

LABOR ACTION

Independent Socialist Weekly

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FIVE CENTS

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A Study in 'Totalitarian Liberalism'

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TRUMAN

The President Washes His Hands in Public

By LARRY O'CONNOR

On June 10 President Truman asked a joint session of Congress to take action on the steel strike. He told the assembled legislators that although there are several lines of action Congress can take in this situation, there are two main possibilities:

(1) Seize the industry by congressional action, and give neither the workers nor the bosses all that they want in the way of wages or profits. This would put pressure on both of them to continue collective bargaining.

(2) Direct the president to get a Taft-Hartley-type injunction against the union, with the purpose of forcing the men back to work.

Truman said that he would prefer the first alternative. He repeated his former contention that the union had long ago voluntarily complied with all the purposes of the Taft-Hartley injunction by working for over three months without a contract before govern-

ment seizure. "I want to make it plain to the Congress," he said, "that the result of using a Taft-Hartley-type injunction in this dispute would be to take sides with the companies and against the workers."

MAKING THE RECORD

Nevertheless, he made it plain that if Congress was going to "force" him to get out a Taft-Hartley injunction against the steel workers, they should pass a special law which would make it possible for such an injunction to be obtained immediately, without the delay involved in appointing another "fact-finding" board. Instead the Senate merely requested him to use the T-H ax.

Thus President Truman has made the political record. He has sought to put the blame for breaking the steel strike on the shoulders of Congress. He has made a political gesture which has a famous precedent. Like Pontius Pilate, he has publicly washed his hands.

Tobin Runaround

Dan Tobin, head of the big Teamsters Union, who is a dear friend of the Democratic Party, writes in his union organ (May): "On the other hand, if some of my leading friends in the Democratic Party—with few exceptions—from the top brackets down, give you their word to be helpful, they will crawl into their private rooms after 5:30 and laugh and tell their associates how they bluffed labor today and how, with their clever political persuasion, they made labor believe that they were the friends of labor."

"The worst runaround labor has had in all my time—and I was somewhat active in 1904 and in 1908 for Bryan, and in 1912, when we elected Woodrow Wilson—in all those years under many different kinds of presidents—I repeat labor has never been given the runaround that it has been given in the last four or five years."

In the same editorial, the same Tobin says that if Truman ran again, he would personally vote for him, even though he wouldn't go out of his way to ask "my large membership, or the workers of the nation" to do likewise! We can add that "in all our time" we have rarely seen as abject a confession of bankruptcy. It would seem that the pro-Democratic labor leaders have been giving labor "the worst runaround" in years, too.

EISENHOWER

It Seems Charm Is Not Enough

By GORDON HASKELL

The American people are at last getting a chance to take a closer look at the political views of General Eisenhower. The result must be most embarrassing to those liberals who four years ago were prepared to back him as a potential winner when it appeared that the Democrats were foredoomed to defeat.

In the few days since Eisenhower landed in this country, he has already made a good deal of the record on a wide variety of subjects. From what he has said—and equally from the questions he has evaded—it can be safely predicted that any illusions about Eisenhower as a "liberal" will have been safely dispelled by the time of the Republican convention, or shortly thereafter if he is nominated.

Eisenhower has found himself in a most difficult position. The rock-ribbed regular Republicans have in their majority committed themselves to Taft. His possible strength as a political candidate stems from the feeling in a large section of the Republican Party that Taft is too vulnerable, and that his ideas on foreign affairs are dangerous

if taken seriously. Eisenhower appeals to these people as a candidate who is potentially capable of bringing a considerable section of the independent vote into the Republican column on the basis of his personality appeal, and also as one whose foreign-policy ideas appear to be closer to a realistic approach for American capitalism in 1952 than Taft's. Further, this section of the party leadership realizes that even though a Republican candidate must rail against the Fair Deal, he cannot safely attack many of the Fair-Dealish policies which are popular.

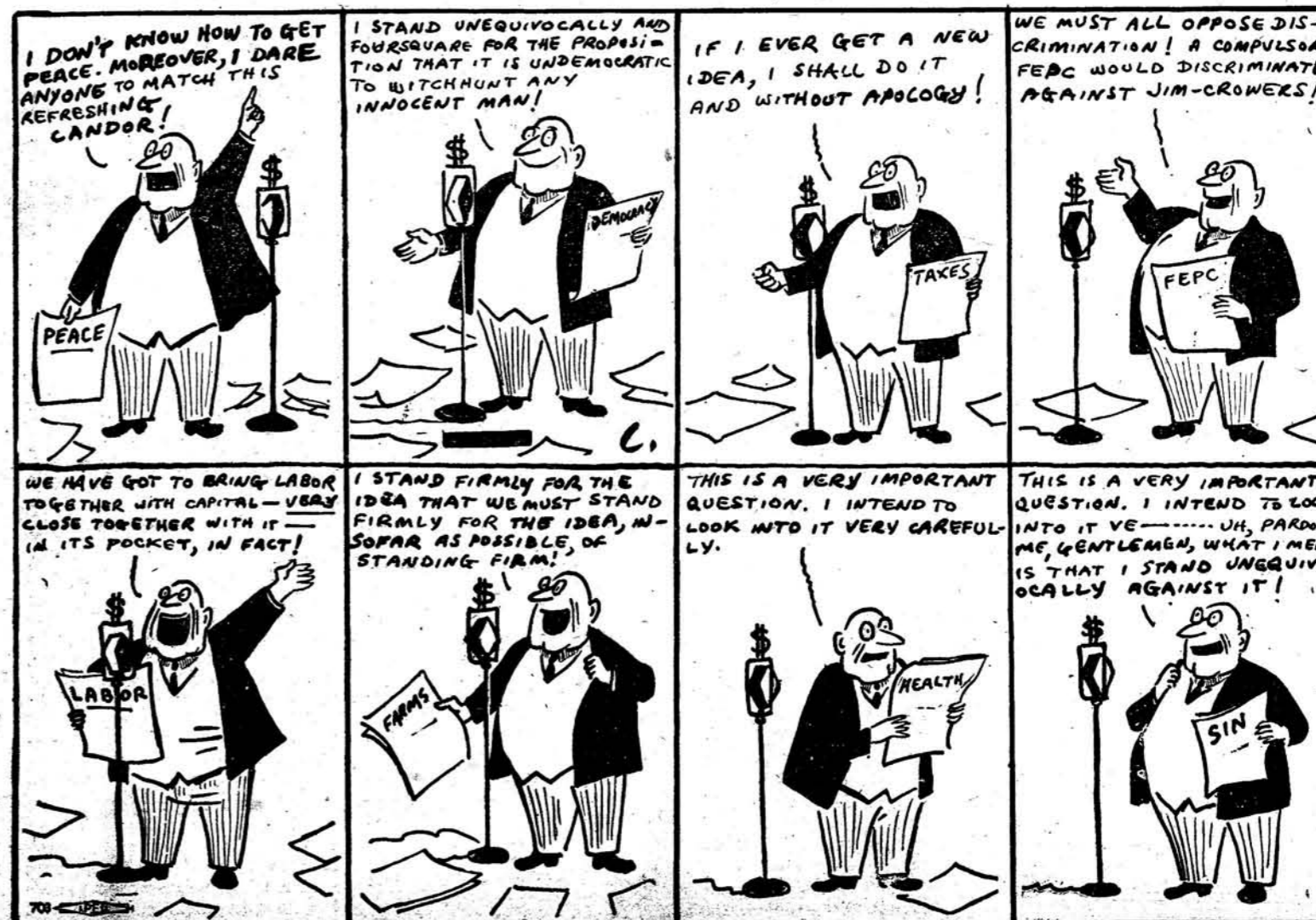
NO MORE DOUBT

Thus Eisenhower's problem has been to express himself in favor, in some form, of measures of social amelioration, while at the same time attacking the Fair Deal on grounds which have nothing to do with its failure to carry out even a portion of its formal program. The actual result of his efforts is to put him squarely in Taft's lap on almost all domestic issues, thus losing much of his potential appeal for the independents. And on important foreign policy his position is indistinguishable from that

(Continued on page 3)

Flash! Candidate Grapples with Burning Issues of the Day

(See more-or-less full story below.)



LOS ANGELES 'Committee Against Socialist Housing' at Work
CASH Defeats Public Housing Plan

By GEORGE CARVER
LOS ANGELES, June 4—Yesterday, California had its presidential primary...

But the issue in the voting which attracted the most attention was the controversial public-housing proposition...

This proposal asked the voters if they wished to endorse the erection of 2000 public-housing units for low-income families...

MONEY TALKED

The government threatened court action for compliance, or a suit to regain \$15,000,000 already spent on the project...

Proposition B was defeated, according to nearly complete returns, by at least 100,000 votes. Its opponents, who were responsible for its draft...

SCREAMING REACTION

The amount of money spent on propaganda by the reactionaries for radio and TV time, newspaper ads, public lectures, handbills, and billboards...

An interesting sidelight on the issue was a special message to the Daily News by columnist Drew Pearson...

L. A. SLUMS
The pro-housing bloc, including the liberal and labor elements therein, denied (correctly) that the project was in any way "socialistic."

isting contract, because, he said, "the eyes of the nation are on Los Angeles now to see if a well-financed realty-landlord campaign can obstruct needed slum clearance here and elsewhere."

Another feature of the housing fray was the personal split between Mayor Bowron and Police Chief Parker. The mayor had often worked closely with Parker and had defended the latter's office when it came under attack in repeated and extensive cop-brutality cases...

Bowron claimed that Parker in effect falsified the report, and did some clever card-stacking as well, by comparing arrests and police calls in new housing projects...

