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Ten Cents

THE SANE CRAWL



Militants were present but it was the American Flag waving friends of Johnson who had their sickening day.

HOW NOT TO BUILD A PEACE MOVEMENT

VOICE FROM THE SOUTH

Excerpts from minutes of a meeting of people from the South, Thursday night, Nov. 24.

"...What are we doing at this conference? Where is their concern for people? Where is their concern for freedom? Where is the connection between peace and freedom. We need to deal with the felt pain. The gas in Selma and the gas in Saigon--it's the same gas."

"...We want to be part of the whole movement, not caught up in parliamentary procedure and factionalism....The relation between peace and freedom hasn't been resolved."

"...We need a position paper from the South....I have the deepest personal grief about how poor whites and Negroes are being especially hit by the draft....The discussion tonight was on how the draft is oppressing everyone--workers, poor people, as well as students. We from the South know how important it is to work together."

"...The atmosphere of the anti-draft workshop would lead anyone who walked in there to feel they couldn't ask a question. Trying to combine the peace movement and the freedom movement to me is not taking on too much."

"...There is no time to get into distinction between peace and freedom. They're the same. We're fighting the same evil."

"...This middle class bit is not where it's at, man. You approach these damn doors with a damn issue, and you might as well be the rape man."

Delegates returning from the peace conference in Washington held November 25-28 will doubtless have a hard time explaining to their organizations what happened there. The mood of the participants was one of confusion and, in many cases, disappointment. Those who wished to build a strong and viable peace movement returned home empty-handed.

The planners of the conference neatly arranged the agenda so that it dealt with organizational and structural questions before the questions of program could be discussed. The inevitable confusion that followed was no accident, for the delegates were thus forced to take up the task of building a strong organization whose program and policy were as yet undetermined. But lurking behind every tree and bush was a political question disguised as an organizational proposal.

At the first plenary session an SWP-YSA inspired motion was made to set up an independent national Vietnam committee. SDS and pacifist sharpies recognized this move for what it was---an attempt of the SWP-YSA to gain hegemony over a national peace organization using as their fulcrum those local independent groups which they dominate by methods which we have described in previous articles. SANE and its right wing SDS allies responded in kind, that is, organizationally. Thus by tacit agreement these two groups hid their political differences and made it practically impossible for anyone else to raise programmatic questions or even explain what was going on.

SWP Has No Program

The SWP, having abandoned Marxism as a method, had to resort

to this tactic because they are incapable of formulating any program. The National Coordinating Committee, having no program of its own but the droppings of the left-liberals, was reluctantly forced to allow a large portion of the time and energies of the convention to be wasted in a faction fight which neither side admitted had any political basis. The two groupings erected a phony umbrella of "unity" under which they stood alternately cheering and stabbing each other in the back.

AN 'INDEPENDENT' COMMITTEE

Sunday afternoon after the last plenary session a member of the ACFI went to the hotel where the "independent" Vietnam committee was having an organizing meeting. She was denied admittance because she was a delegate from the ACFI, not an independent Vietnam committee. As she reasoned with the guard at the door two people entered, both delegates from YSA chapters, not from independent peace committees. They were admitted to the meeting without question.

People who came to the convention honestly seeking to build a movement upon programmatic clarity had a rough time of it. The proposals of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party and other delegates from the South showed serious thought. Instead of hiding behind the "single issue" of peace in Vietnam the Southern delegation boldly made the inevitable link-up between the questions of peace, poverty and injustice. They proposed such slogans as "Vietnam and Watts--it's the same struggle", "End the War in Vietnam Now" and "Self-determination for Vietnam and Mississippi". By some mysterious alchemy only one of these proposals reached the floor of the plenary session. However the Southern workshop fared better than most. At least their proposals were actually open to discussion from the floor. No other workshop was accorded this privilege.

The National Coordinating Committee will pay heavily for their high-handedness and chicanery in suppressing political and programmatic discussion. As a result of this they represent absolutely no one. The SWP's "independent" Vietnam Committee's national caucus represents the SWP-YSA(whoever they represent).

