist Workers Party. . . . You state that you propose to take your action under Section 4, Public Law 144, 78th Congress, a 1953 statute which provides for forfeiture of veteran's benefits by persons guilty of "mutiny, treason, sabotage or rendering assistance to an enemy of the United States." Pending your determination and before any hearing, Mr. Kutcher's pension payments have been stopped.

1. Punishment without trial.

We have represented persons appearing before the McCarthy committee, we have defended persons, including Mr. Kutcher, before loyalty and security boards, but we never thought we would be forced to defend a treason charge against a legless veteran before an agency set up to protect Veterans' rights.

You state that Mr. Kutcher "appears" to be guilty of giving aid and comfort to the enemy. If he has committed this highest crime against the United States, and any school child who reads your charges against him would

laugh at the thought that these acts constitute "aid to the enemy," then the Constitution gives Mr. Kutcher a right to a criminal trial by jury with its traditional safeguards. Treason is the only crime specifically defined in the Constitution, but apparently any citizen who has been crippled in combat fighting for his country, may be found guilty of "treason" by officials of the Veterans Administration without trial. You have suspended Mr. Kutcher's pension without any hearing of any type and you propose that he should come and present evidence to you that he is innocent, although apparently you have already decided the question without a hearing for you state that "it appears" that Mr. Kutcher has violated the law.

2. Charges totally disregard First Amendment rights.

You are also apparently unaware that the First Amendment protects freedom of speech, association and petition. You say that by openly espousing and defending the Socialist Workers Party cause he "gave aid and comfort to the enemy by undermining public interest and cooperation and confidence in the United States Government's administration of the war effort." There is absolutely no indication in your charges against Mr. Kutcher that his support of the Socialist Workers Party gave aid and comfort to any enemy.

If criticism of government during the Korean war in your opinion is "giving aid and comfort to the enemy" every major Republican leader in this country who was active in the 1952 election campaign is equally guilty. On July 5th, 1950 Senator Taft said our government "invited the attack which has been made" by its failure to arm South Korea (Chicago Daily

Tribune, July 6, 1950) and continually referred to the war thereafter as "Truman's war" (Christian Science Monitor February 12th, 1952); Governor Dewey blamed our own government in the Korean war stating that the administration had neglected to train South Korean troops who could have manned the battle lines instead of American soldiers (Washington Post, October 22, 1952). General Eisenhower stated in a speech in Cincinnati on September 22, 1952:

"What I deplore in these cases of Berlin and Korea is this: The incompetency of political leaders which made military action necessary. . . . Our servicemen were summoned to snatch military victory from defeat. Democracies cannot afford the luxury of assigning armies of soldiers to go around 'picking up' after their statesmen." (New York Times, September 23, 1952).

The troops that read these statements had their confidence undermined far more directly and dangerously than if by some chance they had heard Mr. Kutcher say, as you claim he said, "that the Government of the United States is composed of people who are cheaters and crooks, who oppress the working people."

3. Meaningless charges also untrue.

You state that Mr. Kutcher made certain quoted public statements. These garbled and false quotations refer to "overthrow" of the Government. Mr. Kutcher testified at length under oath before a Veterans Administration Loyalty Board that he was opposed to force or violence of any kind and that after being crippled in the war he thought that people should get on with each other without the use of

force and violence. Your charges neglect the fact that the listing of the Socialist Workers Party, which listing has no relevance in any case in these proceedings, was accomplished, as the Supreme Court has held, in violation of due process of law and is a nullity without force or effect.

4. Accusers guilty by own standards.

Even if your charges were true they couldn't possibly amount to aid to the enemy. The United States is not at war. And if they did amount to aid to the enemy that is up to a jury of 12 American citizens to determine after a formal trial. It cannot be determined without trial, by administrative officials acting on hearsay assertions by undisclosed informants. . . .

In view of the foregoing, it is demanded:

1. That you immediately dismiss the unfounded charge against Mr. Kutcher of "rendering assistance to an enemy of the United States."

2. That you immediately direct resumption of his pension payments which, on the basis of these meaningless and unfounded allegations, were held up without any opportunity for hearing.

3. That if you do not immediately dismiss the charges and revoke the suspension, you give Mr. Kutcher a hearing at the earliest possible moment.

4. That at such hearing you produce any witness or witnesses upon whose testimony the Government intends to rely before the Veterans Administration's Committee on Waivers and Forfeiture.

This letter will serve as notice that we are attorneys for Mr. Kutcher in this matter. Formal power of attorney will be filed prior to hearing.

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1. Review of 1955 -- The Cold War

In 1955, U.S. imperialism continued to lose the cold war.

Threats hurled against the Chinese government by the U.S. State Department during the Formosa Straits crisis early in the year were the last echo of the particular attempt to crush the Chinese revolution that began with the Korean "police action" in 1950. The Geneva conference last summer registered a stalemate between U.S. imperialism and the Soviet bloc. This was the substance of the "Geneva spirit."

President Eisenhower's peace protestations acknowledged in effect that the plans of the U.S. government to launch World War III had suffered indefinite delay. These plans envisage overthrow of the socialized property relations in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, China, North Korea and North Indochina.

The Geneva conference of foreign ministers in October showed that building military alliances designed for war against the Soviet bloc was still at the core of Wall Street's foreign policy. Under those circumstances, no concrete agreement could

be reached between imperialism and the Kremlin.

