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## THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

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## AN APOLOGY TO OUR READERS

The editorial board deeply regrets the long delay in the appearance of this issue of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL and offers its apology to all readers. The delay was occasioned by a larger than usual number of technical difficulties, by the preoccupation of those in charge of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL with the preparation for the national convention of the Workers Party and with the convention sessions themselves, and by a reorganization of the editorial staff necessitated by the appointment of our managing editor, Hal Draper, to the position of editor of *Labor Action*. We hope to catch up on our date of publication as speedily as possible.

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# THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

*A Monthly Organ of Revolutionary Marxism*

VOL. XV

MARCH 1949

NO. 3

## Boom and Bust in American Prosperity

*The Growing Role of Armaments in the National Economy*

Professor Schumpeter, in his interesting but grotesque book, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, remarks that "any prolonged period of depression or of unsatisfactory recovery will verify any pessimistic forecast."

Conversely, any prolonged period of prosperity will verify, or appear to verify, any optimistic forecast. What we have had in the United States for eight years is a period of prosperity such as this nation (or any other nation) has never in history experienced.

In such an economic climate it was easy for all sorts of capitalist and social-democratic economic theories to win acceptance among intellectuals and labor leaders, at the expense of Marxism. The Marxist analysis and criticism of capitalism tended to be shoved into the background, and "new" theories, which explained nothing but which looked kindly upon capitalism and its work, became the popularly accepted ones.

John Chamberlain and James Burnham, who, in the depth of the depression, were predicting the socialist revolution, became ardent opponents of socialism. Perhaps the next turn of the economic cycle will again work its charms upon such people and their "theories" will reflect the economic ill health of the country.

The next turn of the cycle? When will it come? Because economics is still not an exact science, it is not possible to predict accurately when the post-war economic boom in the United States will collapse. Marxists (and other economists) can predict that the boom will be succeeded by a depression. Under capitalism it could not be otherwise. But no one can put his finger on the calendar and say: "This is doomsday."

It is, however, possible to enumerate the major factors responsible for the boom, to measure roughly the development of each factor, and to estimate its weight in contributing to the end of the boom and the beginning of the depression.

### What Made the Boom?

These are the factors which have joined to build up in the United States since the end of the war the greatest economic boom the nation has ever known:

(1) Tremendous peacetime military expenditures. Today Washington is spending on armaments alone almost twice what it spent for the total national bud-

get before 1940.

(2) Swollen and artificially sustained exports, brought about by the division and ruin of Europe and by U. S. gifts and loans to that unhappy continent.

(3) Unprecedented capital-goods investments by U. S. industry in new plant and equipment.

(4) The gradual building up in the United States of huge inventories of goods at all levels—in the factories; in the wholesale warehouses, in the retail stores, in the granaries, etc.

(5) Increasing mass indebtedness as the people attempt to supplement their inadequate wages and salaries with heavier credit and installment buying. While on the one hand this braces up the mass demand for goods, on the other it prepares the way for the economic devastation to follow when unemployment begins to spread throughout the economic body and people have to renege on their debts.

(6) Public works, now at a level higher than in any other peacetime year. Yes, higher than in the old WPA days.

These are the major factors that have created the boom, that carried employment above the 60,000,000 mark, that have boosted corporate profits each year to record-breaking levels.

### The Depression Is Nearer

How much closer to the depression are we today than we were one year ago?

This question is in the minds of all. The sharp increase to 3,000,000 or more in the number of unemployed since the first of the year has jolted every adult's memory back to the years from 1929 to 1940. Fear of the future, well-founded fear, is widespread. Is this it? Will the army of 3,000,000 grow to 13,000,000—to 30,000,000? Or do the capitalist class and its government have resources which can temporarily stave off the catastrophe? Let us take a closer look at what has been happening.

PRICES: Wholesale prices today are 12.5 per cent above one year ago, at a post-war high of 166.8 per cent of the 1926 average. Retail prices (despite the widely advertised but small drops of recent months) are correspondingly higher than they were a year ago.

The mid-November 1948 index of the cost of living was 172.2 per cent of the 1935-39 base of 100.

This was 4.4 per cent above the November 1947 level, and 29.6 per cent above the living cost index in June 1946, when price controls were lifted. (President Truman still had a Democratic majority in control of both houses of Congress at that time.)

Living costs in November 1948 were 74.6 per cent above August 1939, when the Second World War began. Some food prices have begun to edge down, but food prices are still considerably higher than they were at the beginning of 1948. Rents, on the other hand, continue to climb, as do the prices of many durable consumer items and of freight rates.

Here is the Bureau of Labor Statistics index of wholesale prices, based on 1926 as 100:

Year	Farm Products	Other Commodities	All Commodities
1939 .....	65	80	78
1944 .....	120	96	103
1946 .....	150	108	120
1947 .....	180	135	146
1948 .....	185	146	163

**PRODUCTION:** The value of all goods produced and services rendered in 1948 in the United States was \$253 billion, about \$20 billion above 1947.

**CONSUMER PURCHASING POWER:** This is lower today than at any time since 1942, according to statistics of the President's Council of Economic Advisers. Climbing prices have not only wiped out an actual gain in per-capita income after taxes, but have sent the purchasing power of that income reeling backward.

In 1939 the share of national income going to employees was 65.9 per cent. By 1946 it stood at 65.4 per cent. Then price controls and rationing were completely removed, a blow aimed straight at the living standards of the masses. In 1947, the share of national income received by employees dropped sharply to 62.9 per cent, and during the first half of 1948 declined further to 61.9 per cent.

**PROFITS:** The complement to this decline in the proportion of national income going to the employees is the growth in the share going to the owners of industry.

In 1939 corporate profits (before taxes and including inventory valuation adjustments) comprised 8 per cent of the total national income; by 1946 this had been raised to 9.4 per cent. Corporate profits then jumped to 12.2 per cent of the total national income in 1947 and to 12.3 per cent in the first half of 1948. Between 1946 and the first half of 1948, the distribution of our national income had been shifted, through reducing the relative share going to employees by 5.4 per cent and through boosting the corporate profits share of the national income by 31 per cent.

According to the Commerce Department, corporate profits in 1948 increased more than any other type of income.

As to volume, profits rose from an annual rate of \$24.7 billion in the first quarter of 1948 to a rate of \$30.9 billion in the second quarter, *excluding \$2.5 billion in paper profits on inventories*. By the third quarter profits were at an annual rate of \$35.6 billion. The profits of unincorporated business and the rental income of landlords rose from an annual rate of \$46 billion to an annual rate of \$51.9 billion between the first and second quarters of 1948, and continued to grow during the rest of the year.

Corporation profits after taxes also set a new all-time record. The rate reached \$21.7 billion a year in the third quarter of 1948, or 20 per cent above a year ago, which in its time represented an all-time high. Profits in 1948 were more than double those in 1929, year of the crash.

### Mass Indebtedness Rises

According to the Federal Reserve Board, "during the three years since V-J Day, the American public has gone into debt more than in any other period in history." The board estimated that by the end of 1948, some 40,000,000 American families would owe more than \$50 billion for home mortgages and consumer goods.

Mortgage debt jumped \$10 billion in the three post-war years, to a present total above \$32 billion, chiefly as the result of home buying at inflated prices, the Reserve Board said.

Credit given to retail buyers expanded over \$9 billion since the war's end, to a total of \$15 billion. This figure, despite regulation "M" and the moans of Mr. Kaiser, is rising steeply and represents a great danger to capitalist stability. Consumer credit in June 1947 totaled \$10.8 billion, which was 38 per cent above that of June 1946. From June 1947 to January 1949 the masses went into debt another \$4.2 billion.

At the close of 1948 total private debt had reached an all-time high of \$190 billion. The total of public and private debt neared \$425 billion, compared with a total of \$192 billion in 1929. If we were keeping books on an individual, this would be the statistical expression of bankruptcy, or very nearly so. The prosperity of the immediate past has mortgaged the future, and the overhead expenses and wars of capitalism are not at an end.

At the same time, consumers are saving less and less. By 1947, almost three of every ten "spending units" spent more than they received, according to the Federal Reserve Board. This reflected the continued "heavy" use of liquid assets and credit to buy durable goods and other consumer goods and services. One spending unit (one family, approximately) in ten neither saved nor "dissaved" in 1947. Those who saved (the wealthy) tucked away about \$25 billion in 1947, while the dissavers (the workers, by and large) spent about \$11 billion above their incomes.

More than twenty-five out of every hundred consumer units with incomes of \$3,000 or more in 1947 spent more than they made that year, against fewer than twenty of every hundred in 1946. "Top income units accounted for a larger part of net savings in 1947," was the Reserve Board's way of saying that the rich got richer, the poor got poorer.

This is an important point. Economists in early 1949 continued to refer to the vast amount of savings for the nation as a whole. Pointless statistics! The people who have the savings are the rich, who live comfortably and buy accordingly. But these people constitute a very tiny segment of the population. If they all spent with the most reckless extravagance, they could still not create that mass purchasing power which is necessary to sustain capitalism at a high level.

### Real Earnings Dip

Not only has the workers' relative share of the national income been whittled down, but their real earnings have been steadily declining. In terms of the 1939 purchasing power of the dollar and after provision for the meager tax relief granted in 1948, the average weekly take-home pay of a single worker (with no dependents) in manufacturing had dropped from \$30.32 in 1944 to \$26.86 in the first half of 1948. For a worker with three dependents the decline was from \$34.89 to \$30.24 during the same period. The percentage decline in real take-home pay for the above workers was 11.4 and 13.3, respectively.

Dividends were the highest in 1948 of any year since the war. Cash dividends publicly reported approximated \$5.75 billion, compared with \$5.17 billion in 1947. (Publicly declared dividends are estimated to represent 60 per cent of all dividends paid.)

High as these dividends appear to be, stockholders' returns averaged less than one half the available earnings of corporations. The corporations sought to justify their retention of profits by asserting the investment market was unable to furnish them funds for expansion. It was said that investors were "reluctant" to subscribe for new stock issues.

Though there is a grain of truth in this interpretation, it would be more correct to say that investors were refraining from buying stock *because* the corporations were slighting dividends at the expense of diverting the profits to new plant or equipment, or simply of retaining the profits. Whereas in 1929 dividends accounted for 6.7 per cent of the national income, in 1933 they accounted for 5.2 per cent of the national income, and in the first half of 1948 for only 3.3 per cent.

Industry's investment in plant and equipment in 1948 was \$18.4 billion, almost exactly the extent of 1947 profits. The *Chicago Journal of Commerce* pointed out that this was "a comparatively new phenome-

non. In the old days new plant and equipment were made possible largely by equity capital."

With profits on such a lavish scale, big business is using them for the purpose of itself financing a tremendous expansion of physical plant.

"But isn't that what capitalism is for?" asks the defender of capitalism. "Isn't that the 'creative destruction' that Schumpeter and other social-democratic apologists hail?"

To be sure! All that should be pointed out is that

(1) the expansion is being financed from the surplus value taken from the workers;

(2) that by and large it is being financed by each business itself, creating still greater concentrations of capital in the hands of the few;

(3) that it is an anarchistic planning (without allowing for the possibilities of consumptive forces in America or the world buying back what the enhanced new plant will be used to produce);

(4) that it is contributing to inflationary forces by taking such huge amounts of building materials and steel; and

(5) that in the coming depression this huge productive apparatus will result in a greater unemployment than would have been the case had the new plant been created according to a harmonious plan.

### How It Looks to a Capitalist

Let us see how a capitalist looks at this expansion of industry's physical plant. M. J. Lovell, director and counsel of the National Association of Shirt and Pajama Manufacturers, wrote an interesting letter to the *New York Journal of Commerce* on this point. He said that the American shirt industry had suffered from "two fundamental defects in the last 22 years which had prevented that industry from being one of the greatest in the country—its comparatively low wage scale, and the industry's tremendous capacity to produce."

Mr. Lovell assured his readers that "the first of these inherent weaknesses has been corrected and the industry now pays a wage comparing favorably with that of the best in the land.

"The second defect in the industry is one which has been considerably enhanced, namely, its capacity to produce," he continued. "While the former capacity of the industry was about 16,000,000 dozen shirts per year, this has now been increased to 20,000,000 dozen shirts per year."

Mr. Lovell lamented the fact that statistics showed that when the industry was producing at 75 per cent of capacity, it furnished enough shirts to meet the normal demands of consumption, but when the industry produced in excess of 75 per cent it was over-producing, with the result that inventories piled up and more goods were offered for sale than the consumption warranted, thus resulting in a lowering of price.

Now, according to him, the installation of additional machinery and the improved efficiency of the production methods has increased the capacity potential of the shirt industry by 25 per cent.

"Why shouldn't the industry be able to produce at 100 per cent of capacity without over producing insofar as consumption in the country is concerned?" plaintively asks our philosopher of the shirt.

That indeed is *the* question, which Marx answered some time ago.

"The annual shirt consumption in the United States amounts to only three shirts per man per year," declares Mr. Lovell. "If the male population could be induced to buy only one shirt per man per year more, it would take up the slack between production at less than capacity and full production, with the resultant savings in cost and therefore in price to the consumer."

But, alas! capitalism does not provide the worker with the wherewithal to purchase "one shirt more," nor does capitalism permit the capitalist to produce at capacity for very long.

Our daily papers during the January sales told the story of what has been happening to Mr. Lovell's shirt industry—and to a lot of other industries. The news stories in the back financial section told what was beginning to happen to employment.

