

# LABOR ACTION

Independent Socialist Weekly

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APRIL 18, 1955

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### BEHIND THE ECONOMIC BOOM—

## The Patient Is Sick With High Fever

By GORDON HASKELL

The American economy surged along at boom levels during the first quarter of 1955. Industrial production, building, sales and profits reached, and in some instances, topped the highs of 1953. The "American way of life," it appears, has once more justified the faith of its devotees and we can expect its minstrels to fill the air with fulsome praise to the good life in this best of all possible worlds.

**A boom is here—of that there can be no question. But before we get carried away by the rapture of it all, it might be well to take a sober look at some things which are going on beneath the surface of the big figures.**

One item is strikingly absent from the list of "new highs" which are being recorded. That is the figure for employment.

While manufacturing output was only about two per cent below the all-time high of 1953, man-hours worked in manufacturing were 11 per cent under that peak. While construction was running at an all-time record, employment in that field was 5 per cent below the '53 highs.

These figures, when added to the normal increase of the labor force of six to seven hundred thousand workers per year, explain why it is authoritatively estimated that unemployment will run between four and five million workers this year despite the boom!

Don't let the official unemployment statistics put out by the government fool you. They won't fool the unemployed.

As an example of what can and should be expected from the government in this field: the civilian labor force (people available for work) was reported as 404,000 smaller in February of this year than it had been a year ago!

What accounts for the fewer number of workers producing as much or more than they did in 1953? Widespread automation, mechanization and speed-up have increased productivity in manufacturing by 7 per cent during the past year, almost double the average long-term trend.

### WHAT'S THE OUTLOOK?

And automation has hardly got a running start in American industry. This year it is estimated that industry will spend about \$3 billion on electronic and other control devices, the basic components of automation. No one can estimate how much farther this industry will expand in the future.

Another figure which gives pause to the more sober economic analysts is the vast expansion of consumer debt. With fewer man-hours being worked, and with wage rises held to modest levels during the past two years, the purchasing power for the burst of consumer spending must have come from somewhere. The figures tell the tale.

The latest figures available (mid-March) showed total installment debt at a new high of almost \$23 billion. Installment debt falling due was running at an annual rate of almost \$30 billion, or 11.6 per cent of estimated spendable income. At the same time mortgage debt had reached the fantastic figure of \$101 billion, and other individual borrowings

were close to \$40 billion, for a grand total of \$163 billion owed by individuals.

That is roughly 64 per cent of total spendable income of the nation, and 95 per cent of the total liquid assets held by individuals.

If the debt is less than the liquid assets, one might think, that is not too bad. But one must always remember that the people who own the bulk of the assets are rarely the same ones who owe the bulk of the installment and mortgage debts.

Thus this vast credit structure depends on continuing prosperity and high employment. A small dip could lead to serious consequences.

**Experience and caution should result in a contraction by the government and the banks of consumer and mortgage credit at this time. But the government is loath to do anything which might puncture or even slow down the boom, specially as profits are running at such brilliant levels for the staunchest supporters of the administration. Thus, although the ratio of mortgage debt to income is now the highest it has been since the depression years of the early thirties, the government continues to stimulate the market by its policies.**

It is widely recognized that one of the strongest factors in the boom is the fantastic rates at which automobiles have

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## Here's What Adlai Forgot to Explain

By BERNARD CRAMER

In Adlai Stevenson's speech last Monday, the titular head of the Democratic Opposition presented "a peaceful solution of the present crisis in the Straits of Formosa," as alternative to what he called the Republican administration's belligerent-looking and saber-rattling policy.

In brief, Stevenson's proposal was that the U. S. drop defense of the offshore islands in order to concentrate on defense of Formosa itself, through an international declaration "condemning the use of force in the Formosa Strait and agreeing to stand with us in the defense of Formosa against any aggression. . . ."

There can be no doubt that this policy makes better sense for U. S. power than does the point out on the limb to which Eisenhower and Dulles have crawled—a point from which they are still unable to descend without either losing prestige or starting war, in either case ensuring a political victory for Stalinism. For the rest Stevenson threw in pretty routine liberalistic verbiage about needing allies and criticizing the Dulles "policy of big words and little deeds."

But otherwise Stevenson did not even make much real pretense at offering a solution of the world's war crisis or at presenting a genuinely democratic and anti-imperialist foreign policy against the Eisenhower-Dulles program. He spoke in terms of achieving as "the best hope for today's world . . . a kind of atomic balance. . . ."

**Stevenson decried starting an atomic holocaust over little things like the offshore islands, which aren't really essential militarily anyway, etc. But on what grounds does he assert his willingness to launch a "war that may be unlike anything that man has seen since the creation of the world" just in order to keep Chiang Kai-shek on Formosa?**

His sole answer: Formosa, unlike the offshore islands, belonged to Japan previously and "We have as much right to be there as anybody, except perhaps [sic] the real Formosans."

Which means: "we" have no right to be there at all. Which means: Chiang Kai-shek has no right to be there as foreign occupier of the islands of the "real Formosans." But Stevenson mentions the possibility of a plebiscite (maybe) as one course among many for an indefinite future. What he is concerned with for the present crisis (his "peaceful solution") is defense of the Chiang establishment on Formosa; for it is Chiang who is the master there now.

**He argues that Quemoy and Matsu are not "essential to the defense of Formosa." But what is the defense of Formosa essential to? He does not explain to the American people why he is willing to unleash an H-bomb catastrophe because of the presumed importance of Formosa and the Chiang-type of butcher as against the lesser value of the little islands.**

He proposes a declaration by America's allies and even the Asian nations against the use of force in the Formosa Strait. Does he also propose to restrain Chiang's attacks on Chinese shipping, a continuing form of warfare being carried on by the ousted warlords against the new Stalinist warlords? Nowhere does he face the issue of Chiang at all.

Stevenson's proposal is one for a more sensible strategic retreat by U. S. imperialism, and welcome as such. It does not have any resemblance to a democratic foreign policy that can really meet the Stalinist threat to the Asian peoples with anything more than an American threat to those same peoples.

### FRANCE: REPRESSION AT HOME & ABROAD

## Faure Means Reaction All Down the Line

By A. GIACOMETTI

PARIS, Apr. 6—The first few weeks of the Faure government have seen the development of a vast reactionary offensive, exceeding by far the misdeeds of the pre-Mendès governments.

**Based on a parliamentary coalition of all right-wing parties, it expresses the extra-parliamentary coalition of beet-root growers, alcohol producers, clerical reactionaries and colonial rulers, pledged to the mutual protection of their interests and cemented by fear and rage against any attempts at reform.**

One of the few progressive measures of the Mendès-France government, the decrees restricting alcohol production, were negated on the initiative of two Christian deputies of the MRP.

The labor unions were able to obtain only a few piddling concessions in their yearly negotiations with the government, instead of the substantial wage-raises which are necessary to maintain the workers' standard of living.

The Tunisian delegation in Paris is still being given the runaround. Morocco, as Claude Bourdet showed in *France-*

*Observateur*, has been turned over to "counter-terrorist" gangsters, in particular to the pimp Jo Renucci from Marseilles and his gang, who have been hired by the administration to perform the assassinations needed to uphold law and order in the Protectorate.

The principle of lay education is once again being threatened, this time by a bill aiming to transfer professional training in agriculture from the Ministry of Education to the MRP-influenced Ministry of Agriculture. The move has been strongly opposed by the SP and by the teachers' unions, who walked out against it on a general 24-hour protest strike.

**A greater and more immediate danger**

is threatening from the measures the government is preparing to take in Algeria. Acting under the direct influence of the colonialist lobby, the government has just passed a law enabling it to proclaim a "state of emergency" in Algeria.

A "state of emergency" means specifically that censorship is established over press, radio and shows; that houses may be searched at any time of the day; that meetings of any kind are prohibited; that the workers of any public or private enterprise may be drafted in case of strike; that civil jurisdiction may be turned over to military justice by administrative decree; that people may be assigned forced residence and be interned in special areas. In short, it amounts to the legalization of the police terror that has been developing in Algeria over the past months.

**At the same time, the government has renewed its attacks on civil liberties in France, in an effort to neutralize opposition to its repressive policies in North Africa.**

On March 23, Roger Stéphane, a col-

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## A DISCUSSION ARTICLE

# MARX AND AUTOMATION:

## The Third Technological Revolution in Capitalism

By EDWARD HILL

In the last two or three years, the rise of automation has been the cause of increasing discussion. In at least one case, this has led to another claim of the "refutation" of Marx.

The editorial note for the article, "The Age of the Thinking Robot, and What It Will Mean to Us" by Robert Bendiner in the April 7 issue of *The Reporter*, tells that "Automation, almost entirely an American affair, should not lead to further Marxist vagaries. If these new instruments are handled with a true sense of human values they will make Marxism as obsolete as the first steam engine."

In this article, I would like to make a brief (and therefore tentative) investigation into the obsolescence of Marxism in the face of automation.

The discussion will center around two main points: First, that automation does require a significant modification of the model of capitalism which Marx presents in *Capital*; and second, that this modification can, and should, be made by the use of Marxist methods, and that it will indicate that automation has not "solved" the basic contradictions of capitalism, but rather has aggravated them.

### A Revolutionary Change

In *Capital*, Marx describes two technological revolutions which occurred in the rise of capitalism. Each of these created a particular political, social and economic configuration within the general context of the system.

Automation is the third technological revolution in capitalism even though its extent is more limited than the other two. Consequently it has profound implications for the structure of society, particularly in the change which it makes in the nature of work and, therefore, in the nature of the working class.

The first technological revolution of capitalism begins the capitalist era: it is the revolution of manufacture.

Manufacture is distinguished from other, pre-capitalist forms of cooperation by the fact that it is based on the division of labor, the parceling out of tasks, detail work, and necessarily involves large numbers of workers under the same roof, or, at least, under the control of a single capitalist. Marx describes the effect of this process on the worker: "While simple cooperation leaves the mode of working by the individual for the most part unchanged, manufacture thoroughly revolutionizes it... It converts the laborer into a crippled monstrosity, by forcing his dexterity at the expense of a world of productive capabilities and instincts..."

However, although manufacture involves a division of labor and therefore creates a hierarchic grading among workers, skilled workers still predominate. Marx notes, "Although the splitting up of handicraft lowers the cost of forming the workman... yet for the more difficult detail work, a longer apprenticeship is necessary." Strict rules of apprenticeship were thus in effect in England down to the very end of the period of manufacture.

The second transition of capitalist technology is from manufacture to what Marx calls "modern industry"—the factory system.

This change is specifically technological: "In manufacture, the revolution in the mode of production begins with labor-power; in modern industry it begins with the instruments of labor." As a result of this development, tools are "converted from being manual implements of man into implements of a mechanical apparatus." And later, "along with the tool, the skill of the workman in handling it passes over to the machine."