Meanwhile, throughout 1955, the national independence revolution continued its rise in Asia and North Africa. Last April's conference of Asian and African nations at Bandung, the victories scored by the Arab masses in North Africa against French imperialism, the Egyptian-Czechoslovak arms deal and the struggle waged in the Middle East against the U.S. sponsored Baghdad pact, the huge welcome given by the Asian masses to Bulganin and Khrushchev in the course of their visit to South Asia — all these demonstrated the relentless will of the colonial masses to tear themselves free from imperialist slavery.

Infuriated by the new challenge to Wall Street's designs to rule the world, Secretary of State Dulles declared at the NATO conference in December that the cold war was on again. Thus the year wound up with a sharply defined line-up emerging that ranged U.S., French and British imperialism on one side and the Soviet bloc and Asian and African nations on the other.

2. The Witch Hunt

The witch hunt came under increasing attack in 1955 as the Eisenhower Administration slowed down the tempo of Wall Street's drive to war. After McCarthy, the witch-hunter-in-chief, had been placed on the shelf, several prominent Big Business spokesmen such as the N. Y. Times editors and Harry Cain, member of the Subversive Activities Control Board, denounced "excesses" of the witch hunt. The Administration was forced to retreat in a few of these "blunders" as in the Ladejinsky and Landy cases. The Federal courts handed down a number of rulings favorable to witch-hunt victims during the year.

Liberals and sections of the labor officialdom rallied behind the right of witnesses before witch-hunting committees to invoke the Fifth Amendment. And for the first time since the witch hunt began a number of prominent liberals — including Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt — or-

ganized to uphold civil liberties for the Communist Party.

However, the Big Business government's witch hunters continued their attacks on the political liberties of the American people as a corollary to continuing the cold war. The basic measures of the thought-control program — the "subversive" list, the Smith Act, the McCarran-Walter Immigration law and the Humphrey-Butler law (invoked in December against the Westinghouse strike) — were all used throughout the year to create a fresh list of victims of political persecution.

The nation-wide storm of indignation that broke over the Administration because of its move at Christmas time to take away James Kutcher's disability pension, revealed a growing line-up of Republican and Democratic witch-hunters on one side and defenders of civil liberties on the other.

3. Civil Rights

In 1955, the Negro people squared off against the white supremacists in the beginning of a show-down battle over the system of Jim Crow. The growing pressure of the Negro population for equality plus the propaganda needs of the U.S. State Department in colonial lands, has forced U.S. Big Business in past years to grant significant concessions to the Negro minority.

This was climaxed in 1954 with the Supreme ruling outlawing segregation in public schools. Although the high court reaffirmed this principle last May and extended its application in subsequent rulings to parks, playgrounds and other public recreation facilities, it refused to set a time limit within which the Southern states would have to comply with the orders.

Emboldened by the failure of the courts to enforce its decisions and the sell-out of civil rights legislation by the liberal Democrats when the 84th Congress convened in January, the white supremacists launched a reign of terror against the Negro population throughout the South.

With the lynching of 14-year-old Emmett Till in Mississippi last September and the whitewash of his murderers, mass demon-

strations swept the Negro communities in Northern, Western and a number of Southern cities. The Negro population was determined that the legal principle they had won in the courts should be put in practice.

In a second round of Till protest meetings, union bodies in many cities associated themselves with local branches of the NAACP and other Negro organizations. On the national plane, labor organizations and the NAACP called a conference on civil rights to take place in January in Washington.

Prominent spokesmen in the Negro community called for a March on Washington and demanded that the Federal Government send troops to Mississippi to enforce the law against white supremacist terror. This proposal and demand placed both Republican and Democratic parties on the spot, since both function in alliance with the Southern Democrats.

Though U.S. Big Business is hell-bent to preserve Jim Crow in order to maintain its exploitation of the working class as a whole, it was confronted at the end of 1955 with a growing determination by Negroes and whites to put this hated system to an end.

4. The American Labor Movement

Throughout the year, the AFL and CIO bureaucracy continued to serve the U.S. State Department's imperialist aims. Big Business, in view of the continued economic prosperity, agreed to renew some major union contracts and to grant a few improvements such as supplementary unemployment benefits. Thus class collaboration continued to be the dominant aspect of labor-capital relations in 1955.

However, by their wildcat strikes in auto last summer, at the time of the GM and Ford negotiations, the mass production factory workers indicated their growing resentment against the intolerable speed-up and the steady worsening of job conditions. They made known in these strikes their dissatisfaction with the leadership's failure to fight for solution of their grievances.

"Class peace" was also ruptured in the South where telephone, railroad, bus, hotel, sugar and other workers waged extremely militant strikes last Spring. For their part, a number of employers decided to get tough with labor — notably in the Perfect Circle union-busting operation, in which the company had the aid of the Indiana National Guard, and the nationwide strike of 55,000 Westinghouse work-

ers, in which the Justice Department intervened on the side of the corporation.

The AFL-CIO merger dominated the labor scene in 1955. Its immediate effect was to strengthen the labor bureaucracy's policy of coalition with the Democratic Party. Reuther and Meany made it crystal clear that they refused to use the pooled might of the united organization to launch a labor party.

However, in the consciousness of the country the AFL-CIO emerged from the fusion as a potential labor party, strong enough to win a majority of the nation and take power as soon as it strikes out on an independent political road.

The inevitable failure of a Democratic Party-Labor coalition to solve any of the working people's fundamental problems will convince the union militants that the united labor movement must take this road.