### Inventories

Because workers have not received back in wages the value of what they have produced, the masses have not been able to hold up their purchases to match their production. Consequently goods are piling up higher and higher in the factories, warehouses and stores. The government takes huge amounts of these surplus goods and gives them away abroad, but *still* the goods pile up.

In September 1947 business inventories totaled about \$40 billion. By July 1948 they had risen more than 20 per cent, to \$51.7 billion. Inventories of manufacturers stood at \$30.1 billion in July; wholesale inventories at \$8 billion, and retail inventories at \$13.6 billion. From July to November, total inventories rose another \$2.7 billion, to \$54.4 billion.

These statistics are seriously disturbing. A *Chicago Journal of Commerce* report points out that "the essential difference between high inventories this year and last seems to be that this year the increase in holdings is due to buyers' resistance, whereas last year the rise was due to enforced protective buying by business as a hedge against higher prices."

"Buyers' resistance" is the equivalent of "no money in the wallet." People are not so much waiting for prices to come down as they are trying to make their pay checks stretch from one week to the next.

As progressively serious as the economic situation is becoming in the United States, it would already have reached catastrophic levels *if it were not for the*

*arms program and the Marshall Plan aid to Europe.*

First let us look at the significant export-import statistics.

In the years 1936 to 1938, U. S. exports averaged \$3 billion a year, and imports averaged \$2.5 billion.

The Second World War ruined Europe. The ruination of Europe has contributed vastly to the post-war boom in the United States, but now even that prop to our economy is washing away.

In 1947 U. S. exports totaled \$15.3 billion—more than five times pre-war—and imports totaled \$5.7 billion. Such a gross unbalance could not be continued for long. By 1948, even with Marshall Plan dollars, exports did not total more than \$12.6 billion, a decline of more than 15 per cent. The spreading wave of dollar shortages led to an epidemic of import and exchange restrictions in Europe and Latin America.

In August 1948, U. S. exports fell below the \$1 billion mark for the first month in almost two years; reaching only \$988,200,000; in September, they fell another \$61,700,000, to \$926,500,000.

Despite the billions that ECA is pouring into Europe, U. S. exports continue to drop steadily. While the principal emphasis of ECA legislation has been on the economic recovery of Europe, "Congressmen were not unaware," as the *New York Journal of Commerce* reporter delicately put it, "that the ECA program presented an opportunity to dispose of some American surpluses abroad. It is certain that some Congressmen and private groups look upon the program as a means to benefit American agriculture and industry rather than as a means to help Europe. Declining exports, if they continue the trend which started last March, may well place the emphasis on aiding America, rather than on recovery in Europe."

While exports to Europe are decreasing, imports from Europe are rising. This points to increasing European production, and to the end of U. S. sales in Europe at some point in the not-too-distant future.

Let us look at one commodity, coal, in this connection.

In the Ruhr, 1948 monthly coal production exceeded 6,500,000 metric tons, 30 per cent above the 1945 level and 60 per cent of the pre-war level in 1937. In 1948, the weekly average coal production in Great Britain rose to 3,900,000 tons. The 1948 average monthly coal production in Poland was 6,000,000 tons, exceeding the 1937 figure by 500,000 tons. Coal exports from the U. S. fell from 24,000,000 net tons in the January-to-August period in 1947 to 13,000,000 tons in the same period of 1948. These statistics point to the ultimate elimination of the European coal market and the return to our customary outlets in Canada and South America.

The coal illustration shows why it will become more and more difficult for the United States to keep the Marshall Plan going at 1948 levels, even if big

business sees this as one of the few ways in which it can keep the system is America going. Europe is getting back into production on more and more items. Tomorrow it will perhaps be automobiles and tractors that are no longer wanted, etc.

The ERP spent \$5 billion in nine months of 1948. At home this program had the effect of contributing to shortages or tighter supplies of steel, automobiles, pipelines, bridges, etc. The Marshall Plan, for instance, took 1.5 per cent of U. S. steel produced in 1948.

Abroad, the ERP aid just about equaled the expenditures of the nations of Western Europe for armaments to try to keep their colonial slaves in a state of bondage and to prepare for the coming war against Russia.

While our exports are decreasing, our imports are increasing. In 1948, imports to the U. S. totaled approximately \$7 billion, 25 per cent above 1947. As recovery continues in Europe and Asia, the plain implication is that these areas will not only need less from the U. S. but that other areas can begin to fill their wants outside the U. S.

### **Military Spending**

The tremendous expenditures on armaments by Washington constitute perhaps the most important prop of the post-war boom, and one that can and (it appears) will be further increased.

The national budget of the government in 1939 was a piddling \$8.7 billion, though unemployment was well over the 10,000,000 mark. Came the war, with its vast capacity for destruction: by 1947 the national budget was \$42.5 billion. By 1950 it will probably be \$45 billion, of which \$15 billion is expected to comprise the military budget for the future war (the rest of the budget is devoted mainly to paying for past wars). Government expenditures on arms now amount to one third of the government's total expenditures. Together with the foreign-aid program, these two items will consume an estimated ten per cent of the nation's total production of \$250 billion in 1950.

Ten per cent! It is instructive to think what would happen if disarmament should strike—ten per cent of the economy chopped off; six million workers let out at a single crack.

For the fiscal year 1949, a military budget of \$13.8 billion was authorized, plus \$0.8 billion for maintaining the Department of Defense, selective service and stockpiling. Many people expect the 1950 military budget to go as high as \$20 billion.

The fact is that government spending for war and war preparations (the Marshall Plan and military aid to Western Europe) is sustaining the U. S. economy. Without it, the depression would in all likelihood already be here. With it, our government is not only failing to pay off the huge national debt but threatens to increase that debt still further and, of

course, to increase taxes to carry the debt.

The interest on the national debt alone is today far more than the total national budget was in the 1920s.

In 1948, three years after the end of the war, individuals were being taxed at war rates, with only the scantiest reductions.

Here is a tax comparison for a married couple with two dependents:

<i>Net Income</i>	<i>1939 Taxes</i>	<i>1948 Taxes</i>
\$2,500 .....	\$00	\$16.60
3,000 .....	....	99.60
4,000 .....	12	265.60
5,000 .....	48	431.60
6,000 .....	84	597.60

In December 1948 the gross public debt of the U. S. government stood at \$252.2 billion, approximately \$4.5 billion lower than at the end of 1947.

While President Truman has already launched a program to raise federal taxes, tax increases are also predicted at the state level in 1949. (In 1948, state taxes increased in more than half of the states.) Twenty-seven states now have sales taxes (the most iniquitous tax from the viewpoint of the worker in that it leans most heavily upon him who must spend all that he makes in order to live). Every month these state (and local) sales taxes inch upward.

As to the role of government spending, the February 1949 letter of the National City Bank observed that

the government is immensely more important in the country's economy than ever before. Federal and local tax authorities now take—and redistribute—from people and corporations a sum equivalent (in 1946) to 23 per cent of the value of all goods and services produced in the country.

The governments themselves were the purchasers of 12 per cent of these goods and services in 1948 and will be a larger factor in 1949. These government expenditures will not fluctuate with business swings. They represent an unshrinking segment of business, and in case of recession they will exert a stabilizing influence proportionate to their weight.

Quite a change from the old Coolidge-Hoover philosophy! The big bourgeoisie in its public press inveighs against government spending, but it clings to the public hog trough like death itself and dares not order the spigot turned off.

### **Public Works**

Together with the spending for armaments and aid to Europe go public expenditures for public works. It is difficult to realize that expenditures by federal, state and local governments on public works in 1948 totaled \$4 billion, breaking all peacetime records: This was even before the sharp drop in employment which 1949 ushered in. Public-works expenditures in 1948 were more than 75 per cent higher than in 1936 and 1937, when expenditures were being made freely (by conservative bourgeois standards) to seek recovery from the depression. The construction industry's in-



formation committee recently stated that states, counties and cities spent more than \$1 billion on highways, streets and roads in 1948, and expected to spend more in 1949.

### Has the Depression Begun?

In January and February of 1949 unemployment went from below 2,000,000 to more than 3,000,000. Employment dropped substantially below the 60,000,000 mark.

Most economists doubted that the sudden increase in the number of jobless marked the beginning of the depression. This is probably correct. There is no doubt that some of the unemployment is prompted by the desire of certain industries to wage psychological warfare against their workers. Particularly is this true of the railroads, which laid off more than 100,000 workers in a few days, principally as a warning to the non-operating unions not to press too hard for the recommendation of an emergency fact-finding board

calling upon the carriers to institute the forty-hour week by September 1949, with no reduction in pay from the present 48-hour week level.

But this interpretation of the unemployment that suddenly developed cannot be pushed too far. Big business would not dare go too far in this direction for fear of precipitating a stampede. Most of the unemployment is "legitimate," and simply represents the growing lack of demand for goods.

What can big business and its government do about it? It can get rid of part of the surpluses by giving them away abroad, or by destroying them. It can step up its arms program. It can step up public works. Public and private debt can pile up some more.

Whether it will take these steps, and whether it will do so in such a way as to be most effective and so as to result in the least possible disturbances and dislocations, no one knows.

JACK RANGER

# Eisenhower: Portrait in Brass

## A Critical Appraisal of a Nurtured Legend

In our secular age it is not often that we are given the opportunity to observe the birth, growth and nurturing of a god. In the career of Eisenhower, however, we are witness to just such a phenomenon. The legend began seven years ago and has steadily grown.

It has survived even the publication of his collected speeches and the circulation of over a half million copies of *Crusade in Europe*.

The quantity of literature in the United States critical of Eisenhower is extraordinarily small. Only Ralph Ingersoll has dared raise a really profane voice. But his *Top Secret* is a book based on the provincial thesis that the United States was and is the innocent victim of British diplomacy. It is a concept which necessarily vitiates his evaluation of Eisenhower.

A critical appraisal of this public figure has been long overdue.

### 1

Contrary to popular opinion, Eisenhower's main contribution in World War II was not in the military field. Though his military intervention in the European campaigns was constant, it was circumscribed.

Strategic aims were set by the American and British governmental heads in conjunction with the combined chiefs of staff. Tactical problems were resolved by the combined chiefs of staff and lower echelons. Almost all important steps—and many trifling ones—were taken by Eisenhower in consultation with the combined chiefs of staff, to whom he frequently referred as "my bosses."

Only a very few pressing decisions were made by Eisenhower alone: one was the decision to postpone D-Day for the Normandy assault; another concerned the exploitation of the Remagen bridgehead. There were few others. None required a high order of genius.

The English press was correct (if a bit . . . unsporting) in referring to Eisenhower as "the chairman of the board." In an age of total industrial mobilization, mass armies, world fronts, and unprecedentedly massive coalitions, battles can no longer be directed by one man from a carriage pulled up on commanding ground. Modern war is a corporate effort. "The atmosphere in his quarters," says Kay Summersby in *My Boss Eisenhower*, "was that of a business executive, not a five-star general." That catches it.

His primary role was that of a top-level spot coordinator of the Allied forces in Western Europe. He was a mediator, not a messianic personality. As was the case in military matters, all important political and social policies were worked out on the governmental level. The basic decisions were made at multi-national conferences such as took place at Casablanca or Yalta. Other decisions were made by Roosevelt, the State Department, the Treasury Department, and even, on occasion, Congress itself.

Eisenhower did not initiate policy. He lubricated the Allied machinery when friction developed, or threatened to develop, in actualizing these plans.

He absorbed the Churchill pressure for further diversions in the Mediterranean after cross-channel



commitments had already been made—and also mollified English and United States Red Cross girls who were squabbling over uniforms. He mediated British inter-service feuds—and also answered crank letters from empire patriots. He worked at getting arms away from the Belgian Forces of the Interior—and also took an honorary degree from the University of Louvain. He overruled air-force opposition, ordering United States strategic bombing units to be used tactically—and also decided how captured liquor should be divided between officers and enlisted men. He took special measures to secure more landing craft from United States shipyards—and also worked to get more home-front publicity for his generals.

### Personal Credentials

Eisenhower was perfectly cognizant of what was expected of him. He was deliberately picked out by Chief of Staff Marshall—who was himself a type similar to Eisenhower—over the heads of many senior officers whose nicknames themselves suggest their incapacity for this particular job: Ben (Yoo-Hoo!) Lear, J. C. H. (Jesus Christ Himself) Lee, George S. Patton Jr. (Old Blood and Guts).

It must be admitted that Eisenhower turned in a first-rate performance. His work was no small factor in achieving the Allied cooperation which was so strikingly genuine, especially when compared with the jungle law which governed inter-Axis relations and relations within the German army itself.

That Eisenhower was able to achieve this was due to a happy conjunction of personal qualities which are uncommon enough in civilian life—and so rare in the military one as normally to be construed as a weakness by the professional army officer. Eisenhower's social presence is composed of the following: modesty, courtesy, sociability, democratic behavior, tactfulness, a trim figure, and a photogenic smile. *Charm.*

This is backed up by an alert but not profound mind, a good memory, self-confidence, a variegated peacetime military experience at home and abroad, a very competent understanding of his trade, and an ability to speak coherently—this latter in an occupation where speaking ability can normally be registered in decibels only.

On the organizational plane he possesses four prime requisites: the ability to choose able associates, delegate responsibility, back up subordinates, and act decisively.

But beyond this—these are the superficialities—what are the man's beliefs and capabilities? They are not the mystery that newspaper writers would have us believe.