This transition causes a revolutionary change in the nature of work: "in the place of a hierarchy of specialized workman that characterizes manufacture, there starts, in the automatic factory, a tendency to equalize and reduce to one and the same level every kind of work

*We most cordially invite articles and discussions on the subject of the social and theoretical implications of automation, to which the accompanying article by Edward Hill is a contribution.—Ed.*

that has to be done by the minders of machines."

The proletariat which Marx refers to is a result of this change. It is seen as containing a leveling tendency with a growing proportion of unskilled and semi-skilled workers.

It is clear, I think, that Marx expected "modern industry" to be the last phase of capitalist production. By creating a working class, more particularly a certain kind of working class, immiserated, leveled, un- and semi-skilled, it was also creating a revolutionary force. Moreover, in his discussion of the tendency of capitalist accumulation, Marx noted the contradictions between the increasingly social and centralized means of production and the anarchy of private ownership, and this was to be another element in the dynamic of the anti-capitalist revolution.

Now, however, automation focuses a new tendency in capitalist society—forming the basis of a third capitalist revolution. Manufacture revolutionized labor-power with a new form of cooperation; modern industry revolutionized manufacture through the machine; and automation revolutionizes modern industry through a further, and qualitative, change in the machine.

The main characteristic of this change has been described by Norbert Wiener (in *The Human Use of Human Beings*): "Thus the possible fields into which the new industrial revolution (automation) are likely to penetrate are very extensive, and include all labor performing judgments of a low level, in much the same way as the displaced labor of the earlier industrial revolution included every aspect of human power." (My emphasis.)

This change has significant consequences in many areas. Let me mention three of them.

First, such a change means a transformation of work, and of the working class.

The worker tends to become an engineer. The process of leveling, set in motion by the transition to modern industry, is here reversed. This for example could well change the relationship between the worker-engineer of the automatized industry and the worker of the non-automatized. Its implications are mainly limited by the very limits of automation itself; this will determine the significance of the change in the working class.

Secondly, automation is of great importance in reversing still another tendency, that of the increase of white-collar workers.

As Wiener points out, "the machine plays no favorites between overall labor and white-collar labor." As a matter of fact, the automatizing of the office may well have a more immediate significance than the automatizing of the factory. It is certainly possible that this phenomenon will reverse the tendency (which has been operative for some years now) of the rate of increase of white-collar workers.

Thirdly, automation is of considerable significance in underdeveloped areas, for it means that industrialization will take a different form.

The great mass of proletarians required by the beginnings of capitalist industrialization are no longer necessarily needed. This point is, of course, dependent upon the availability of machines. But where they are available, the crea-

tion of a nineteenth century-style working class is improbable. This is, of course, severely modified by the fact that underdeveloped societies often do not have machines and "solve" their problems by an intensified exploitation of labor-power.

These are only three of the consequences of the change which automation may bring. Again, the specific difference, the qualitative element, in automation is found in Wiener's definition: the elimination of "all labor performing judgments of a low level." The wide introduction of such a change in society will profoundly alter the nature of work and the character of the working class. The major limitation upon this tendency is the fact that a significant portion of production cannot be economically automatized.

### 2

#### Modified Demands

Such a change almost necessarily involves a change in other aspects of theory. Let me cite one example, the question of a shorter working day.

Marx conceived of the possibility of a shortening of the working day under capitalism. This could come about through the increased productivity of labor, the greater intensity of labor. Through this increase in productivity, surplus value could be increased, even with a shorter day, because the cost of the "reproduction" of the worker was lowered.

For Marx, the good that could come from such a development was vitiated by the "anarchical system of competition and the most outrageous squandering of labor-power... not to mention the creation of a vast number of employments, at present indispensable, but in themselves superfluous."

However, in the short run, Marx found it hard to conceive of a real diminution in the working day for the ordinary worker. Rather than a social use of the new productivity, he saw that "in capitalist society spare time is acquired for one class by converting the whole life-time of the masses into labor-time." Therefore, the leisure which came from the productivity increase would be a class leisure and would not, under the class structure of capitalist society, reach the worker.

Two aspects of this analysis are changed in the case of automation. The first is the reversal in the tendency of machines to require masses of workers.

Since these vast numbers are no longer required, it is possible under capitalism for labor to demand, and receive, a shorter day. As a matter of fact, this is, of course, a growing demand of the

American labor movement. It is made, however, in the faintest of voices—George Meany sets the target date for the thirty-hour week at 1980! Nevertheless, the demand is possible under capitalism.

The second change which modifies Marx's analysis is the qualitative leap of automation, i.e., that it is a revolutionary change and allows for an increase in productivity far beyond anything which could have been imagined in the nineteenth century.

This surplus which results from this transition is so great that some of it can be returned to the worker. This by no means indicates that capitalism thus solves its basic contradictions. It does mean that in the short run, a change may well take place because of the reversal of certain tendencies through automation.

Thus, Marx's model of the relation, in a capitalist society, between workers and leisure may well have to be modified under the impact of automation. Many "ifs" are still involved, the major of them being the militancy of the labor movement with regard to a shorter week, but the possibility of a much shorter week, under capitalism, is at least opened up. In Marx's time, the trend was in the opposite direction: "the life-time of the masses" was being converted "into labor-time."

### 3

#### The Big 'If'

Even the Marx-baiting editorialist of *The Reporter* is, however, stopped from claiming that automation will necessarily solve the contradictions of capitalism. In the editorial note, this is made to hinge upon an "if":

"If these new instruments are handled with a true sense of human values they will make Marxism as obsolete as the first steam engine."

If a class society engages in the social use of its productivity, Marx will indeed be obsolete. The "if" is rather large.

As a matter of fact, *The Reporter's* writer, Robert Bendiner, is somewhat more sanguine than the editorialist who wrote the descriptive note about his piece. He sees the other side of the coin:

"But if it [automation] frees some only to leave as many others stranded, dazed, and for years without the wherewithal to buy what the machines produce, it will hardly have paid its way—at least for a generation that already has all it can stand in the way of large-scale hazards."

Norbert Wiener is franker than the *Reporter* editorialist or Bendiner. He describes automatized production as "slave labor," and then writes that "Any labor which competes with slave labor must accept the economic conditions of slave labor." His vision is of a society where partial automatization has created a huge pool of unemployed workers who compete for jobs in the non-automatized areas. Such mass unemployment—as a result of displacement by technology—is an obvious possibility of automation.

But there is an even more basic problem than technological unemployment when one considers automation: the problem of a major crisis in capitalism itself.

For Marx, capitalist technology was the first revolutionary technology: "Modern industry never looks upon and treats the existing form of a process as final. The technical basis of that industry is therefore revolutionary, while all earlier modes of production were essentially conservative."

Given this characterization, capitalism must be capable of infinitely revolutionizing itself, not only in terms of technology but with regard to distribution and the creation of new jobs as well. The capitalist economy which automation enters into is exactly what the bourgeoisie calls it: a dynamic economy which must constantly expand and expand. Automation now increases the tempo of that necessary expansion; it aggravates the tensions which already exist between the productive capacity of this country, centralized and social, and its political and economic system. Here it is the most classic of the classic analyses of the "obsolete" Marx which is useful in defining the reality.

It is of course preposterous to refer to the "wild generalizations" of Marx, as *The Reporter* has done. They cannot be referring to his brilliant and careful historical analysis of the transition to manufacture and then to modern industry. They cannot be condemning the man for not being a seer. At the same time, the vulgarity of such characterizations should not obscure the fact that a phenomenon like automation requires careful investigation—and that it may well also require a modification of the Marxist model of capitalism through Marxist methods.

## May Day With the ISL

Buffet Dinner  
Film Showing  
Dancing

SATURDAY EVENING  
APRIL 30

WOMAN'S TRADE UNION  
LEAGUE HALL  
34 Street & Lexington  
New York City

LONDON LETTER

# Among Churchill's Souvenirs: Tonypandy

By OWEN ROBERTS

LONDON, Apr. 6—If there is an unhappy man in Britain today it surely must be Sir Winston Churchill. After a lifetime in the public limelight he has taken his final bow as British prime minister in the middle of the biggest newspaper strikes in British history.

He is thus deprived of the pleasure of reading all the nice things which the columnists would have undoubtedly written about him. Indeed, I have heard it said that he finally chose to retire in order only to be able to read those things which are normally only written in a person's obituary. If this be true then he is sadly disappointed.

As previous articles have forecasted Churchill resigned yesterday after he had given a dinner the night before which was attended by the queen and the Duke of Edinburgh, along with a number of Churchill's past and present political and personal acquaintances. This was the final gesture of stage management before he went to Buckingham Palace and officially tendered his resignation to the queen.

Today, in accordance with British constitutional practice, the queen summoned to the palace Churchill's successor, Sir Anthony Eden.

He is now duly installed as the British prime minister, in which capacity he has the power to sort out Churchill's old cabinet a little and perhaps remove some of the dead wood.

In spite of the fact that we are without newspapers in London we have not been entirely spared the eulogies marking the departure of the Churchill epoch. The radio and television programs have seen to that. But, by their very nature, they have left unsaid many things which many people in Britain remember.

It can be said, without a shadow of doubt, that the vast majority of the workers in Britain are still acutely aware of some of the more unsavory details of Churchill's past history. Perhaps clearest of all is the memory of Churchill as home secretary in 1910.

At this time the miners of South Wales were engaged in a fierce struggle with the mine owners for increased wages. Eventually, after 900 of them had been locked out of the pits by the employers, 12,000 of them struck.

Churchill was in his element. He rushed strong detachments of London mounted police to South Wales and followed this up by sending two squadrons of Hussars and a column of infantry troops. Intense provocation—inevitably followed by disorders—took place; one miner was killed and many injured.

From that time onward the name of Churchill has always been associated with Tonypandy—the Welsh mining village where the incidents took place—in the minds of the British workers. It is true that some of the Labor leaders have short memories in this respect and seem to vie with one another in an endeavor to pay him compliments; which only serves to show what a strong influence the British parliamentary system has upon those who loosen their roots in the working class after being elected to serve as an MP.

### BEVANITES ON THIN ICE

If Churchill is a sorry man because the newspaper strike has robbed him of glory, then others are equally pleased that the same strike has operated in their favor. The entire leadership of the Labor Party must be extremely grateful that the last few rounds in the latest controversy over Aneurin Bevan have been stifled, as far as the general public is concerned, through lack of news.

Had the newspapers been appearing recently they would have doubtless headlined many of the statements, made by both right and left, on this issue. As it stands the shroud of silence has softened the blows, and the dust of conflict is slowly settling over the party. To all intents and purposes unity is restored—at least for the present.

One of the rather disturbing features—there are many—which has emerged from this latest conflict concerns the attitude of the Bevanites to the relationship between the Parliamentary Labor Party and the Labor Party as a whole outside of Parliament.