On Parallels and Connections

Needless to say this is no way to go about building a peace movement. The forces that brought the Southern freedom movement and the movement against the war in Vietnam together must be acknowledged and analyzed. The parallels between the struggle for Negro rights, the struggle to end the war against Vietnam and the struggle of the Vietnamese people against colonialism must be pointed out. The identical nature of the oppressors in all three cases must be understood.

As clear as these propositions may seem, once they are publicly acknowledged, SANE and the SWP's "Republican" allies will walk out. But not until then can a serious confrontation with the war makers, race baiters and colonial oppressors, the American ruling class, begin.

The conference had other notable aspects. Trade union representation was non-existent and hardly anyone seemed to care. As has been unfortunately the case with many campus-oriented movements, there was a tendency to view the working class as hopelessly brainwashed or even irreconcilably hostile, ignoring the obvious pressures which are even now forcing large numbers of workers to begin a struggle the end of which is not yet in sight. The American working class is paying for the war in Vietnam with its money and its blood.

What Political Line?

What kind of approach will enable the peace movement to reach these people? There was tremendous feeling among some of the delegates that this must be done, but most of these delegates could not articulate these feelings past ideas that "we should go into the communities" or "we have to reach other kinds of people." And the leadership of the conference gave them no help. The draft workshop verbally took cognizance of resentment of the 2-S deferment by those who are not students. It then proposed that people not yet in the army register as conscientious objectors; that people in the army ask for release as conscientious objectors or refuse to go to Vietnam; that perhaps students should give up their 2-S deferments and register instead as conscientious objectors; that the government be requested to let people enter an expanded Peace Corp instead of the army

How highly moral Staughton Lynd sounded. How revealing of a total absence of any understanding of how to reach these non-students. How simplistic when he said they did not want to oppose conscription--just the draft for this war. What "wars" has the United States entered in the past ten years? Cuba. The Dominican Republic. The Congo. Vietnam. All attempts to suppress anti-colonialist uprisings, i.e., wars of independence. Where will we go next? A nation which embarks upon such a consistent course is by definition an imperialist nation.

How do you make this relevant to the working class? How do you draw these people into your movement? You involve yourself in their struggles. You go to their dances, to their unemployment centers, to their welfare lines, to their civil rights demonstrations. You talk about what is happening to them. You talk about why. And slowly you convince them (but first you must understand it yourself) that they are engaged in a desperate struggle for survival and freedom that is linked up to the desperate struggles of others--going all the way to Vietnam. Only then can you build a movement.

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* FOR UNITY OF ALL THE OPPRESSED!

* NO MORE IMPERIALIST WAR!

* VICTORY FOR THE NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT!

* FOR A REVOLUTIONARY PEACE MOVEMENT!

THE SANE CRAWL

The Friends of Johnson Gather in Washington

To Lick the Boots of Power

On Nov. 27, 35,000 people joined the SANE-sponsored march in Washington. While undoubtedly these people were sincere in wishing an end to the Vietnamese war, they must ask themselves what they have accomplished. A serious assessment by the new, primarily campus-based anti-war movement of what it has done and where it is going is badly needed. Specifically an analysis of the big SANE March and how the various forces in the antiwar movement conducted themselves in relation to it is essential for the future of the movement itself.

That the right wing leadership of SANE would try to give the demonstration a moderate character was of course expected. The question was what part militant anti-war forces to the left of SANE would play.

SDS and the National Coordinating Committee to End the War in Vietnam (NCCCEWV) chose to compromise with SANE. This was a rotten compromise, and continuing on this road will only demoralize and eventually destroy the antiwar movement.

While they theoretically extracted a compromise from SANE that participants could carry whatever slogans they chose, in reality this was an empty victory, since neither SDS nor the committee organized its forces to demonstrate under separate slogans. The SANE leaders obviously decided to make up for their conciliatory policy of allowing "unauthorized" signs by outdoing themselves as far as their respectable and conservative public statements were concerned. (Actually there was little the leadership could do to remove unauthorized signs without causing chaos and a great deal of resentment against themselves, and, recognizing this, they sought to make the best of it.)