Then Bowron began to ride the pro-housing bandwagon by stating on the eve of the election that "a vote for Proposition B is a vote of confidence in me."

The liberal organizations, community groups, churches, and labor unions had set up a propaganda committee known as Citizens for Slum Clearance...

The arguments were not without their contradictions, either. On one page it was charged that the housing program would not benefit anyone who needed decent, low-rent housing...

In other paragraphs it was stated that the government was running unfair competition with those who sell or rent housing for profit. A charge that the scheme called for an elaborate, 13-story apartment building with an elevator rounded out the contradiction...

The administration group, calling itself the Beckman-DeVito Slate, showed its weakness in not even being able to muster a full slate of candidates...

head propaganda had an element of truth in its maze of lies, half-truths, and misrepresentations. The "free-enterprisers" were not far from the truth when they claimed that the project under way would not clean up the city's slum areas...

Although Councilman John Holland said publicly that he personally wasn't alarmed at the extent of Los Angeles slum conditions and compared this city favorably with Eastern ones...

THE PEOPLE SUFFER

"On South Beach Street a family on relief pays \$60 a month of your tax money for a room at the rear of a garage." Also: "These families have no place to go, because other landlords do not want their children, or they do not want Negroes or Mexican-Americans or 'poor whites.'"

CLEVELAND CP Stronghold in UAW Weakens Stalinists Lose at Fisher Body

CLEVELAND, June 9—Annual elections recently completed at Fisher Body Local 45, UAW-CIO in Cleveland, dealt the heaviest blow yet to the administration forces, without completely eliminating their grip on the local union structure...

This year the Freedom Slate put out a full list of candidates, for nine officers, ten board members at large, and four shop committeemen at large. In this election the Beckman administration slate took the top three officers...

The Freedom Slate issued a campaign program based on the following points. The union needs a local seniority agreement to supplement the broad terms of the national General Motors contract...

Mexican-Americans Form New Group

A new organization for the defense of minorities has been formed, it is announced, by groups representing Spanish-speaking peoples in the U. S., covering the entire Southwest and buttressed particularly by organized Mexican-American leagues.

Named the American Council of Spanish-Speaking Peoples, it will serve as a clearinghouse for groups in California, Texas, New Mexico and Arizona. Issues such as jury duty, public housing and segregation are already on the agenda.

Idar also said that heavy poll taxes in some states are affecting Mexican-Americans as well as Negroes. Other cases under discussion include charges of racial segregation in public housing projects in Texas.

Anti-Franco Bulletin

The Committee to Defend Franco's Labor Victims, chaired by Norman Thomas, has begun to issue a news bulletin to keep the facts of the Spanish dictator's terror regime before the public.

It remains to be seen whether the federal housing authority can enforce its contract in the face of the vote against its project. While this project is certainly inadequate and only scratches the surface of the problem, socialists vigorously support all genuine ameliorative measures to ensure the health, happiness, and well-being of society's underdogs.

likely to contract tuberculosis... 13 to 30 times more likely to contract the venereal diseases, 12 times more likely to get diphtheria, three times more likely to get streptococcus infections, 3 to 60 times more likely to become juvenile delinquents.

Whereas the average cop shows extreme deference to big businessmen and their progeny when they get out of line, and use kid gloves occasionally in approaching the middle classes, slum residents who may be completely innocent of wrongdoing often get the mailed fist or nightstick by prejudiced officers.

It is no wonder such people, when they have the good fortune to afford better surroundings, move into the exclusive areas even if they have to face white-supremacy (or 200-per-cent "American") zealots who throw rocks or bombs.

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It Seems Charm Isn't Enough

(Continued from page 1) of the present administration.

What does Eisenhower stand for? What is his program for approaching the solution of the domestic problems which face the American people? Actually, all that needed to be known about his views in this field was known before he returned from abroad.

In his speech at Abilene, Eisenhower described the greatest internal threats to America as "disunity, inflation, excessive taxation, bureaucracy."

AGAINST FEPC

"Disunity" is the term used by Eisenhower to describe the struggle between capital and labor in this country, which has most recently exploded in the steel strike.

But how about the other kind of "disunity" in the country, the flagrant discrimination against people because of the color of their skin or their religion?

Eisenhower is flatly against a compulsory fair employment practices law (FEPC), and specially against a federal one. When asked about it his reply was: "I have no objection whatsoever to stating my unchangeable, my unalterable support of fairness and equality among all types of American citizens."

But he is against any compulsory legislation on the matter. "This I say with the utmost sympathy for anyone who feels himself to be a member of a group that has been depressed or unfairly treated..."

IT COSTS MONEY?

By the time of his second interview with the press it appears that the reaction to his opposition to real fair employment legislation had become so strongly impressed on his managers that he came out in favor of some kind of a commission without enforcement powers.

This is quite typical. The indignity and lifelong handicap of segregated education for its victims... well, that's just something that will have to get worked out somehow, preferably with good will. But it costs money, too! Well, if

that's so, I will have to really look into the matter.

Although this should lead us directly to Eisenhower's views on government expenditures and taxation, one other point must be made in passing, as it was by the candidate. Repeated efforts were made by reporters to draw him out on his attitude toward Senator McCarthy...

Up till now, the government has

been allegedly concerned with eliminating federal employees who are "bad security risks" or are "subversive." Eisenhower now adds the category of "pinkish" as a bar to federal employment.

The press is full of comment on Eisenhower's "refreshing frankness." On this question, we must admit, he is frank enough.

Eisenhower is against inflation, but he is also against controlling the economy, except through the traditional methods of manipulating the credit rates.

His heart is in it. That is as far as I can answer the question.

In short, it is clear that fundamentally Eisenhower stands on the economic and social views which so endeared Herbert Hoover to the American people.

public, and made available only through special order. It's true that censorship of any sort is dangerous, for it can easily creep into every facet of our social expression, as we witness on practically every major campus in America today.

Whether this note deserves answer or not, I wish you continued success. C. W. WESLEY, Charleston, W. Va. May 26

Our correspondent's reaction to The Birth of a Nation is understandable enough. Despite its historic role in the development of the motion picture, its anti-Negro bias disgusts decent people today.

It helps to keep in mind that the court's decision struck a blow

general services performed by the government for various sections of the population.

On this he has nothing specific to offer except to denounce waste and bureaucratism. When asked specifically about price support for agricultural products, he assured the assembled reporters that although he could not say anything about it specifically he is for ensuring that agriculture never suffers disaster due to natural causes and things which they cannot foresee.

On foreign policy he has no ideas other than those which have been followed by the administration, though at times he tends to put the objectives of these policies perhaps more clearly and frankly than do most politicians.

For instance, the crusade to save

democracy throughout the world is put in these terms:

"I am ready to do anything I know in this world to help to develop a workable, decent, satisfactory program of the promotion of the security and peace of the United States which I believe of course includes, necessarily, the peace and security of those nations with which we must trade in order to continue to exist."

WHERE'S THE CHARM?

But how is peace to be assured? We will all have to await the answer to this question. At the moment, all that Eisenhower tells us is that "if ever I can get a new idea of developing and reaching the objective of peace it is wonderful! I shall do it and without apology."

On the face of it, if logic were the decisive factor in American politics, Eisenhower would have to be ruled out as a contender for the presidency immediately.

Why, then, should anyone be for Eisenhower? Unless his Abilene radio speech was 'way off form, he does not even appear to have the dynamic personal qualities which would attract people who are blindly looking for a leader to lift political responsibility from their shoulders.

NOT SO BRIGHT

In view of the uncertainty in the Democratic Party, the question cannot be answered decisively as yet. In practice the voters do not choose on the basis of logic alone, they choose on the basis of alternatives. The greatest asset any opposition party can have is the administration's record.

Beyond that they will have to bank heavily on the general feeling of frustration which pervades the country; the feeling that even with high employment and the atom bomb at our disposal somehow the country is riding for a fall.

Readers Take the Floor...

To the Editor:

I have followed LABOR ACTION with keen interest over a period of several months. Your central ideas on international politics and the basis you advocate for national and local action meet my heartiest approval.

A matter that carries the crux of one such problem is the film, "Birth of a Nation." As a work of art and technique it was, and is, a brilliant achievement.

Those include, dominant in the film in fact, the "reasons" why the Negro must play a subordinate role in our society. We cannot justify the treatment by locating the film historically, for it was completed in 1914, at which point many Negroes had shown marked improvement under the greatest social handicaps.

SOCIALIST YOUTH LEAGUE
114 W. 14th St.
New York 11, N. Y.

I want more information about the Socialist Youth League.
I want to join the Socialist Youth League.

NAME
ADDRESS
CITY
ZONE
STATE
SCHOOL (IF STUDENT)

They're for a Free Press Too

At the recent convention of the Typographical Union, President Woodruff Randolph once more blasted monopoly practices in the American press. There is a monopoly not only in the field of newspaper publishing, he said, but also in the output of newspaper and in matrix services.

only one reason a sports promoter, dress maker or theater makes gifts to newspapermen—to purchase good will or influence. It irks me to see publishers get excited about influence-peddling in Washington, when the same thing goes on in their own shops."

An editorial in the same issue of the weekly journal of the newspaper business chided the newspaper publishers for holding their recent convention in New York behind closed doors. It began: "Mr. Publisher, has it ever occurred to you how absurd you must appear when you discuss 'censorship,' 'suppression of news,' 'freedom of the press'—and do so behind closed doors?"

Read THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

The ISL Program in Brief

The Independent Socialist League stands for socialist democracy and against the two systems of exploitation which now divide the world: capitalism and Stalinism.