The deteriorating world position of U.S. imperialism and the sharpening line-ups at home and abroad foreshadow the outbreak of a devastating social crisis which will put in question the rule of imperialism in general and American Big Business in particular. That crisis will pose the question: which class is to rule the world — the working class or the capitalist class.

SWP Told the Truth About Korean War

By Harry Ring

In its current attack on James Kutcher, the Veteran's Administration charges that by "espousing and defending the Socialist Workers Party cause" he "rendered aid and assistance to an enemy of the United States." This fantastic accusation is linked to the charge that the SWP opposed the "U.S. Government's war effort."

Thus, according to these witch hunters, political opposition, by constitutionally guaranteed means, to any war conducted by the U.S. Government means to be an enemy of the United States. The administration in Washington is above criticism or opposition — that is what the power-drunk witch-hunters are saying in effect. Oppose us and you are an enemy of the country, for we are the law. Hitler could not have proclaimed the autocratic principle any better.

As a matter of fact, the Socialist Workers Party is proud of its record of opposition to imperialism wars waged by the Big Business-dominated U. S. government. By this opposition, the SWP defended the interests of the great majority of the American people, the working people, against the real enemy of the country — namely, the small clique of billionaires who have a stranglehold on the nation's economic life and manipulate its government for the billionaire profit makers' own selfish ends.

KOREAN WAR

The SWP's opposition to the Korean War — which is a matter of public record and from which we do not wish to erase a single line — is a case in point.

A month after Truman plunged the American people into the Korean war, James P. Cannon, the founder of the Socialist Workers Party, addressed an open letter to the President and members of Congress. Published in The Militant of July 31, 1950, the letter declared:

"I disagree with your action in Korea and in my capacity as a private citizen I petition you to change your policy fundamentally as follows: Withdraw the American troops and let the Korean people alone."

"The American intervention in Korea is a brutal imperialist



FARRELL DOBBS

invasion, no different from the French war on Indo-China or the Dutch assault on Indonesia. American boys are being sent 10,000 miles away to kill and be killed, not in order to liberate the Korean people, but to conquer and subjugate them. It is outrageous. It is monstrous...

"The Korean people have a mortal hatred of the Wall Street 'liberator.' They despise unto death the bestial, corrupt, U.S.-sponsored Syngman Rhee dictatorship that made South Korea a prison camp of misery, torture and exploitation..."

COLONIAL UPRISING

"The explosion in Korea on June 25, as events have proved, express the profound desire of the Koreans themselves to unify their country, to rid themselves of foreign domination and to win their complete national independence. It is true that the Kremlin seeks to take advantage of their struggle for its own reactionary ends and would sell it tomorrow if it could get another deal with Washington. But the struggle itself has the overwhelming and whole-hearted support of the Korean people. It is part of the mighty uprising of the hundreds of millions of colonial people throughout Asia against Western imperialism. This is the real truth, the real issue. The colonial slaves don't want to be slaves any longer..."

"American imperialism was

quite willing to turn North Korea over to Stalin in return for control over South Korea, which it ruled through the bloody dictatorship of Syngman Rhee. Now Washington is seeking, against the resistance of the Korean people, to reimpose its imperialist puppet rule, to enforce the division of Korea and to maintain it as a colony and military base for future war on the Soviet Union."

Throughout the Korean war the Socialist Workers Party spoke out against the U.S. government's intervention and continually underscored the fact that this intervention was part of Wall Street's drive for world domination.

DOBBS'S SPEECH

Addressing an audience of millions over the NBC radio and TV system Oct. 19, 1952 Farrell Dobbs, SWP presidential candidate, scored Adlai Stevenson's defense of that intervention as "mankind's" war.

Dobbs charged that what Democratic presidential candidate Stevenson really meant by "mankind" was — "that small minority of wealthy men who own vast tracts of land and huge capitalist holdings in the colonial countries. He means the agents of this wealthy minority with which the Republicans and Democrats are now forging military alliances — like the Nazi and Japanese warlords, like Franco and Chiang Kai-shek, all of them tyrants hated by the people of their own countries."

"It is for that wealthy minority, dominated by the Wall Street bankers, that American boys are bleeding and dying in Korea."

"This unholy military alliance against the working people is supported by both Stevenson and Eisenhower. They tell you it is aimed only at Stalin. Don't believe it. This alliance is intended to restore capitalism everywhere it has been abolished and to prevent the organization of a socialist society anywhere in the world. It is not aimed at Stalin's crimes but against a majority of the human race."

VOICING MASS SENTIMENT

In its opposition to U.S. policy in Korea the SWP was giving conscious expression to the sentiment of the great majority of the American people: Within six

months after the outbreak of the war, Jan. 23, 1951, a national Gallup poll revealed that 66% of the people already wanted to "pull out" of Korea. Nine percent had "no opinion," and only 25% wanted the U.S. to "stay there." The Korean adventure was certainly "the most unpopular" war this country ever embarked on.

The opposition of the American troops in Korea was even more intense. Some idea of their sentiment was indicated by the N. Y. Times military expert Hanson W. Baldwin. He wrote on June 23, 1953, "The front line reaction, even though undoubtedly muted by censorship, has been bitter. The fighting soldier wants the war to end and Dr. Rhee and the Koreans now bear the blame in their minds for its continuance. This hostile feeling is shared in the United States by the kinsmen of U.S. prisoners of war and by many of those with relatives in Korea who have been hoping for months for the end of the war."