### 2

*Was he a great general?*

"Germany," wrote Amiel in 1871, "will teach the French that rhetoric is not science." It remained for

the United States to teach Germany that science is not mass production. Under conditions of overwhelming superiority in manpower and material such as the Allies enjoyed over the Axis powers, the skill of a general—or his lack of it—was obscured.

In the final three years of the war the failing resources of the Germans lent very great importance to the qualifications of each German general, thereby making an estimation relatively easy. The best of them were the exceptional generals of this war. Even if Eisenhower's intervention on the military plane had been more direct than it was, it would be difficult to assess his military capabilities.

Were the North African, Sicilian, and Italian campaigns needless wastes which prevented the mounting of a cross-channel invasion in 1943, one year earlier than it actually took place? Probably. Eisenhower more or less thought so. That he could not firmly oppose them was not basically due to his ambivalent attitude but to conditions of coalition war: Russian pressure for a second front, English pressure for action in the Mediterranean—and pressure from Roosevelt, who wanted our newly conscripted troops to see action.

### Tactical Errors?

Was the strategy of the broad front in attacking Germany wrong as against the British proposal for a thrust north of the Ruhr? Possibly. Was the Salerno operation badly executed? Probably. Badoglio thought so. Was the Ardennes attack by the Germans a product of Allied carelessness and overconfidence? Unquestionably. But these and other probable errors can be written off as representing the normal permissible incidence of mistakes in a long war, mistakes in which Eisenhower shared. But *were* they mistakes? Unfortunately, battlefields are not chessboards where the problem can be set up again and replayed.

The question becomes somewhat academic. A successful general is a good general. Eisenhower was successful.

### 3

*Where does Eisenhower stand politically?*

Like most professional soldiers, Eisenhower has an aversion for politics, which is regarded as a disturbing element in the classic unrolling of military operations. In Eisenhower's case this aversion is compounded by the traditional American lack of feel for international diplomacy.

Throughout the war Eisenhower merely followed the State Department line. This was true even in North Africa, where Roosevelt urbanely and publicly placed the responsibility for the Darlan deal on Eisenhower. This is not to say that Eisenhower disagreed with the pro-Vichy policy. He did, in fact, agree with it, basing himself on the practical grounds (which in the end proved not so practical) of military expediency.

He had no specific ideas of his own—just a con-

servative military bias so ingrained that *he simply could not even understand* the point of view of the liberal opposition to the North Africa policy. ("The liberals crucified me in North Africa.") It was many a month before he could establish even reasonable working relations with De Gaulle and the Committee of National Liberation which represented the French resistance movement.

### A Political Primitive

Nor is there any evidence in Harry C. Butcher's semi-official diary *My Three Years with Eisenhower* that until the outraged roar from the United States reached Africa Eisenhower was at all sensitive to the existence of the Vichy concentration camps maintained in Africa and to the operative anti-Semitic laws. As it was, not until five months after the African invasion were the infamous Nuremberg laws repealed!

Butcher reveals the atmosphere at SHAEF at that time: "In England we were harassed on the Negro question by liberty-loving provocateurs. In Africa we, apparently, are supposed by these same gentlemen to have a general election of Arabs, Jews and French to elect a congress and president, and then go on with the war."

In Italy, likewise, Eisenhower betrayed no democratic tremors in dealing with the Fascist general Badoglio (the Duke of Addis Ababa!) and the House of Savoy, which had propped up the shaky Mussolini regime over the years.

Politically, Eisenhower is simply a primitive. He led a hand-to-mouth existence, depending for sustenance on the Allied policy at any given time. He foresaw nothing. To the politically sophisticated Churchill, who insisted that the Anglo-American forces drive on to Berlin, Eisenhower stubbornly replied that it was not militarily necessary. He could not appreciate the political implications motivating Churchill's proposals.

His opposition to the army's running of military governments was not based upon democratic principles but upon military exclusiveness and contempt for civilian activities. His analysis of the Russian problem—after he finally got around to seeing one—went no deeper than thinking that everything would turn out all right if the Russians and Americans could sit down and talk things over.

Eisenhower has not committed himself on any non-military domestic issue, a fact of symptomatic importance. But it is not difficult to deduce the conservative nature of his politics.

Here we have to speak of an orientation, for it is doubtful if Eisenhower has ever formulated a concrete political program. His typically mealy-mouthed statement on Roosevelt in *Crusade in Europe* affords a clue: "With some of Mr. Roosevelt's political acts I could never possibly agree. But I knew him solely in

his capacity as a leader of a nation at war—and in that capacity he seemed to me to fulfill all that could possibly be expected of him." The deprecatory counter-position of the New Deal president to the war president is obvious.

His whole life has been passed within one of the most conservative milieus in society—that of the regular army. And Patton, the authoritarian prototype, was one of his best friends in that army. That Eisenhower is considered "safe" by business has been demonstrated by his post-war career. To become president of Columbia University he had to pass inspection by a board of trustees whose Republican conservatism is irrefragable.

### 4

Eisenhower's own economic position is not calculated to make him a subverter of society. His salary as president of Columbia is reported to be around \$25,000 a year; his army pension is \$15,000. The sum paid Eisenhower for *Crusade in Europe* has been rumored at be somewhere between \$100,000 and a million dollars.

His handling of the publication deal indicates a real flair for survival in a chancy civilian world. According to the *New Yorker*, "The manuscript was finished on March 24th and sold to Doubleday early this month [October 1948]. . . . The reason for the hiatus, and for the outright sale rather than the usual royalties deal, was a ruling by the income-tax people that in this way Eisenhower would qualify for a twenty-five per cent capital-gains tax on the transaction, instead of being subject to the graduated income tax. The capital-gains tax is limited to twenty-five per cent only in the case of so-called capital assets held at least six months, and apparently writers can get in under it when they are non-professionals."

It is difficult not to believe the rumor that places him in the Republican Party. There is, however, more explicit evidence.

### Party Allegiance

On the basis of conversations with Eisenhower in Europe in 1945, Harry Hopkins stated that Eisenhower "and his family had voted against Roosevelt every time up until 1944; but that he did vote for Roosevelt this last time." Robert Sherwood, Hopkins' biographer, states in *Roosevelt and Hopkins*: "Eisenhower once told me (it was in London in March 1944) that his family had always been Kansas Republicans but that he himself had never voted in his life. He felt that since an army officer must serve his government with fully loyalty and devotion regardless of its political coloration, he should avoid all considerations of political partisanship."

Sherwood's view, which coincides more closely with Eisenhower's expressed attitude toward politics than does the Hopkins statement, is in any event not

in direct opposition to it, since the general Republican atmosphere is accepted in both cases.

That several labor leaders panted after Eisenhower is a measure not of Eisenhower's pro-labor sentiments but of the desperation induced by their self-confinement in the two-party system.

"As late as the summer of 1944," notes his biographer Kenneth S. Davis in *Soldier of Democracy*, "he said repeatedly in private conversation: 'The liberals crucified me in North Africa. All this talk about my "betraying the common people"—it's absurd. I am a common man myself, more so than most of those people who are always talking about the "proletariat." I've worked with my hands at about every kind of job there is.'"

### **Ideological Elements**

But Eisenhower is hardly a "common man." His whole life from the age of twenty-one has been spent in the army. For two years prior to that he worked full time in a creamery, not "at about every kind of job there is." He was never a member of a labor union. He has never made an explicit statement of any sort which might be construed as indicating sympathy for organized labor. In his talk to the CIO convention in 1946 he stressed "cooperation," his post-war stock in trade.

Fundamentally, this field, like so many others, is alien ground for Eisenhower. "During the war period when I drove the general and worked in his office," Summersby notes, "I never once heard him discuss such questions as racial segregation, capital vs. labor, international politics, or any other of the usual signposts to political conviction. He was too busy directing the war . . . to put a conversational toe into such dangerous waters."

*But Eisenhower has been portrayed as a democratic military type. Isn't he?*

His democratic attitudes are genuine. On the personal plane they probably derive from Mennonite forebears, Kansas equalitarianism, and personal inclination—nurtured in the socializing climate of a large, working-class family. On the national plane they reflect the traditional democracy of American life, the absence of a feudal military tradition, and the disciplinary latitude which a tremendous industrial potential permits.

But this democratic spirit of Eisenhower's is limited. It is, after all, synchronized with army norms.

He can visit his enlisted-man driver when he is hospitalized—and also rake his "naval aide" Butcher over the coals for eating with the same driver. He can intervene to retain Mauldin's cartoons and the B-Bag (letters to the editor) in the army daily *Stars and Stripes*—and also keep the Patton slapping incident out of the press. He can order supply troops out of Paris—and also take a vacation on the Riviera himself during the final phases of the battle for the Rhine. He can order priorities on supplies for front-line

troops—and also maintain a private armored train, complete when en route with billiard table, record player, movie screen and projector, portable generator, jeeps, several dogs, a cat, two cows, and a large entourage including a tailor and a driver used also, on occasion, for retrieving golf balls. He can, without revulsion, have champaign with his meals and dine on oysters sent by air from the United States.

On the Negro question—a real democratic touchstone—Eisenhower is Jim Crow. His typical, ambiguously formulated position is caught by Butcher in a diary entry dated July 14, 1942, describing an early press conference which took up the question of policy toward Negro troops in England: ". . . he told them his policy for handling colored troops would be absolute equality of treatment, but there would be segregation where facilities afforded. The colored troops are to have everything as good as the white." Neither during the war itself nor after did Eisenhower evince even a desire to abrogate the Jim Crow system in the army.

His democratic role (carefully photographed and recorded in all its phases) served as a front for the benefit of the people back home. In the European Theater of Operations his example—such as it was—was not catching.

In fact it didn't affect even his chief of staff and close friend, Walter Bedell Smith, of whom Summersby writes: "Most of the headquarters staff, especially the junior officers, regarded General Smith as a complete Prussian. He could be, too—tough, humorless, driving, with all the sentiment of an SS general. As Beetle himself often put it, 'Someone around the top has to be an absolute S. O. B. and Ike's not in a position to do it all time time. So that's my job.'"

There's the *real* ETO atmosphere!

### **5**

In late 1948 with the publication of *Crusade in Europe* Eisenhower emerged as a historian. It must be said immediately that the book is unique in at least one respect—it was dictated and finished in forty-six days. There were obviously no problems of intellectual logistics involved.

The first impression is of the failure to establish the locus of the war in the historical continuum. Out of what did it come, and why? And when in the end Eisenhower turns his back upon the lunar landscapes in ruined Germany and returns to the United States no question arises for him of what follows for humanity. There is no tortured sigh for human suffering which even the hard-bitten Churchill cannot keep out of his morality-play prose.

### **Inept Historical Judgments**

Military events are treated descriptively, not analytically. Nothing exists in depth. Only superficial use is made of the key information gained from post-war interrogations of captured German officers, without

which it is impossible to present a historically viable work. ("... the German mind, if it is a mind," remarks Eisenhower, in an access of smugness, of some of the best military brains of his times.)

Beyond the ritualistic reference to Cannae there is virtually no examination of World War II in the light of past military theory, particularly that of the post-World War I period. Even rudimentary technical matters which formed such fierce points of contention during the war Eisenhower does not handle. For instance, the notorious inferiority of United States tanks and anti-tank weapons is not even discussed briefly!

### His Estimate of His Colleagues

The virtues of Eisenhower the administrator are the vices of Eisenhower the historian. Almost every positive statement made in *Crusade in Europe* is immediately qualified to extinction, so that Eisenhower's real opinion (in those cases when he is not simply confused) is about as sharply defined as the fried mush of which he was so fond. It leads to bloopers like this one concerning the Italian campaign, about whose value Eisenhower could never make up his mind:

"Fundamentally, however, the Italian campaign thereafter became a distinctly subsidiary operation, though the results it attained in the actual defeat of Germany were momentous, almost incalculable."

Was the Ardennes debacle an Allied error? Was Patton a scoundrel? Was Eisenhower in agreement with the Morgenthau plan? Was Montgomery over-cautious? The balanced antitheses that Eisenhower erects in answering these and a hundred other questions would be the pride and joy of a medieval scholastic.

When Eisenhower *aims* to be critical—as he does occasionally—he employs such an oblique method that the casual reader, or one who does not happen to be acquainted with the background material, can innocently pass over the critical passages.

Eisenhower's distaste for MacArthur, for example, is well known. To get at him, however, Eisenhower attacks Quezon, who in 1942 sought "the neutralization of the Philippines, with each contestant agreeing to withdraw its troops." In attacking Quezon, Eisenhower is perfectly aware of what is forthrightly documented in the Stimson biography *On Active Service in Peace and War*: that MacArthur was sympathetic to Quezon's view and so radioed Washington.

Later, describing the North African campaign, Eisenhower writes: "Rommel himself escaped before the final debacle, apparently foreseeing the inevitable and earnestly desiring to save his own skin." When taken with a reference to Bataan in the paragraph which precedes it, this sentence can be construed only as another furtive cut at MacArthur. For, obviously,

if Rommel should not have fled, neither should MacArthur have left the Philippines. Otherwise the sentence remains simply a curio.

There are omissions. Eisenhower fails to mention that hedgerow fighting was completely unprepared for. The Huertgen Forest slaughter is dismissed with little more explanation than the "the First Army got involved..."—a classic of understatement.

There are simple errors. Von Rundstedt, for instance, did not lead the Ardennes offensive. He was actually opposed to it and played only a nominal role in the operations.

