

## 'I TAKE A FRESH LOOK' (8)

## The Welfare State

By ALEXANDER BITTELMAN

AS YET THERE is no scientific definition of the Welfare State, but its meaning—historical, social and political—is fairly clear.

In a general way it is the old American dream that came down to our own days of a free and happy nation. But it began to assume modern social and political forms in the 1930's during the Great Depression and the rise of the New Deal. Gradually it became the social and political aspiration of labor, the toiling farmers, the Negro people and large sections of small and independent business, with organized labor as its chief exponent. It is becoming a social and political platform of the overwhelming majority of the American people for making the welfare clause of the Constitution the basic and chief function of government. Specifically: the government—the State—assumes full responsibility for the economic and social welfare and security of the people, with a consistent expansion of the people's democratic liberties and rights, national, state and local.

A scientific Marxist-Leninist analysis of this popular concept of the Welfare State would show that it is a modern product and expression of the traditional anti-monopoly and democratic movements of the American people. It embodies a system of radical social reforms for the improvement of the economic conditions of the masses of the people and for restricting and curbing the powers of the monopolies.

On the political side it is again a modern expression of the traditional struggle of the democratic classes and groups in the United States for making the will of the masses ever more effective in government and generally in the political life of the nation.

VIEWED FROM the Marxist-Leninist standpoint, the Welfare State would represent a historic stage in the social progress of the American people, a historic stage of considerable duration in the advance of the American people to the eventual socialist transformation of American society.

Whether in popular concept or scientific analysis, the Welfare State is not Socialism nor socialistic in any sense of the word. It is anti-monopoly but not anti-capitalist. Its aim is to check and curb the economic and political powers of the monopolies, not to abolish capitalism. The movements for the Welfare State are generally democratic—not socialist—by their aims, aspirations and social composition.

Again: viewed from the Marxist-Leninist theoretical positions, the potentialities of the Welfare State for realizing the social welfare and security of the people within the confines of the capitalist system—these potentialities are limited; but they may prove extensive for a certain period of time.

In any event, the realization of the Welfare State is conditioned by two basic factors. One is the rise of a powerful anti-monopoly coalition embracing the majority of the American people and having the working class as its backbone and driving force. The other is a government representing and actively backed by such a coalition, a government that will be willing and able to go to the very limit compatible with capitalist relations of production to curb the powers of the monopolies.

BASIC TRENDS in American social and political life all go

in that direction. Marxist-Leninists, and Socialists of all currents, can play a key role in accelerating the course of development of these anti-monopoly trends toward a Welfare State and to bring it to complete fruition.

Viewed once more from the theoretical positions of Marxism-Leninism, the welfare potentialities of the Welfare State, its capacities to meet the ever growing needs of the people, must eventually become exhausted and come to an end. At some point along the road of social progress, the welfare activities of that state must come into insoluble conflict with the capitalist mode of production. Economic and political problems must inevitably arise at a certain turn in the development of the Welfare State, whose solution will become possible only by social measures that go beyond the limitations of the capitalist system. It is at such a turn that the American people will confront the direct task of transforming American social life on the basis of Socialism.

MOST PEOPLE view today the Welfare State as the final and complete answer to America's basic social problems. Marxist-Leninists cannot accept that point of view. To them the Welfare State, while representing great progressive social and political changes, yet constitutes only a historic stage on the road of social progress and eventually to Socialism.

Others tend to look upon the Welfare States as in itself the transition to Socialism, a kind of opening phase in the social-

ist transformation of American society. Marxist-Leninists can not accept that point of view either. The idea of the Welfare State and the movements towards it are arising as objective necessities from the national peculiarities of American social, economic and political life. This alone determines the social and political content of the Welfare State and the class nature of the forces moving in that direction.

A Marxist-Leninist analysis shows that the social and political content of the Welfare State is anti-monopoly, not anti-capitalism, and that the class and political nature of the movements toward it are generally democratic, not socialist. The conclusion therefore is that the Welfare State is a distinct historic stage in America's social progress and that the peaceful and constitutional transition to Socialism is another historic stage, the next and higher stage.

This is how the future of American appears in a fresh look at theory and life. From the "cold war," the American people fight their way to the period of peaceful coexistence and competition. From the struggles to insure world peace, they proceed to impose upon the government foreign policies based upon the Bandung principles, and domestic policies inspired by the economic and political ideals of the Welfare State. And along this road of anti-monopoly coalition and struggle, the American people will be moving to the Welfare State itself.

(Tomorrow: American Road to Socialism.)

## Will the Chicago Council Keep Jim Crow Housing?

CHICAGO—Are the people of Chicago going to watch the City Council play insidious games with the housing needs of Chicagoans, particularly those of the Negro people? Will we witness the run-around that became an all too familiar scene in the council during the early months of last year?

As the council is preparing to vote on new sites for public housing projects, it appears that the Chicago Housing Authority will resubmit a number of sites that it has previously suggested. One of the reasons given by supporters of public housing for the proposal of certain sites, is the ready availability of land. This would mean less cost in tearing down old buildings and also would ease the problem of finding new housing for displaced tenants.

The 8,000 new units that will become available, for new construction, if the city council, in its wisdom so sees fit to vote, should be examined in line with what has previously happened in the council on this question.

IN FEBRUARY of last year the CHA submitted eleven proposed sites to the council. Of these six were in predominantly Negro communities. They were mainly on the south side. The remaining five were in wards that, in the majority, were populated by whites.

Here are the sites that the council turned down.

1. From 87th Street to 89th St. near South Chicago Avenue. This is in the 10th ward.

2. South St. Lawrence Avenue from 130th to 134th St. This is next to the Philip Murray Houses and is located in the 9th ward.

3. Forty Fifth St. and Lavergne

Avenue. This is located in the 23rd ward.

4. South Exchange Avenue from 126th St. to 130th Street. This site also is in the 10th ward.

5. South Morgan Street from 115th Street to 117th Street. This area is located in the 19th ward.

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THE ALDERMEN of these four wards fought bitterly against the selection of these sites and won out. Thus another battle against integrated housing in the city of Chicago was won.

It is a fact that in Chicago, in spite of the difficulties presented by racists, 29 of the 30 of the current housing projects of the Chicago Housing Authority have Negro tenants. The only one that does not is the Bridgeport Homes, just a few blocks from Mayor Daley's home.

Thus the only logical conclusion that can be made of the motives of those who oppose public housing sites is their opposition to integrated housing in these areas. The four most articulate spokesmen in the council last year against the new sites were Aldermen Emil V. Pacini (10th ward), Reginald DuBois (9th ward), David T. McKiernan (19th ward) who is now deceased, and George J. Tourek (23rd ward).

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IT IS EXPECTED that the question of new housing sites for Chicago's public housing will be voted upon in the next two month period. Hearings before the council committee on planning and housing is expected to be announced shortly.

This fourteen man committee is chaired by Alderman William T. Murphy of the 17th ward. Alderman Roman of the 30th ward is the vice chairman of the committee.