The Ex-Communists and the Renewal of American Socialism

By W. H. BENSON

Within a few years, thousands have left the Communist Party; together with other tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of sympathizers, the ex-Communists have formed themselves into a movement which, as it develops, is likely to play a major role in the political life of the United States. The ideological basis of this movement has not been clearly delineated, but it is likely to be a response to the disillusionment with the Communist Party and its policies.

What Do We Do Now?

Perhaps Gates is right that a new radical movement of some kind will come. In that case, the socialist movement in the United States will be faced with a new challenge. The problem is not simply to reorganize the old. The challenge is to find a new and more effective way of fighting for social justice and freedom. The example of the old socialist movement can serve as a guide, but it cannot be simply copied.

A Place for Ex-Commers

John Gates, in his article "The Failure of Communism in the United States," points out that the old socialist movement has fallen short of its ideal. The new movement, he argues, must be more radical and more committed to democratic principles.

Gates sees the current movement as a place for ex-Communists to find a new home. He argues that the old socialist movement was not simply a political party, but a movement that sought to change the society as a whole. The new movement must be committed to this same goal.

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