Capitalism cannot be reformed or liberalized, by any Fair Deal or other deal, so as to give the people freedom, abundance, security or peace. It must be abolished and replaced by a new social system, in which the people own and control the basic sectors of the economy, democratically controlling their own economic and political destinies.

Stalinism, in Russia and wherever it holds power, is a brutal totalitarianism—a new form of exploitation. Its agents in every country, the Communist Parties, are unrelenting enemies of socialism and have nothing in common with socialism—which cannot exist without effective democratic control by the people.

These two camps of capitalism and Stalinism are today at each other's throats in a world-wide imperialist rivalry for domination. This struggle can only lead to the most frightful war in history so long as the people leave the capitalist and Stalinist rulers in power. Independent Socialism stands for building and strengthening the Third Camp of the people against both war blocs.

The ISL, as a Marxist movement, looks to the working class and its ever-present struggle as the basic progressive force in society. The ISL is organized to spread the ideas of socialism in the labor movement and among all other sections of the people.

At the same time, Independent Socialists participate actively in every struggle to better the people's lot now—such as the fight for higher living standards, against Jim Crow and anti-Semitism, in defense of civil liberties and the trade-union movement. We seek to join together with all other militants in the labor movement as a left force working for the formation of an independent labor party and other progressive policies.

The fight for democracy and the fight for socialism are inseparable. There can be no lasting and genuine democracy without socialism, and there can be no socialism without democracy. To enroll under this banner, join the Independent Socialist League!

MARXISM FOR TODAY

HOW NOT TO EXPLAIN SOCIAL CHANGE

By PHILIP COBEN

In an essay in the *Nation* last month, Joseph Wood Krutch looks for and finds a reason for the growth of religious attitudes among our intellectuals in recent times. He complains that even the religious intellectual Johnny-come-latelies too often assign social motivations, themselves. This is dangerous because it lends color to the tendency of "naturalistic positivism" and Marxism to explain the flight to the church in radical social terms—the breakdown of social hopes in a society which is itself breaking down. He has a different answer, satisfactorily non-materialist:

"What seems to me increasingly clear is simply that scientific materialism, Marxist determinism, and the anthropologist's relativism are alike incapable of providing certain things which we cannot get along without. . . .

"I strongly doubt that any considerable number of 'intellectuals' find either the concept of revelation or Christianity as an institution congenial in itself. Mysteries, sacraments, dogmas, and scholastic metaphysics are all stumbling-blocks. But a Christian can believe in the effectiveness of his own decisions, and he can make value judgments. To gain these two inestimable privileges a considerable number of people, seeing no other way of achieving them, make a desperate effort to believe that they can accept a faith upon which they were once based." (May 17—My emphasis.)

It would take more space than this column to discuss free will and determinism, and it's been done before. What we are concerned with is something else: Krutch's apparent belief that he has given an explanation, good or bad, right or wrong.

Grant for the sake of argument (though it is not in the least true) that scientific materialism and Marxist determinism are logically or philosophically incompatible with making decisions or value judgments. This might be considered, then, a reasonable ground for refusing to be a scientific materialist or Marxist. But Krutch thinks he is doing something else—namely, giving an historical explanation, explaining something which has happened in society, the drift toward the consolations of religion.

Krutch's Difficulties

If an historical change from an ideological tendency (one which existed for a fairly long period) is explained merely by the claim that the new opinion is true and the other false, then the question to be explained is merely shifted. Why then did the false opinion exist for so long? Also: are there reasons, worth investigation, why men's minds have finally rallied to the "true" opinion?

If the "uses of religion" (Krutch's title) have now made themselves evident to men through the mere passage of time and the efficacy of thought, how does history select which errors shall be punished by these means and which shall remain to plague us?—for surely Krutch will agree that many errors remain, some of them even less tenable than the materialistic nuisance which is now so happily gone. And how does history decide just when the bright truth will dawn on the minds of the intellectuals? And since we will all agree that the mere passage of time and application of thought do not insure, and never have insured, against the existence of errors, just why is Krutch under the impression that he has explained the change to the truth by merely asserting that the new opinion is true (or truer, or better, or more useful, or however Krutch wishes to put it)?

But Krutch has an even more serious difficulty. His explanation for the new religiosity is that the religious view permits "two inestimable privileges," making decisions and making value judgments, since materialism negates "free will." Men need these privileges and therefore they turn to religion to obtain them.

Yet, we must surely know, in the bad old days men notoriously found no difficulty whatsoever in making either decisions or value judgments, and acting on both quite vigorously, in spite of the fact that they lived in regrettable error. Certainly Krutch is not claiming that men have just found out the necessity of these "privileges." In that men have just found out of all, the Marxists (the most consistent materialists), have been most insistent on the need for action, which involves both decisions and value judgments. Not only that, but in these regenerate days, it is still the Marxists who live for a program of social action (however distasteful the program may be to Krutch); whereas so many of an incensus, are paralyzed by despair, doubt, soul-searching and other difficulties not known to stimulate decision-making.

You see, we have not been "refuting" Krutch. It has not been necessary. For his "explanation" merely was: men have come to this new opinion because they have decided to come to this opinion. Which is what an idealist interpretation of history often boils down to.



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BOOKS and Ideas Samuel Lubell's Book on Politics and Parties in the U.S.

'The Future of American Politics' Surveys the Past

THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN POLITICS, by Samuel Lubell.—Harper & Bros., New York, 285 pages, \$3.50.

By WALTER BARRON

In this presidential election year, when politics is most fascinating as a game and most serious for those actively interested, Lubell's book has been one of the most favorably received of the recently published volumes. It has little appeal to those who want to size up candidates and parties or become amateur prognosticators for 1952. Its popularity comes from its supposed set of clues to an understanding of the direction of American politics from the late twenties up to now.

As such it is a valuable achievement, which this reviewer recommends for reading. It is particularly refreshing after the long series of "exposés" which view political events as the product of one or more "conspirators"—Franklin Roosevelt, Alger Hiss, Joe McCarthy, Cardinal Spellman, Sidney Hillman, corrupt political bosses or the Mafia.

But it is not the long sought-for popularly written field manual to the political scene that some reviewers have made it out to be; above all, it hardly warrants the author's claim that he has "a new theory of the nature of American politics," and that if this is valid, "a good many textbooks on American politics will have to be rewritten."

There is nothing essentially "new" about either his context or his details. The over-all framework is the much discussed "complexity of American life" and American politics; the specific picture, as later detailed, has been often enough described by journalists, social scientists, and even politicians, though not in such easily read fashion or with the specific terms used.

Above all, there are important elements of recent and current politics that are handled very inadequately, if at all. Such problems as the reasons for the New Deal and the opposition to it, the background of World War II and the whims of the cold war are considered, at best, only casually. Policy questions are mostly a backdrop for organizational alignments and elections.

Election Trends

Moreover, even on the organizational plane the analysis is weak. Pressure groups are not formally featured, the changing character of political machines is not sketched, nor are the actual internal structures of the political parties delineated. There is nothing on the process of legislative and executive decision.

What Lubell has done, primarily, is analyze elections—who (by and large) votes for whom, why they do so, the relationship of such voting to political alignments and therefore to legislative and executive policies. The presentation is less systematic than the author's journalistic abilities make it appear; there are a series of historical notes, unquoted use of voting studies, anecdotal statistics and illustrative interviews from particular localities culled from post-election articles that Lubell did from time to time for the *Saturday Evening Post*.

In summing up his principal themes, it is necessary to ignore some sections and go lightly over others. Descrip-

tions of particular elections, one of the most interesting features of the book, have to be left out, in favor of a digest of the main line of argument and a critical appraisal of the conclusions.

To summarize the principal election trends, the United States has shifted from a country with a Republican majority to one with Democratic Party dominance. Although both eras saw a leading political party in both control and appeal, each has been the typical American coalition of many diverse elements. However, the major factor of this trend has been the increased importance of the urban population, particularly the large number of poor immigrant offspring who came of age in the industrial cities.

The Democrat Party was "their" party even before the New Deal, partly because the Republicans were the "in" group, partly because Republicans were closely associated with the wealthy and with the "old American stock." Even the Democratic machines gave them more patronage than the equally strong Republican city machines.

The maturation of the predominantly working-class urban immigrant stock, coinciding with the increased urbanization of the country, saw city "radicalism" replace the predominant agrarian radicalism that had been part of the inner-party struggles of both parties. At the famous 1924 deadlocked Democratic convention were arrayed the two symbols of protest—[William Jennings] Bryan of the overmortgaged Bible Belt, [Al] Smith of the underpaid melting pot. The now archaic and trivial form this struggle took, the battle over prohibition, was a queer sociological manifestation of this rural-urban split.

Smith's nomination in 1928 revealed the electoral power of his side—the group the "out" party thought most necessary to solicit for votes. Only one feature of the results of that election has usually been publicized, Smith's considerable losses in the South. More significant is this fact: he won a majority of the vote in the twelve largest cities.

The New Deal Coalition

The 1932 election mostly saw a further shift of these same elements to the Democrats, plus the addition of many foreclosed farmers. But whereas farmers tended to go back to their Republican allegiances in 1936, the New Deal measures further intensified the support of the urban immigrant plebeian, with the additional increment of Negroes who were abandoning their post-Civil War Republican voting habits. The Democratic machine politicians and the New Dealers, working together, were the recipients of this mass support; combined with the traditional Southern Democratic vote, it gave Roosevelt his sensational 46-state victory.