There is outright falsification. In *Crusade in Europe* Eisenhower infers that Darlan's presence in Africa was an entirely unexpected and unprepared windfall: "We discounted at once the possibility that he had come into the area with a prior knowledge of our intentions or in order to assist us in our purpose." In a diary entry dated October 17, 1942, three weeks *before* the invasion, Butcher states: "Today a succession of messages from 'Colonel McGowan' [Robert Murphy]. . . . Darlan apparently wants to play ball. . . . Murphy recommends that Darlan be encouraged on the basis of securing his cooperation with Giraud. Darlan expected in Algiers within a week."

Future historians will find Butcher's *My Three Years with Eisenhower* a more useful source book than *Crusade in Europe*. This day-to-day account of the war as seen from the pinnacle of SHAEF by Eisenhower's "kibitzer, water boy, cigarette girl, and flunky" (the description is Butcher's own), edited though it is, gives a much more accurate and colorful account of the Allied inner conflicts, the fluctuations of morale, the inter-service jealousies, the tactical improvisations, the material and logistical problems, and the top echelon Bohemia than does Eisenhower's olive-drab prose.

### 6

Following his quasi-retirement from the army in 1948, Eisenhower became president of Columbia University in New York City. "... it was with no illusions," he said, "that I could contribute anything academically."

And in all truth Eisenhower can be considered as a transmitter of "Western" culture only in the most specific American sense. His known tastes run exclusively to cowboy stories, horse operas and Western ballads.

### His Academic Role

At West Point, says his biographer, he "stood consistently at the very bottom of the upper one-third of his class." (A decade later, however, he was to graduate from the Command and General Staff School first out of a class of 275.) He was better in athletics. In view of his general public activity and his role of military adviser to the government, his contribution to the administration of Columbia must be as tenuous as his academic one.

What, then, is the significance of his Columbia job?

The influence of Columbia upon education in the United States—and thereby upon its cultural life as a whole—is exceptional. About one out of every ten Ph.D.s granted in this country, for example, is granted by Columbia. The student body numbers 31,000, the faculty over 4,000. Its income from investments is second only to Harvard's. It amounts to \$6,180,000 annually—which is equal to the income received from \$247,200,000 invested in 2½ per cent government bonds.

A university of this size, located in the intellectual and financial center of the United States, is of prime importance for the most conscious representatives of the capitalist class. They have not overlooked their opportunity. In *The Goose-Step*, Upton Sinclair referred to Columbia as “the palatial University of the House of Morgan.” There has been no reason to change that characterization essentially in the twenty-six years which have elapsed since the publication of Sinclair's fascinating book.

True, the elder Morgan no longer sits upon the board of trustees, which is the final arbiter of university policy. But the representatives of Wall Street (in the most *literal* sense) are very much in control.

Of the twenty-four trusteeships at Columbia, seventeen are self-perpetuating: when a trustee dies his place is filled by vote of the other trustees. Six are elected by the alumni. The president of the university, likewise selected by the trustees, serves as a trustee also. The overwhelming majority either have very close ties with the plutocracy of the country or are active members of the plutocracy. A survey by Hubert Park Beck, published in 1947, shows that the known taxable income (based on 1924 data) of the thirteen board members for whom figures were available averaged over \$65,000. Figures from the mid-thirties,

available for seven trustees, showed an average annual salary of \$74,000.

The public spokesman for the trustees—who typically lead a rather anonymous existence—is the president of the university, who is carefully chosen by them. For a generation prior to the appointment of Eisenhower the post was held by the rubbery Nicholas Murray Butler, presidential aspirant, opponent of any further amendment of the Constitution (it was like “proposing amendments to the multiplication table!”), supporter of child labor, director in a Morgan insurance company, and over-all reactionary.

#### Academic Beliefs

The times, not the least important component of which is the development of a powerful and articulate organized labor movement, call for someone less obviously reactionary. Hence the selection of Eisenhower. His appointment was acclaimed by almost everybody, including the campus chapter of the American Veterans Committee. Nevertheless, a grave precedent has been established: heading up one of the most influential universities in the country is a man whose cast of thought is antithetical to the spirit of free inquiry which should pervade a university.

To date he has trod warily. His concept of academic freedom, though it has not been explicitly revealed, is plain enough, however. Ira T. Freeman, writing in the *New York Times*, says:

“His conception of academic freedom, however, does not include the right to advocate ideologies hostile to ‘free enterprise,’ since he has threatened to dismiss at once any instructor ‘infiltrating our university’ with ‘inimical philosophies.’ He defended the release of one left-wing faculty member from Teachers’ College.”

The implementing of that credo would guarantee the destruction of academic freedom at Columbia.

JAMES M. FENWICK

# The War in Indonesia

## ***The Background of the Policies of the Parties in Holland***

One should not expect a Dutch socialist to be able to make public any facts that are unknown to the outside world. For, whether he looks at an American daily or a provincial publication of Toowoomba in Australia, or reads the British or French journals, he is always forced to conclude that, as regards the direct facts, the world abroad is better informed than he. Except for one thing: a knowledge of the reactions of the Dutch people and the political and economic background for the behavior of the Dutch government and of the parties that support it.

Information about the actual events is perhaps characterized by the complaint of a member of Par-

liament who recently declared that those journalists who, because of their profession, read the foreign press regularly, are better informed than the MPs. The aim of this article therefore is two-fold: information to the world about the feelings and reactions within the Dutch population; and an analysis of the background of the government's policy.

The military attack on the Indonesian Republic on December 18 came rather unexpectedly for the masses of the Dutch people. This is not to say that they had not reckoned with its taking place in the long run. Conservative and reactionary colonialist circles moved consistently in this direction from the



We are glad to print the following article, written for us by Frits Kief, editor of the independent socialist weekly published in Holland, *De Vlam*, which was established by those socialist militants who distinguished themselves in the national resistance struggle against the German imperialist occupation during the war. It is encouraging to read that there are fighters in Holland who take their democratic, socialist and internationalist obligations seriously by speaking up and organizing against the infamous assault upon the Indonesian Republic launched by the Dutch reaction, in complicity with the Social Democrats, who rule a country which was subjected only recently to the same infamy and humiliation by German imperialism. We are obliged, however, to note in addition that Comrade Kief's references to the rôle of American imperialism in the Dutch-Indonesian conflict, and in Asiatic affairs more generally, seems to indicate an appraisal of only one side of American policy which, for all the significance that it undoubtedly possesses, does not suffice for more rounded elucidation of American imperialism in world politics today, which invests it with a character no less reactionary in essentials than that of Dutch imperialism itself.—Ed.

very beginning and certainly after suspending the first military action. By means of the negotiations, however, and by a great number of declarations made by the PvdA (Party of Labor), they pretended that they continued to prefer peaceful consultation. The reinforcement of the Netherlands' military forces was, it is true, in conflict with this pretense. So was the utterly biased information and the increasingly sharp tone used against the Republic. Still the Dutch government, up to the moment that it issued the order to attack, made a show of not desiring a military action.

However, not everyone was deceived. The two big progressive weeklies, *De Groene Amsterdammer* and *Vrij Nederland*, and in particular the independent socialist weekly, *De Vlam*, continually and doggedly pointed out the road that events would take.

*De Vlam* followed the development closely. In its issue of August 14, 1948, immediately after the present Drees cabinet was set up, the weekly wrote, on the basis of the way the government was constructed, that this cabinet was a declaration of war against the Indonesian Republic. This was written at a time when the ins and outs of the new government's history were not yet known. It turned out later on that the reopening of the military action was indeed the principal question in the negotiations between the parties.

### **Role of the Catholic Church**

We shall presently find the occasion to sketch the situation of the Dutch parties. For the moment it may suffice that the Roman Catholics made the demand that Lieutenant Governor-General Dr. van Mook be replaced by their retired prime minister, Dr. Beel, and that the post of Minister of Overseas Territories no longer be taken by a Social Democrat but by a Roman Catholic tainted with corporatist ideas, Mr. Sasen. To make matters acceptable to the Party of La-

bor, the position of Prime Minister was offered to Mr. Drees.

We must emphatically warn against any misunderstanding arising out of the title of "Prime Minister." In Holland, this position does not have the same significance as, for example, in England. The Prime Minister is nothing but the chairman of the Cabinet Council and his constitutional position is not distinguished from that of any other minister.

### **Political Composition of Cabinet**

Like Surinam (Dutch Guiana) and the Dutch Antilles (Curaçao, Bonaire, etc.), Indonesia has been adopted into the Dutch constitution by a special formula. A new settlement of the relationship between our country and these territories implies a modification of the constitution. For such a modification, a clear majority is sufficient in the first instance. However, the constitution prescribes that Parliament shall thereupon be dissolved, that new elections shall be held and that the modification shall then have to poll a two-thirds majority to become law.

On the pretext that the basis of the cabinet, composed of Roman Catholics and Social Democrats, could not produce this two-thirds majority, the Roman Catholics insisted upon an extension to the right, by admitting a Conservative Liberal and a Conservative Protestant. These points may sound strange, but we shall presently have the opportunity to characterize their relationship more clearly. That is how the new cabinet came to be formed. In this connection it should be noted that both our Conservative Liberals and our Conservative Protestants looked upon the reopening of armed action as desirable, and therefore conducted their election campaign in part from this standpoint. So, everyone who had eyes in his head and could use them was able to gather from the replacement of Dr. van Mook by Dr. Beel—the man who prepared the first military action and launched it—and from the shift of the government's basis to the right, that the new military action was only a question of finding the right moment. That moment had to come and it had to be before January 1, 1949. For the Linggadjati agreement of November, 1946, and again with the Renville accord of January, 1948, the date of January 1, 1949, had been fixed for the transmission of Dutch sovereignty over Indonesia.

It is well to keep this in mind for here lies the explanation for the development of the events. It was in the profound interests of the Indonesian Republic, having this date in view, for the negotiations to run smoothly enough to allow for the transmission of sovereignty to take place at the time due. On the other hand, it was in the Dutch colonial interests to spin out and confine the negotiations in such a way that by January 1, 1949, a critical situation should arise which would produce a pretext for military action.

The question of the extent of the mistakes of the

Republic—apart from the consideration that this republic is only a nascent state and certainly cannot come up to the requirements of an old established power—is surely of secondary importance. The only point of interest is that the Dutch government exploited the mistakes—and provoked them—in order to have the opportunity of dragging out the negotiations in the first place, and in the second place, to be in possession of the necessary pretexts.

### **Military Intervention**

The above is not a matter of hindsight. The course of this development was outlined by us in *De Vlam* from week to week. It is therefore preposterous for the Dutch government to try to create the impression that, except for the Communists, it had the whole nation entirely behind it. In this respect, we repeat, not only *De Vlam* but also *De Groone Amsterdammer* and *Vrij Nederland* made public continuously their disquietude about the developments.

The unloosing of forcible action was proclaimed by wireless on Saturday night, December 18, 1948, at 11 p.m. Dutch propaganda abroad aims to create the idea that Holland had to act militarily because the situation had become untenable. The argument is concentrated mainly on three points: Dutch sovereignty, including the territories of the Republic; violations of the truce; and—this is particularly accented—the impotence of the Republican government in having its orders obeyed by its military forces.

It is remarkable how two-faced a game the Dutch government plays. To make inclusion into Benelux, the Western-European Union, and the Atlantic Pact acceptable, it argues that the abandoning of part of Dutch sovereignty is inevitable. The Social Democratic leaders in particular make a propaganda display of this argument, all the more so since they have accepted the view of the European federalists. With regard to the truce violations, it is likewise very strange. The government complains that the Republicans have systematically penetrated the Dutch sphere of occupation and killed officials who were cooperating with the Netherlands. But in saying this, it admits that the Dutch military machine in the controlled region was not able to maintain “order” and also that in its descriptions of resisting people who deal with collaborators it follows the same line of thought that guided the German occupation.

Finally, with regard to the “military powers in the background.” The Dutch government reproaches the Republic for displaying symptoms which are no less severely—if not more—evident on the Dutch side. The Dutch militarists have, to this day, sabotaged every course that offered the possibility of agreement. They set up concentration camps for Indonesians on a large scale; they engaged in “purging actions” on South Celebes, among other places, which are a match for the most barbaric atrocities of Hitler’s SS, and

honored the executive commander; at Bondowoso, they suffocated prisoners of war in the train (a committee of colonial dames is presenting a petition for mercy in behalf of the guilty party who was very moderately punished); and in Pakisadji they methodically burned down *dessas* (one of the few facts that have become known here) just as the Germans did in Lidice and Putten.

But the worst act committed by the military was their internment of the Republican leaders in the old-fashioned colonial way, followed by having the Dutch representative in the Security Council declare that they enjoy complete freedom of action.

It is therefore no accident that practically all the reports of the wealfare committee of the UN are unfavorable to the Dutch government. In this respect it is humiliating that systematic attempts are made in Holland to belittle these reports and even to undermine their authority by stating that the military and other representatives have indulged too freely in sexual and alcoholic excesses. It is not hard to understand that matters are pretty bad when such arguments have to be made. Hitler, too, in one of his speeches, repeatedly called Churchill a soak. Although this is one of the most indecent and rude utterances, it is nevertheless symptomatic of the “spirit here.” There are differences in shading, but none in essentials.