The Korean intervention was one war that could not be sold to the American people. They had in their majority supported and suffered the hardships of World War II because they accepted the false claim that it

was a war to wipe out Hitlerism and the Mikado. But they reacted against similar claims about Korea. American GIs got a first hand view of "democracy" dictator-Rhee style. They saw Korea reduced to a horrible rubble in the drive to "liberate" it. Every correspondent dwelt on the theme that the mass desire of the troops to "pull out" flowed from the fact that they "didn't know" what they were fighting for.

That Rhee is a fascist-type dictator is today no longer subject to debate. Yet the only visible result of the U.S. war of "liberation" which cost tens of thousands of American lives and hundreds of thousands of Korean and Chinese lives has been the systematic and insistent campaign of Washington to keep that bloody oppressor of the Korean people in power.

The present administration feels impelled to attack those who exposed and condemned Wall Street's policy in Korea because its present foreign policy is a continuation and extension of the course pursued in Korea. The Socialist Workers Party, however, will not be bludgeoned into discontinuing its struggle against that reactionary policy.

World Events

IN GUATEMALA, the unprecedented, if not unexpected, victory of President Castillo Armas' party in the last elections, in which it captured every congressional seat, appears to have boomeranged. Pro-government newspapers in Guatemala, according to the New York Times of Dec. 24, "have labeled the light vote as a defeat for the government," in view of the fact that the vote was the smallest in modern Guatemalan history. "The party's only rival in the balloting was another anti-communist, pro-government political bloc. The opposition refused to participate in the elections."

An electoral law under which 80% of the voters (on grounds of illiteracy) were deprived of the secret ballot, and had to vote by a public show of hands, apparently resulted in the use of abstention as a form of protest.

THE ALGERIAN LIBERATION MOVEMENT stepped up its attacks on French imperialism with three dramatic new actions. Under the threats of "terrorist demands" the government cancelled the elections of Jan. 2 for members of the French parliament. This election symbolized the imperialist policy of exploitation of Algeria through its integration into the French national state. Secondly, the resistance movement has made public its demand upon all Algerians to resign government posts, upon pain of execution. Even a partial success here would paralyze the French administration. Lastly, reports indicate that active guerrilla fighting, hitherto concentrated in the eastern provinces, has now reached the vicinity of the capital city of Algiers itself.

A NEW STRIKE WAVE among the highly organized government workers of Italy has reached such proportions that it threatens the existence of the cabinet. In all, a total of 1,200,000 workers are involved. On Dec. 23, the entire postal, telegraph and telephone system was shut down by a 24-hour stoppage. A similar stoppage is scheduled for Dec. 28 on the state-owned railroads, and the nation's tax collectors will be on strike during the last three days of the year. Seventy thousand high-school teachers have been out since a week before Christmas. The government has offered wage increases which have been rejected as inadequate by all the unions. At the same time, several cabinet members

threaten to resign if the unions' demands are granted.

MASS DEMONSTRATIONS in Jordan during the past week have succeeded in overthrowing the cabinet of Premier Majali, compelling the announcement of new elections. The new government has announced that it will not proceed with plans to take Jordan into the U.S.-inspired Baghdad pact. At one point, Arabs stormed the American Consulate and hauled down its flag. The rapid flow of events was hailed as a victory for Egypt, which, together with Saudi Arabia and Syria, opposes the pact. These three have placed their armed forces under a joint command. Equally important, observers report the likelihood of genuinely free elections for the first time, with an organized opposition and elimination of the practice by which the votes of the 20,000-man army were cast in a block for the government candidates.

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...CP Wires Protest

(Continued from page 1)

from a serious heart ailment, claimed he had been erroneously credited with earnings on which he was entitled to draw the old-age pension. Since all those earnings came from the Communist Party or Communist Political Association, the letter said, and since the Department regarded his employment as that by a foreign government, the agency demanded that the amount paid must be returned at once.

Foster's is the fourth case in which the Social Security Administration has by administrative fiat convicted and punished individuals. No court has ever found that the Communist Party is an agency of a foreign government. Yet the SSA has arbitrarily acted on that assumption.

The first case concerned a retiring CP employ whose identity the SSA did not reveal. In another case, Alexander Bittelman, after receiving ten monthly Social Security checks in Atlanta prison, learned his October check has been impounded. He has brought suit in a New York Federal Court. Bittelman is one of the Communist Party leaders who was thought-control Smith Act. Jacob Mindel, serving a two-year Smith Act sentence has had his December Social Security check impounded.

As the Militant said editorially last week, "The social secu-

ry law makes the government sole holder of the funds. It has no legal right to refuse to pay what the law required it to collect out of a worker's wages. The introduction of a political criterion now for payments is an ominous step toward destruction of the principle of impartial administration of the law."

Meanwhile, President Eisenhower remained silent about the Christmas amnesty plea of 46 public figures to immediately release all CP members serving terms under the Smith Act. The 46 include Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, Dean John C. Bennett of Union Theological Seminary, Norman Thomas, Elmer Rice — playwright, Lewis Mumford — noted author, and A. J. Muste, Secretary emeritus of the Fellowship of Reconciliation.

The 46 stated that though they were in "fundamental" disagreement with the philosophy of the Communist Party and its program, they were motivated by "attachment to the democratic way of life."