"This is not a Protest"

"This is not a protest march," said march coordinator Sanford Gottlieb. "It is in support of a negotiated settlement and not a pullout." 'Socialist' Norman Thomas added his 'protest,' urging "upon our opponents, as we most emphatically urge upon our own government, the necessity of negotiating on honorable terms." Mr. Thomas, the great 'democratic socialist,' obviously feels that the U.S. government has some business in Vietnam, although it may not be going about things correctly. Otherwise he would not be saying the U.S. has any right whatsoever to negotiate.

Representative Brown said, "We know that the President seeks peace as earnestly as any man." (!) Most of the speakers dropped all pretense even of 'neutrality,' and made sure to address some hostile comments to Hanoi or Peking, or the South Vietnamese National Liberation Front, so that LBJ would be fully aware of their loyalty, no doubt.

The Committee to Aid the National Liberation Front carried NLF flags. Right wingers were allowed by the police to destroy the flags with impunity. In addition, there was the sickening spectacle of marchers carrying thousands of little U.S. flags which were distributed to help the marchers demonstrate their purity. No doubt the sponsors of the march were trying to impress the millions upon millions of the world's poverty-stricken and dispossessed, to whom the U.S. flag means so much!

While many of the marchers were liberal and pro-capitalist or, like the Stalinists or Social-Democrats, content to march under their banner, there were also many thousands of more militant marchers who would have been eager to follow militant leadership. Most of these were not represented, either on the speakers platform or in signs and slogans. Several radical groups brought their own signs, and some more militant signs were distributed. But the major student antiwar groups, like SDS or the largely campus-based National Coordinating Committee to End the War in Vietnam chose not to challenge the right wing, and this is what enabled the moderate to simply ignore the militants and, because of their superior organization, drown them out.

BULLETIN supporters, in the American Committee for the Fourth International, carried signs jointly with the Spartacist, saying: "Vietnam, Wats: the Same Struggle;" "Unconditional Withdrawal of All American Troops Now;" and "Victory for the Vietnamese Revolution -- No Negotiations." Youth Against War and Fascism distributed signs saying, "Bring the GI's Home Now" and other slogans. Undoubtedly other individuals carried militant slogans. Various groups distributed literature. All of these groups tried to help, but the fact remains that they did not have too big an effect. They simply did not add up to more than a small fraction (several hundred) of all the posters and signs.

What Was Accomplished

Of course SANE and the liberal forces were trying to placate Johnson and the superpatriots rallying around him. But these people will not be placated; the neo-fascist forces, as a matter of fact, will be strengthened by this capitulation to the right.. This is a caving in which is inevitably called forth by even the mildest moves of Johnson to put pressure on the movement. What the right wing in the peace movement represents is a stratum which, for all its morality and pious phrases, has a stake in the continued U.S. presence and domination of S.E. Asia in one form or another. For the most part these people see their relatively privileged position in society as tied in with continued U.S. world hegemony, except that they would like to see this hegemony maintained by "liberal" means. If any of them are ever to see things differently, it will only be when the working class puts forward a revolutionary leadership to which they can be attracted.

What could have been done/ We repeat, it was not simply a matter of the marchers being entirely right wing and moderate in composition. It would not have weakened the movement if the

militant forces had organized to oppose SANE's pro-government movement, even if this meant a split with SANE and the other right wing forces. On the contrary, it is they who are weakening the movement by removing its strongest weapon and by turning it away from an appeal to the working class and Negro people. There is absolutely no basis for common action with forces such as SANE unless we have absolute freedom to raise our own slogans and criticize theirs. Let them join our marches if they please, but we must not subordinate ourselves or surrender the initiative to them. They are not for the self-determination of the Vietnamese people if this self-determination conflicts with the interests of the American ruling class and its government.

Issues Facing the Movement

The problem of slogans only symbolizes the deeper issues facing the antiwar movement. SANE will drop everything rather than engage in a militant anti-war struggle. We can only gain and emerge stronger if we break with SANE and aggressively educate, propagandize and organize against the war in terms that the masses of the working population, who have nothing to gain from the war, can understand.