After the 1938 elections, the New Deal as a vigorous legislative program was at an end, though its essential contribution to the role of the federal government in economic life has become permanent. The recession of that year helped bring renewed life to the Republicans as an electoral force; they, plus the conservative Southern Democrats, independent of the national administration from now on, have usually been able to take over congressional leadership (a process assisted by the overrepresentation of rural areas in Congress). Since that time to date the legislative and executive branches of the national government have been in a steady series of conflicts and armed truces, producing a relative "stalemate" in effective domestic politics.

But whatever shifts in electoral support there have been from time to time, such as those of particular nationality groups under the influence of international questions, the New Deal coalition has remained the crucial political group. External forces of war and economy, the opposition of the Southerners, and the felt need to placate other groups in the population has prevented much New Deal legislation. Yet New Deal voters have remained the viable center of American political life, and when New Deal politics have been able to win over other Democrats and "liberal" Republicans, as on foreign policy, they have dominated national legislative and executive decision.

There have been several especially pertinent post-war developments. Lubell notes that full-employment economy has put the old down-trodden urbanite into a "new middle class," generally conservative but with anxious memories of the depression. He never defines what he means by "middle class," but it would seem to be based upon income criteria, which he prefers to symbolize by "freshly-painted houses."

Political "Solar Systems"

But also implicit is a change in social status, as the former alienated immigrant outsider definitely appears to have "arrived." As a conservative, he wants to hold what he has. When that is threatened by inflation, he becomes lukewarm toward the Democrats as advocates of government spending, as in 1946 and 1950. When there is a danger of possible depression, as seemed to be the case in 1948, he turns back strongly to the Democrats against the Republicans, who then appear as the dangerous "innovators."

We read further that correlated with their growing conservatism has been the equal conservatism of their most prominent mass organizations—the trade unions—stronger than ever organizationally but politically weaker than in 1936. Leaders and rank and file have both lost their verve; the membership can be sold on a political line only when there is an obvious threat, as when Taft-Hartley looked as though it could immediately seriously harm the unions in 1948, and the Republicans presented a fearsome prospect of possible slump.

There are special items considered by Lubell: the strains and stresses produced by Negro migration to Northern cities and increased Negro assertiveness in the South; the

possibilities of a two-party South from the growing Republican identification of the region's "new middle class" (and here the criterion appears to be occupational); the maintenance of isolationism as a continuing myth when the idea has lost its meaning; the fluctuation of the farm vote with the same inflation-depression anxieties as urbanites but starting from a Republican center. We cannot discuss all of these.

All of Lubell's analysis is summed up in a quaint astronomical analogy for the political-party system. At different times, one party has been the "sun" of the political "solar system," a body with widely divergent pressures yet held together by strong gravitational forces. The opposition has been the "moon," operating only as a reflection of the sun. The years 1928 to 1936 saw a definite shift from a Republican to a Democratic solar system. Since then, we have seen a process of chunking off and return of different components of the Democratic central celestial body; the Republican gravitational attraction has not been sufficient to form a new sun. In fact, if one part of the "sun" drifts away, another may adhere more strongly, as happened in 1948.

But as earlier indicated, it is a very ineffective and unstable solar system, though there is no sign of a new one forming. Blocs of voters may chip off and give the Republicans victory in 1952 (especially with Eisenhower's candidacy), but the Republicans will have the same problems in office and will be less able to hold together divergent elements. We will, therefore, continue to live in a "political twilight," waiting for the new solar system which is not yet in anyone's analytical telescope.

Before going into an evaluation of Lubell's presentation, we need a more detailed statement of his chapter on the labor movement, appropriately titled "The Dynamo Slows Down." It is mostly the story of the growing conservatism of both leaders and rank and file. Labor is actively in politics more than ever, but its power has clearly waned. Leaders are fearful of alienating both their own membership and their allies in the Democratic Party. They could readily stimulate devotion to their political program when it was part of the organizing process. But now, according to Lubell, it is unable "to deliver its membership except in the direction toward which that membership is inclined," which would be a tautological statement except for the implied limitations on the directions of their inclination.

Middle Class in Politics

They could round up enthusiastic support for Truman when the membership thought the Taft-Hartley Act could actually be used as "slave labor" legislation. But they could not defeat Taft in 1950 when the potential restrictions of the act had not been realized. And the unions have not been able, according to the author, to prevent some of its membership from accepting propaganda that "labor is becoming too big politically" (this last conclusion is a typical generalization that Lubell sometimes makes after a few interviews). To put this in our own language, which Lubell would undoubtedly not use, the leaders have no lasting political program to offer the membership; thus political support and activity are not regularly stimulated.

With all due criticisms and misgivings, with obvious disagreement on many points, his condensed version of political party trends is essentially sound. Our criticisms would center mostly about the post-war discussion. That the "stalemate" has continued is undoubtedly true; Truman, as the individual prototype of it, is aptly described as a "man fighting stubbornly, and yes, courageously, to avoid decision."

The relative conservatism of the full-employment era is a valid observation. But too much is geared to the crazy notion of the "new middle class" (having no connection with C. Wright Mill's use of the same term).

Is he describing a large-scale upward occupational mobility? As a long-term trend, numerous studies have established the cessation of any such mass climb since World War I (for the total society, not for any specific set of individuals). If he limits it to the tremendous occupational change from unemployment or membership in a "locked-out generation" to relatively secure jobs, there is no dispute. If he means that immigrant groups have improved their social status, that too is acceptable; but this merely makes them less of a special problem, making their problems close to those of the entire American population, a notion which Lubell seems to assent to in his observation of the relative "nationalization" of politics through the New Deal era. If he means that there has been an increase in consumer's income, whatever dispute there may be about pre- and post-war figures, it is again a completely valid belief that those who roamed the country in box cars or lived in Hoovervilles are now better off in their overpriced homes and apartments. The new middle class may thus include only those who have been allowed some entry, however slight and insecure, into acceptance as full citizens.

Where Do We Go from Here?

Where may we go from here? On this Lubell offers little help. One might at least have hoped for a comprehensive listing of possible contingencies. Broadly following his own scheme, some conceivable predictions can be tried. Neither Lubell nor we can discuss this in the eventuality of an actual world war, for "all bets would then be off." He does indicate that a depression-in-sight would reinvigorate New-Dealism and the labor movement. Neither of us sees that as a likely turn in the immediate future. What we both expect is a continuation of the present shaky permanent war economy prosperity in the cold-war setting.

Jobs will continue, but occupational mobility will be ever more blocked. Consumers' income should go down through the mechanism of steady inflation, which Lubell recognizes as a very important element in the current political scene. He stipulates that inflationary fears bring gains to the Republicans as the enemy of government spending. Are they not also the opponents of government price control? That is just about completely ignored.

Even if such a break from the Democrats follows inflation, will the typical Democratic voter go Republican—that is, regularly support the party still identified, in his eyes, with Hoover, Wall Street, Park Avenue, and the Mayflower? Although he does not state so definitely, such a permanent switch is not pictured, except for those few who move to Wall Street and Park Avenue. Despite shifts in individual elections, will these inflation-ridden Democratic voters generally stay Democratic? Lubell completely avoids even a tentative answer.

As the stalemate continues, as neither party shows any method for overcoming inflation, because each is fundamentally geared to administering a capitalist economy in the cold-war setting, the typical "newly-arrived" former down-trodden urbanite will become restive. The labor movement is already forced to resort to industrial action to overcome it, despite any conservatism of leaders and members. The number of such industrial city and town dwellers will increase with further industrialization and the farmers' continuing shipment of surplus population to them. The shift from "rustic politics," which Lubell so carefully chronicles up to 1936 and then forgets, will become even stronger. He who gets the urban masses, regardless of any uneasy "middle-class" status, will form the center of the new political "solar system." The Democrats may not be able to hold them; the Republicans seem incapable of getting them.

Lubell merely dismisses the idea of a Labor Party with such quips as "ivory tower of a futile third party" and insistence that the "strength of the Democratic appeal reflects the many different ways through which Roosevelt touched and lifted the aspirations of the urban masses," including "ethnic and religious factors as well as economic." But elsewhere he speaks of a movement away from the Democrats as a result of inflationary pressures, which he does not concisely fit into his "new theory of politics."

The traditional hold of the Democrats on city dwellers remains strong, on economic, religious and ethnic grounds. This sets up a difficult initial obstacle for any new party. The Republicans seem unable to overcome it. A militantly programmatic party can.

The possibility for such a party existed at least twice in the recent past. Lubell's easy avoidance of such historical background is part of his lack of discussion of alternatives, revealing a fairly unimaginative and rigid approach (the type of appellation usually reserved for attacks on Marxists.)

Toward a New "Sun"

In the early New Deal days, a Labor Party was not only seriously discussed within the growing labor movement but received a considerable proportion of the votes at the 1935 AFL convention. Labor's Non-Partisan League and the American Labor Party in New York were answers to this pressure. Is it not conceivable that American politics would have been quite different if that resolution had passed?

Even more significantly, the possibilities of the 1946-48 period are ignored by Lubell. It must not be forgotten, in the light of the current synthetic heroism of Truman as a fantastic result of the steel seizure, that the same president tried to draft railroad strikers, that the UAW was on record for considering a new party, that AFL leaders like William Green told the Democrats that the labor movement might go on its own, that Dan Tobin threatened to go the "British way," Truman's '48 whistle-stop minority, the unexpected victory in the election and the poor showing of Wallace scotched any new political party for the immediate period. The return of such ideas remains a distinct possibility in the inflationary future on the basis of Lubell's own analysis.