Previously it has usually been the left wing which has endeavored to exert as much control over the Parliamentary Party as possible through the national party machine, particularly through the party annual conference. In resisting this pressure the right wing has usually fallen back upon the argument that

British constitutional practice—as formed by the parliamentary system—insists that the parliamentary body be completely autonomous. Which means that the right-wing MPs need—should they feel so inclined—pay no heed to the voice of the rank and file.

The roles now seem to have been reversed.

In its issue of April 1 the Bevanite weekly *Tribune* questions the authority of the National Executive Committee to pass judgment on any action of the Parliamentary Party—in this case the withdrawal of the Whip from Bevan. Says *Tribune*, "Hitherto it has been assumed that the Parliamentary Party was an autonomous body," and then it goes on to state that the Parliamentary Party and the NEC have separate functions to perform "and grave dangers arise when they are mixed up."

### IT CAN BOOMERANG

This is a very dangerous statement for *Tribune* to make and one which could well rebound against the left on a future occasion.

At the annual conference each year the Parliamentary Party presents a report, which can be debated and either accepted or rejected by the delegates. By using the arguments of *Tribune* the right wing could easily stifle any rank-and-file criticism of their activities. The right wing could also refuse to take any notice

whatsoever of the hundreds of resolutions which are sent to the Parliamentary Party each year by local party organizations and trade unions.

So far the right wing has not taken the Bevanites up on this particular point but there can be no doubt that they have stored it away as a useful shot in their locker for the time when they wish to emphasize that the NEC and the national party cannot interfere with the Parliamentary Party.

A further result of the latest Bevan row which gives cause for alarm is the number of party members who have either turned in their party cards or else lapsed into inactivity. This has become serious enough for both *Tribune* and Bevan to make statements pointing out the extreme folly of such moves and imploring members of the party to stay inside and maintain their position. This is timely advice, for nothing whatsoever can be gained by odd collections of left-wingers breaking away and leaving vast areas of the party machine firmly in control of the right wing.

But the Bevanites themselves must bear part of the responsibility for this attitude. Their lack of a positive policy, coherently expressed and continually pushed within the party, has caused many of the rank-and-file left wing to stumble around in a most appalling fashion. The Bevanites have yet to learn the role of an effective left alternative force within the party acting in a responsible fashion.

In this situation the Third Camp socialists in Britain have an important part to play in providing the theoretical content to the broad mass of left-wing forces. Now, more than ever before, it is up to the Third Camp socialists to exert themselves and to extend their influence among the rank-and-file party members.

## JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

### HERE'S ONE SENATORIAL INQUIRY THAT DIDN'T GET BIG HEADLINES

A Senate subcommittee to investigate juvenile delinquency has exposed the following conditions after 17 months of study:

The number of children coming before juvenile courts in the country has grown from 300,000 in 1948 to 435,000 in 1953, and only 10 per cent of this increase can be attributed to an enlarged youth population. If the rate continues at this pace, the number may total 785,000 within the next five years.

But that tells only part of the story. The number of children getting into trouble with the police (cases disposed of without court action) probably exceeds 1,125,000. By 1960 this is expected to rise to 1,700,000 unless action is taken to create better conditions for youth. The subcommittee stated that delinquency is no longer a big-city problem only.

The committee estimated that there are from 200,000 to 300,000 boys and girls who run away from home annually. Practices with regard to handling runaways run from excellent to "the more frequent practices of jailing, running out of the county, or just plain neglecting in a manner the subcommittee feels to be almost barbaric in nature."

With regard to use of child-welfare funds for return of runaways, provisions are so cumbersome to administer that states do not avail themselves of this money. Most young runaways are handled by police instead of welfare departments. Further, funds are limited to children under 16.

The committee found it impossible to determine the number of youths addicted to narcotics and drugs. Probably there are some 7,500 juvenile narcotics in New York City alone.

The investigations revealed that pornography is a one to three million dollar business. Federal statutes prohibit interstate shipment of obscene materials by common carrier or through the mails. However, it is not unlawful to transport such materials by private car or truck.

Lack of employment opportunities and vocational guidance contributes to juvenile delinquency, according to the report. The committee believes the first line of defense in preventing juvenile delinquency is the school, and federal aid to reduce the acute shortage in classroom space and the oversized classes is a must.

Another area needing nationwide attention is housing. A large number of the delinquents come from slum areas. But unless adequate provision is made for community centers and community services in public housing projects, even they can well become breeding areas for delinquency.

Payments to mothers with dependent children are so low that mothers must go to work, and most programs are administered with the idea that they are only for mothers who cannot work.

Another desperate need is a mental health program. The subcommittee feels that an expansion in federal aid can repay in large dividends.

The subcommittee is strongly convinced that the seriousness and size of the problem requires that the federal government assume responsibility for aid to local and state programs and services by: (1) national planning to combat juvenile delinquency; (2) enlarged technical aid to states and local communities; (3) stimulating training of personnel to staff preventive and treatment services; (4) providing "risk capital" for development or expansion of programs for combating juvenile delinquency.

What stands out is the tremendous gap between these elementary measures recommended by the Senate subcommittee and any reasonable expectation about what will be done by the government and its Department of Not Too Much Health, Education and Welfare. Billions for H-bombs but pennies for youth.

### ISL FUND DRIVE

## We Need That Final Push!

By ALBERT GATES  
Fund Drive Director

We are now in the closing weeks of the Fund Drive with our goal still a considerable distance away. Unless a real spurt is put on in the next three weeks, we shall not succeed in finishing this drive successfully. That would certainly be in contrast to every other Fund Drive we have held for the past 15 years.

We have never failed to complete a quota, even though there have been some years when we were close to such an event. But this year, we are further behind at this stage of the game than in comparable periods in other years.

At the time of this writing, we are \$3500 away from the over-all quota. This means that in order to finish the drive on top, we need to average \$1200 a week for the final weeks of the campaign.

A glance at the box score will show why we are at this level. Only four areas have hit 100 per cent, and these are among the smallest in the drive. Of those cities with the larger quotas, only Detroit, Chicago and the National Office are now within striking distance of their individual quotas. All the rest are far below the three-quarter mark.

If we take as a standard the percentage of the total quota of 66.9, then eight areas are below that figure and three only just above it.

Those are the places that have to give the drive the big push. New York, which has done well this year, all things considered, is still below its normal pace. As the area with the largest quota, it has to be the anchor in the campaign. So we are counting on New York to make the push in the next three weeks.

But there are others who need to help New York out in these final weeks. Los Angeles, Newark, Philadelphia, Seattle and the Bay Area are the cities we have in mind. If these places come through, and the ones leading the campaign finish at their current paces, we can go over.

In this past week we had contributions of over \$700 which is below the percentage required, as we indicated above. But the week saw Cleveland go over the top, as well as Oregon. Detroit has come pretty close to it and Chicago is pushing hard to make good on its voluntarily increased quota.

The next weeks will tell the story!

### FUND DRIVE BOX SCORE

Branch	Quota	Paid	%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$10,050</b>	<b>\$6726.75</b>	<b>66.9</b>
St. Louis	25	56.25	221
Cleveland	150	165	110
Streator	25	25	100
Oregon	50	50	100
Detroit	200	175	87.5
Chicago	2,000	1539	76.9
Nat'l Office	1,500	1110	74
Reading	50	35	70
Pittsburgh	125	85	68
N. Y. City	3,800	2553.50	67.5
Bay Area	500	269	53.8
Philadelphia	250	127	50.8
Newark	400	197	49.2
Los Angeles	450	215	47.5
Seattle	150	60	40
Akron	50	20	40
Buffalo	250	40	16
Indiana	75	0	0

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## PRO &amp; CON DISCUSSION

## Stalinist 'Capitalism' and Pro-Stalinist Theories

Following is the second part, continued from last week, of a discussion letter by Comrade Shane.

To the Editor:

... A fuller understanding of the nature of the new China is of vital importance to socialists. But does the editorial reply to my remarks on this point contribute anything but confusion?

The editorial reply dismissed my discussion of the actual property relationships in China with the comment that this is merely a question of "state-capitalist elements in this non-capitalist China."

Such an approach stands the real situation on its head. The point I was making is that private capitalist elements comprise the major part of China's present economy; that state-capitalist elements exist in a private capitalist, not a non-capitalist context.

The "orbit of state-capitalism" in China today includes a large majority of heavy industry, foreign trade, and domestic trade in certain basic commodities. But a majority of light industry and virtually all of agriculture are in private hands, and these are the preponderant sectors of the Chinese economy.

Although the present Chinese economy is substantially privately owned, the dynamics of its development mark it as state-capitalist. In all of Asia, including China, the basic economic problem is that of capital accumulation. The only agency capable of amassing the capital required to introduce modern industry is the state. In proportion as industrialization takes place, the economic role of the state increases. The development of every Asian capitalist economy must therefore take a state-capitalist course. China is fundamentally of a piece with the rest of Asia in this respect.

But we are told that this is merely a question of "economy"; what really is important is the "social system." And "social system" is not at all synonymous with "economy," it is inextricably bound up with "class structure."

It is to be feared that the editors have forgotten that "class structure," at least to Marxists, is defined by relationship to property in the means of production—and this is strictly an economic relationship, inextricably bound up with the laws of motion of the economy as a whole. If the means of production retain the economic character of *capital*, the class which is defined by its "ownership" of them is a *capitalist class*, and the social system in which it predominates is a *capitalist society*.

The confusion which the editorial reply creates on this point is worsened by the statement that "The significance of a social revolution is precisely that the new state power can proceed to reshape the economy in its own class image, fast or slow." This is essentially the basis for the theory of "Socialism in One Country," as expounded by Bukharin in the 1920s. He argued that workers' state power in Russia in itself enabled the Russian proletariat to reshape the economy in its own class image, i.e., to build socialism "even at a snail's pace."

But mere conquest of power confers on a class no such sovereign power over its economic conditions. Workers' power in Russia stood in contradiction to backward Russian capitalist economy; a contradiction that could only be resolved through extension of the revolution to economically advanced countries or through capitalist restoration (which

took place in the form of Stalinism). If Chinese Stalinism can slowly and organically transform the Chinese economy "in its own class image," that is because its "class image" is entirely suited to the dynamics of Chinese capitalist development.

The Editors ascribe to me the "invention" of a distinction between "bourgeoisie" and "capitalist class." Of course, it is clear from any but the most superficial reading of the original letter that I introduced this distinction precisely in order to give an intelligible, therefore discussable, form to their phrase "capitalism without a capitalist class." Their reply made no attempt to defend that argument, but retreated to the proposition that "The Stalinist 'capitalists' (new non-bourgeois variety) are very peculiar capitalists: they own no capital."

This argument has a familiar ring to it, doubtless because of a certain resemblance between it and the basic argument advanced by the proponents of the "degenerated workers' state" analysis of Stalinism: that the Stalinist bureaucracy is not a class because it owns no property in the means of production.