The militant section of the movement should have rejected compromise with SANE. We could have picketed together at the White House, but with our own signs, and we could have continued picketing after the moderates had left for the Washington Monument rally. We could have gone later to our own rally, perhaps to a march to the Capitol or another site.

This is of course now past history. But the movement must not make the same mistake again. The SANE march only served to allow Johnson to show how "tolerant" he was of dissent, without sharply confronting and politically opposing the war in Vietnam. It demoralized antiwar activists who made the long trip to listen to several hours of friendly advice to Johnson. One such mistake is costly; another may be almost deadly.

THE MEANING OF THE CANADIAN ELECTIONS

by our Toronto Correspondent

The main significant change in Canadian politics indicated by the election results was a growth in support for the New Democratic Party. Its gains were particularly important in the industrial towns of Ontario. In British Columbia it was the leading party by popular vote but it made little progress in the Maritime Provinces and failed to win a seat in Quebec. Its share of the popular vote increased from 13% to 18% and it gained three seats, bringing its representation up to 21 in a house of 256 members.

The NDP is a reformist party which bases itself on the worst features of European social democracy. Its leaders went

out of their way to court the middle class, including the small businessmen, by demagogic appeals. The issues it brought forward -- Medicare, more and cheaper university education, better social services -- were not unacceptable to the major parties. It is still possible that Douglas will enter into some formal understanding with the minority Liberal government.

All the big issues with which the Canadian working class will have to contend in the near future were discreetly kept out of the campaign by the NDP leaders. The unreality of the election was clear to see in the absence of discussion of these issues which the NDP leaders, as much as the "old-line parties," deliberately evaded.

The central hidden issue was the relationship of Canada to U.S. imperialism. The tentacles of U.S. big business are drawn tightly around the Canadian economy. There can be no discussion of automation, wages and employment which does not take this into consideration. By not raising this question, or by explicitly stating that problems such as automation could be regulated between the state and the corporations, the right-wing leadership of the NDP kept their campaign within the framework of capitalist relations. In the same way, although Douglas had been critical of the Vietnam war, he was careful to keep even his limited opposition off the electoral platform as far as possible. To do otherwise might have alienated middle-class support.

The Douglas policy, standing a little to the left of the Liberals and promising perhaps more integrity than they have been able to muster in recent years, could only contribute to the misleadership of the Canadian working class. His hostility to any alternative had been shown before the campaign in a witch-hunt on the left wing in the NDP.

Given the realities of Canadian economics the possibility of an independent Canadian policy based on nationalism and demagogy of the kind put forward by the Communist Party is also highly dangerous, regardless of the fact that it cut no ice with the electorate anyway.

Marxists have to begin from the position that the class struggle in North America does not respect the 49th parallel. Like the big corporations it is indivisible on both sides of the border and must be seen from the same angle by those who seek to build a new leadership for the working class, U.S. or Canadian, English or French-speaking. The call for a socialist alternative in Canada immediately involves the nationalization of the big corporations, the majority of which are under U.S. financial control. It cannot, therefore, be a narrowly national issue posed in terms of some hypothetical "national" interest.

Discussion along such lines presents itself as an acute necessity in Canada and is a corollary of the Statement of Unification of Trotskyists in the United States which appeared in the last BULLETIN.

There are some important political experiences in Canada which can be brought into the discussion of American perspectives. The experiences with the NDP need, for example, to be gone into thoroughly from the standpoint of correct and incorrect methods of entryism. Canadian Trotskyists, as is known, tag behind the SWP and accept the methods of pragmatism, whether consciously or not. A clear break has to be made with centrism if advantage is to be taken of the potentialities for growth which exist, especially among young people fresh to politics.

A LOOK AT THE VIETNAM WAR BOOM

Is the Economy Inflating Itself Into a Bust?