From the first moves of the Truman Administration to violate the Communist Party's right to free speech, the Socialist Workers Party took a principled stand of supporting the civil liberties of the Stalinists. The SWP did so despite basic disagreement with their program and despite Stalinist refusal to back the case of 18 SWP leaders, who in 1941, were sent to prison in the first application of the Smith Act.

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Letter to a Miner

Dear George,

I guess you weren't so dumb after all when you decided to stick it out in Pennsylvania and wait for the mines to reopen — even though you must be pretty hard up by now. But in case you're changing your mind and thinking about coming up here to work in auto, you better hold off a while.

There are many rumors going around about a layoff after the first of the year with maybe 15% of the guys getting the axe. This wouldn't affect me as I have one year seniority and 15% only goes back six months. But I still feel shaky. You and I were in the pit for over ten years; we thought we would dig coal all our lives — until the bottom fell out down there.

This is a fine time of year for a rumor like this to start. With the holidays coming up it makes a lot of the guys in the plant mad.

I got a kick out of one guy who was talking about C. E. Wilson, the one who made that crack about "bird dogs." Right

in the middle of a bull session about the layoff he pipes up: "Remember what Charley said, 'What's good for GM is good for America.'"

Another kid who is always talking about the Xmas bonus in the last place he worked said, "Yeah, seasons greetings from GM."

I guess you've got the idea now of what's going on up here. Like I said you might as well sit tight.

I'll probably be down that way during the holidays, but give my regards to Irene and the kids anyway.

Your Friend,
Jim

P.S. When I went down for the mail the other day I found a big white envelope. Up in the corner was printed "Greetings from the President of . . ." The first thing that popped into my mind was the last time I got a "greeting from the president." It cost me four years in the army. But this was only a flashy Xmas Card from the president of General Motors. My Xmas bonus.

George Ivanow's Crime

By Reba Aubrey

"When I worked I used to eat well. . . But when I thought I could never find work I started to eat not so well." Because George Ivanow "started to eat not so well" and thereby saved in two years the "fantastic" sum of \$924 from relief payments of \$1,997.50, he must stand trial in the New York Court of Special Sessions Jan. 17 to prove whether or not he is guilty of "obtaining public assistance by fraud."

Ivanow, 60-year-old Russian-born pianist, speaking through an interpreter, told the press how he managed to get by on relief payments of \$88 a month, later increased to \$92.40 a month, and still put something away for a rainy day.

He spent \$1 a day for food — three cups of tea for breakfast, a large bowl of potato soup for a combined lunch-supper. At night he had another cup of tea and one small sausage. Sunday he splurged — feasting on 25 cents worth of lamb. His rent was \$8 a week.

Ivanow never drank, never went out with women and never bought clothing. He got his three shirts before going on relief. He has two ties, a pair of shoes and three suits he found in garbage cans. His overcoat? A friend gave him that five years ago.

When Ivanow immigrated from Yugoslavia in 1951 he got a porter's job with French Hospital. Then things were good. But in 1953 he was robbed and in the fracas suffered a broken hip. After the

operation he had to use crutches. It's hard for a man on crutches to get a job. After his hip was better and he could get along without crutches, he couldn't get work because of his language difficulty. There seemed no way out except to go on relief.

Ivanow had the impression that the Welfare Department would give him relief for no more than two years. What would he do when the relief payments stopped? He decided "to scrimp and save money." He saved as much as \$32 a month from his relief payments, but he didn't tell the Welfare people.

"He should have told us about the money he saved . . ." said a Welfare Department spokesman. "The budget we figure is a minimum budget. . . All receipts of public assistance are based on need. Money derived from any source eliminates or lessens the need."

But then the Welfare Department "never asked him" about making any savings.

Since Ivanow's arrest in July — when the wheels of justice brought an end to his crime of salting away part of his allotment — he has spent all but \$50 of his \$924 savings. In addition to his tea, potato soup and one small sausage, he had other expenses: bail, lawyer's fees, doctor's bills and medicine.

If the court decides that Ivanow is "guilty of fraud," he is willing to pay back the \$924 — if someone will give him a job.

Portrait of British Labor Party's New "Leader"

By John White

LONDON, Dec. 21—Mr. Hugh Todd Naylor Gaiskell is now Leader of the British Labor Party. He assumes that mantle not as a result of a rank-and-file vote but through the support of right wing Labor Members of Parliament who last week elected him leader of "Her Majesty's Opposition" in the House of Commons.

This ex-schoolboy of Britain's upper-class educational institutions joined the Labor Party in the 1920's, but throughout his life has remained divorced from real working class struggle and from the Socialist aspirations of the Labor masses. His origins in the upper layer of the middle class and his family traditions — that of imperialist administration in the Indian Civil Service — have conditioned his thought processes a great deal more than any traditions of the Labor Movement.

Before the last war Gaiskell worked with the Fabian Research Bureau attempting to give a new shine to the rusty, reformist

conceptions of controlled capitalism and providing the "theoretical" base for the subsequent activities of the post-war Labor Governments. During the war he loyally supported British imperialism as an economic advisor.

He joined the post-war Labor Governments and after the death of Stafford Cripps became Chancellor of the Exchequer. He was a staunch defender of the capitalist rearmament program even though it undermined the "welfare state." He, it was, who pushed through the increased charges for the State Medical Service and forced Aneurin Bevan to resign from the Labor Cabinet in protest.