The answer to that argument is this: that the Stalinist bureaucracy, in Russia and elsewhere, through totalitarian state power collectively maintains a proprietary relationship to the means of production—even in the strictest Marxian sense. It therefore proves nothing to assert that the Stalinist bureaucrats "own no capital." It is first necessary to ascertain whether these means of production, which they own through their control of the state, are *capital*.

Let us first clarify the meaning of the economic category "capital." Marx considered capital to be a social relationship expressed in terms of things. This social relationship is that of class exploitation of "free" wage labor. The factories, money, commodities, etc., used in that process acquire their character of capital from that use.

To illustrate simply: if a given factory is used by a socialist society to produce goods for public use, it is not capital. If that factory is used by an owner as a mansion it is not capital. Only if it is used as a condition of exploitation of wage labor can it be considered capital.

The key category is that of "free labor." The working class under capitalism is "free" in a double sense: free from ownership of (or any organic connection with) the means of production, and free to choose whether to sell its labor power or to starve. (See *Capital*, Vol. I, pp. 187-9.)

We can now proceed to determine whether the means of production in a Stalinist economy are *capital*. Their capitalist character depends upon an affirmative answer to the question: Are they used for the exploitation of "free labor"?

No one but an apologist for Stalinism can deny that labor is exploited in Russia and the other Stalinist countries. (Of course there is in itself nothing "capitalist" about this; exploitation is the hallmark of any class society.)

But is labor under Stalinism "free" in the capitalist sense? On the basis of what we know about Russia, the answer must be *yes*. Slave labor occupies a relatively minor position in the Russian economy (and growth of industrialization tends to diminish even that), because of its grossly inefficient character. Moreover, its repressive political function is at least as important as its positive economic aspect (even if we ignore its role as a "reserve army of unemployed" and look at it only from the viewpoint of production).

The large majority of the Russian proletariat is therefore exploited under conditions of "freedom" from organic connection with the means of production, and of course it "owns" them in no sense whatever. That it is also free in the sense of having the choice "sell or starve" is illustrated by the prevalence of the piecework system, under which remuneration is directly proportional to intensity of labor.

It is true that laws restricting mobility of labor exist; but such laws are scarcely unknown to the proletariat of private-capitalist states. They no more destroy the "free" character of labor in Russia than such laws did in Nazi Germany or would in the U. S. A. (cf. the "labor draft" proposals of World War II).

It follows from the foregoing considerations that exploitation of "free labor" is the economic role of the means of production under Stalinism. The Stalinist bureaucratic ruling class, in Russia and elsewhere, derives its rule from *owner-*

*ship of capital*, and must therefore be considered a capitalist class.

(There are, of course, many other approaches to a proof of the capitalist character of Stalinism. Many of them were worked out in the articles by Forrest referred to in my previous letter—*NI*, Dec. 1942, Jan. & Feb. 1943. It is certainly odd that so much space was given to arguments already so thoroughly "refuted" that not a word of subsequent refutation was deemed necessary. I would like very much to know what documents contain the "extensive refutation" to which the editorial reply refers. I must admit that I am unacquainted with them.)

In conclusion, it should be made clear that an understanding of its state-capitalist nature is only the starting point for a thorough analysis of the new China. It is also of first importance to recognize that the Chinese Stalinists have taken power at the head of a mass revolutionary upsurge unequalled in modern times (except, perhaps, for the Russian revolution). The problems of theory and politics posed by the Chinese revolution are the most important facing our movement today. It is imperative that we discuss them in a serious fashion.

SHANE

## REPLY

## Some More ABCs

It took the "pro and con" exchange of Feb. 28 to smoke out Shane's opinion that it is not only China that is "capitalist," but in fact it is *Russian* Stalinism—any Stalinism—that is "capitalist." Thus the useful discussion is not at all over some Chinese peculiarities, but over the basic nature of Stalinism in the world. It is no doubt worthwhile to help a young comrade develop his germinating ideas in this way, but we're afraid it takes too much space in LABOR ACTION to achieve his gradual education toward facing the real questions jostling in his mind.

(1) In the Feb. 28 exchange, he had written: "It is not necessary to demonstrate the capitalist nature of a matured Stalinist economy to characterize China as state-capitalist." Thus he avoided presenting his whole view that Stalinism is capitalism, concentrating instead on what could only be basically irrelevant talk about the current and temporary stage of economy under the Chinese Stalinist state power.

This he does again in the first part of his piece on this page. Private ownership is still "preponderant" in the Chinese economy, but the "dynamics of its development mark it as state-capitalist." Why is it state-capitalist and not private-capitalist in its dynamics? Shane simply refers to the well-known need of all Asian countries for industrialization, which raises the economic role of the state. Then he writes:

"The development of every Asian capitalist economy must therefore take a state-capitalist course. China is fundamentally of a piece with the rest of Asia in this respect."

But it is not only Asia that needs industrialization and therefore faces this future. In South America and Africa this picture exists too. Therefore all over the world, the development of "every... capitalist economy" in the underdeveloped countries must take the same course as China, must be "fundamentally of a piece" with Stalinist China.

This is the beginning of a theory of the *inevitability of Stalinism*. Shane need not protest that he doesn't believe in this; we believe him. He does not believe in half the things he implies in his free-wheeling confusionism, just as he does not believe in the social-patriotic methodology which he expounded.

This theory of the inevitability of Stalinism flows precisely from Shane's meager theoretical flight in identifying Stalinism with statified capitalism. For it is quite certain that an inevitable economic trend in the underdeveloped lands is indeed, toward statification. Everybody knows that. Identify this statification with Stalinism, on no matter what absurd "Marxist" grounds, and you have the theory.

Above all, you have a theory, if only a pitiful one, which allows you to view this Stalinism as "progressive" in some sense, which permits you to talk (as Shane does) about the "mass revolutionary upsurge unequalled in modern times" as if the victory of Chinese Stalinist totalitarianism is coordinate in its glory with the Russian revolution.

The fact that Shane, in two long let-

ters, has not yet screwed his courage up to the pitch of making the simple statement that Stalinism is "progressive"—in spite of our challenge to do so—merely signifies that his own understanding of where his views point is still in a dense fog; since obviously it cannot be that he has refrained from this obvious conclusion simply because he wants to conceal his real views or because he wants to pull them out of this pocket only piecemeal, on the installment plan, so to speak.

This reluctance of Shane, reluctance to commit himself in print to the actual views which emerge amidst his rationalizations, is a good thing; it means he may still find his way back.

(2) One road back he has to take is to educate himself about the Marxist conception of the social revolution, which involves precisely the idea of the relationship of the state to the economy.

We had told him to pay some attention to "the nature (first of all) of the state power in China—i.e., what class is in power." We had informed him that a social system is bound up with "the state power, with the question of what is the ruling class, with the class structure." (Italics in original.)

He dodges. He takes up only the unitalicized phrase "class structure," ignores the preceding ones which condition it, and proceeds to an appallingly ignorant little lecture, not excluding a fantastic reference to Bukharin and "socialism in one country."

In total defiance of elementary Marxism, he argues that "mere" conquest of power does not permit a class to "reshape the economy in its own class image," as we had said.

(a) What on earth does Shane think happened in Russia after 1917? The new workers' power "reshaped" the economy, that is, abolished the capitalist system; but over a period of time, not overnight.—Can it be that Shane believes that "capitalism" remained as the social system in Russia right through from the tsar to the "state-capitalism" of Stalin? We may possibly find this out some day in another article in which Shane peels another layer off his ideas, in some suitable discussion organ.

(b) Even in the bourgeois revolution—e.g., the Great French Revolution—the new state power acquired by the bourgeoisie (in addition to its already existing bastions of economic power inside the old regime) was used to sweep away the remnants of feudal restrictions with an iron broom and speed the blossoming of capitalism. Even in the bourgeois revolutions, then, the new victorious class used its conquered state power to reshape the economy in its own class image. In fact, this is why a bourgeois revolution was needed by the otherwise timid bourgeoisie!

(3) A half century ago Karl Kautsky, in a socialist classic, already pointed out that the socialist revolution differs from the bourgeois revolution in the fact that, before conquest of power, the revolutionary class has no economic power within the old system, in the sense that the bourgeoisie had; that it must first conquer the state power before it can proceed to introduce a new economy. And it is so obvious! Yet Shane finds that a simple statement of this idea has something to do with... Bukharin and "socialism in one country," about which he seems to know next to nothing.

(4) This simple idea is abundantly true also of the Stalinist conquest of power. In all of East Europe, the Stalinists came to power in countries which still maintained economies that were "preponderantly" private-capitalist; and for a period the Stalinists let this situation remain and even talked demagogically of maintaining it. People who understand nothing about Stalinism, like the Fourth-Internationalists, thereupon wrote theses about state-capitalism under the Stalinists, citing abundant (and irrelevant) statistics like Shane's about the number of shops, farms, fruit-stalls and peanut-vendors still not collectivized. We said: Look at the state-power and its inevitable drive to turn the helm of the economy in the direction it needs to go, fast or slow depending on conditions and possibilities.

So it is in China. This is exactly what is happening, though slowly in a very backward economy. Not only that, but Shane is peripherally aware of this, and so he talks of state-capitalism, and not private capitalism, and its "dynamic," a dynamic which derives from the nature of the new state power and not from some platitudes about industrialization.

But anyway, as we have shown, once Shane talks of state-capitalism, he is talking of Russian Stalinism in the first place, and has left off playing with his stalking-horse China. It is perfectly clear that China is significant to him mainly as the road by which he has been

(Turn to last page)



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## GREETINGS to the CAL. STUDENT CONFERENCE

The Young Socialist League sends its warmest greetings to the California Civil Liberties Conference being held in Los Angeles on April 22-24.

The cooperation of liberals, pacifists and socialists which is embodied in the holding of this conference is a heart-warming sign. Such cooperation is a must in the face of the monolithic front of reaction which blankets the nation, especially on civil-liberties questions. We have devoted this entire issue of *Challenge* to the conference and the problems which it will have to deal with, because we are aware of the importance of such a conference in these times.

The crying need today, especially because of the slight setback suffered by the witchhunt in recent months, is a militant offensive by the labor movement and liberals to halt the onslaught against democratic liberties, and to begin a reconquest of the ground which the witchhunters have gained. We of the YSL have our criticisms of those with whom we are ready to cooperate in a defense of freedom, disagreements on many fundamental questions and even perhaps on some questions relating to civil liberties. Nevertheless we can and should fight together in this important area on which to agree.

In this spirit, we greet the conference and wish it fruitful deliberations and successful endeavors in defense of democracy.