Because the socialists around *De Vlam* in particular, as appears from the articles published in it, took the reopening of attack by main force before January 1, 1949, seriously into account, the attack of December 18 did not come about unexpectedly. They had taken steps to raise their voice in protest. Moreover, they had been forewarned, because a Conservative Protestant member of Parliament had let his tongue run away with him in a small country town—Leerdam—apparently under the impression that on that day, “according to plan,” the action would be started. This member of Parliament, Mr. Beernink, said at the time: “I believe I may say that if the government should not start a new action under the prevailing circumstances, or should not press it, the Christian Historical fraction will have to renounce its confidence in this government.”

### **Role of Labor Parties**

On the initiative of *De Vlam*, an emergency meeting was called on the very night of Sunday, December 19, and on that occasion the “Peace in Indonesia” Committee was born. *De Vlam* itself published a manifesto in 100,000 copies. The Amsterdam committee convened a mass protest meeting which was attended by several thousand workers and intellectuals. Following this example, a number of local committees have come into existence and other meetings have been called in Rotterdam, The Hague and a good number of smaller towns. On January 23, the local committees were assembled throughout the country so that the



action against the government's policy could be pressed as much as possible.

It will of course be asked what was the attitude of both workers' parties, the "Partij van de Arbeid" (Party of Labor) and the CPN (Communist Party of the Netherlands), of the non-confessional trade unions, the EVC (Unity Trade Union Center) and the NVV (Dutch Trade Unions).

The CPN found itself in a very awkward position. It had recently supported the revolt at Madiun, organized by the Stalinist Moeso who had just returned to Indonesia from Moscow, and on that occasion it had called the Republican leaders agents of American imperialism. Therefore, when forcible action was started it could not very well take the part of the Republican government and, consequently, it has left itself a large white space in this question. The EVC, which is allied to the CPN, could not twist the situation as it wanted to, either.

This fact is of interest because it serves to disprove the rumors spread by the government that the Republic is a Communist bulwark. We wish to observe in this connection that this whole history is characteristic of the attitude of Holland toward the Republic, for in the beginning Soekarno and his associates were made out to be "Japanese servants."

In judging the policy of the PvdA, it is necessary to distinguish clearly between the official declarations of the party chiefs and the views of large sections of the party membership. For while the masses of the Dutch workers hardly reacted at all, the expedition violently upset and convulsed the ranks of the PvdA.

It goes without saying that the party's leadership, co-responsible as it is for the policy pursued by the government and for the present coalition government itself, supports that policy out and out. In practice, this means that, to the outside world, any appearance of opposition is ignored or suppressed as much as possible.

Yet the party leadership was forced to call an extraordinary congress which, in spite of the very bad preparations and of only biased information, saw a large number of the delegates—one-third—denounce the policy of the government. In addition, a resolution of ex-Minister Vos was accepted which, without saying so in so many words, included a statement of disapproval. The fact that this could happen as it did is an indication of the confusion which actually prevails.

#### **Duplicity of Labor Leaders**

Characteristic of the gestures of the party leadership is that its chairman, Koos Vorrink, boarded a plane that very afternoon to try, by government commission, to win over the Norwegian member of the Security Council by impressing him that the policy of the government is supported by the PvdA. If Vorrink had not met with an accident on that occasion, this fine trick would never have leaked out.

We do not wish to go further into the matter of party democracy that follows from this line of conduct. It may suffice to state that the party chiefs declared that they are "personally responsible" and that consequently they cannot allow themselves to be bound by party decision.

#### **Meaning of Imperialism**

The modern trade union, the NVV, has not played a very fine role either. Whereas a few years ago its secretary, van der Lende, declared at a public meeting attended by 40,000 that the NCV would use the strike weapon against the employment of armed force, the directors of the union now agreed to Mr. Ad Vermeulen traveling to the United States to keep the American dock workers and seamen from strike action against the use of military force by the Dutch. It is obvious that the role played in this regard by these trade union leaders is a humiliating, not to say a treacherous one.

Many must have wondered about the cause of this Dutch intransigence, since Holland itself has just escaped the pressure of such a domination and has to thank the success of Allied arms for its present existence.

The simple formula, right though it is, that we are dealing here with colonial imperialism, is insufficient for an objective judgment. The familiar colonial imperialism does indeed play a considerable part in the conflict, as appeared, for example, from the quick rise of Indonesian shares by 20 per cent and more immediately after the military action became known. However, there are a few other aspects of the matter to which attention should be drawn.

By its possession of the rich Indian islands, Holland has for a long time lived above its own financial status. This position was, it is true, already crumbling before the war. Because of the industrialization in the Far East, in Japan, in India and in Indonesia itself—stimulated by the big world crisis of the '30s which advanced it far beyond the start that had been made in the First World War—Indonesia could not continue to be an object of colonial exploitation in every respect. However, the considerable wealth of the Dutch, and the position of Holland as an investing power, was built upon the possession of Indonesia. We might point out in this regard that the policy of the Dutch government in London always took into account this possession, as well as the economic value it represented.

This possession not only meant very great wealth for a top few, it also meant prosperity for the middle classes, the colonial officials and the employees of the Dutch East Indies plantations. It opened up to the Dutch intelligentsia the possibility of making a living overseas or of being active on the large estates. Moreover, it meant a relatively high standard of liv-

ing for the Dutch working class in comparison with the surrounding countries.

Holland has been impoverished by the German occupation. The investors have had to dispose of their American funds to a considerable extent. The German hinterland—that other important source of Dutch prosperity, because of our situation as a transit country as well as our position of providers of agricultural and fishery products—is, for the time being, still eliminated; and in view of the shifts which have taken place in the world economic situation, it is questionable if it will ever regain its old position for the Dutch economy. The Dutch density of population is one of the highest in the world. Therefore Holland has to keep its eyes open for means of economic recovery. A quick recovery of the German hinterland is, we repeat, not to be expected. The speedy increase of population drives toward industrialization but there already seems to be a discrepancy between the possibilities of investment and the general Dutch standard of living, which is, moreover, deepened by the demands of armaments for the war in Indonesia as well as for participation in the Western European Union. A new turning point all over the world is casting its shadow before it (note, for example, Fritz Sternberg's *The Coming Crisis*). So it is obvious that the colonial forces in this country, whose prosperity has always been derived from colonial possessions, strive for as quick a recovery of the mastery of this object of exploitation as possible. In this respect, it should be noted that, from school days onward, Dutch thought, in the average politically-unskilled worker, is dominated by the conception of "our" colonial possessions. Furthermore, the investment in Indonesian funds stretches over to the small savers. If, therefore, on the one hand the formula is accepted that the conflict with the Republic is the outcome of Dutch imperialist interests, and on the other hand the Marxian classification is considered correct, we are nevertheless of the opinion that there are shadings of difference and that these nuances reach expression at the same time within the political parties. It is of interest, however, to take the foregoing into account every time.

### **Weight of Dutch Parties**

Dutch party relations are distinguished in many respects from those in other countries and it is certainly true that they can be explained with great difficulty because it is often the case that confessional, more than political, ideologies play the leading part.

The largest party is the Roman Catholic People's Party, hence a party of Roman Catholics. It therefore includes, in fact, all kinds of social shadings. The cement which holds it together is the Roman Catholic religion, although the most reactionary and purely colonialist wing has separated itself recently and formed a party of its own under the leadership of the former Minister of Colonies Welter. This party is par-

ticularly strong in the Southern Netherlands. It contains industrialists, business capitalists, farmers and workers, and, of course, intellectuals and officials. The class antagonisms which are indubitably present are fought out every time on the backs of the workers. A brief attempt on the part of the Social Democracy, after the liberation, to penetrate the Roman Catholic worker masses, failed, since it proclaimed the thesis that it could form a government only in combination with the Romans. Moreover, since the episcopacy, on the occasion of the elections, issued the advice to vote for the KVP (Roman Catholic People's Party), the fate of the Social Democratic break-through attempt was sealed.

### **Ideological Basis of Parties**

At this point it should be observed that in the leading Roman Catholic circles of our country, that is, with Messrs. Romme (chairman of the fraction in the government), Kortenhorst (chairman of the Parliament), and Sassen (ex-Minister of Overseas Territories), corporatist, not to say fascist, ideas are having a field day. We shall come back to the meaning of the Roman ideology in connection with the Indonesian question.

The second party is the Party of Labor. It originated in the fusion of the former Social Democracy with Protestant-Christian progressive liberal and a few small Roman groups. The Dutch Social Democracy having always belonged to the groups most to the right in the International, has, ever since its conversion into the PvdA, stored away in the attic, both theoretically and practically, the program of socialism, such as the expropriation of the propertied classes, the socialization of the means of production, the class struggle, and made a principle out of unprincipled opportunism. We can state explicitly that this is no "leftist" backbiting but that we are only formulating what is proclaimed every day by the leaders of the party themselves. The social structure of the PvdA has also changed since the fusion. It is true that the party still has a number of workers among its members but the bourgeois and intellectual element has grown powerfully. This is one of the factors in the shift of its front to the right. Many socialists did not therefore follow the road of the PvdA, so that we have here a great number of workers who are politically unorganized or who have grown indifferent.

We have already remarked that the political parties of Holland have been built up largely on a confessional basis. Therefore we have in addition three conservative Protestant-Christian parties. The largest, the Anti-Revolutionary Party, originated as a party of the bourgeoisie and the workers, in contrast to the Christian Historical Union which, though it started from the same confessional group, has mainly organized the people with the "double names"—the nobil-

ity—and the upper middle classes. Both parties, however, have shown in the course of their existence a policy of tinkering with their social order. They embrace officials, small tradesmen, farmers, industrialists, intellectuals, a large number of large and small investors and Christian workers. Their policy is conservative-liberal.

### **British Influence**

By their side is the People's Party of Freedom and Democracy, a more or less modernized conservative-liberal party, mainly supported by industry, trade and navigation. Finally, there are the Communists. They need no further description. In general, they do not differ from the Communist Parties abroad—they follow the instructions of Moscow just as faithfully. The only difference may be that the CPN is even more incompetent and even more dependent than any other Stalinist party in the world.

With this sketch of the party situation, we can return to the Indonesian problem. It will be understood that in view of the structure and the social basis of the various parties, the ideology of colonialism is rather general. At the same time it will be understood that, given the economic portrait of Holland we have drawn, the inclination to plunge into colonial adventures is almost without restraint.

This is undoubtedly bound up with the structure of our industry which is made up for the most part of minor concerns with a few mammoth concerns at the top. These concerns have special interests in Indonesia as a field of raw materials. Philips and the allied electro-technical industry (rubber, cotton, etc.), the AKU (artificial silk), and Unilever (copra and other nut products) and also, of course, the big oil companies such as Batavian and Royal Shell. In addition, investment-capitalism plays a leading part in this respect.

We have already pointed out that the thought of Indonesia as the starting point for the recovery of Dutch capitalism was the prominent idea of the Dutch Gerbrandy cabinet in London. The proclamation of the Indonesian Republic on August 17, 1945, therefore upset all their plans and it is not surprising that Mr. Gerbrandy is among the outstanding champions of an aggressive policy toward the Republic. At the same time, however, an open action against the Republic could not be undertaken because of Holland's military weakness. Besides, the situation in Holland itself did not allow it. The Dutch Minister of Overseas Territories, the PvdA-man Prof. Logemann, at one time attempted to win the British for this purpose (we cannot swallow the story that the conflict with the Indonesian Republic is an *internal* affair whose settlement does not lie within the scope of the Allied military power). But the British were not prepared for it.

The then Premier Prof. Schermerhorn thereupon

endeavored to pursue a realistic policy by trying to come to an agreement with the Republic. Every attempt was, however, systematically torpedoed by the Roman Catholic Mr. Romme, and time and again the suspicions of the Republic were aroused. That was the case at the negotiations in Holland at the "De Hoge Veluwe" estate (Romme wrote at the time: the Week of Shame), that was the case when signing the fundamental accord of Linggadjati when Romme linked up with the accord an interpretation that was unacceptable to the Republic, that was the case when he moved the military action of July, 1947. That was the case after the Renville agreement and it is the case now when he incites a nullification of the decisions of the security Council of the UN.

In this policy of Mr. Romme—Dr. Beel in Batavia is his political associate and partner—not only do economic and political considerations play an important part, but so do ideological and more particularly Roman Catholic considerations. Romme denied a short time ago an intervention by the Vatican reported by the *New York Herald Tribune*. His fanatical attacks on the Mohammedan Premier of the Republic, Mohammed Hatta, point to the opposite conclusion. Romme realizes only too well that Indonesia would become a predominantly Mohammedan state. In view of the hostility of the Roman Church against any power which is an obstacle to Rome's influence—which is why this church is the consistent enemy of other religions, as well as the enemy of socialism, and the reason why it supports clerical-fascist powers—we have in the case of our Roman Catholic colonialists an action combined out of economic, political and clerical motives. With the Conservative Protestants, on the other hand, reactionary and obsolete ideas, with respect to domestic policy as well, are the dominating drive. If it fits anywhere, the well-known phrase of Marx that "the tradition of all dead generations weighs like an Alp upon the mind of the living," applies to this grouping.

### **Dutch Social Democracy**

There remains the Social Democracy. Although its leaders speak loftily of their constructive and positive intentions, the basis of their Indonesian policy is in reality perfectly negative: the fear of Bolshevism. But that is not the only thing. The Dutch Social Democracy regards party relations in this clerical country, as they are at present, as unassailable. In other words, it is the opinion that in Holland only a policy of cooperation with the Roman Catholics is possible. And since it does not want to act as an oppositional party, as it did formerly—and it does not wish it particularly because it starts from the immovability of the political constellation—it has become the prisoner of the Roman Catholics.