Also pertinent to charting the possible future roads is that phase of contemporary politics which Lubell ignores—the loyalty-oath witchhunt atmosphere and the anti-labor drives which may be yet only in embryo. Particularly in reaction to the latter, the labor movement may be impelled further toward political independence; its warnings about the perils of Taft-Hartley would then not have the academic note they have seemed to possess for many workers.

Pressed by the rigors of income-reducing inflation, the squeeze on the standard of living induced by the Permanent War Economy, and the restrictions on labor that have and will become a part of cold-war America, both leaders and rank and file in the labor movement should again become increasingly attentive to the idea of independent politics. The uneasy stalemate of the twilight can end with a labor party as a new "sun" of the American political solar-system. If that is not the outcome, the sleep-walking drift to a garrison state will continue, no matter which party is in temporary ascendancy.

As mentioned earlier, Lubell's predictive efforts add up to almost nothing. He does not lay out any substantial contingencies that can produce any way out of the stalemate which he describes and frets over. This limits his book as an analytical work, however competent a piece of historical résumé it may be.

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THE ANTI-ANTI-WITCHHUNTERS:

By HAL DRAPER

One article in one magazine, even if that magazine is widely regarded as liberal, does not constitute a trend. But when that article excites wide praise from prominent liberals, gets reprinted, and has (I am told, wrongly I hope) been greeted enthusiastically in at least some liberal circles as a "brilliant" statement of the liberal viewpoint, it deserves a close look at any rate.

That is, when it's an article like the one entitled "Civil Liberties, 1952—A Study in Confusion," by the managing editor of *Commentary*, Irving Kristol, in the March issue of that magazine.

If it were merely Kristol, it could be shrugged off by liberalism's best friends. But to our amazement the May issue of the same magazine bears witness to the fact that it was apparently not an aberration. Norman Thomas writes of it: "magnificent service . . . [Kristol is one of those] who understand what civil liberties mean in our modern society and how they must be defended." The chairman of the board of the American Civil Liberties Union, Ernest Angell, says: "real contribution . . . goes to the heart of our basic problem. I agree heartily with his thesis." John Haynes Holmes: "fine job . . . perhaps we will wake up in time, especially under the shock of such an article as this in *Commentary*." And others.

That Kristol's piece has had an impact is testified to also, perhaps, by the fact that the current *Partisan Review* carries a sort of reply to it by Richard H. Rovere, who makes fine mince out of some of Kristol's "brilliant" points—until he too caves in before Kristol's viewpoint, if not before his logic. We shall see that Rovere's concessions in his *attack* on Kristol is in a way as revealing as the latter's brash defense of the witchhunt system in the U. S.

Yes, that is what *Commentary's* managing editor is doing; but it is not one of your blunt, forthright and open (i. e., "reactionary") vindications of the loyalty-oath network, subversive lists and Smith Acts. It is written for liberals.

And if one reads it very fast one might even get the impression that Kristol is doing something quite different—namely, giving liberals some excellent points of advice on how to fight McCarthyism. For Kristol has one good handle, and he uses it for what it's worth. We will look at this first and give it full credit, the better to make clear what the article is really about.

What Kristol Seems to Say

Kristol is not for "McCarthyism"; in fact, his formal framework is an attack on prominent civil-libertarians for giving fuel to McCarthy's attacks. His attack is centered especially on Professor Henry Steele Commager, the "distinguishing historian who never was a Communist and never will be" (clean bill of health); on Alan Barth, author of *The Loyalty of Free Men*; on Zechariah Chafee, the Harvard law professor who wrote the standard *Free Speech in the United States* and who has attacked the current witchhunt in many articles and speeches; on Francis Biddle, ADA head and author of *Fear of Freedom*.

He does not overtly attack them because they defend civil liberties for Stalinists. He seems rather to attack them for being naive or ignorant about the Stalinists whose civil liberties they support. This is no great discovery, to be sure, as far as we are concerned, but it is certainly a legitimate point. Above all, we would not quarrel with the charge that they are "politically naive," though we might not always point to the same evidence for the opinion.

He pushes the charge further, not limiting it to Commager, Chafee et al.; on the contrary his sharpest language is almost invariably directed against "liberals" inclusively.

FOR THE FAST READERS

It is wrong to believe that "because a vulgar demagogue lashes out at both Communism and liberalism as identical, it is necessary to protect Communism in order to defend liberalism." (What liberals do this today? Some, or many? An important point. All? Absurd. Fair Dealers on the whole? No. The ADA? It was organized on an "anti-Communist" basis. Kristol never shows the slightest awareness that the most prominent liberal organization is being slandered if his broad words are taken seriously. But he has something there, even though it is used irresponsibly? Yes indeed, and we have written about it many times ourselves.)

Perhaps the fast readers were impressed by this: "If one wishes to defend the civil liberties of Communists . . . one must do so on the same grounds that one defends the civil liberties of Nazis and fascists—no more, no less." Fundamentally true. The reader is led to assume that the objects of the attack are "soft" on Stalinism, though not Stalinists of any degree themselves.

In fact, this point is used as the summary paragraph for the article, and even fast readers do not skip last

Examining Irving Kristol's Attack on Defenders

paragraphs: "But if a liberal wishes to defend the civil liberties of Communists or of Communist fellow travelers, he must enter the court of American opinion with clean hands and a clear mind. . . . He must speak as one of us, defending their liberties. To the extent he insists that they are on our side, that we can defend our liberties only by uncritically defending theirs, he will be taken as speaking as one of them." That's Kristol's italics and the end of his article.

Very true, and important. He pushes it still further. Why does "the liberal" behave this way? Because he looks on Stalinism as "left," diametrically opposed to fascism which is "right." He looks at Communism out of the left corner of his eye. He considers it "a political trend continuous with liberalism and democratic socialism," only more impatient, more radical and more to the left. Again: true and important, if Kristol were talking of a tendency among liberals.

All these things "unite for a liberal prejudgment of issues (e.g., the cases of Alger Hiss, Owen Lattimore, William Remington, Harry Dexter White). . . ." We note that his parenthetical examples of "issues" are cases of individual men—"issues" of evidence, not opinion. We are willing to go along with the criticism, but for a different reason than is indicated by Kristol's context: when the McCarthyite witchhunt tactics against these men is denounced on the ground that the victims are not Stalinists, it is too often true that the main principle is being conceded in effect; the implication may be that what is wrong with the witchhunt is that it is directed against "innocent" men, that it would be justified if the accused turned out to be Stalinists after all. Hence the discomfiture of his liberal defenders when Hiss was convicted of having been a Stalinist.

WITH "CLEAN HANDS"?

In short, if the above specimens really represented the burden of Kristol's argument, it might appear that he was telling Commager, Barth and the others: *Look here, my friends and fellow opponents of witchhunts, you sacrifice a great deal of effectiveness for your joint objective when you leave any doubt about which side you are on, yourself. It is all right if you defend the Stalinists' civil liberties, but you must make clear that you are doing so as an opponent of Stalinism, that you are defending civil liberties and not Stalinists as such, and also that you can distinguish a Stalinist when you see one. Don't be afraid to call a spade a spade, in the first place; and in the second place, get smartened up.*

In fact, in this case Kristol would be usefully criticizing the above-mentioned defenders of civil liberties as "one of us." He would be advising them on how to be more effective. One might wonder about his use of the phrase "clean hands" to describe this, but at any rate in such case he, Kristol, would be entering into the argument with Commager and colleagues with "clean hands" himself.

Nothing of the sort is true. We have merely been calling selected passages in order to try to give an idea of what may conceivably have impressed the gullible. The above presentation has no more resemblance to the real viewpoint of the article than a holiday-peroration by McCarthy about "our way of life" has to the real ideology of McCarthy.

What Kristol Really Says

Nowhere in the article does this valiant opponent of "confusion" and moral advocate of forthrightness declare himself, in so many words and directly, on the main issue: the civil liberties of Stalinists. He never says he is against the viewpoint of Commager, Barth and Chafee on this question. He snipes at this or that real weakness of theirs; he makes a quick end-run to turn a flank; he picks off a sentence in one of their works to make a point which is sometimes valid on a different level; he proves they are confused about Stalinism and declines to discuss their viewpoint on civil liberties. This may deserve hailing as a "brilliant" exhibition of artful dodging, for all I know, but I am willing to leave that judgment to connoisseurs.

Yet he makes his viewpoint perfectly clear. He does this repeatedly not by direct statement but by simply assuming the principles on which the witchhunt is based. He does not even devote a passing word to recognizing the existence of the arguments used by Chafee, Barth and the others against these principles. And when he does finally indicate a positive viewpoint, it is literally done parenthetically in the midst of another argument; but we shall see that it leaves not a shred hanging on any principles of civil liberty.

Let us first exhibit his method.

1. The Shura Lewis Case

This is set up by Kristol on the basis of an incident for which he goes back five years, to 1947. In an article at that time, Professor Commager referred to, it as an

example of anti-Communist hysteria. A Mrs. Shura Lewis, Russian-born, gave a talk on Russia at a Washington, D. C. high school. As Kristol describes the result himself, explaining "what greatly disturbed Professor Commager": the speech gave "rise to a furor in Washington. Congressmen belittled that our schools were being subverted, the principle of the school came forward with a humble apology, the superintendent of schools for the nation's capital swore it would never happen again, and the speech itself was reprinted (after some discussion) in the Congressional Record as a horrible example."

Was THIS sequence of tempestuous reactions an example of hysteria? Could THESE things have happened except in a climate of hysteria? Kristol does not even discuss this. (We are exhibiting his method: watch!) For our naive Commager inserted the following sentence in his article: "She [Mrs. Lewis] said nothing that any normal person could find objectionable."