"DEAKIN'S DARLING"

Bevan once described Gaiskell as a "dissipated calculating machine." Among the rank and file of the Labor Party he was known as "Deakin's Darling" because of his close alliance with the most powerful leaders of the trade union bureaucracy, particularly the late Arthur Deakin of the Transport and General Workers Union.

Over the past few years he has been in the vanguard of the anti-Bevanite forces. Together with the leaders of the Big Three — Transport and General, the General and Municipal, and the Mineworkers Unions — and others on the extreme right of the Labor Party, he planned to expel Bevan in the weeks before the General Election of last May. The plan failed.

Out of this failure came a firmer resolve of the extreme right to substitute Gaiskell for Attlee who at that time was Leader of the Party.

Two weeks ago Attlee resigned as a result of sustained pressure by the trade union bosses and right wing politicians. They were aided openly by a gutter tabloid, a knight in sexy armor — the Daily Mirror — which for the past three years has conducted a vicious demagogic crusade against Bevanism and in defense of the right wing.

Attlee, himself, when he resigned complained of the pres-

sure which had been put on him to make way for Gaiskell. "After the last general election, I intimated that I would continue as chairman of the party meantime," he declared. "It is regrettable, however, that since that date there has scarcely been a week pass without one prominent member of the party or another talking about my impending resignation."

"TRUE PATRIOT"

To be sure, Attlee's sympathies are with the right and hostile to working class militancy. Like Gaiskell he is a product of one of the exclusive schools, a labor politician drawn from the ranks of the upper middle class, and venerating ruling class tradition. The very day he left the leadership of the Labor Party he accepted an earldom from "Her Gracious Majesty."

The conservative Daily Telegraph bowed him out of the House of Commons with this tribute: "The Major Attlee who fought in the Dardanelles was the political progenitor of the true patriot who was one of Sir Winston Churchill's most loyal unflinching and efficient colleagues during the Second World War . . ."

However, when the attempt was made a few months ago to expel Bevan, Attlee hesitated. He drew back before the prospect of splitting the party. That is what the expulsion would have meant. He emerged in the role of peacemaker. His opposition to the expulsion and the support given him by politicians fearful of losing their seats in parliament in the impending General Election if it was fought with the party in a turmoil, blocked the trade union leaders' demand for Bevan's head.

They never forgave Attlee and determined on securing a firm hand at the helm to deal with the left. As Leader of the Labor Party the right wing can now count on a younger, more virile and ruthless opponent of Bevanism and one linked closely to the trade union bureaucracy.

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THE MILITANT

Concentration Camps -- U.S. Style -- Are Ready

By Robert Chester

Concentration camps! More than anything else these words evoke the image of the bestial Nazi regime in Germany — only now they also describe what the witch hunters have in store for the United States.

A New York Times correspondent, with a pipeline to Washington, gives a first-hand report Dec. 27 of how the U.S. Attorney General's office has established a network of six "detention camps" which are now ready to be "activated" at any time "needing only about as much work as would be required to make the beds and light the fires to receive those deemed dangerous to security if a national emergency arises."

McCARRAN LAW

This skeletal mass concentration camp set up was "legalized" by the McCarran Internal Security Act of 1950. The notorious act also empowers the President to proclaim an "internal security emergency" in event of a war, invasion or internal insurrection.

The McCarran law authorizes the Attorney General to "detain" persons "suspected of conspiracy for espionage or sabotage" without defining the limits of these designations. Under the McCarran law all "suspects" can be detained upon the declaration of an "emergency" and held indefinitely while their cases are being investigated. The camps are ready and waiting for these "suspects."

The six detention camps were used during World War II to house war prisoners and internees of Japanese and German origin. Federal prisoners have been used to renovate enough buildings to house 5,000 immediately and can be rapidly expanded to take care of many times that number.

With an eye to world public opinion the Times reporter assures us that there is nothing at any camp to "suggest the 'concentration camps' . . . in World War II." He dwells happily on the "cold storage rooms, radio outlets, shower baths, steam tables . . . laundries, up-to-date hospital wards, heating plants and air conditioning" with which some of the camps are equipped.

"HOWEVER . . ."

But lest you jump to get in on the ground floor of these inviting resorts he is careful to add, "However, they are not luxury camps, where prisoners might loll on beds of ease and grow fat on rich food. Life could be mighty uncomfortable at any of these camps. This would be especially true if they were filled or perhaps overcrowded."

For example El Reno Camp boasts of 29 dingy barracks each about 100 feet long heated by three iron stoves down the middle and "an air conditioning unit at one end that would help protect the internees when the scorching Oklahoma sun beats on the roofs."

Who would be interned in these camps? The Times reporter

admits that "standards of what constitutes a menace to security are less clearly defined than those that govern human conduct. . . in the climate of a national emergency hundreds, perhaps thousands could be sequestered in security camps who were not actual, or even potential spies or saboteurs. As in the last war, however, the official position probably would be that it is better to be safe than sorry."

BITTER EXPERIENCE

An example of how this "safe" formula works can be found in the bitter experience of the West Coast Japanese during World War II. Tens of thousands, citizens and non-citizens alike, were herded like cattle out to these camps and dumped there like animals afflicted with plague. Their property, their constitutional rights, their homes and their human dignity were robbed from them. With brutal cynicism the wealthy farmers of California lined their pockets and grabbed what was stolen from the Japanese. Later it was admitted that the whole ghastly project was an "error." The Japanese in Hawaii, for example, who were much closer to the scene of combat, were never touched.