To put it differently: the Party of Labor has, by this conception, blocked off its own road toward

breaking this conception. As a matter of fact, it has placed every obstruction in its own way at attempting to win the adherents of the clerical parties.

The Dutch Social Democracy sees the outbreak of an armed conflict between Russia and the United States only as a question of a relatively short time. It is therefore one of the prime movers with regard to Dutch armament, and it also allows itself to be seduced by the suggestions of our colonialists that the maintenance of Dutch sovereignty over Indonesia would contribute to damming up Bolshevism in the Far East. It thus intends to play the American game and now discovers, to its disappointment, that the Americans think somewhat differently about it.

This is not the place to elaborate our view of Russian-American relations, therefore it may suffice to state it without further expansion.

### **Estimate of Social Democracy**

We are of the opinion that while Russia, during the Second World War, had a strong and, right now, a mobilized military potential, it has been considerably weakened economically and has suffered heavy losses of manpower. It is further our opinion that Russia is committing not a military but a political aggression which can be curtailed by means of political and economic measures, with all the greater chance of success because the Russian political aggression starts with a long-term perspective before it.

In our view, this situation is regarded by the present leading American politicians in the same way, so that U.S. politics are directed to the satisfying of the national and social aspirations of the Asiatic nations. They take into consideration that the achievement of independent political structures is a sounder basis for the strong deployment of military and economic power than colonial domination, however camouflaged. By virtue of their economic authority, the Americans are, moreover, in a position to support—but also forced to support, with an impending turn in mind—the military and economic upbuilding of the Asiatic areas.

Does Holland regard it this way? No, it thinks in all seriousness that by playing the colonial game it is facing up to Bolshevism. And as this is its opinion, and the Roman Catholic party is the main pace-setter of the anti-Russian campaign, the Social Democracy has become the captive of the Roman Catholics in this respect as well.

Because the opposition to the course of the government does not have a clear concept of the reality either; because, furthermore, it is only in part fundamentally socialist; it concentrates mainly on the rejection of main force and on expressing the formula that the Indonesian people has the right to decide upon its own political and economic development.

However much this may be acclaimed, it is nonetheless an inner weakness which seriously handicaps the driving force and alertness of the opposition. In

any case, the lack of real political insight hampers the creation of the basis on which a new socialist workers' party could be established. This is not to say, of course, that this problem should not be put forward right now. But it is only at the beginning of its ripening.

The Dutch government apparently aims at resisting the decisions of the Security Council and not executing them. This can have no other consequence than to drive the Republic, or its leaders, into the arms of the United States and thereby to make the Republic an American position. In consequence, we will have the queer spectacle of our Dutch anti-Bolsheviks playing the game of the Russians.

For Holland, this policy will have very disastrous consequences. It would lay our country open to American sanctions—the withdrawal of Marshall aid—and thereby precipitate a speedy impoverishment which, because of the German occupation, is not small as it is. Holland would then fall into a serious economic and political crisis which would involve all sorts of possibilities of fascist and Stalinist extremism.

That is how we independent socialists see the tendency in the coming development. We are not, however, of the opinion that this is a hopeless perspective for a genuine socialist workers' movement—on the contrary.

We believe that Holland is now passing through the collapse of the old reformism and that, in the near future, a process of the maturing of radically and fundamentally socialist ideas can be achieved, a process that will undoubtedly also lead in the end to organizational consequences. Therefore it is not saying too much to state that the war in Indonesia is not only a result of the revolution carried out at their end but that it will at the same time be the beginning of a spiritual and political revolution in Holland itself.

This war, taking place in the very period in which the union of all nations is before us for consideration, is, seen dialectically, “part of that power which always aims at evil and always produces good” (as Goethe's *Faust* puts it), an apparently inevitable phase in the struggle against all ruling classes and therefore a factor in the real revolutionization of the Dutch proletariat.

FRITS KIEF

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# American Student Movement: A Survey

## *Socialism on the Campus As It Was and As It Is Today*

The twentieth century has seen the development of the American campus into a mass institution. From a student body of under a hundred thousand at the turn of the century, the institutions of higher learning are now crowded with over two million students. This tremendous increase of our student population cannot be fully explained by the number of veterans on campus taking advantage of the GI Bill of Rights who would normally be working or seeking employment. For even if we discount this category there would still be approximately eight times as many college students today as there were in the early 1900s. The increase of the college community can more accurately be traced to the needs of the economy, the higher living standards of the American people and the pressure of reform groups whose success was assured by the existence of the other two factors.

### **Need for College Graduates**

A growing industrial nation requires an expanding number of men and women who have achieved more, academically, than the minimum of education provided in the secondary schools. America's growth as an industrial power has led to its ascendancy as a world financial and political power. Industry, finance, diplomacy—these three related phases of American capitalism require large numbers of technically skilled personnel and semi-educated careerists, both of which categories are now being turned out en masse by the American colleges and universities. Executives, advisers, businessmen, lawyers, technicians, scientific workers, financiers, government bureaucrats, petty diplomats—these are but a few of the subdivisions of a new middle class which, for the most part, must receive its training in the college classroom. College endowments from big business, large private contributions to educational institutions, the construction of city and state tuitionless schools are not the products merely of good will or civil charity, nor merely submission to demands of labor and reform organizations. They are acts motivated by bourgeois instincts of self-interest, if not self-preservation. If the need for a large supply and oversupply of college graduates was essential before the last war, how much greater is that need today following the explosion of the atomic bomb and the emergence of the United States as undisputed overlord of half the world!

The increasing opportunities for the college graduate, the corresponding numerical growth of the student body, coupled with the rising living standards of the working class as a whole have led to a gradual

change in the social composition of the student body: sons and daughters of workers and lower middle-class families have begun to break down the social and economic barriers and start nibbling at the dubious-quality offerings of American mass-production higher education. This addition of youth from relatively depressed sections of the population played an important part in the political awakening of the campus in the early '30s. Students from poorer families were naturally more sensitive to and acutely aware of the economic and political dislocations of the nation as a whole. For them, depressions and intensified class struggle meant not only tragedy at home but additional hardships for themselves: the possible rupture of their college education and the loss of all hope.\* Obviously an economic crisis could not have the same profound psychological and practical effect on college youth who came out of the upper stratum of class society.

In the early '20s the student body numbered a half of a million and was composed almost exclusively of young people from the respectable middle class. With the America of the '20s apparently solid and stable there was no personal economic impulsion to pressure students into extracurricular political activity. Not even with the influx of lower middle-youth on the campus in the prosperous late '20s was this political vacuum significantly filled. A false sense of security pervaded all social classes at this time and was accompanied by a politically passive campus. College, for the student of this era, was a place where one went to have his fling, make the social grade, and learn how to make more money. Whatever mass revolt against the status quo did take place was for the most part limited to petting parties, short skirts, whiskey flasks and speakeasy adventures. Fraternities and sororities reigned supreme and the pigskin aroused more spirit and concern on one campus than the Russian Revolution had impact on the entire student body.

A militant intellectual student movement did exist during the early '20s but it was miniscule in size and soon retreated from politics to Menckonian snobbery; and from there to a natural oblivion. Of still less importance were local college groups organized by the Socialist Party and the League for Industrial Democracy. These groups had a narrow perspective and could not make any headway until the more politically propitious depression years.

If the student of the '20s was typified by the hip flask, his successor of the following decade was char-



acterized by the *Communist Manifesto* in the back pocket. If the short skirt can be considered symbolic of the form of student revolt in the '20s, then the militant girl who came to school in low heels and a leather jacket to identify herself with the working class was symbolic of the depression student.

### **Political Allegiance of the '30s**

The crash of '29 was the antidote that dissipated the political apathy of the roaring '20s student. Before long, brightly painted futures were washed away. Many were forced off campus, others were uncertain of ever graduating, most of them lost confidence in the present and the future. The labor market was flooded with undergraduates and young people with valueless diplomas. There were at one point in the '30s approximately five million youth looking for work, a large number of them with a college background. What job the college boy did get was frequently of a menial and miserable paying sort. Visions of a profession and career were replaced by a bitter disillusionment.

With the depression as a backdrop it is easy to understand why the college stage became a political battleground. Politics was forced upon the student. It could no longer be just an intellectual exercise for the elite, but was now intimately related to the student's immediate existence. The fact that colleges by this time already had hundreds of thousands of students from lower middle-class and working-class families contributed in large measure to the politicalization of the campus. These were students from families who suffered most acutely from the foreclosures on little business and factory layoffs. The children of these dispossessed began to look toward militant social action as a solution to their dilemma.

There were two political tendencies on campus at this time anxious to give leadership: the Young Communist League and the Young People's Socialist League. The latter operated through the Student League for Industrial Democracy, student section of the League for Industrial Democracy. The YPSL was much more militant than its parent organization, the Socialist Party, but was nevertheless limited on campus by that party's lack of dynamism in the United States and the political insipidity of the world Social-Democratic movement.

The Young Communist League, on the other hand, could pose as the essence of rebelliousness and thousands of students learned to accept the leadership of the YCL, which was not hamstrung by a reformist party. The world Stalinist movement, with Russia at its head, symbolized the most thorough and consistent break with the status quo. It was also fortunate for the growth of Stalinism on the campus that the depression coincided with the "Third Period" of world Stalinism. During this period, the interests of the Kremlin bureaucracy dictated a policy to all its

subordinate parties that was, on the surface, ultra-revolutionary. Only the most militant, revolutionary phraseology was permitted and all forms of meaningless, adventuristic actions were undertaken by the Stalinists. Strikes and demonstrations were called in Stalinist-controlled unions and organizations with the full knowledge that the demands could not be won and that heads would be busted. All those opposed to the Stalinists, according to them, became "enemies of the working class" and "social-fascists." With a revolutionary fervor superimposed on a debilitated American economy the Communist Party grew from an unimportant current into a whirlpool that sucked in thousands of members and supporters. Intellectuals and students who romanticized the class struggle were, proportionately, the most numerous prey of this bold "revolutionary" party. Little did anyone suspect at this time that the Stalinist-led adventures in the labor movement, the overturned milk wagons, the breaking up of opponent meetings were not motivated in the least by consideration for the American people, but could be traced directly to the desires of the Russian bureaucracy.

The YCL became particularly influential in this period at the city colleges, above all at the tuitionless campuses of New York City. The student body here came predominantly from poorer families and oppressed minorities. Thus, in addition to an economic incentive to engage in radical politics, these New York students who learned to express themselves in college began correctly to regard themselves as the articulate spokesmen for discriminated minorities against the system which exploited their parents in a double sense: as workers and as members of religious and racial minorities. The Stalinists did not find it difficult to channelize much of this student resentment against capitalist society into membership in or sympathy for the YCL. Not only were New York college students more disposed to Stalinist propaganda because of their sharper alienation from society, but it must be remembered that New York City had for many generations been the country's most enlightened and advanced intellectual center and most specifically, the organizational and political hub of the Communist Party.

### **Revolt on the Campus**

It was only natural, therefore, that the Stalinist bid for building and controlling the student movement began in New York. In 1931 a number of representatives from various YCL-led campus clubs met in New York City and organized a student league that was soon to mature into the strongest left-wing national student movement the country had thus far witnessed: the National Student League. From a modest beginning of New York chapters, the NSL became the national rallying center for what James Wechsler has dubbed the "revolt on the campus." The NSL

was much broader in concept than the SLID and need- less to say, more militant. It made wider appeals to a student body which found inspiration in the fresh- ness and militancy of the new organization that was soon to eclipse the SLID in influence, activity and prominence.

### **Anti-War Policy**

The Stalinist-sponsored movement waged cam- paigns on local issues, but capitalized most on its campaign against war and fascism. The most dra- matic actions on the NSL were the Oxford Pledge its members took and the anti-war student strikes which swept the nation with increasing momentum. By 1935, close to 200,000 students left their classrooms to demonstrate against war, fascism and American imperialism. This number does not include the many thousands of high school students who likewise struck against war. These protests, usually under the joint sponsorship of the SLID and the NSL were preceded by threats from the school administration and fol- lowed by suspensions and expulsions. Yet the revolt of the students could not be tempered or subdued by administrative repression. The strikes grew in size and subsequent disciplinary action became local aca- demic-rights issues.

The National Student League had appeal not only for the unaffiliated student but for many members of the YPSL-led SLID as well. Many young socialists on and off campus turned away with disgust from the moth-eaten reformist leadership of the Socialist Par- ty and joined the Young Communist League. Other young socialists active on campus looked with favor on cooperation with the YCL. (Indeed, at this time, even the Socialist Party, as a whole, thought of itself as the critical defender of the Russian state!) The Stalinist student leadership took clever advantage of the relative decline of its competing organization and of the friendly disposition of SLID members toward the NSL. Organic unity was proposed and accom- plished. Although this resulted in a larger and more powerful organization, it marked the beginning of the end of the progressive non-Stalinist national stu- dent movement. Out of this coalescence in 1936 there emerged the American Student Union. Almost from the outset this united student movement was under the domination of the YCL. The militant anti-Stalin- ists in the ASU were few; the young socialists were rapidly losing members and were bogged down by the Socialist Party bureaucracy. The YCLers in the ASU did not face such problems and, in addition, they were masters at maneuver and deception. In short order the ASU degenerated into a valuable front for the Stalinists, with anti-Stalinists either being expelled or dropping out. With the student movement under one roof now it became that much easier for the Sta- linists, in due time, to behead it.