Conditions for a new wave of radicalization in the labor movement may be taking form in the present economic situation. The past five month's growth in employment and inflation provide a classical background for significant upturns in labor struggles. Expanded employment and normal turnover make the average trade unionist younger and thus more combative than the union member of the immediate post-1958 recession period. Minority groups' militancy, a small but important increase in the number of independent unions, and rank and file upsurges in Auto, Steel and elsewhere symptomize the actual social forces in the organized and unorganized labor movement at the point of making their presence felt.

But Johnson's black-jacking of aluminum and copper producers is a quiet rehearsal of repressions in store for workers who refuse to knuckle under to Administration wage-guideline policies. Workers will get important gains only by taking them away from Johnson. It is under such circumstances that militant trade unionists may realize that they have the same enemy as the Viet Cong.

The immediate key to this potential explosion is the Vietnam war. It was Johnson's decision to escalate that slaughter that saved the U.S. economy from the recession that began last spring. That war boom has accelerated inflation. The lesson in price controls which Johnson gave the aluminum and copper bosses, the lesson in wage controls awaiting militant workers, are both part of that same "Grand Strategy" under which Johnson is murdering Vietnamese and GI's.

Why Johnson Must Show His Anti-Labor Fangs

Only a liar would assert that the U.S. has any right to intervene in Vietnam, but only a fool would deny that Johnson is slaughtering the Vietnamese people in the self-interests of the U.S. ruling class.

~~A Johnson anti-labor program does not seem in the~~
best political interests of a regime engaged in an unpopular war. Whether Johnson is personally anti-labor or not is irrelevant. Johnson, for example, can have as many anti-Negro prejudices as

he might choose, and yet his present need for cheap cannon-fodder and peaceable labor directs him to throw a sop or two on the side of civil rights. There is no explanation for either the Vietnam slaughter or the promised anti-labor campaign unless one properly identifies the desperate issue Johnson has at stake in each instance.

The issue behind the Vietnamese war and wage control policy is the present state of the U.S. economy.

Last June public opinion was reeling under the double impact of a sharp decline in the stock market and Federal Reserve Chairman Martin's Columbia address. The press was full of excited debate: was the U.S. economy headed for a crack-up? Now, with a new spurt of prosperity, those fears are widely forgotten; questions of a general economic crisis have gone back to their customary private haunts, in the circumlocutions of the financial pages and journals which the public seldom reads and never comprehends. John Doe has gone back to his comfortable blind faith, like that of a child, that father will provide.

Behind this almost religious illusion of indefinite U.S. prosperity, the prospect for the economy in the next few years are much worse than any leading press implied last June. Vietnam war prosperity has solved nothing; the day of reckoning may have been postponed -- to make the ultimate reckoning more costly, more catastrophic. The balance of payments crisis has been temporarily "solved" by a virtual fraud in national book-keeping. The true extent of improvements in the economy is exhibited in the billion dollar a day New York securities market, where bankers express their real confidence in America's future by discounting U.S. bonds an additional quarter of a percentile. Exemplary of the rottenness in the national economy is the plight of financial crisis-ridden New York City, whose public debt threatens to rank as an investment risk with the tables at Las Vegas.

The International Situation

In Wall Street's world market, a similar degree of progress obtains. Britain's fictitiously valued Pound Sterling has been temporarily rescued from a repetition of last November's crisis by a massive dose of U.S. and West European credit. Since the Pound's crisis is, in the first place, Britain's enormous overseas debt, her added indebtedness to U.S. bankers has obvious merits as a "solution" to the underlying problem. And this exhibition of U.S. banker's charity is itself prompted by no less noble motive than the consideration that the collapse of the Pound would probably bring down the whole shebang.

Japan, meanwhile, has shot ahead so far that she is already veering on the edge of a 1929-scale debacle. West Germany's economic "miracle" has accelerated national progress to the point of the U.S. economy on the eve of the 1957-58 recession. French solvency continues to rest on the imposing pillars of

economic and political stagnation; these pillars, in turn, would collapse but for the efforts of an aged humbug playing Napoleon the Third, who himself assures his electorate and the world that only his presence prevents absolute chaos. Meanwhile, the prize investment market for West Germany and Japan, India, rumbles in preparation for a general convulsion and the great "Alliance for Progress" founders in the ineptitude so aptly symbolized by a growing Colombian slum called "Kennedy City."