NATIONAL ACTION COMMITTEE, YSL  
BERKELEY UNIT, YSL  
LOS ANGELES UNIT, YSL

## SOCIALISTS AND LIBERALS

# Two Bases for Collaboration

By JACK WALKER

BERKELEY, Apr. 17—It is a fact that socialists and liberals cooperate today over civil liberties issues, notwithstanding other political differences. This can be seen in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and Berkeley, to name a few places.

There are two main bases for this cooperation, one a positive reason and one a negative reason. The positive or favorable reason, at least to the socialist, is that despite all the official propaganda to the contrary, liberals have found that democratic socialists of the Third Camp tendency (i.e., the Young Socialist League in particular) have a principled position on civil liberties akin to that of the best liberals.

Unlike the Stalinists who are for civil liberties for themselves only, it has become apparent, amid the declining number of fighters for civil liberties, that socialists will defend the rights of their enemies—Stalinist or fascist—against the government's present drive to suppress political dissidents. In addition, this present generation of students and non-students have found, like their predecessors, that it is possible to work with Third Camp socialists in an organization without having to be afraid of "rule or ruin" tactics or secret "conspiracies."

The SDA in New York, the All-Campus Civil Liberties Committee at the University of Chicago, the Student Civil Liberties Union in Berkeley are all examples of organizations which have found that it is not only possible to "co-exist" with socialists in joint committees or a single organization, but that it is to the benefit of the organization to draw upon socialist ideas and organizational experience in the field of civil liberties.

The second, or negative reason, for liberal-socialist cooperation has been the fairly obvious fact of life that "official liberalism," which is embraced by millions voting for the Democratic and Republican Parties, or thousands in ADA, and which has congressional representation, has by and large deserted a principled stand on civil-liberties problems. Hubert Humphrey, the darling of some Fair Deal liberals, introduced the "Communist Control Act" of 1954 permitting the government to license

trade unions. The ADA opposes the right of Stalinists to teach.

And, of course, it was the Democratic administration which first introduced the attorney general's "List of Subversive Organizations," an illegal blacklisting device now employed in private as well as public employment to deprive political dissidents of their livelihood and, thereby discourage independent thinking.

### OUR TASKS

In situation after situation the "respectable" liberal has chosen to remain respectable rather than incur the obloquy that goes with defending unpopular organizations or individuals with unorthodox political views. As against this, the socialist has found—to his surprise and often bewilderment—that he is compelled to defend those values that in bygone days were assumed to be secured by liberals. In one sense this has been an unexpected burden; in another, a reason to demonstrate the importance of continued socialist organization today, when socialism itself seems so distant.

It would be unrealistic and hypocritical, however, to deny that there have been and will continue to be disputes about matters of national and international concern to liberals and socialists. Especially in connection with measures that successive administrations have chosen to employ in the cold war against Stalinism, there is a division of opinion over what the U. S. may do without opening itself up to the charge of depriving other nations or peoples of their rights and sovereignty. Socialists have opposed and continue to oppose such measures as the Marshall Plan, which ties U. S. aid in with U. S. control of the borrowing country's economy (through veto power over use of this money and a "matching fund" put up by the borrower); peace treaties with Germany and Japan which refuse sovereignty to these countries without simultaneous commitment to military cooperation with the United States; the support of dictators such as Chiang Kai-shek, Syngman Rhee, and Franco, not only against the Stalinists, but against their own people or the lands they inhabit; the support of European imperialism by U. S. allies such as England in Cyprus, Kenya and Malaya, and the French in Morocco, Tunisia and Indochina, etc.

These are the criticisms that socialists  
(Continued on page 7)

## SOCIALISTS, LIBERALS, PACIFISTS TO WORK TOGETHER IN CALIFORNIA'S

# Civil-Liberties Conference To Rally Student Action

By RALPH HODGES

LOS ANGELES, Apr. 10—The California Student Civil Liberties Conference which convenes on April 23 in Los Angeles is a welcome example of the growing opposition to the anti-civil-libertarian trends in the United States today. The wide range of organizations and individuals participating is in itself an indication of the increasing awareness of the seriousness of the situation in which democrats find themselves.

Because each of the major groups—pacifists, liberals and socialists—have a common belief in the necessity of freedom and the extension of democracy and oppose totalitarianism, there exists an excellent basis for mutual cooperation and action—both at the conference and in the future.

As civil-libertarians and democratic socialists we will earnestly work for a really successful conference. In order that the conference be a success, certain minimum things must be accomplished, in terms of general orientation and concrete action.

First, if the conference is not to be a "one-shot" event, then it is necessary to adopt a programmatic statement upon which future organization can be based. This statement should take a firm stand to defend the rights of every individual and group. At the same time, if a meaningful civil-libertarian position is to be taken, then it is necessary to specifically dissociate ourselves from all totalitarian elements; only in a principled unity are there grounds for cooperation.

### GOALS FOR ACTION

In terms of organization, two things should be accomplished: (1) the organization of a state-wide student civil-liberties liaison committee, and (2) the active encouragement of the formation of local discussion groups (especially on the smaller campuses), and/or student civil-liberties unions modeled after the Berkeley SCLU. The former (the liaison committee) can serve to act as a source of information and organizational contact between the various local groups.

All of the experience of the last years

would seem to indicate that one of the most potent weapons against the witch-hunt is that of public exposure of the facts and issues involved in the numerous violations of civil liberties. Additionally, a lack of information has always handicapped student civil-libertarians in their attempts to present a united front. If here in California an effective, functioning state-wide civil-liberties liaison committee can be organized, one of the biggest hurdles to an effective defense of civil liberties will have been overcome.

The latter aim, that of encouraging local discussion groups and the formation of SCLUs throughout the state, is the necessary organizational base for the establishment of a state liaison committee.

It must be remembered that the witch-hunt achieves its goal when students become silent or apathetic about the crucial issues which face all of us today; that is, it is not just an end to the persecution of minority dissidents that we desire, but also the stimulation of a vigorous opposition to the blackjack of conformity and suicidal apathy on the part of a broad section of students. The formation of discussion groups on those campuses where it is so often said that civil liberties "is not an immediate issue," would be a very great step toward the re-creation of a tradition of critical and independent thought for students.

Thus through its actions the California Student Civil Liberties Conference can do a great deal to improve the present situation of civil liberties, and to help lay the foundation for an extension of the freedom necessary to a real democratic way of life.

## SOCIALISTS AND PACIFISTS

# Plenty of Common Ground!

By MICHAEL HARRINGTON

To understand the drive against civil liberties in all of its implications, it is necessary to understand the drive toward war. Socialists and pacifists share this basic assumption, and this common analysis provides the basis for cooperation between them.

It should be obvious today that the witchhunt is part of a larger process. It cannot be explained as an independent phenomenon, or even as the normal martial mobilization of public opinion which always occurs in time of war. It goes deeper than that. For in the drive against every kind of non-conformity and criticism, the entire society is militarized and marches to a single point of view. The roots of this fact go deep.

Perhaps the most important thing that can be said is that the anti-civil-liberties

movement is analogous to the kind of response which the United States gives to almost every problem it encounters today: a response of violence and coercion, and inability to use even the resources of bourgeois democracy in the struggle. Thus the shabby list of America's allies abroad, the Francos, Chiangs, Songrams, Bao Dais and Syngman Rhees. Thus, the almost pathological fear of basic criticism, the resort to coercion rather than persuasion in the area of domestic civil liberties. And the two responses, the overtly militarist in the case of foreign policy, the basically militarist in the case of civil-liberties, require a common criticism and a common opposition.

I think one example will explain this entire point. The attorney general has announced additions to his list. One of the new organizations named was the "Johnson-Forrest Group." These people

(Continued on page 7)

### LOS ANGELES YSL CLASS

FRI. EVES. at 8 p.m.

May 6: First and Second Internationals.

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Berkeley YSL Headquarters  
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# TRENDS

## AT THE UAW CONVENTION

By BEN HALL

Two thousand eight hundred delegates came to Cleveland from 1000 locals for the convention of the United Automobile Workers (CIO), March 27 to April 1. They were preoccupied with a single fixed thought: After five years contracts with General Motors, Ford and Chrysler were about to expire; the union was on the brink of opening the first big push for the Guaranteed Annual Wage. If necessary they were ready to call hundreds of thousands of workers on strike.

This convention could best be described as a gigantic rally in preparation for the possible struggles to come.

Everything else was shunted aside; the only important resolutions to receive attention were linked directly to contract negotiations; for the first time resolutions on political action, or foreign policy, or any other pressing subject, were held up in committee and never hit the floor.

Nevertheless, even apart from its leading role in the fight for the Guaranteed Annual Wage, the convention gave many a token of the distinctive and outstanding character of the UAW in the labor movement.

By the second day when the strike-fund debate began, the mood of the convention was clearly defined.

The leadership proposed to build a strike fund of \$25,000,000, financed by a dues increase of \$5 per month. When the fund reached this total, the dues increase would be suspended to be restored as soon as the fund dropped below \$15,000,000.

This is the largest dues rise ever put for a vote. In other years, requests by the leadership for modest increases met fierce resistance from delegates and sometimes were defeated. But this was the first time an appeal for more money was linked without qualification to a fighting fund. And this on the eve of what could turn out to be the largest and most costly strike in union history.

Whatever doubts existed before now vanished as the debate began. After a minimum of a day-and-a-half discussion the delegates voted 90 per cent for the dues increase and strike fund. It was an honest expression of opinion; the administration did not have to lumber out its heavy organizational machine to put it over.

Opponents of the fund were thoroughly routed in the discussion as well as in the vote. Their arguments were not the fiery lashing-out of democratic-spirited rank-and-filers eager to curb an officialdom; this time those who opposed the fund spoke in the dull and drab tones of backward union men.

The main debate turned on a minor issue. The administration proposed that benefits be paid out to strikers in actual need. A large bloc of delegates who voted for the fund wanted it distributed to all strikers equally as a matter of right. The issue was thus posed as "need versus right."

The supporters of "right" were a mixed crew. Many active unionists sincerely were repelled by the thought of conducting a "means test," of prying into intimate details of a striker's life; they feared favoritism and injustices when committees decided who would and who would not get strike benefits. Their misgivings prompted the convention to vote for a special post-convention survey to work out a long-range solution to the strike-benefit problem.

But other supporters of "right" were prompted by simple maneuverist considerations. They were not willing to oppose the fund but they feared to face the members back home who might resist the dues increase. And so they assumed this "oppositionist" stance in order to escape responsibility.

In the final showdown vote, "need" won by 60-40. The decisive argument was simple: if 325,000 General Motors workers went on strike and each received as a matter of right \$20 per week, the fund would be exhausted at the rate of \$6,500,000 weekly.

Three days later, the convention endorsed the demand for the Guaranteed Annual Wage and adopted an extensive program of additional contract demands including: wages, retirement benefits, health program, overtime.

The following significant provision repudiates long-term contracts: "Contracts not to exceed two years if they include escalator and improvement factor provisions and not to exceed one year if they do not include both such provisions."