Essentially the student movement was able to

grow on the basis of its opposition to imperialism and war. Without these features there was nothing to ce- ment it. Campaigns for civil rights and academic free- dom alone could not awaken the student body and keep it alive politically for any extended period of time. There had to be something more fundamentally rebellious about a student movement if it was to cap- ture the imagination and active support of the cam- pus. This is no less true today than it was then.

From 1931 to 1936, when the Stalinists, for their own reactionary reasons, were sounding what ap- peared to be a revolutionary clarion call against bour- geois society, the left - wing student movement achieved a vitality it had never known before and has not known since. The political and organizational de- cline of the ASU dates from the moment the Commu- nist International at its Seventh World Congress (in 1935) instructed its Communist Parties in the new tactics and policies of the "People's Front." In the United States it meant turning the left-wing student movement into a conformist and patriotic organiza- tion. The "People's Front" and "collective security" meant giving a new respectability to the Communist Party and its peripheral organizations. Roosevelt and the New Deal were no longer the main enemy. The for- mer was graduated from a "social-fascist" villain to a progressive hero. The New Deal, which had been attacked as the War Deal, was now adopted by the YCL and the ASU as their Ideal. The Stalinists no longer thundered against American imperialism or pledged themselves not to support America in any war. Instead, for example, they demanded that the State Department take action against Japan for sink- ing the American gunboat, the Panay, in Chinese waters.

Another shift in line came with the signing of the Stalin-Hitler Pact, which was Russia's signal to Ger- many to proceed to war according to plan. The YCL and the ASU obediently followed orders. Roosevelt was once again an "imperialist warmonger" and all the names in the Stalinist lexicon of abuse were hurled at the Allied powers. Germany was absolved from war guilt with Molotov's notorious "fascism is a matter of taste" statement.

### **ASU and Stalin-Hitler Pact**

This latest and most startling twist in policy com- pletely discredited the Stalinists on campus. Their picket signs, "Stop the Aggressor," were replaced by "The Yanks Are Not Coming." But this hypocritical new militancy fell flat. The student body remained in sympathy with the Allies—to no small degree due to the Stalinists' previous efforts to whip up a war spirit. The school administration proceeded to clamp down vigorously on the American Student Union. In school after school it was declared illegal and sum- marily thrown off campus. The Stalinists, who had completely cut themselves off from the student body



by their latest Russian import, received neither aid nor comfort from it. What the government and school authorities could not do previously to crush the independence of the mass student movement was now accomplished with ease as a result of the Stalinist change in line. The ASU disappeared from campus life ignominiously.

### **The Political Vacuum**

The only youth organization left which continued to work on campus with a radical anti-war program was the Young People's Socialist League (Fourth Internationalist). This organization with close to a thousand members had split away from the Socialist Party in 1937 and became the youth section of the Socialist Workers Party. Operating primarily in the schools, it was nonetheless too small to combat the chauvinistic trend on campus or to recreate the anti-war spirit which the Stalinists had successfully destroyed. The Trotskyists on campus had always fought an uphill battle; at first against the misleadership of the Stalinists, then against the growing cynicism of students who had been repelled and demoralized by YCL tactics and finally against the objective conditions in the late '30s which precluded a revival of a mass anti-war student movement. Unemployment was on the decline, war production and Lend-Lease orders reopened factories and the American government made increasingly successful appeals to the anti-fascist sentiments of the American students to work hard and dutifully in the interests of national unity against the forces of fascist aggression.

Economic recovery (based on war production), mounting war hysteria and Stalinist duplicity—these three worked together smoothly, destroying student idealism of the preceding years and leaving a tragic vacuum on the American campus which has yet to be filled.

The word "vacuum" as used here must be understood in a relative sense. Compared to the mass movements of fifteen years ago, the campus today is indeed a "vacuum." However, there are even more political tendencies functioning in colleges and universities today than during the hey-day of the NSL and the SLID. Almost all political parties have their organized spokesmen on campus. But the majority of these student groups, all of which are small in number and influence, are basically tied down to either Russian or American imperialism, and are thereby incapable of initiating or participating in an anti-war movement comparable to those led by the earlier Stalinist and socialist organizations. The atomization of campus politics itself is indicative of the relative sense in which the word "vacuum" is being used.

The average student today conscientiously avoids contact with political organizations either on or off

campus. The reasons for this attitude are more complex than those which explain the political somnambulance of the '20s. One common cause, though, is the apparent economic stability of the country. There are some 60,000,000 employed today, a phenomenon which many socialists looked upon as a utopian impossibility under capitalism. America came out of the war with a tremendously expanded industrial machine. Contrary to all predictions made during the war of widespread unemployment following the end of hostilities, American production and employment has increased rather than declined since V-J Day. Larger family incomes, war savings and a war-rationed population have proved to be a boon to consumer goods industry since the end of the war. Capital goods industries (as well as consumer industries) have been kept at high gear preparing for a Third World War and repairing the economic markets and strategic political bastions of war devastated Europe. Tremendous sums of money are being spent by private industry and government on "scientific research" especially on new and more efficient techniques of atomic, chemical and biological warfare. And a highly productive war economy means additional government "interference," thereby necessitating an additional government bureaucracy of analysts, technicians, inspectors, etc.

Thus the prospect for successful professions in fields requiring college-bred skills in government and private industry has reopened on an unparalleled scale. The average student feels—not without some justification—that upon graduation he will be able to find an economically secure niche for himself: a government job, perhaps a teaching position, possibly as a theoretical mathematician on an atomic research project. The negative political effect that this renewed confidence in American production has had on the student body is not to be underestimated. Secondly, the student today has been considerably cowed by the drive against civil liberties. He is aware that his economic future may be tied to the good graces of a government which is cautious about those in its direct or indirect employ. This has intimidated any number of students into a total acquiescence where otherwise a minimum of radical political activity might have been expected.

### **Student Indifference**

The student today is more than docile and apathetic toward politics. He is resigned. The inevitability of a Third World War is not welcomed by any means, but it is accepted. The proverbial fatalism of the American people is not excepted on the campus but is reflected in political abstinence.

The threat of universal military training and the passage of peacetime conscription did not provoke as much protest from the student as from non-campus

forces although the former would be more personally victimized in these advanced preparations for armed conflict. Perhaps if the draft act were applied more extensively the student would have been forced out of his political lethargy, but the large number of volunteers accounted for most of the armed forces quotas, leaving the campus virtually untouched.

The small core of "intellectualized" students—the driving power in rebel school politics in the past—has likewise retreated from politics. The most commonly expressed attitude from this quarter is: "Why bother with such prosaic matters as politics? The war is coming and that will put an end to all idle talk about socialism." Armed with this feeble rationalization, the college "intellectual" is satisfied with his vicarious pleasures secured from reading *Partisan Review* and his ivory tower is lined with books on psychology—many of which are never opened—giving the "intellectual" a new terminology with which to analyze the dullest of all topics: himself.

In the '20s the intellectual movement, captured by the arch-snob Mencken, was nonetheless a politically undefined social revolt and intellectually creative. The intellectual today, on the other hand, has made his peace with society (or, in some cases, becomes its advocate), is unproductive and sterile.

### The Stalinists on Campus

The Stalinists remain the strongest single organized political force on campus. This is not by virtue of any alarming strength or popularity but rather by the above described political default of the student body as a whole and the political disunity of anti-Stalinist college clubs. Actually, the Stalinists have reached an all-time low and it is not conceivable that they will ever wield the same influence over the student body as in the '30s. During the '30s, the cardholders in the Young Communist League, which had comparatively high standards for membership, reached a peak of 22,000. The membership of their ASU front was several times that figure. At no time since the dissolution of the ASU has a single youthful Stalinist *catch-all front* organization with a combined campus and off-campus membership reached the size of even the old YCL.

The crisis of membership in the Stalinist student movement is related to its crisis of leadership. The ineptness of the Stalinist leader has to be observed to be fully understood. He has neither the knowledge nor the sophistication of the YCL spokesman. A large proportion of the old Stalinist youth leadership has been promoted to positions of local and national authority in the Communist Party and its controlled organizations. The Communist Party will find it impossible to locate a similar number of potential leaders in its present youth and student sections. The student magazine of the Stalinists, *New Foundations*, which is forced to depend on articles written by pro-

fessional youth in the graduate schools and contributions from "former students," is indicative of the poor stuff of which the campus Stalinist movement is made. A critical review of Paul Sweezy, for example, is left to Celeste Strack, a leading YCL hack of fifteen years ago! Other material published by young Stalinists in official CP student literature or that of front organizations is patently absurd. The recently departed American Youth for Democracy issued publications which could only embarrass the literate reader, not to speak of the politically advanced subscriber. The following quotation is from a statement issued by the New York *state board* of the AYD:

### Stalinist Gyration

The danger is that of a calculated effort by reactionaries to undermine world peace and to move our country toward fascism. This threat is heralded by a rising of reckless propaganda for war, based on provocative and hysterical slanders against the Soviet Union and other wartime allies. Fascist typewriter "generals" of the newspaper world, trigger-happy admirals and generals, irresponsible congressmen . . ."

And so on, ad nauseam, à la *Pravda*. The above quotation is a fair barometer of the intellectual and political level on which problems are analyzed. The backwardness of the Stalinist student leader is not accidental. The Communist Party is a completely authoritarian organization which cannot encourage or permit independent thinking from rank-and-file or leader. Critical and uninhibited investigation can only lead to doubts, heresies and disillusionment.

Unlike his predecessor of the '30s, the more cultured student of today maintains a safe distance between himself and the Stalinists. The Stalinist gyrations since the earlier period; the trials, culture purges, concentration camps, and the ruthless expansion of the Russian state which have come to light since the '30s; the stifling conformity and anti-intellectualism of Stalinism—all these factors have discredited the Communist Party on campus, and form an unbridgeable gulf between the CP and the more sensitive and talented student.

In 1943, when the patriotism of the Communist Party was reaching a climactic pitch, the Young Communist League announced its self-dissolution. This was more than a show of "good faith" from the Kremlin to its American allies via its foreign ambassadors. It was a tactic designed to recoup the setbacks suffered by the CP youth movement. The YCL was to be reorganized as a streamlined front organization which was to become a broad movement of "democratic" and "progressive" youth. As an organizational bulletin of the Youth Commission of the Communist Party put it:

During the war, the Young Communist League, feeling that there was an opportunity to have a broad anti-fascist, non-Communist youth organization, voted to dissolve and throw its membership and energies into such a new group.

This new organization was the American Youth for Democracy. Several hundred delegates were rounded up to found this new group in October, 1943.

At almost the same hour the YCL was officially disbanded. The AYD was organized on several levels: teen-age clubs (mainly high school students), college chapters, and "young adult" branches for the working youth.

### **The AYD**

The AYD was designed to grow into an organization of thousands. It had a progressive-sounding program and gave its complete support to the Roosevelt administration. There was nothing in it politically to frighten the unsuspecting. Its main attraction for the young "innocents" was its social life. Yet the AYD never lived up to expectations and it was only on campus that it showed any viability. It suffered from an incompetent leadership and did not have enough to offer neighborhood and working-class youth. On the campus, however, where it was fashionable to be "progressive" yet safe, the AYD met with some initial success. One could belong and feel distinctive, though not queer, meet new friends of like interests, without demands being made as return payment. The AYD fitted in well for a number of years with a new unthinking breed of college diletantes which grew up during the war years enthralled by American folk-songs and convinced that to be a "progressive" was to have acquired the essence of all wisdom.

Following the war the AYD came out unreservedly in favor of military conscription! The Stalinist mentors of AYD operated under the illusion that the military alliance of Russia and America would continue undisturbed. Peacetime conscription was defended as a "character builder," a "health measure" and as a patriotic requirement. It was on this issue that the first serious defections from the AYD took place. For this position was a bit too much for many AYDers, including active Communist Party members on campus, to swallow.

Before these defections could get out of hand there was a sudden reversal of policy. At Potsdam and at the San Francisco UN Conference the conflicts between Russian and American imperialism proved irreconcilable, even temporarily. The order was given to the American Communist Party for a new "left" turn. The CP and its front organizations including the AYD, obediently complied. A new chorus was now chanted against any plans for peacetime conscription, against occupation of foreign lands and against the "anti-Soviet" plans of American imperialism. This new change in line echoed by AYD meant a further decrease in membership. On a number of campuses the AYD had its charters rescinded by the school authorities. Without school facilities at its disposal these unrecognized college chapters of the AYD could not keep their loosely organized membership together. The active membership of the AYD in one such chapter after another was reduced to the hardened CP core. In 1947, for example, a rally sponsored by the

New York city-wide college AYD managed to attract no more than 150 students. The only successful meetings AYD could hold required a Paul Robeson performance or the histrionics of Vito Marcantonio.

The AYD was definitely passing off the college political scene. Then the Stalinists on campus found a new white hope to bolster their morale and prospects for a mass student base: Henry Wallace.

Wallace had an appeal on campus that took everyone by surprise. The Students-for-Wallace movement, controlled by the Stalinists, grew and flourished on every important campus. Not only Stalinists and their young dupes followed Wallace, but liberals and consciously anti-Stalinist elements declared their support of his candidacy, many of them joining the Students-for-Wallace cavalcade. Wallace's "peace" campaign was effective; his attacks on Jim Crow won the Negro students; his pleas for the rights of the Jewish people to a homeland won the support of many Jewish students. Wallace appealed to every healthy sentiment. And no one could call the former Vice-President a Communist! His prestige as a cabinet member in the Roosevelt administrations stood him to great advantage. At its nominating convention when the Wallace movement became the Progressive Party, the Students-for-Wallace movement was organized along with other youthful Wallace contingents as the Young Progressives of America.