Never before has the U.S. experienced such prosperity-- like the worker who for the first time spends his entire week's wages in one glorious night in a barroom. Under the momentary lush intoxication of war-economy spending, Johnson has desperate problems of the magnitude required to explain the slaughter in Vietnam and the impending political assault on the labor movement. Portents of the situation are seen in the pilot "War on Poverty" programs which are rehearsals for large-scale "WPA" emergency programs an economic collapse would demand.

What Johnson Needs From Your Paycheck

In the first instance, the Vietnam war means a bite from wages. In part this will come by wage-cuts through taxation. In part it will come through a cut in government service given in return for your tax dollar. In large part it will come from a cut in the percentage represented by workers' wages in the Gross National Product; this will be accomplished by keeping wage increases below the level of inflationary price increases and gains in productivity: The Wage-Guidelines policy.

Johnson means business about price controls, too. An imperialist government doesn't slap down corporate managements, as it did in the aluminum and copper cases, unless the capitalist economy as a whole is seriously threatened in some way. Behind this slap-down: war-economy inflation of U.S. commodities would depreciate the dollar on the world market. This would aggravate the balance of payments problem. But a deeper problem exists. The whole world capitalist system's financial reserves, property valuations, etc. are based on the present pegged value of the U.S. dollar and on the tens of billions of U.S. dollars constituting the major portion of the margin of solvency of every nation in the capitalist world market. A rapid depreciation of the U.S. dollar through war economy inflation would threaten to trigger the 1929-type crisis already on the horizon.

That is not the end of the matter. The long-term prospects for saving the capitalist system depend upon a successful program with the objectives of the unsuccessful "Alliance for Progress." U.S. capitalism desperately needs to develop the Indian, Latin American and leading African economies to the point that they offer a stable, growing market for U.S. foreign investments. Those economies can not be developed to that end without initial massive subsidies from the U.S. and Western Europe. Because of the poverty of these countries this represents a far more ambitious program than the "Marshall Plan." Such subsidies can not be created without war-economy measures; funds must be

scraped off the backs of labor in the so-called "advanced" countries.

The war in Vietnam is one leg of Johnson's program to convert impoverished "developing" countries into a stable investment market. (See BULLETIN, Vol. 2, No. 18). This war, like the general strategy of which it is only a part, means a collision between Johnson and the working-class in the U.S., Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Japan. For both the war and for necessary subsidies to U.S. corporations desiring massive overseas investments, the share of the working-class income in national production must be cut drastically. That process of wage-cutting is already getting under way in Britain, where U.S. bankers are calling the tune for a self-styled "Labor" government. It is on the verge of being put into effect here; no doubt the Vietnam war will be used by Johnson to offer sacrifices to U.S. workers in the name of patriotism.

The present conditions in the U.S. tend to favor a rise of trade union struggles. The growing ferment among the huge mass of unorganized labor could mean the beginnings of a great movement like that which founded the CIO. But any real upsurge of labor would bring quick and ferocious replies by Johnson. Militants in that upsurge would have to run over the treacherous AFL-CIO bureaucrats, Johnson's tools. If such an indicated upsurge begins to manifest itself, many trade unionists' prosperity-spurred acquiescence to Johnson's war would undergo a revolutionary change as they discovered that U.S. workers and the Viet Cong have a common enemy.

DUBINSKY AS BOSS: WHY 'FOUR' DIED

It appears that the long struggle of the Federation of Union Representatives (FOUR) for recognition as the bargaining agent for the organizers and business agents of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union is over.

On September 14 the U.S. Court of Appeals invalidated the original election of four years ago which was narrowly won by FOUR. Challenged ballots, and legal stalling action by the ILGWU leadership had kept the matter before the National Labor Relations Board and in the courts since that time.

In the course of all the litigation and also in the wake of a continuous campaign of pressure and fear by the Dubinsky leadership using all of the bureaucratic prerogatives at its command, FOUR had shrunk to a very small shadow of its original size. The court decision thus means, with any new election obviously not in the cards, that FOUR's struggle is defeated, at least for the present.