Active unionists are sensitive to the debilitating effects of long-term contracts; in the discussion every speaker emphasized the need to strengthen the union at the shop level and warned against weakening working conditions and union rights on the job in return for money gains.

As the convention moved toward adjournment, it set its sights for the next major objective: shorter hours. The debate on this question, which has simmered for

four years, is virtually resolved. As the impact of automation becomes general, everyone feels the need to cut hours. A special resolution endorsed the goal of a reduced workday.

In this atmosphere of simple concentration on the job at hand, none of the invited guest speakers could hold anyone's attention. The listening delegates were restless and impatient. But there was one exception: When George Meany was introduced he spoke to a hushed audience, aware of the historic significance of his appearance on the stage. Labor unity was becoming a reality.

Meany was careful to make the customary genuflections to private enterprise, laboring to prove that capitalism could not go on without free trade unions. This is an argument which always goes over big... with unionists. Presumably, however, he has little hope of convincing employers, for the real theme of his speech was: "To meet our enemies, we must get our own house in order."

He outlined nothing less than a proposed platform for labor unity, a platform which will become the rallying ground for the Meany-Reuther forces in the new federation:

(1) "The union must be open to all regardless of race, creed, or color."

(2) "For high moral standards and ethics; those who serve unions must place the unions first, not their own personal aggrandizement." In plain English, get rid of racketeers.

(3) Communists are traitors to the workers who would lead us to a dictatorial form of government.

(4) Intensified political action: "they have chosen the political battleground and we will fight it out there." After outlining anti-labor laws: "This is the challenge and in this challenge lies the threat of the destruction of unionism."

### Critical of Witchhunt

Civil liberties never came to the floor. But convention reports, committees and preparations proved that the UAW's official position was in fine shape, more clear-cut than ever on important issues.

The Constitution Committee ignored proposals from Flint to bar Communists from membership in the UAW. On the other hand, it distributed the text of a strange clause governing conduct during campaigns for union office, requiring candidates to pledge not to engage in "false, deceptive or malicious" propaganda; a clause whose vague prohibitions would give a handle to all kinds of anti-democratic suppression.

Who first sponsored it, and how, is unknown. After behind-the-scenes protests, the committee announced the formal withdrawal of its proposal.

Reuther's written report on "Loyalty and Security Programs" was more critical and more specific in its criticisms than ever. It refers to "security" boards, with the properly derogatory quotation marks; it defends John Lupa against the charge of associating with the Socialist Workers Party in these terms: "he associated briefly not with Communists, but with anti-Communist members of a minority political party."

In conclusion he demands the removal of "all federal legislation limiting what people can think and say... from statute books."

The proposed convention resolution began: "The ten-year period since the end of World War II has witnessed a series of unparalleled assaults upon the Bill of Rights which threaten to undermine the basic liberties upon which our country and our labor movement have grown strong." In three and a half pages it lists an indictment of anti-democracy, denouncing the outlawing of the Communist Party and repudiating the Smith Act.

The Bill of Rights was printed on red, white and blue parchment paper and distributed to all. Emil Mazey was proposing that the convention endorse the Bill of Rights as a dramatic symbol of its continuing attachment to democracy. But he was ill in the closing days as the convention crowded to an end and it was lost in the shuffle along with everything else.

The only jarring note in an otherwise uniform mood of democracy came from Vice-President Jack Livingstone, who defended the action of the Grievance Committee in rejecting the appeal of Martin Trachtenberg of Buick Local 599 (Flint).

Trachtenberg had been fired by General Motors on the pretext that he had falsified his application for employment five or six years before. Actually he had been discharged as an alleged Stalinist who had refused to testify before a congressional committee, standing on the Fifth Amendment.

The UAW's GM Department, headed by Livingstone, accepted his grievance but refused to submit the case

to arbitration when the company refused to reinstate him. Trachtenberg was appealing to the convention to overrule the GM Department and direct it to carry his case through to an arbitrator.

Trachtenberg had a strong case. In the Ford setup, for example, a statute of limitations makes it impossible for the company to reach way back into the past in the search for a firing-pretext. Ironically, in a previous case GM had discharged a worker who had been a member of the CP but broke with it. When he repudiated it, the CP turned over information to the company which became the basis for his discharge.

Two principles were at stake: (1) the right of the company to fish into the past; and (2) the defense of job rights of an accused Communist. But Livingstone depended, as usual, upon a coarse and vulgar appeal to simple hatred of Trachtenberg's reported politics.

The convention listened politely to Trachtenberg and rejected his appeal with near-unanimity. Reuther reported six votes in his favor. It is worth noting that not one of the Stalinist delegates voted for him.

### The Woman Question

On the very first day, the "women question" was hotly debated when the Resolutions Committee brought in a simple statement in defense of seniority rights of women. The resolution was finally adopted, of course, but not without extended debate and a surprisingly strong resistance.

Significantly, both the ardent supporters of the resolution and its critics found common ground on one of the great moral platitudes of modern times: woman's place is in the home. Here are 2,800 leading representatives of our greatest union; they cheer on to battle against monopolists; they resist, they repudiate, they demand. They will refurbish society. But they think that women's place is to bear children and stay in the kitchen. In this, they are hardly a notch above the gray average citizen.

Once again the dilemma of the Reuther leadership flashes before us: As a leadership, as a machine, as a tendency, it advances great social goals and wants a union capable of striving for them. But the tendency, concentrated at the top, dribbles down into nothing as it reaches down into the membership.

As the years go by, all the advanced experienced elements are sucked into the officialdom. The men who built and led the union, who made it what it is today, are now lifted out of the ranks, into the organizational apparatus.

Literally hundreds of worker-leaders who were everywhere, speaking, debating, demanding, making the UAW and its conventions sparkle with their speeches and their actions, are heard no more. They are now part of the paid staff; they no longer make policy, they only carry it out; they hang around the convention corridors; they are silent, they go into action only upon demand of the top officialdom.

### Ciampa Case

If any of the appointed staff should dream of assuming a place of active initiative in inner-union politics, the fate of P. J. Ciampa gives pause.

Two years ago he was elected to the lofty post of regional director for the South; this year he came a broken and beaten man.

In 1953 Ciampa was an international representative appointed to the staff of the then regional director, Tom Starling. Like Starling, Ciampa was in the Reuther camp; but when opposition to Starling rose in the region, Ciampa got a little ambitious. Upon his own initiative, without clearing it with the top officialdom, Ciampa ran against Starling and defeated him.

For two years Ciampa was regional director and sat on the International Executive Board. A few months after his election, the top leaders demanded that he resign.

Why? He had violated their just established code of honor. His crime: he had defeated his former boss Starling, running against him without proper prior notice.

When Ciampa refused to bow, they told him that he could serve out his term; and if he agreed not to run for re-election they would guarantee his reappointment to the staff. But he refused, countering with a demand for the convocation of a special regional convention to hear both sides. He agreed to step down if the convention upheld the Board against him, provided the Board would permit him to live in peace if he were upheld. The Board informally agreed; but the conference was never held.

For two years Ciampa was loyal to UAW policy but the campaign of undermining him went on mercilessly. By the time this convention came around, he was thoroughly discredited and could not muster enough strength to run for re-election. His supporters circulated material very damaging to Reuther; Reuther announced several times that he would reply to the convention at the proper place and time. But that time never came.

### Negroes and the Leadership

Two additional vice-presidents were added to the Executive Board, bringing the roster of top officers up to six: president, secretary-treasurer, and four vice-presidents. Together with the 19 Regional directors, they make up the top ruling International Executive Board, highest policy-making body between conventions.

The enlargement of the board prompted two incidents: (1) the raising of the question of a Negro in the top leadership; and (2) the candidacy of Carl Stel-

(Continued on next page)

# The Interplay of Militancy and Bureaucratization in America's Trail-Blazer Union . . .

lato for the vice-presidency. Each of these incidents in its own way illuminates the vexing problem of the inner relations among the top leadership, the appointed staff, and the ranks.

The candidates of the administration to fill the two new posts were Leonard Woodcock, an original and authentic Reutherite, and Norman Matthews, Chrysler director.

At every convention, demands are heard for the elevation of a Negro to a top post. This convention was no exception. An unknown Negro, Nathaniel Turner from Flint Local 599, ran for vice-president on the principle of Negro representation. He got only 10 per cent of the votes.

The leadership has consistently replied to such demands by arguing against the assignment of a leading post to a Negro solely as a race representative; this, it maintained, would be a form of segregation; Negroes should run for office, it concluded, on the basis of ability.

But at two pre-convention Reuther caucus meetings, Horace Sheffield, one of the first of the leading Negro militants to back Reuther, pointed out that the approach of the administration was obsolete. Sheffield is head of the Iron Foundry Division of Ford Local 600.

The fact remains, he argued, that after 20 years of unionism, after scores of men have come and gone in the top leadership, not one Negro has ever risen into a top policy position. Yet there are and have been dozens of prominent Negroes, at least equal in ability to those who have held office. Why? he asks.

**He deserves a reply. So far, none has been forthcoming.**

In this reporter's opinion, the problem in the UAW lies not at all in prejudice or discrimination at the summits of the administration, but in machine methods of control. In every region, only a single director is elected (with one exception). The delicate jockeying for position, lining up every vote necessary to win, makes it virtually impossible for a Negro to count on victory. It is far more difficult for him to win such a job than it would be to win the presidency of an overwhelmingly white local union. Here, the Negro suffers the disability of widespread subtle and not so subtle prejudice.

An outstanding Negro could cut through the layers of prejudice at the bottom through election to one of the top posts directly by the convention. But when Reuther first rose to power, he needed every support; to solidify his position, the first two vice-presidencies were handed out to two powerful regional directors, Gosser and Livingstone.

Now, since the days of the first victory of the Reuther group, Negroes who were once prominent and outstanding leaders and speakers have sunk into the background. Not because they are Negroes but because they, like hundreds of other militants, have become mere staff men. And as part of an appointed staff, they must be self-effacing executors of the will of the top leaders.

**A case in point is one of the most capable men in the union who happens to be a Negro. At one convention, he persuasively led the fight for the administration's policy on Taft-Hartley affidavits. At another, he held a key post on the Grievance Committee. In his own community he became a prominent figure in local politics. Only a**

**few men in the union possess his abilities. Now? He is an appointed staff member and is heard no more.**

With time, the appointed staff members enjoy less initiative, less independence, and less power. Those already at the top command greater prestige and power. When it comes time to choose two new vice-presidents in 1955, it seems only natural that once again two powerful regional directors will move up. Naturally, no capable Negro has won national standing and prestige; the organizational climate is not favorable to it.

## The Symbol of Stellato

Only one new man has successfully emerged into national prominence since Reuther's victory: Carl Stellato. But he occupies the strategic post of president of Local 600, largest UAW local and key link in the Ford chain.

