

# CPers Debates Stalinoids On Future of the Party

By GEORGE HANLEY

New York, Oct. 6

Early in September an informal committee was organized by John T. McManus, Paul Sweezy, Clifford T. McAvoy and Michael Bartell in an attempt to link these independent-Stalinist leaders into a coalition aimed at a unity drive between the American Communist Party and the Stalinoid trends in this country. They hoped to make the most of the crises and confusion that has wracked the CP since the Stalin down-grading campaign began, and to utilize the "united front" policies of the 20th Congress of the CPSU as a lever for admittance.

The assumption was that the current leaders of the American Stalinist movement had been so widely discredited that they could easily be deposed in favor of a new "progressive" leadership. The recently published Draft Resolution of the CP came as a dash of cold water on the Stalinoids, with its abstract allusions to past errors and outlawing of internal factions and publications.

This situation was sharply aired at the forum held at Jefferson School on October 5, to debate the draft resolution.

John McManus blasted the document as "Sewer-socialism... offering no leadership to a bewildered American Left... not recognizing the socialist currents in the mass movement in the United States."

Joseph Starobin—who defected from the CP only a short time ago—denounced the document as "a compromise, stacked with duality," and went on to advocate a return to Browderism. He averred that

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"the main task for socialists is to agitate for 'peaceful coexistence.' Then, as American capitalists find the Soviet Union surpassing them in production and international prestige, socialist competition will force them to revert to domestic socialism." He renounced any ideas of "socialist inter-nationalism" because "each country must find its own socialist pattern through 'competition' with other countries who are looking for their socialist pattern."

Sidney Stein (released on bail from the latest New York Smith Act persecution) then rose to defend the resolution he had helped to draw up, with blatant demagoguery, presented in the manner of Orwell's "Big Brother." He announced that the American road to socialism was through "a people's coalition against the monopolies," and attacked McManus for not recognizing the emergency need to defeat the "Eisenhower Cadillac Cabinet."

He rebutted the "sewer-socialism" charge by asserting the liberal, collaborationist policies were the only way to prevent "further isolation of Communists from the labor movement." He felt that it was unfortunate that many people had misinterpreted the draft resolution, but assured everyone that "the National Committee will clarify problems and mistakes soon."

One could find nothing in this latter statement to justify the promises in the foreword of the resolution of increased inner-party democracy.

## STALINOID ROLE

In case the Stalinoids had not yet gotten the point, however, Stein ranted on in an angry voice: "No nebulous socialists will lead the new American socialist current... the Communist Party has and always will be the only strong and capable socialist current in the United States!"

In two significant revelations of policy, Stein declared that "a re-evaluation of Browder is needed," and that "Foster will not hold the Party back—even if he wants to!"

In the summary period that followed, McManus perhaps fearing the CP might cut the ground out from under his livelihood, the *National Guardian* capitulated to Stein, and discovered that "American socialists need the Communist Party because it is the only socialist party in the United States that defends the rest of the socialist world."

Starobin, on the other hand, completed his rejection of the CP with a comment about its continued "dogmatism and sectarianism" and challenged "new social processes at work to organize a new socialist Left in which old-guard Communists could participate but not lead."

Stein met this final blasphemy by warning "everyone here tonight that further criticism will only aid destruction of the Communist Party"; and in an effort to bribe those potential critics, he related that he would propose an amendment to the resolution, asking expelled CPers to come back to the fold.

After this "debate" it should be clear that the Stalinoids don't stand a chance—either through coalition or infiltration—of seizing control of the CP or its remaining cadres. The only function they can serve is to catch disillusioned Stalinists on the rebound and keep them tied to Stalinist politics.

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