The BULLETIN reported previously (Vol. 2 #1) on earlier developments in this case. The challenged ballots which the Court of Appeals had earlier ordered counted, and which it was

expected would have turned the election in Dubinsky's favor, were found to have been lost. It was this rather strange development which precipitated the latest court decision to invalidate the entire election and forget the whole thing, so to speak. No doubt the present weakness of FOUR encouraged this decision, and also encouraged Dubinsky to accept it completely, even though it does not completely uphold his position.

The capitalist courts have thus far held that business agents and organizers are employees under the National Labor Relations Act, and can be organized. Dubinsky has always said he could never go along with this. But he chooses to leave this issue aside now and ignore it completely, since he has achieved his short range goal of crushing FOUR.

For socialists the question of union organization within unions is one which deserves thought and one which cannot always be answered simply. It is not a matter of absolutes. It is a matter of the needs of the working class movement, and should be viewed in each case within that framework.

Lenin correctly upheld the right of independence of the unions within the Soviet Union itself. There is a certain parallel with the struggle of union staff for their own organization. Though they may be loyal "missionaries" for the union, as Dubinsky with revolting hypocrisy claims all of his staff must be, they nevertheless need the rights that all workers need. This is, it must be recognized, a formula which can be filled with reactionary as well as progressive content.

The important thing to remember with regard to FOUR is that they threatened Dubinsky because they exposed his hypocrisy and his bureaucratic regime which still keeps the union ranks near the minimum in wage levels and the union staff in a position where its "missionary zeal" becomes a mockery.

FOUR fought a good fight. This fight must be continued until the ranks of the ILGWU themselves put an end to Dubinsky's 'plantation'. The present leadership must be completely removed, and the union must turn towards a real campaign to meaningfully raise the wage levels and working conditions of its members, as well as organizing the hundreds of thousands of workers in run-away and unorganized shops.

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U.S. PRESS CLAIMS FOUL

MCCLURE AND SMITH CALLED BRAINWASHED

Evidently a large section of the U.S. Press wishes to pretend that GIs are just naturally two-hundred-per-cent pure-American "Kamikaze" killers for whom the meaning of life is to bayonet and napalm Vietnamese farmers by the scores. That is the tenor of press coverage on Sgt. George E. Smith and Spec. 5 Claude D. McClure. Smith and McClure, members of the elite U.S. Special Forces, were captured by the Viet Cong on Nov. 24,

1963. Now, two years later, they have been released by the Viet Cong in "honor of the U.S. anti-war movement." From Cambodia, the two released GIs announced their intention to quit the Army, to come home and lead a fight against Johnson's slaughter. "Brainwashed!" screams the NY JOURNAL-AMERICAN's banner headline. The NY WORLD-TELEGRAM crawls just slightly out of the J-A's editorial gutter; "Brainwashed?" it queries. Surely, only "evil witch doctors," using recipes straight out of Fu Manchu, could turn U.S. "green berets" against the wisdom of their superior officers.

Plainly, the U.S. press would wish to outlaw "brainwashing", as by special amendment to the Geneva Convention. The point is to compel the "Communists" to "fight fair." The main difficulty with such a proposed remedy is that the problem doesn't exist. There is no such thing as "brainwashing" outside the wild imaginations of U.S. propagandists and the credibility of people who fall for such hokum.

But, a lot of people have fallen for that hokum. Despite its absurdity, "brainwashing" is an infectious myth because, like all such widespread delusions, it helps people to believe what they need to believe. For intellectuals, who do not wish to have their opinions traced to organs like the JOURNAL-AMERICAN, "serious" magazines and government agencies have recruited "qualified experts", with the result that the "brainwashing" myth of the Korean War period is now backed up by an impressive literary mass of science-fiction-in-depth.