He was virtually forced to create himself in 1951 by the obtuse high-handedness of the Reuther group. In that year, Reuther was seeking the first dues increase. Stellato, then a Reuther supporter, trying to hold on to Local 600, tried to take an evasive and vacillating position. He was not allowed such a luxury; he was driven out of the Reuther caucus and denounced as a union wrecker.

But what succeeded at this convention in the case of Ciampa failed in the case of Stellato. Reuther has never been able to control Local 600. Stellato held on in the local. He was forced into oppositionism and has since become the focus and rallying figure for all discontented elements. Two years ago he pressed for a 30-hour-week resolution. Again the leadership attacked him violently.

**After a last-minute decision, at this convention Stellato ran for vice-president against the administration slate. With no preliminary campaign, he got 30 per cent of the vote—a not unimpressive total. If balloting had been by secret vote instead of a show of hands, he would probably have gotten more.**

His nomination and acceptance brought out the only spontaneous demonstration. When candidates are nominated floor demonstrations begin. At one time, these were maverick affairs that played a real part in the intense faction struggles. But now that the administration is entrenched they are highly organized, stilted and artificial. "If the delegates will take their seats and come to order," said temporary chairman Pat Greathouse, "they will get their chance to demonstrate at the proper time." This offhand remark (which did not find its way into the official proceedings) typifies the institution of the new floor demonstration.

Stellato's demonstration was more genuine because it was less organized. His supporters had no balloons but plenty of spirit. Their placards were not professionally printed; they were hastily scrawled but waved with honest enthusiasm.

Those who demonstrated for Stellato were not against Reuther. They were not hostile to the administration but they were critical of its machine.

Nor were Stellato's supporters in general more militant or more progressive than the others. A rainbow of all discontents flocked to his banner. Rallying to him were backward opponents of the strike fund; vul-

gar anti-communists from Flint; simple anti-socialists; as well as scores of good militants who wanted to freshen up and prod the leadership.

**They had this in common: they were protesting excessive controls from above and wanted to remind everyone that the rank and file had to be reckoned with.**

The leadership looked to the dues discussion as a showpiece of democracy. In reality, the mood of rank-and-file democracy burst forth during the election of officers.

In accepting the nomination, Stellato implied that the whole Executive Board was handpicked and that there was not a single voice of "honest criticism" represented on it. The administration nominees were stung and reacted sharply, though defensively.

"I resent the accusation that I am a person of no principle," said Woodcock. "There is a difference between brawling in the streets and thrashing out your differences in the council chambers. . . ."

Said Matthews: "I don't think anyone can state that I am a rubberstamp for anyone."

But it remained for Livingstone to give a hint of the mutually accepted leadership-philosophy of the collective officialdom: "I have on many occasions disagreed in our International Executive Board meetings . . . but once a decision has been made by the IEB in behalf of the membership of this union, I as a member of the team, as any team person should work, follow the policies laid down by the IEB. Just as when this convention makes a decision, whether I as an individual agree or disagree with that decision, I consider it an obligation of mine to carry out that decision."

**Stellato's charge misses the point. The top leaders often disagree violently among themselves. What is wrong is not that they are all a bunch of rubberstamps but that they allow no inkling of these differences ever to emerge before the ranks. The leadership must always appear as one unanimous bloc face to face with the membership.**

Vice-President Gosser told Stellato: "There is no union in the world that has the type of democracy that our great union has." And he was right. There is democracy among the top leaders but it is a democracy in which the ranks do not participate. And there is democracy in the ranks where any member can debate, caucus, vote and argue. This exists to an extent equaled nowhere in the labor movement. *But there is no democracy for the appointed staff; it must remain silent.*

The organized top leadership debates and makes up its mind. The staff only listens and then must drive the line through among the membership. As the best elements are lifted out of the ranks into the staff they are lifted out of the atmosphere of rank-and-file democracy.

It is this that the membership feels. And it is this that remains as one of the key problems for Reutherism: how, in such a relationship between top officials, appointed staff, and membership, to create a progressive, democratic social movement.

But all these problems are postponed to arise some other day. As the convention ended, contract negotiations with the Big Three began. The UAW membership—the whole labor movement—now looks to the UAW as the trail-blazer in the fight for a Guaranteed Annual Wage.

## For Collaboration—

(Continued from page 5)

direct at those "unreconstructed liberals" with whom we associate, in terms of fighting for a democratic foreign policy. Then, too, there is the socialist opposition to the propaganda and social measures employed by the government in preparing the populace for a third atomic war. Socialists oppose both the means (atomic destruction) and the imperialist ends of the U. S. government in such a war—ends which will not essentially differ from the bipartisan agreements reached at Yalta.

Many of these government "mistakes"—as they are called by liberals—are looked upon by socialists as being indisolubly bound up with the program of any capitalist government today in an anti-capitalist world. Socialists expect such unpalatable things and even predicted some of them many years in advance (such as aid to Franco), but they still say to the liberal:

"You deplore many things that the U. S. government does. You believe that certain policies can and should be changed, that they are not ineradicable. Why don't you press in an organized fashion to make it clear to everyone what your recommendations are and do battle for them within your own political parties? We socialists would be willing to discuss in advance with you how this fight may be prosecuted even though we do not feel that these changes can be effected within present political parties. We believe that you will have to become a socialist in order to carry out your program, and that a labor party and then a socialist party are necessary, but nevertheless we are willing to work with you until you come to this conclusion yourself."

Holding a wet forefinger up in the air today it is possible to detect a slight breeze blowing in the direction of an expanded civil liberties climate. How

strong or durable this breeze is, we do not know, and of course it would be dissipated by the warming up of the cold war to any degree.

Yet, today, when there is more questioning of McCarthyism (Republican and Democratic, McCarthy-Nixon and Brownell) and some doubts about the government "loyalty" and security program, there is a good chance to widen the audience of people who will listen to the civil-libertarian viewpoint and perhaps be influenced by it.

It is one of the duties of this civil-liberties conference in Los Angeles, and of those participating in its preparation—whether present today or not—to strengthen that breeze as much as possible. It is necessary to struggle tenaciously against both our own tendency to fall into an apathetic "What's the use?" attitude, and also against the limited interest in civil-liberties ideas that we may find in our new audience.

We have to demonstrate first truths to these people again and again—things that we take for granted—and thereby move them on the basis of their own experiences and our work to participate in the fight for civil liberties for everyone.

And finally, we must call attention to the foundation stones that support the anti-civil-liberties drive today, such as the Smith Act, the Hatch Act, the Attorney General's List, the Taft-Hartley Act, the McCarran-Walters Immigration Act, the Internal Security Act of 1950, and the Communist Control Act of 1954—to name some of the more important laws and directives. Only when we begin to see these cornerstones being knocked down can we begin to speculate about a more fundamental reversal of the anti-civil-liberties drive today. It is the job of democratic socialists and principled liberals to contribute their best efforts in the coming period to achieve this common goal.

## Common Ground—

(Continued from page 5)

are not Communist, by any stretch of the imagination, yet they are critical of the basic assumptions of a capitalist society. This same point emerged in the amazing list of charges and interrogatories which the government sent to the Independent Socialist League. Here is an anti-Stalinist organization of democratic socialists—and it was precisely this last category, democratic socialism, which the government found "subversive."

These cases cannot be explained in terms of a rational response to a real threat unless you assume that the threat is not merely Stalinism but the power of ideas, criticism, as well. This the government has done, in an attempt to mobilize the mind and conscript the conscience for a fundamentally violent and negative struggle against Stalinism.

On the basic points of this phenomenon—the drive to war, the drive against

civil liberties, in short, the garrison state—socialists and pacifists are agreed in their opposition.

### BASIS FOR AGREEMENT

Therefore, the only question is one of implementation, of how this cooperation will work out. In the past, fear, suspicion and hostility have sometimes marred the relations between socialists and pacifists. Some of this still remains today. And yet, in various conferences, picket lines, protests and the like, socialists and pacifists have worked together on the level of a principled agreement. For both realize that it is only by taking a thoroughly consistent and principled stand that a real alternative can be offered: therefore, both agree that we must have civil liberties for all, for Communists and fascists as well as anyone else.

The differences which separate pacifists and non-pacifist socialists are not small. They certainly should not be suppressed nor minimized. In the process of cooperation on issues where there is agreement, such as that of civil liberties, both points of view can learn from each other. Yet given the fact of differences, this does not operate in the field of civil liberties. For here we are agreed, not only in point of the actual position but with regard to basic analysis as well.

Pacifists and anti-war socialists both know that the drive against civil liberties is part of the militarization of our society. We both propose the same line of response: to offer a clear and principled democratic position as an alternative, to demand that the basic democratic conception of the right of non-violent discussion for all be kept. Given the wide scope of our agreement, it is essential that we work together. In this, there is no suppression of differences. There is rather the urgent task of cooperation on the basis of common analysis and common program.

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# Letter from a Group of Expelled SWPers in Los Angeles

The following communication is from a group of recently expelled members of the Socialist Workers Party in Los Angeles, who have lately been discussing and cooperating with the ISL in that city. We are very glad to publish their account for the interest of LABOR ACTION readers.—Ed.

We are happy to reply to the request of LABOR ACTION for an account of the recent expulsions in the Los Angeles SWP, and a statement of the attitude of the expelled SWP members toward the Independent Socialist League.

In preparation for its recent convention the SWP conducted what it was pleased to call an internal "discussion." As the leadership's contribution to the discussion there was presented to the membership two—of course unanimous—resolutions from the National Committee: one on the role of the SWP in the trade unions, which contained nothing that was both new and true; the other a "political" resolution dealing 99 per cent with the one-time—and now abandoned—line of the SWP toward Senator McCarthy, in which "the most important event in world history since the crossing of the Yalu River by the Chinese" was said to be... the rise of McCarthy in the United States, etc. Two additional contributions were concerned with the Negro Question and the Woman Question. As a crown to this flow of reason a NC member issued a plea for punctuality.

The SWP convention met after a period which saw the exclusion of the Cochran faction from the SWP—in spite of the unanimous convention which was held last time with the Cochranites present; after a period in which it became

crystal-clear to any honest revolutionist that the Bolivian section of the Fourth International had definitively and irretrievably betrayed the Bolivian proletariat; after the split of the SWP from the Fourth International; after a period in which the line of the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International and the 3rd World Congress had been exposed in action as being wrong and inadequate toward the Mao regime in China;—the SWP convention was held, this is to say, in such circumstances as would compel any honest revolutionary party to a considerable activity in re-examining, re-checking, and, where necessary, in revising its line and policies.