His goose is cooked. Kristol does not have to discuss hysteria. For a half page of the magazine, he quotes the speech from the Congressional Record; it is obviously a whitewash of the Russian regime, pro-Stalinist. Not "objectionable"? He yells triumphantly at Commager, why, it is "a tissue of lies." A heap of polite abuse is thereupon dumped on Commager's head. "For Professor Commager to defend the rights of Communists to free speech is one thing, for him to assert that there is nothing objectionable in mendacious pleading in support of Communism is quite another."

COMMAGER'S NAIVETE

As we have noted, Kristol has slyly substituted the offending sentence for a discussion of whether or not the Shura Lewis case evidenced anti-red hysteria, which was the point of Commager's article. But this is not all. Does Kristol think that Commager himself found the woman's views not "objectionable"? Obviously not, since Commager was given a clean bill of health. Does it occur to Kristol that Commager's meaning may be that there was nothing "objectionable" in the speech of such a nature as to make it forbidden for a high school talk, as a presentation of a point of view? Perhaps Kristol thought he was meeting this when he remarks that "Mrs. Lewis was not introduced as a Communist apologist. . . ." Does he insist that NAM supporters be introduced as apologists for big business? Make your own guess.

In any case, how can Commager "defend the rights of Communists to free speech" without pointing out that such free speech is obviously up a creek when the school superintendent of the capital has to apologize publicly for permitting Mrs. Lewis to talk?

That Commager was naive in his formulation of the one sentence is a dead certainty, if only because he has to reckon with the fact that there are honest men like Kristol around.

It would be still another question—several cuts above the level of Kristol's polemic—to discuss the educational value of letting students hear a live presentation of the Stalinist point of view, of "the other side." Or is this settled by the argument that tender high school minds should not be "contaminated"? In any case, this need not be discussed here, for fear of giving the impression that this has anything to do with Kristol's approach. He has proved that Mrs. Lewis' talk was pro-Stalinist; the case is closed for him.

2. The Lawyers Guild Case

Attacking the House Un-American Activities Committee, Commager instanced its probe of the Lawyers Guild. He stressed the fact that the "chief basis" for the committee's assault "is, as far as we know, that the Guild has proffered its services to the defense of Communists under indictment for violation of the Smith Act. We need not inquire into the accuracy of this charge [my emphasis—H. D.] or into the degree of zeal displayed by the Lawyers Guild." What is relevant here, says Commager, is the effect of the committee's type of attack in discouraging lawyers from taking "subversive" cases.

Kristol does nothing but grab onto Commager's phrase "we need not inquire. . . ." Aha, he polemizes, Commager says we need not inquire into. . . . the Guild's zeal for "pro-Communism"! On the contrary, "the degree of this zeal and the accuracy of the charge of pro-Communism are precisely what we do need to inquire into." And then he gives himself away:

"How can we know whether to sanction or condemn the committee's investigation of the Guild as a pro-Communist organization unless we make an effort to find out if the Guild is or is not, in fact, a pro-Communist organization?"

For Kristol, a judgment on the House Un-American Committee's witchhunt tactics, procedures, types of accusation and smear-policies depends on one thing—whether or not its chosen victim, at any time, does or does not turn out to be pro-Stalinist "in fact." After all. Does he know the scale on which even liberal lawyers have been intimidated from taking "subversive" cases, even for non-Stalinists and anti-Stalinists? It does not concern him.

THE SOLE QUESTION

Is he aware that the denunciation of the House committee (by liberals who do not look at the Stalinists from

A Study in 'Totalitarian Liberalism' Of Civil Liberties in 'Commentary' Magazine

the left corner, etc.) is based on their view that the committee's methods and objectives cast a "pall of fear" over the country whether or not they prove anything? This does not concern him. Does he ask himself what it shows about the state of mind of the country's witch-hunters when the ponderous machinery of government is devoted on such a scale, and with such public consequences, to labeling a group as Stalinist—which is not yet a crime—even when occasionally they hit it right? This does not concern him.

Does he dispute Commager's statement that the "chief basis" for the House committee's attack on the Guild (not for Kristol's or our objection to the Guild) was the particular charge which "greatly disturbed" the historian? He does not, though a fast reader might think so.

Kristol's sole question is: Is or is not the Guild pro-Stalinist? If it is, the case is closed, for him.

"Brilliant" . . .

3. The U. of California Case

Commager has discussed the "purges" going on in the universities and argued that they do not make the institutions "stronger in those essentials that go to make a university."

Kristol asks sarcastically: "Just which universities would Professor Commager describe as 'purged'? Not Columbia, he answers; not Yale, Princeton, Harvard, or Chicago. "The list could be extended indefinitely, and never provoke an affirmative response, for there is not a single university in the United States that can be said to have been, in any meaningful sense of the word, 'purged.'" Stalinist college teachers have been fired in "no more than a handful of cases," and non-Stalinists have been "unjustly" fired in "less than a handful of cases." Commager's charge is "to echo Communist propaganda."

Does Kristol know that the dismissal of "the handful" of teachers, after red-scares and red-hunts and investigations and questionings and loyalty oaths, is more than enough to throw the rest of the faculties into a quaking fear of non-conformism?

Does his "handful of cases" include those where a teacher has been held back from promotion—which is sufficient unto the purpose—or those cases that could not be and were not publicized as horrible examples, because no fight was made, or none could be made? Doesn't he know that the main witchhunt has been in colleges supported by state or city funds, and not in the ones he conveniently lists? Was the New York Times also echoing "Communist propaganda," perhaps because it is soft on Stalinism, in its series of articles on the pall of fear on the campus? Does he know anything about the extent of the inquisition in the public school systems, only a fraction of which makes the news items?

"PHILOSOPHY" OF TOTALITARISM

None of this concerns him. He is as "objective" about his "handful of cases" as a Southerner who curses the damn interfering Yankees because, after all, only a "handful" of Negroes get lynched—and who uses this fact to cover up for the Jim Crow system, or who uses this fact to make an easy contrast with the Russian slave-labor camps.

Even Kristol's bravado does not go to the point of ignoring the case of the University of California's loyalty-oath witchhunt. He gives it a genteel paragraph as delicately worded as a Hollywood flunkey's brave venture to disagree with his boss. He is against such loyalty oaths because they don't catch Stalinists. But this is only another reason to attack—Commager, for saying that this "does not differ 'in any essentials' from the philosophy behind the totalitarian control of university teaching."

Does he discuss Commager's reasoning on this point, "brilliantly" or no? He does not even mention it. It is enough for him to close the case with "One swallow does not make a spring, or one injustice an apocalypse." (This is his full reply, literally!)

What was the "philosophy" behind the U. of C. loyalty-oath purge? That a competent scholar and teacher has no right to teach unless his political views (whether or not they can be demonstrated to affect his competence) are within an area satisfactory to the state power; further, that he must publicly proclaim his political conformity in a special oath in order to keep his post. Is this related to the essence of the totalitarian approach? All Kristol knows is that one swallow does not make an apocalypse, or some brilliant and original idea like that.

4. Passports

There has been something of a scandal raised by liberals about the State Department's passport policy. The "handful of cases" that have become *causes célèbres* concern very prominent personages; they are only an index to the authoritarian powers assumed by the government. The prominent examples most recently have been Dr. Linus Pauling, the famous chemist, and a Brooklyn clergyman.

In Kristol's rejoinder to criticism (in the May issue) he "grapples" with this issue. (But not with the witch-hunt policy of the government regarding visas to visitors, and not with a dozen other issues for which, presumably,

he can think of no brilliant dodge.)

Here is how he disposes of the passport question: Can we expect the government to hand out passports to "Communist couriers," he asks? (Perhaps they are carrying atom-bomb secrets through Customs inspection in double-locked briefcases, and so we shall not even question what he means by Communist couriers.) And surely we cannot expect Communist couriers to admit that they are Communist couriers, he continues with incisive logic. Therefore we must give the government the benefit of the doubt. . . .

The "Communist courier" in this argument is without doubt the most useful one possessed by the Kremlin. Was then Dr. Pauling or the Brooklyn clergyman suspected of being a Communist courier, even by the State Department, or does even the State Department justify and explain its policy on the "practical" ground of keeping Communist couriers from using passports—as if they would need them for any dirty work at the crossroads? Not a bit.

If and when the government decides that the infamous Stalinist system of *internal passports* must be applied in this country, with police searches at appropriate occasions, should we not give the government the benefit of the doubt in order to make things hard for Communist couriers, spies, saboteurs transporting bombs by street-car, and general no-goods?

But Kristol has brilliantly posed the issue of "For or against Communist couriers?" and the case is closed on the question of passports.

5. Government Loyalty Oaths

The "Communist courier" method is a godsend for a brilliant polemist who "goes to the heart of our basic problem." What he does to the heart of it when he gets there is another matter.

Take the government purge of employees, down to file clerks in the Newark Veterans Administration (as in the Kutcher case). We meet the Communist courier here too in another guise. Kristol asks guilelessly: Has not the government the right to keep Stalinists out of "sensitive" posts in the administration?

Do not expect Kristol to discuss whether a VA file clerk is a sensitive post, or whether the outcry at the loyalty board investigations has been directed at its exclusive concentration on sensitive posts. He will "reply," brilliantly, that Alger Hiss had a sensitive post, and he is not visibly concerned over what has been happening in the witchhunt atmosphere in which thousands of others have been enraptured. Do not expect him to discuss (for example) Alan Barth's crushing indictment of the loyalty boards' hearings and methods. He got the naive Barth wound up on the Hiss and Lattimore "issues" and that was that.