The "science-fiction" line runs generally as follows. Back in the early Twenties, during the period of virtual starvation in Civil War racked Soviet Russia, that malignant and far-sighted genius, Lenin, authorized special rations for an evil Russian scientist named I.P.Pavlov. At this point, the literate and semi-literate public nods its head; it has heard of Pavlov and the dogs that drooled when a bell was rung; it has heard of "conditioned reflex". The science-fictioneer, now having qualified his audience by a characteristic confidence man's trick, proceeds to hint darkly about something called "second-order conditioned reflex." This, he explains, involves certain dark, unholy principles of atheistic Communist science, by which specially-trained Soviet and Chinese scientists are able to do to human beings what Pavlov did to helpless dogs. With that, the reader is brought to that advanced level of scientific psychology made famous in the novel (and film of the same name) The Manchurian Candidate.

Brainwashing or Social Pressure

There is still to be explained the fact that young men who were once Gung-Ho members of elite U.S. murder battalions have changed their views during imprisonment. That change is by no means magical; it is almost entirely a matter of a few practical facts of life.

Peoples, unlike Pavlov's dogs, are social. Not only do they have a spoken language, not only is consciousness itself a social creation, but one's very idea of one's own identity is a mixture of what others believe one to be and what one would have others believe about oneself. This is not only a psychological fact of life; one's employment--one's ability to survive--depends quite materially on the opinion of others. This means that one's conception of one's own identity, one's morality, etc, is not merely a thing formed in one's childhood, but one's self-estimation, morality and so forth are modified according to one's social situation. This is everyday stuff to those who see the changes in people occurring with changes in jobs, in kinds of jobs--as from production worker to salesman or to company executive -- in the clubs they join, and so forth.

Take a GI from a combat unit and place him in isolation, or with only a few of his fellow-GIs, among a large number of Korean or Vietnamese soldiers and civilians and one has introduced a very drastic social change in his personal situation. In one moment he is shooting and being shot at in a situation where his existence depends very much on the opinion of his fellow-soldiers--as U.S. troops--and his non-commissioned and commissioned superiors. In the next, the opinion of society, as society represents itself to him in large numbers of people with whom he is in active daily association, is quite different. His opinion of himself, his sense of morality changes to accommodate him to his changed situation.

Now it is true, as more serious studies of alleged Korean "collaborators" stress, that individuals from bad home situations tend to reorient more quickly. Their sense of personal identity in U.S. civilian society is weaker, their sense of being a part of U.S. society is less. Individuals who "go over" out of such weakness in their sense of personal identity will tend to "go over" the other way more easily, too. But, the important fact about POW defections in Korea is that the morale of the U.S. and the U.S. soldier in that war was much poorer than, for example, in World War II. It is much, much harder for a GI to "get worked up about" Vietnam. The small percentage of GI prisoners who "went over" during Korea and those who will tend to "go over" in much greater numbers in Vietnam is the visible portion of the "iceberg."

A Common Enemy

We can not pass on the degree of conviction of Smith and McClure; one or both of them may prove to be remarkable people. Whether or not that is the case, we have to examine the much more important question that anti-war sentiments among GIs, both POWs and on-the-line, may spread to larger numbers. The important difference between a few and many is that under the latter condition the anti-war sentiment ceases to be an exception among troops and becomes itself a social pressure operating upon the opinions of individual GIs. In the latter case, the anti-war GI ceases to be an isolated case of official "notoriety."

The statements of Smith and McClure can not be put down by the press as "obvious propaganda." Their statements represent the simple facts of Vietnam, as everyone on both sides of the blood-line can easily confirm them. The susceptibility of the GI POW to the social pressure of the Vietnamese people is vastly increased by the facts which bring home to him the nature of a war which is not in the interests of U.S. students and workers. If the white GI's tendency toward color-prejudice helps to insulate himself against the social pressure of these Vietnamese people, the Negro GI, who knows what it is to be a "gook" in his own country, easily sympathizes with the "gook" on the other end of the GI gunsight. This war is in Johnson's interests, but not in the interests of the classes mainly represented in the U.S. Army. Under the proper juncture of circumstances the GIs may begin to demonstrate that fact in a way no one can mistake. The GI and the Viet Cong have a common enemy. What has to be understood is not why GIs turn against Johnson's war, but why they don't.

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