The Negro Question and the Woman Question are, of course, important questions. We in no sense criticize the interest that SWP members claim to have in these matters. But, to put it bluntly, these are hardly the burning questions of the moment: to discuss these questions exclusively when there are other and equally important questions before the party, amounts to using these questions not for the advancement of women or Negroes, but in order to stifle and avoid discussion which could only reveal the stupidity and ignorance of the SWP leadership and the passivity and docility of the membership. The discussion in the SWP was concentrated on these two problems in order to whitewash the SWP leadership for a long series of obvious and inexcusable errors of both a principled and a practical nature.

In this situation the SWP was presented with two minority contributions from a small group of Los Angeles members: one, an article dealing with the Fourth International's betrayal in Bolivia; the other a resolution opposing the then "McCarthy-is-a-fascist" line of the SWP leadership.

In the Los Angeles section we were unable to get any discussion at all of the Bolivian article: the leadership pretended that it was waiting for some specific facts, the nature of which were never revealed; and the whole Bolivian matter was relegated to the question of whether the Bolivian leaders would support Pablo or Cannon.

One discussion of the McCarthy issue was held. It is impossible to describe the nature of this meeting which corresponded more closely to a Stalinist meeting than any we have ever seen in an ostensibly anti-Stalinist party. One of the SWP's most ignorant and borish, but most "regular," members was chosen to "report": what he did to Trotsky has frequently been done earlier but not more definitely by Stalinists and Social Democrats. His report was followed by a round of hatchet attacks upon the motives and characters of the Minority Spokesman, in the course of which SWP members of twenty years were referred to as "racial bigots," "chauvinists," "McCarthy supporters," "Stalinists," etc.

The attack was particularly virulent since most of the hatchet-men and hacks were well aware themselves that the "McCarthy-is-a-fascist" position of the SWP had suffered a number of serious setbacks and would have to be shelved. One of the Minority spokesmen even told the Majority: "This resolution you're

supporting won't even be given to the convention; a new one will have to be drawn up and it will be passed—without any discussion." Such indeed was the actual outcome.

The Minority in Los Angeles was entitled to one delegate to the SWP convention. At the meeting as well as for months previous the LA Minority had been threatened with expulsion by the convention; and at this meeting itself members of the NC confirmed the fact that the convention was going to expel the LA Minority.

In these circumstances—considering the absolutely empty pre-convention discussion and the passivity and docility of the SWP membership, the promise of expulsion, as well as the generally undemocratic and useless nature of SWP conventions—the Minority supporters in LA decided not to accept the considerable financial and personal difficulties involved in sending their delegate—not only without help from the SWP but in the face of actual obstruction by it—to the convention. Instead their delegate sent a sharply worded criticism of the SWP policy and leadership, a characterization of the internal methods and aims of the SWP leadership, and the statement that SWP policy "is neither Marxist, revolutionary or proletarian."

The leadership replied with a motion "expelling" all the SWP members who voted for the Minority resolution on McCarthy. The expulsion consisted of a motion and a vote—no trial, hearing or defense being considered necessary.

The LA Minority considered, and still considers, that the ideas and attitudes enunciated by Leon Trotsky were, and are, the only basis for consistent socialist activity. In this sense the LA Minority is opposed to many of the past and present positions of the ISL and closer to some of the declared positions of the SWP. However, the declared position of the SWP means nothing whatsoever: with double-talk and ambiguity the positions have been given a content diametrically opposed to the content that they once had; in addition the SWP leadership has repeatedly shown in recent years that principles and fundamentals mean absolutely nothing to it; that the SWP is a collection of crackpots held together by clique and even family ties and degenerating more rapidly than any other party on the American scene. As we write these lines the rumors of new clique alignments are heard with the certainty of new non-political struggles and additional bureaucratic splits.

While the ISL has not rectified the positions taken in 1940, it has attempted to give these positions theoretical elaboration; doing this the League has apparently been able to maintain for the moment much that the SWP had abandoned. Even incorrect theories are superior to no theory at all, or to a contempt for it! Attempting to function theoretically the League members appear to have escaped the moral degeneration which had gripped the SWP. Avoiding moral degeneration with its attendant pomp, cant, ballyhoo and claims to infallibility, the League maintains its internal democracy it would appear, at a time when SWP members are hesitant

and fearful of expressing honest criticisms and opinions.

The Los Angeles Minority feels that the ISL is far from perfect; but it also feels that less has been surrendered by the League to the developing witchhunt than has been surrendered by the SWP—to degenerate more slowly is not an ideal to strive for, but a material fact not to be ignored; and for these reasons the LA Minority is willing and happy to cooperate with the ISL in much of its work.

## PRO AND CON —

(Continued from page 4)

blindly backing himself into a pro-Stalinist theory, without looking where he is going, until friends point out to him where he is, whereupon he invents a theory to justify the distance he has so far covered toward Stalinism.

(3) So now Russia—i.e., Stalinism, in short—is "capitalist." Why? Shane, apparently unaware that there have been more sensible and sophisticated efforts at a Marxist proof of this theory, boils the state-capitalist theory down to its most improbable element. In this section of his letter, every sentence contains at least two elementary errors at a minimum, but we have room here only to point out the two main whoppers.

According to Shane, (a) capitalism is sufficiently defined as the class exploitation of "free labor," and (b) Stalinism exploits "free labor" also. Ergo: Stalinism is also a form of capitalism. Simple!

(a) We already saw Shane dream up a capitalism without a bourgeoisie, though with a "non-bourgeois" capitalist class, defined to order. Then we saw him strip each of these "non-bourgeois capitalists" of any ownership of capital, for of course he has to admit that they "own" only the state (which in turn owns the "capital"). Now we see him, inevitably, stripping capitalism of all other attributes which do not fit into a definition of Stalinism as capitalism. This is the standard course for developing any state-capitalist theory of Russia, including those that make more sense than Shane's.

Above all, he strips capitalism of any connection with the profit motive as the regulator of the system, as it is under capitalism.

Exploitation of "free labor" is, as everyone knows, a characteristic of capitalism which differentiated it from the preceding feudalism and slavery. All that Shane does is assert, in the teeth of credibility, that this well-known characteristic of capitalism is itself the decisive determinant of capitalism. This is absolutely original on his part, since nobody else has yet thought of making "free labor" (of all things) the decisive common ground of capitalism and Stalinism.

(b) Even more fantastic is Shane's argument that labor is "free" under Stalinism in the same sense as under capitalism. The "freedom" that Marx refers to in this regard is precisely the workers' *juridical* freedom, not only to sell his labor power or starve, but also to sell his labor power to the highest bidder, etc. Under Stalinism, the "free" worker does not have this right, or even the right to "sell or starve"; his freedom is to choose between working in the factory as ordered or being worked to death in a concentration camp. And this apart from the slave-labor sector, which has not tended to diminish with the growth of industrialization in Russia, as is well known!

Finally: we would be glad to work up a reading list for Shane on the Russian question, as well as more elementary subjects. But we are taken aback by his remark that it is "odd" that Forrest (1942-3) got "so much space" for arguments we had refuted. Being among the very few believers in the long-run educational value of continued discussion, our movement gave that much space to one who had spent much research time and devoted much energy to carefully working out evidence for a mistaken theory. Since that is unfortunately not Shane's case, he should rather think that the present space is what's odd.—Ed.

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## The Patient —

(Continued from page 1)

been produced during the past four or five months. By the middle of March over 2 million of this year's model cars had been sold, and production was running at an annual rate of over 8 million. Despite the high sales, inventories totaled over 550,000 cars at that time, and have been increased further since.

This rate of production can be explained in part by the possibility of a major strike in auto this year, and in part by the frenzied competition among the giant producers. A Federal Reserve Board survey, conducted in January and February, indicates that slightly fewer consumers plan to buy new cars this year than a year ago. With new car sales running over 40 per cent ahead of last year, this means a drastic cut in sales and production are inevitable later in the year, strike or no strike. (Estimates of the production cut run from 45 to 70 per cent!) Such a cut will tend to spiral out through the economy, just as the high automobile production has affected the economy as a whole.

There are, of course, some industries which have failed to share in the boom, and some industrial areas which have remained depressed despite the general rise in activity. The farm population as a whole has failed to feel the stimulus, and remains a serious weak spot (and a large one) in the over-all picture.

Does all this add up to an outlook of gloom and doom with regard to the American economy's immediate prospects? Does it mean that we are teetering on the edge of a precipice or that the present high level of activity is simply the fever-flush of a mortal disease which can lay the victim low at any moment?

The factors listed above do not justify a prediction of a drastic depression in the immediate future. They do add up to a very strong possibility that the boom will be short and a further possibility that the drop afterward will be fairly sharp and deep.

But the limits are set by a factor in the economy which has not been mentioned above—the continued military outlays of the government at a level of about \$41 billion per year.

The patient is sick indeed, as continued high-level unemployment in the midst of a boom demonstrates. He is likely to feel worse rather than better as time goes on. But as long as the government is capable of pumping those "life-giving" military billions into his bloodstream every year, he can be kept from any sudden total collapse.

That may be little comfort to the farmers and the unemployed, and to the auto workers in the latter part of the year. But it is the most comfort they will get as long as we continue to live the "American Way of Life," even with its built-in Permanent War Economy.

## Faure Means Reaction —

(Continued from page 1)

laborator of *France-Observateur*, was imprisoned pending trial for articles on the Indochinese war written in July 1953 and in May 1954. According to the police authorities, these articles are supposed to be connected with the leaks in the Ministry of Defense discovered last November. In fact, there is nothing in the articles that hadn't been published at the time in several very respectable dailies and weeklies, which is why they passed unnoticed then.

The arrest of Roger Stéphane cannot be understood otherwise than as an act of intimidation directed against the whole liberal and radical Left. As such it serves a double political purpose: as a warning to the opponents of the government's North African policies, and as an attempt to show that the Indochinese war was not lost by politicians and generals but by radical journalists.

It assumes its full significance as part of a pattern: the government has already brought charges on similar grounds against Gilles Martinet and Claude Bourdet, editors of *France-Observateur*; it has seized an issue of *La Vérité* (No. 350) containing a letter by a leader of the Algerian resistance movement (on March 8); it has subjected

leading members of the PCI and of the anarchist FCL to police interrogatories in preparation of charging them with "subversion" (continually since December 1954.)

In the face of this concentrated attack on the freedom of the press, wide-spread protest has been raised, from every shade of political opinion left of center and by the whole Paris press. The lone exception is *Le Figaro*, which, on this occasion, has not hesitated to call for the police persecution of an opponent it cannot answer politically.

Thus the close connection between repression in the colonies and repression of democracy at home is once again demonstrated by a reactionary government. What the large labor organizations have not been able to learn from experience, is being taught to them once more the hard way. Of course the PCI, the FCL and *France Observateur* are not as powerful and as important as the SP and the CP; but this is why they make such good precedents for the government.

However, the reactionary attack may backfire. At the present time, any trial of left-wing journalists and political leaders may easily be turned into a trial of the Indochinese war and of the North African repression, and thereby into the trial of a none too stable government.