What "sensitive" posts is Kristol talking about? He gets real concrete: the president of the United States, for example. . . .

The case is closed.

6. Assorted Brilliances

(a) The civil-libertarian liberals, Kristol charges, use clichés of Communist manufacture. "What clichés of Communist manufacture? It wasn't until his May rejoinder that he got specific and cited one. It is the term "witchhunt" itself, which, everybody knows, was invented by the Russians along with the radio, automobile, steam engine, toothed comb, bismetric stockings, and despicable slanders.

BAD CONSCIENCES

(b) The "liberals," who are soft on Stalinism, are motivated by "bad conscience and stubborn pride," because in the good old days of Popular-Frontism they used to play with the Stalinists and apologize for them. There is something to this, in the case of many, no doubt. How about the liberals or ex-liberals and ex-radicals (like Max Eastman and the *New Leader* gang) who are making a profession of anti-Communism and cheer for the witchhunters, even in the case of Eastman for McCarthy? Shall we get profound about their "bad conscience" . . . ?

In fact, we can bring it closer to home. Just suppose, for example that Kristol himself turned out to be an ex-Trotskyist. . . . Shall we toss off some brilliant analyses of the bad consciences of those who get scornful of the bad consciences of liberals who still want to defend civil liberties? Let us hastily close this case too, before the muck thickens.

MINNEAPOLIS TRIAL

(c) Kristol, as we saw, insists that the Commagers be very clear about the nature of Stalinists as "conspirators" and therefore subversive. He is righteously against confusing Stalinists with non-Stalinist heretics (à la Sidney Hook). He demands that they get politically smart about it and make the proper distinctions.

What then about the case of the Minneapolis Trotskyists who were the first victims of the Smith Act? One would naturally expect that in all decency—excuse the expression—Kristol would at least remain silent as the grave on this inconvenient case. And, to be sure, he does not discuss it. But he is careless enough to refer to it while attacking Francis Biddle.

Biddle asked in his *Fear of Freedom*, "What makes an organization subversive?" and argued that it is not the large proportion of Stalinists in its membership. Kristol scornfully denounces him as "politically naive." And he begins: "He [Biddle] must know what it means to be 'subversive,' since it was he who, as attorney general, sent 18 members of a minuscule Trotskyist sect to jail in 1942 for being just that. . . ."

Is the Minneapolis verdict approved by Kristol? Apparently so, for otherwise what he has just proved is that Biddle does not know what subversive means! If he has any reservations on the question (none is indicated) it is not important to him.

THREE LEGS UP ON "SUBVERSIVE"

(d) How do you determine "guilt by association"? It is "silly" when loyalty boards put the "bad security risk" label on someone because of a friend or relative. (What about that Communist courier and the benefit of the doubt?) It is "sober" when taken to mean that "anyone who is a member of three or more organizations officially declared subversive is to be considered a Communist."

How were they "officially" declared subversive? Was the "three or more" derived from the rules for winning loving-cups or from some views on civil liberties? Why does he identify "bad security risk" and "subversive" when even the loyalty boards don't? How does he justify the totalitarian "philosophy" of guilt-by-association, with or without three strikes? None of this concerns him, since he is busy going to the heart of the problem.

7. Kristol and McCarthy

Kristol is against McCarthyism, as we have made clear. Let us see how. Richard Rovere did this part of it excellently in his own article.

(a) "McCarthy and his friends, who are less famous for their habits of meticulous reading than for their preference for arguing in the large. . . ."—Touched with the *gemäßlichkeit* of the true-born gentleman and scholar, who never permits himself a raucous note except when exposing scoundrels like Professor Commager.

(b) "It is also interesting to note that 'McCarthyism' has in no way been directed against the trade-union movement. . . ." Very interesting indeed, especially in view of the Detroit saturnalia of the House Un-American Committee. Or wasn't this McCarthyism?

(c) "For there is one thing that the American people know about Senator McCarthy: he, like them, is unequivocally anti-Communist. About the spokesmen for American liberalism, they feel they know no such thing. And with some justification."—As Rovere pointed out, Kristol is tending McCarthy's counterforce as good cash. McCarthy's "anti-Communism" is a demagogic cover for something else and a piece of bait—like the Stalinists' anti-Jim-Crowism.

(d) Kristol repeatedly deprecates McCarthy's penchant for lumping Fair Dealers with the Stalinists—but repeatedly he equates the liberals with McCarthy on this score, in line with his thesis that liberalism identifies Stalinism as a left variety of itself. So the liberals are just as wrong as the senator.

Rovere makes a cruel summary of the obvious difference in Kristol's language in writing of the witchhunter and of the anti-witchhunters: Kristol, he says, became annoyed because Commager failed to denounce Mrs. Lewis' talk as a "tissue of lies," but when he gets to McCarthy he does not call the senator what he is, a liar and a bully, a fascistic demagogue. . . . [Miss [Freda] Uley and Mr. Kristol, because they sometimes find McCarthy talking their language, because some of McCarthy's victims are their enemies, cover up for McCarthy just as Mr. Barth and Professor Commager sometimes cover up for Communists.]

Rovere neglects a little difference. Even to Kristol, Barth and Commager's cover-up is the result of naivete, ignorance, bad conscience, or what have you. They don't know better. But Kristol is not naive about McCarthy. . . .

8. Expert on Martyrs

There is a long passage in Kristol's article which does not come within the pale of discussion. My purpose (Continued on next page)

(1) Richard Rovere, in his rebuttal to Kristol in *Partisan Review* (May-June), takes the man up on principle, and gets in some powerful blows. In the midst of his article this OPONENT of Kristol in defense of civil liberties indicates that there must be a misunderstanding somewhere:

"He [Kristol] feels, as I do, that the provision of the McCarran Act which calls for the internment of all Communists known to the FBI immediately upon the outbreak of war is sound and necessary. It involves a violation of principle," admits this defender of democratic principles, going on to claim that said violation would be less serious than the internment of Japanese-Americans in World War II because it would be based on politics and not race, "but the stakes would be high and the action would meet the test of clear and present danger." (My emphasis.)

At another point, he counterposes the good way of soaking the Stalinists against Kristol's bad way: "FBI agents provided most of the evidence by which the Communist leaders were convicted under the Smith Act. Some of us may regard the Smith Act as a bad law, but it has stood up in the courts so far, and certainly no one can say that the Communists convicted under it were denied their rights."

Provided you get "due process" on a law which says that you have to turn stoolie on your grandmother (cf. the Michigan Trucks Act), who can say that you have been denied your rights? No doubt, also, there are "fair trials" in the Stalinist courts—on the basis of the laws. But Rovere at least is writing with his conscience. It would seem.

The Anti-Anti-Witchhunters

(Continued from page 7)

here is to exhibit it, holding it gingerly between thumb and forefinger, at arms length.

I think it's somewhere in the film *Quo Vadis* that this scene is enacted. Nero is watching the Christian martyrs being devoured by the lions. There is something that disgusts his tender sensibilities. It is not, of course, the cruelty of the lions. It is the fact that these martyrs, who claim to be so heroic, are actually showing signs of fear of the animals! Imagine—the hypocrites! they claim to be true fighters for the faith and yet cringe in fright merely because a lion is chewing off their nose. . . .

Kristol is discussing "martyrs" too. Please read it in the tone of voice with which it is written:

"These martyrs whose testament is 'I refuse to answer on the grounds that it might incriminate me!' These 'intellectuals' of Hollywood and radio who are outraged at a congressman's insistence that they say what they actually believe, and who wall that they are in danger of—being excluded from well-paying jobs! [So writes this courageous penman who can no doubt present credentials for his own willingness to sacrifice his weekly fat check on behalf of principles.] Is this the vibrant voice of 'non-conformity' and 'dissent'?"

He continues: American liberals have strangely never been "moved to disgust" by these people's refusal to put their heads boldly on the chopping-block. This shows the corruption of the . . . liberals. For if you want to be respected for resisting despotism, do it "loudly, brazenly, stubbornly, in disregard of the consequences." We should say to these martyrs: "Speak up and damn the consequences! Let them take your job . . . tell the truth—you have nothing to lose and honor to gain!"

And so on, till the stomach turns.

There is simply no comment we can make. We have held it up, as we said, between thumb and forefinger. Now drop it, and step on it.

III

Totalitarian Liberalism

Even from the above series of questions, there can be little doubt about whose side Kristol is on, with regard to the issues of civil liberties which are the heart of the problem. He is not criticizing Commager, Barth, Chafee and the others with "clean hands." He is not advising fighters for civil liberties as "one of us," that is, as a proponent of civil liberties himself. He is not advising them how to be more effective in their fight.

He is sniping at them, for the benefit of confused liberals, as a thoroughgoing down-the-line blown-in-the-bottle brassbound defender of the witchhunt and purge system which is the going policy of the powers that be. He is doing so under false pretenses. There is not an intellectually honest and serious discussion in his article from first word to last.

There are only two parenthetically placed phrases in which he actually states this viewpoint—in passing—if you look hard. That such sentiments, in such an article, written presumably for serious liberals, can be inserted like subordinate clauses, without discussion, is itself an index to the level of Kristol's "contribution."

(a) "So long as liberals agree with Senator McCarthy . . . that we must choose between complete civil liberties for everyone and a disregard for civil liberties entirely, we shall make no progress except to chaos."

In a letter to *Commentary*, Arthur Garfield Hays replied: "Why? The very essence of liberty is that there shall be no discrimination between individuals."