Now the mealy-mouthed Times dares to say about this swindle and crime, "It was later acknowledged that not all of them (the West Coast Japanese) were a menace to national security."

What a foul distortion! It's exactly the other way around. Not a single one of the thousands of Japanese-Americans interned by the brass was ever proven to be a menace to national security. The whole point is that under the system of concentration camps, regulated by "emergency decrees" and the arbitrary whims of the military, no one ever gets a chance to disprove any charge. They are merely "held" while an "investigation" takes place, in the interests of "national security."

Isn't this exactly the principle of the whole witch hunt and loyalty purge? That's what these "detention camps" are — the logical outcome of the witch hunt.

The Times is trying to break the news of these camps gently — to cover their ugly meaning with a coating of sugar. But the American people, and above all the labor movement, must not allow this challenge to go unanswered. A loud and sustained cry of protest is called for. Let no one imagine that they are safe from the "safety first" boys. With the hysteria of war, or a stepped-up drive to war, the atmosphere of the McCarthy period can be magnified and intensified a thousandfold. And then, even a trade union leader or liberal would not be safe.

Story of Miss. Told by Howard At L.A. Meeting

By Ernest Rief

LOS ANGELES, Dec. 19 — A large audience heard Dr. Theodore Howard, militant leader of the all-Negro town of Mound Bayou, Miss., give a shocking account of the racist terror campaign against Negroes of Mississippi.

A few days before this address, he had called for "a million red-blooded Americans to march on Washington in protest to the deaf ear" that the Administration has turned to the reign of lynch-law in the South. Dr. Howard has demanded direct federal intervention to bring about a change in Mississippi.

The facts he publicized in his address made it abundantly clear why federal intervention is necessary to safeguard the rights and lives of Mississippi's Negro population — 49% of the state's total — and why a gigantic march on Washington is needed to force the government to act.

CITIZENS COUNCIL

Dr. Howard described the White Citizens Council, which is conducting the anti-Negro terror, as the "Ku Klux Klan in modern garb." Negroes who register to vote are driven out of their jobs. Hundreds of Negroes are leaving Mississippi because of economic discrimination and pressure applied against them after they sought to exercise their constitutional rights.

Following the Supreme Court decision outlawing segregation in public schools, the Governor of Mississippi tried to get the approval of Negro leaders for a voluntary segregation plan, based on "separate but equal" facilities. When he failed, the legislature passed a law permitting abolition of public schools. Another law sets up a "test" for Negroes designed to prevent them from registering to vote.

The White Citizens Council believes it can prevent integration

Finally Fired



Racist Fire Chief J. H. Alderson of Los Angeles holds his head as the Board of Fire Commissioners finally responded to pressure and suspended him from post. The West Coast white supremacist had brazenly defied orders to end Jim Crow in fire department until Negro community forced him out.

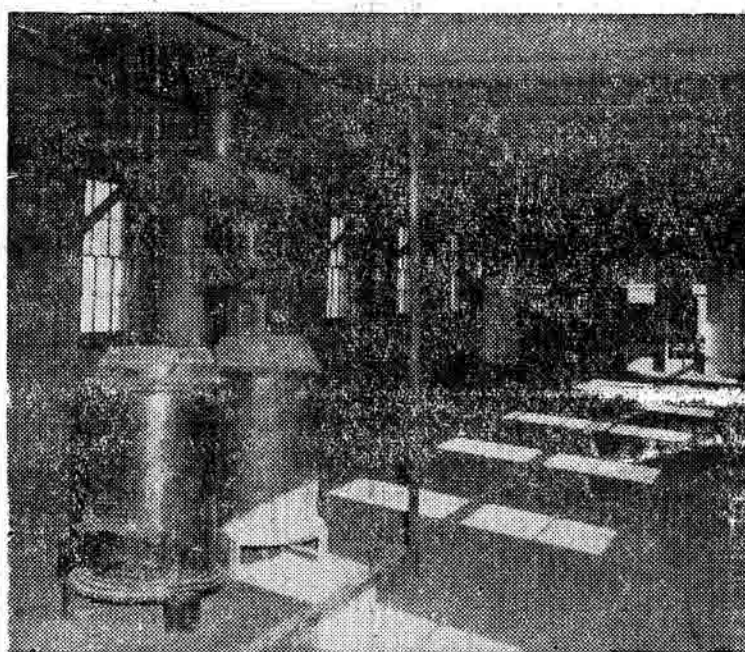
in the schools for ten years by litigation in the courts.

Federal, state and local officials backed the racists in every phase of the Till case, Dr. Howard said. He told how J. W. Milam, one of Emmett Till's killers, who was acquitted in murder and kidnap whitewash trials, "talks all over the county about how he got away with it."

The meeting, sponsored by the American Civil Liberties Union, was deeply impressed with the courage displayed by Dr. Howard, who has received as many as 50 death threats in a single day. Even though he has moved his family out of Mississippi for safety, Dr. Howard returns regularly to Mound Bayou to fight for Negro justice against the Southern racists.

The rest of the time he spends on tour, giving a true account to Negro communities in the North, West and South, of the white-supremacy terror in Mississippi and the struggle of the Negroes there against it.

America's Buchenwald?



Barren interior of barracks building above at Tule Lake, Calif., Federal Prison Camp 38, is typical of six such places set up by Justice Dept. during Truman regime to hold political prisoners without trial. They were set up under a 1950 McCarran Act section originated by "Fair Deal" Senators.