Kristol writes as if he were stating two extremist and unthinkable positions, one of which is "complete civil liberties for everyone," and that naturally no sensible person would be caught at either pole. It happens that "complete civil liberties for everyone" is not only (up to

yesterday) the traditional position of liberalism but, in fact, the formal and even platitudinous position of everyone who claims to be for democratic processes. It is discussable, to be sure—but not for Kristol. Yesterday's platitude is now dismissed with a sneer.

What then does Kristol substitute for "complete civil liberties for everyone"?

IS DEMOCRACY "EXPEDIENT"?

(b) The civil liberties of Stalinists and fellow travelers amounts to this: we can only "defend the expediency in particular circumstances of allowing them the right to be what they are." (My emphasis.)

It would be impossible to invent a more sweeping formula which dispenses with civil liberties altogether. The operative word, of course, is "expediency," which is only underlined and reinforced by "particular circumstances." There are no rights whatsoever, barring cultural lags. There are no principles about civil liberties or democratic processes. These are all thrown out of the window.

As a matter of fact, the truth is that Kristol does not think there is any issue about civil liberty in the country today. He explicitly proposes that disagreement be limited to "the appropriateness of specific actions with regard to Communism." And this is what explains a peculiarity about the title of his article which the reader may or may not have noticed: the disclaiming quotation marks around the term "civil liberties" itself. (One might almost think it was a cliché of Communist manufacture.)

It would be legitimate to raise the question whether Kristol understands how much he has categorically confessed about his real viewpoint. We imagine that he can still play around with doubletalk about how the principle of "expediency" is only a slight amendment to democratic principles—and, after all, are you going to take an abstract, unhistorical, dogmatic, utopian and formalistic attitude toward democratic platitudes, especially in these times of crisis when things are tough all over? There's a war on.

We, as Marxists, certainly do not set up the principles of civil liberties as superior to and irrelevant to all other principles, as supra-historical abstractions. Nor would this very interesting question have anything to do with Kristol.

For what Kristol presents—more clearly, more naively, than any other example we can think of quick—is the rationale of what has been called "totalitarian liberalism."

What is "totalitarian liberalism"? It is certainly easier to smell it than to define it. But surely it begins with this:

● The belief that, in time of crisis and social strain, the free expression of opinion and the much-praised "market-place-of-ideas" concept is a hindrance to effective action for our goals, whatever they may be. That differences in the expression of opinion must be bridled and restrained in order not to tear society apart in the face of an enemy.

● The rejection of the conception that the greatest social dynamic can be unleashed not in a people who are kept in fear and conformity (even conformity to "our" very good ideas) but by a people who are not in a straight-jacket, not even in a benevolent one, but who are encouraged to discuss, think and weigh with full initiative, so that they can act with full initiative from below.

What is involved is the totalitarian principle that democracy cannot be "efficient" by its very nature, versus the socialist and traditional liberal principle that a genuine democratic élan is one of the most powerful fighting forces in the world.

This, and not merely "expediency" as an abstraction, is what lies behind Kristol's viewpoint.

THE NOBLE FINGER POINTERS

This is what Stalinism began with, as the juridical and ideological rationale for its early steps in the counter-revolution. We are not referring to the social and political roots of Stalinism, but precisely to its rationale.

The men, still pro-democratic in their own minds, who

first rallied to Stalinism against the ideas of the Left Opposition and workers' democracy, did so partly on the plea that, hard-pressed as the revolution was, it could not "afford" the "loose" democracy of the revolutionary period. Insofar as this was true, it was nothing but a manifestation of the fact that the revolution, isolated in one country, was in a blind alley. What was more important, however, was that, if any way out of the blind alley of socialism-in-one-country existed, it could be found only by relying on the democratic dynamic of a people who felt that at last the country was theirs.

What will seem absolutely incredible to uninvolved historians of the future is that such people as Kristol and his ilk can be the first—and most raucous in pointing the finger of accusation at measures taken by the Bolshevik regime under Lenin and Trotsky. (We are not speaking hypothetically as far as Kristol himself is concerned.) We ourselves have made criticisms on this score, but with clean hands, that is, as supporters of the Russian Revolution, not as enemies of it.

These people, however, who insist on "expediency in particular circumstances" in the United States of today, dare to besmirch a government in the midst of civil war, denounce it for taking steps to put down armed revolt (Kronstadt)!

These ineffable people, who can approve throwing every "known Communist" into a concentration camp on the say-so of the FBI, in a country with a tiny and weak Stalinist party, dare to get indignant about the solutions of a revolutionary government whose territory was held by fourteen invading armies of foreign powers!

These people get righteous about the "expediency" of a socialist regime which was willing to engage in a public all-out party and faction struggle over (e.g.) the Brest-Litovsk treaty, while the very existence of the state was virtually hanging in the balance a few days (or hours) away! And when, under these great pressures, the elements of the Stalinist counter-revolution rallied around what is now their very own rationale, they see in this evidence for the theory that the "seeds of Stalinism" lie in . . . Leninism!

THE DEMOCRATIC DYNAMIC

It is not simply to "turn the tables" upon them—yoo-too stuff—that we point out the essential totalitarian content of their conception of civil liberties. If Kristol "covers up" for McCarthy, to use Rovere's harsh words, it is not because he is enamored of McCarthyism. If he pretends to be not a witchhunter or an apologist for witchhunters, but "merely" a critic of the anti-witchhunters—an anti-anti-witchhunter, so to speak—it is not because he has carefully figured out how to write a dishonest whitewash of practices that appall and disquiet his liberal friends.

If he rejects any reliance upon the democratic dynamic, it is not because he is "against democracy." He rejects it, as a matter of fact, on a ground which compliments his political understanding as against the "naive" civil-libertarian liberals. He rejects it because he knows that, in this struggle for the world with Stalinism, there is no possibility of getting a democratic dynamic unleashed around capitalism and under the aegis of a capitalist ruling class.

For the "democratic dynamic" which we have been referring to is also not an abstraction, any more than democracy. It cannot be manufactured to specifications merely out of good will, principles, courage and exhortations. It has its roots in the society. It has wasted away with the decline of capitalism as a social system of progress and hope; it has its future in a new social order of socialist progress.

Our subjects tremble before the dynamic drive of Stalinism, based as it is on its anti-capitalist appeal even if it replaces capitalism with its own brand of slavery; and they see no practical defense against it except military force from the top, the State. Just as they see no defense against the internal threat of Stalinism as effective as the policemen's billy.

Youth and Student Corner

Book-Burning in Public Schools

By GERALD CARR

LOS ANGELES, May 19—as the local anti-Stalinist campaign drags on, the reactionaries in business organizations, local government, and private social clubs are having a field day in their own "anti-subversive" fight which more than matches the official government drive in red scare psychology.

Now, the public school textbooks are under the scalpel of the self-appointed guardians of "the American Way" and the patrioters who identify "social significance" in social-studies texts as signs of a collectivistic plot to undermine the fidelity of youth to the "free enterprise system."

The local Chamber of Commerce set up a "Citizens Committee on Education," actually a board of censors, to examine and report on more than 100 social-science books now used in the

city's high schools. That this unofficial body of censors has the tacit approval of the city officials who dominate the schools is apparent from the reports that the committee met in the Board of Education building to map out their plans and instructions.

"EDUCATOR"

Even if only quasi-official, the censors can still make recommendations to the school board which are likely to be considered favorably unless there is a sufficiently loud protest from citizens and organizations opposed to this Stalinist-type attempt to convert students into intellectual robots whose ideas must conform to one over-all pattern.

The *Daily News* of May 15 reported that 12 of 75 appointed censors, drawn from business and conservative civic groups, assembled in the Board of Education building to get instructions from

Dr. V. O. Watts, a former college instructor and Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce economist. Watts "told the 12 elderly readers, nine women and three men, how they should read the books so they would be able to answer the 44 questions in the questionnaire. In the course of his two-hour lecture, Dr. Watts gave many examples of the type of propaganda which might be slipped into the school books and which should not be read by school children."

Watts said the United Nations is "really an extension of government which curbed America's basic freedom." His opinion is that "perhaps a good war is the way to world peace." He also listed as examples of "collectivistic" ideology such New Deal projects as TVA and proposals for federal aid to education.

He blasted the post-office system as a "vast political machine," and while there is much truth in this appraisal, since the post-office administration is prize

under the spoils setup of the two-party system, Watts' alternative would undoubtedly be private ownership of the service which he regards falsely as "socialistic."

A Mrs. Logan present at the meeting, who took a leading part in the discussions, reported that she recently read a geography text which noted the similarity in climate, topography, and agricultural production in certain Russian and American regions. "She said she resented the fact that the book didn't point out that even if all these things were the same, the way of life would be different." To these witchhunters geography can be exempted from the cold war no more than genetics can in Stalinist Russia.

LABOR SPEAKS UP

The last section of the questionnaire deals with illustrations in the textbooks and calls for a comparison in the "number of photographs devoted to persons who advocated the individual incentive system of government?"

and the number who seem to indicate "collectivistic tendencies."

Labor got into the news on May 16 concerning this new book-burning attempt. Previously, these labor leaders had given their support to the Citizens Committee on Education. Albert T. Lunceford of the Greater Los Angeles CIO council, formerly a member of the subcommittee, and W. J. Bassett of the AFL labeled this new reactionary move as "hysteria" and "spiritual book-burning."

Said Lunceford: "This is a development to be expected from those who believe they see the ominous shadow of Stalin falling across every idea with which they disagree . . . and we will continue to oppose and denounce such hysteria wherever we find it."

Bassett said that the AFL had a "suspicion" that the "citizens" group wished to whitewash the discredited, former members of the school board who were implicated in shady contracts and graft. Labor's protest, and that of liberals, is more than due.

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