Displaced Workers Promised Sympathy

By Harold Robbins

The Senate-House Economic Subcommittee Report issued Dec. 11, summarizing the public hearings on the effects of automation is worth close examination. It is the product of collaboration between the Democratic Party and the trade union officials just prior to the opening of the 1956 presidential and congressional election campaigns.

More than \$25 billion was invested in new manufacturing facilities in 1955, and it is expected an even larger sum will be invested during 1956. A large part of these investments are in automated production processes in the mass production industries. The congressional committee's report indicates what the workers may expect out of this development and what the fruits of labor's collaboration with the Democratic Party politicians have been and will be.

The report correctly states that "many individuals will suffer personal, mental and physical hardships as the adjustments [of automation] go forward." "The middle aged worker particularly, [that is, the largest part of the working force in the mass production industries] who may find his skills rendered obsolete overnight or his job abolished as his work is turned over to a machine, has every right to expect that industry, his union and society will recognize his plight and assist in his retraining, or his relocation if necessary."

WHAT PROPOSALS?

So reads the analysis of the subcommittee's Democratic Party majority — with the concurrence of the Republican members. What did they propose Congress

to do to relieve the "plight" and protect the "right" of the workers?

The report says, " . . . no specific broad-gauge economic legislation appears to be called for."

That's clear enough. The worker displaced or facing displacement by the new productive processes is condemned to a future of short-term unemployment compensation followed by home-relief living standards as soon as he cannot find another job.

How about the re-education needs recognized by the report? Here, too, everything is made quite explicit.

According to the Dec. 19, 1955 New York Times the subcommittee recommends that "All levels of government and others should take very seriously to heart the need for a specific and broad program to promote secondary and higher education to combat what it calls a dangerous shortage of scientists, technicians and skilled labor."

A HEART OF STONE

The kind of "heart" shown by the government is manifested in how it is tackling the problem of providing adequate educational conditions for the youth of the country. The administration refuses to budge from its position of dumping the problem of a critical shortage of class rooms, teachers and educational facilities on to the localities, while spending 65% of the colossal federal budget for warfare.

The Southern state governments are taking steps to abolish and restrict still further the public school system in order to defend their Jim Crow schools which were illegalized by the recent Supreme Court decisions.

What kind of a "heart" is appealed to in order to take care of the educational needs of the "surplus" workers. Would it be exaggerating to call it a "heart of stone" of a ruling class that has outlived its usefulness to society?

During the depression of the Thirties Hoover made the same appeals to industry. "Give a job 'till June," was one of his slogans. The capitalists were urged to start a prosperity drive. There were many appeals to their good "hearts." But this didn't feed the hungry or provide jobs for the unemployed. The proposals of this subcommittee are of the same kind as Hoover's depression program — don't do anything, but "soft soap" the working people until you have to pay off with phony promises. The subcommittee doesn't even feel the need to make a single promise of relief for the victims of automation under capitalism. Isn't that why the Republicans on the subcommittee went along with the report?

PASSING THE BUCK

The report passed the buck for action and relief to "industry and the unions." Walter Reuther, whose United Auto Workers' contracts set the tone for dealing with automation, had previously passed the buck for everything unresolved in the new three-year contracts to Congress.

Reuther had promised the workers a guaranteed annual wage as against an immediate fight for the six-hour workday. The GAW would be so expensive, he told the auto workers, that it would slow down the widespread introduction of automatic processes and protect the jobs of the workers. What they got was neither job protection

or a guaranteed annual wage, but supplementary unemployment insurance which was semi-annual and not guaranteed.

Reuther promised to fight for the seniority rights of older workers on the newly automated jobs. The contract provides nothing of the sort.

Reuther promised a retraining program financed by both the companies and the government in order to train the auto workers for the newly automated maintenance jobs. He didn't get it in the contract and his Democratic allies in the government stand united with the Republicans in passing the buck back to "industry and the unions." They won't even pay off the union leaders with a promise. Yet Reuther and his kind repeatedly tell the workers that the Democrats represent labor's interests.

Reuther negotiated his pattern-setting three-year agreements at a time when the workers were united and eager for struggle. The corporations were making the greatest profits in their history. They could easily afford to grant the six-hour workday with no reduction in pay. And yet Reuther settled for the extension of the union shop and the dues checkoff for three more years while the corporations continue to automate and dump the workers off the production lines into the street.

Reuther got his out of the contract — he got the dues check-off. The workers are paid off with a promise of federal help from "their" Democratic Party. The Congressional report proves once again that the Democrats stand in capitalist unity with the Republicans. In the face of the peril to workers' living standards resulting from

capitalist automation they unite — to do absolutely nothing.

What the working people need is their own party. Until such a Labor Party is formed it will be the same story over and over again — the interests of the working class will be betrayed by the labor officials in collaboration with capitalist politicians.

Harvest of Blood On Apple Farm

Labor's Daily has been running a series of articles on the economic, political and racial situation in Berryville, Va., where three Negro migrant workers were burned to death early last month on the huge apple farm of Sen. Harry F. Byrd (D-Va.).

The first article appeared in the Dec. 8 issue under the headline: "3 workers die in fire as Byrd Reaps Apple Fortune." The articles are by G. B. Hokomb.

A New Pamphlet

Desegregation!

Labor's Stake In the Fight For Negro Equality

By Jean Simon

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