The success of the Wallace movement opened up new vistas for the student section of the Communist Party. At their last national convention it was agreed to unite what was left of AYD with the Young Progressives following the national elections. This had already been anticipated on many campuses where the membership formally and informally merged with the Young Progressives. The youth resolution at the CP convention also announced the perspective of building a young "Marxist League" that would be formally affiliated to the Communist Party. Without any concern over appearance, the resolution made it clear that the new Wallaceite front was to be the transmission belt for cadres of the newly projected young "Marxist" affiliate.

### **Illusion About Wallace**

But the Stalinists overextended their objectives. They themselves were taken in by Wallaceite enthusiasm on campus, but large numbers of the Wallace supporters were not sufficiently serious. They would sing themselves hoarse at Wallaceite songfests, but active participation in a political organization was another matter. These students may have had every intention of continuing their support for Wallace but such pledges were not worth much. Another section of support for Wallace came from students who promised support for his campaign as a protest against the two capitalist candidates. These students never expressed the intention of joining the Young Progress-

sives. Another group of anti-Stalinist supporters of Wallace joined the YPA because they felt that the Stalinists could be removed and that a third New Deal party could be revived.

The solid ground on which the Stalinists were banking proved to be quicksand following the Progressive Party's election disaster. A large vote might have been a force pulling in and crystallizing the large student sympathy for Wallace into a powerful YPA. With the unexpectedly small vote, however, the YPA declined rapidly. A few figures will help us understand how acute this drop has been: at the University of California (Berkeley) the YPA has fallen from about 600 to 100 book members; at the University of Chicago the numerical decline is about the same in a chapter which witnessed a bitter factional struggle between the anti-Stalinists and Stalinists; at Brooklyn College the fall has been from a pre-election claim of over 500 members to an estimated 100. What is true on these large campuses is no less the case in most of the YPA chapters.

These figures do not tell the whole story, for the present membership contains much "deadwood." The Jimmy-Higgins work for YPA continues to be carried on by the same core of Stalinists who had to do the spadework for the AYD until its dissolution in February of this year.

The Stalinists have two immediate organizational objectives on campus. One is to attempt to build and stabilize the YPA, the other is to establish "Marxist Cultural Societies" on every campus. The two college fronts are given distinctly different functions. The "Marxist Cultural Societies" are designed to cater to the more intellectual students. The cream of the Stalinist intellectual world is invited before these societies to explain the intricacies of "Marxist" theory as most recently edited. The YPA clubs are the "mass organizations" with programs planned for attracting students with more modest intellectual pretensions. It is to be the vehicle for the rallies, demonstrations, petition campaigns, etc.

### **The Stalinists and Civil Rights**

The topics and issues the Stalinists have chosen for their campaign activity are interesting and significant. Rallies, campaigns and propaganda meetings revolve almost exclusively around civil rights issues. A Stalinist-sponsored meeting on the situation in Germany, the Atlantic Pact or the trial of the churchmen in the East European countries is practically unheard of. The Stalinists are evidently afraid of the reception such topics might receive from the student body on the one hand and from the administration on the other. Instead, they have chosen to concentrate on civil rights as an easier means of building support and as part of an integrated campaign against the government's efforts to outlaw the Communist Party and its fronts.

The civil rights issue receiving the heaviest concentration from Stalinists clubs on campus is Negro rights. Through a campaign against Jim Crow the Stalinists hope to recruit Negro students to their sorely depleted ranks and try very cleverly to use the popular fight against racial discrimination to recruit support for the less popular campaign to defend the CP leaders by linking the two issues. As part of this new added emphasis on "Negro work," the Stalinists have successfully infiltrated student chapters of the NAACP and have captured or organized independent Negro societies.

### **The New Stalinist Student**

Academic rights is another civil rights issue which is receiving a one-sided accent from the CP. Where local academic rights issues do not exist the Stalinists have consciously gone about creating issues, with themselves as the storm center. At least on the New York campuses, the Stalinists have gone out of their way to violate school regulations in an effort to get CP-controlled club charters suspended. In one college the Stalinists sponsored a meeting off campus in the name of the school organization at which a CPer under "judicial review" was the invited speaker. It is an age-old administration policy in this school—as in many others—that no club can sponsor a speaker who is standing trial. This is an arch-reactionary policy of judging a defendant guilty until proved innocent. However, it has never been seriously contested by the student clubs. That is, not until today, when the Stalinists are actually seeking martyrdom. The CP strategy is the following: A club they control intentionally violates a rule; the club is suspended; the Stalinists become fighters for student rights; rallies are held tying up the vicious attacks of the school authorities on the "Marxist" society with the government trial of the eleven CPer; the Marshall Plan is brought under fire; Wallace is hailed and after a month or two of defiance the suspension period is over, the club back to normal and a propaganda triumph for the Stalinists is scored.

It is the responsibility of every democratic student to fight the reactionary administration of a school; it is necessary to fight the suspension of any organization which violates these primitive restrictions. But it is also important that the Stalinists' political motivation for inviting suspension at this time be exposed.

The attitude of Stalinists on campus toward the Trotskyists is a far cry from that of ten years ago or the official party attitude today. One never hears a Trotskyist member or sympathizer labelled "fascist," "Nazi agent," "stoolpigeon," etc., by a CPer. The vehemence of the '30s is gone. On the contrary, there is a calmness in the Stalinists' tone when conversing with a Trotskyist that almost borders on friendliness. The fact that these conversations take place at all is evi-

dence of the new type of student Stalinist. Ten years ago the threat of expulsion from the YCL for any social contact with a Trotskyist was not idly made. Every week during the late '30s there were lists of loyal YCLers expelled for talking to real or imaginary Trotskyists.

This new Stalinist objectivity is a sign of the times. The CP no longer has a fanatical and devoted student membership which will swallow *any* idiocy in the name of the party. To shout "fascist" at a Trotskyist today in personal debate would ring a false note to the CP student listener and any serious CP effort to prohibit its membership from discussions with Trotskyists would boomerang.

There are dozens of socialist student groups on almost as many campuses throughout the country. Most of these clubs are recognized college organizations; others exist as discussion groups off-campus due to lack of adequate forces to maintain a functioning on-campus club, or as a result of reactionary school administration policies which deny school facilities to political groups. These socialist clubs mirror almost all shades of American socialist thought. The most active organized socialist forces working on the campus are members of the Socialist Youth League and its parent organization, the Independent Socialist League, and the Young People's Socialist League, youth affiliate of the Socialist Party.

There is only one national socialist student organization in the country: the post-war edition of the Student League for Industrial Democracy. In 1946, under the sponsorship of the LID, local chapters of this revived movement were organized. There was an initial spurt of enthusiasm for the SLID, but it was shortlived. Today the SLID is once again almost extinct. In a number of colleges and universities where it showed some promise a few years ago, the SLID quietly folded or remained as a mere paper group. The reason for this collapse can be traced to the policies of a middle-of-the-road right-wing socialist leadership. There was simply nothing exciting about the program or leadership of the organization. It had a liberal outlook and program and was not even officially a socialist organization until its last convention, held six months ago. SLID membership is extremely heterogeneous: there are within it socialists, pacifists, liberals, conservatives, Wallace supporters—a small sprinkling of each. It could not distinguish itself politically from other liberal student organizations already in existence with larger memberships, important financial backing and distinctive programs. Lacking a dynamic or original approach, it was inevitable that SLID would become defunct. The Cornell chapter, for example, which was the pride of the SLID, decided recently that it had no special reason for existence and consequently permitted itself to become a chapter on paper only.

At the recent national convention of SLID all of its weaknesses were made clear. It was revealed that

they have no more than several hundred members located in a few clubs in Eastern schools. SLID is almost unknown even by reputation in the West. Under the influence of right-wing YPSLs, the SLID convention voted to bar Trotskyists from membership! Following the convention, however, avowed Trotskyist students have been participating in the largest chapters and invited to participate in other chapters which voted to exclude them at the convention.

The extent to which the anemic SLID has been dropping off in membership and activity has been more than compensated for by the growth of independent socialist clubs in the past two years. In that period, militant socialist student groups have blossomed forth on about a dozen of the larger campuses. With one or two exceptions these clubs have found it difficult to keep going on a smoothly functioning and formalized basis. It must be remembered that the continuity in the radical student field was broken off for a number of years and that the revival of left socialist clubs will inevitably suffer from growing pains. But the prospects for the growth of Third Camp socialist groups are good. Though there can be no illusions about such groups soon maturing into mass organizations, they nevertheless have no political competition. A socialist club which upholds the Third Camp is clearly distinguished from all other anti-Stalinist student groups. The Students for Democratic Action (student section of the ADA), the World Federalist campus clubs, the Young Liberals who operate on the New York campuses are all, in varying degrees, tied down to American capitalism.

It is the responsibility of these socialist clubs to think in terms of building a militant national student movement which will embrace more than convinced socialists. A broader anti-war perspective is necessary—one which will open up the possibility of recreating an anti-war anti-imperialist student movement. A federation of all the independent socialist, SLID, militant pacifist and anti-war student clubs would not make a powerful force today but it would increase the effectiveness of these clubs considerably and at the same time provide the form for a mass anti-war student movement which is certain to develop when the student body is jolted out of its lethargy by the pressures of an ever-growing restrictive war economy.

JULIUS FALK

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## IN THE NEXT ISSUE

Delay in publication of this issue compelled us to omit reference to the recent national convention of the Workers Party and to its decision to relinquish the name of that organization and to establish the Independent Socialist League. The next issue of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL will publish an article giving a full report on the purposes of the new organization and its significance for the orientation of the working-class and revolutionary movements.



# The Inevitability of Socialism

## A Discussion of the Grounds for the Theory in the Marxist Movement

A piece of writing may, among other things, be a work of art or a clever hoax. Both types have one thing in common: factual accuracy plays no part in determining their excellence. In judging them, only a partisan of confusion fusses about whether they are true or false. There is a third type of writing that also does away with the use of true and false. But this type differs from the other two in proposing the impossible: it presumes to be factually accurate. For this reason, it may be designated as an idiot's delight.

I make the three distinctions, because I wish to examine a doctrine frequently associated with the name of Karl Marx, the doctrine of the inevitability of socialism, paying particular attention to an article by Hal Draper, *The Meaning of "The Inevitability of Socialism"* [NI, December 1947].

### The Concept of Causality

The meaning of the inevitability of socialism, Draper insists, depends on correctly understanding "the Marxist view of determinism and causality." He devotes five numbered sections to an exposition of the principles comprising the view. Although the view has no traffic with the supernatural except to reject it, the sections do have an ecclesiastical odor like that of the Nicene Creed. Perhaps the odor, which, instead of an angelic quality, smells strongly of eighteenth-century France, is even appropriate. For the article, like the Nicene Creed, is written to extirpate heresy. The nature of the heresy I leave to a more proper time, but nothing is anticipated by suggesting that the heresiarchs, Cannon, Johnson and Forest, evidently members of a stuffy, self-righteous sect, are apparently in the throes of amorous imbecility. For, according to Draper, "they amiably enfold dialectical materialism in a crushing and lethal embrace."

Draper rejects the plausibility of the supernatural in the first section of the exposition. In the second section he denies that nature, "of which man and his works are a part," is a teleological process. In the third section he concerns himself with indicating the fundamental principle controlling all natural laws. He writes, "To say that natural laws exist is the same thing as saying: every event that takes place is the product of a given cause or combination of causes" and, what is equally important, "the same concatenation of causes will ever produce the same effects." Hence, the fundamental principle controlling all natural laws is the principle of causality, which, moreover, always exhibits an in-

variable relation, a necessary connection between a cause and its effect.

While stating the fundamental principle, Draper also tries to stop the so-called public scandal of a cause and its effect being able to live in sin, being "merely a highly probable succession of two events which have no inherent connection." For example, he tries to forestall the pleasing possibility that, instead of water, hydrogen and oxygen may some day combine to form a highball. The attempt, nevertheless, fails. For Draper's belief that "no scientist would rest until he had discovered what change in the conditions had brought about the different effect—i. e., what change there was in the concatenation of causes," is simply a repetition of what he already claims to be the fact. It assumes that the causes have changed. It in no way deals with why it might be plausible to assert that the same cause can, at various times or in divergent places, be carrying on relations with different effects.

Despite the failure of the attempt, it may well be that, in addition to being a scandal, the idea is, as Draper maintains, a "fantasy." But to describe it as "an idealist version of causality" is to be mistaken about those who prepare its ground. For example, this would be to claim that David Hume is not an empiricist, but an idealist.

Furthermore, Immanuel Kant's *The Critique of Pure Reason* has undoubtedly been subject to various interpretations. But, were Draper's description of the scandalous fantasy as an idealist version of causality correct, a new one could now be said to exist. For all previous interpretations, whatever their differences may be, never so much as intimate that Kant, an avowed idealist, intended to write a defense for Hume's conclusion that a cause and its effect need not have an invariable relation, a necessary connection. In fact, Kant, like all idealists, aims at annihilating such a conclusion. Perhaps, in order to substantiate the description, Draper may assert that the negation of negation, which brings all things to pass for the dialectical materialist, has been at work. But, if this be a fact, the negation of negation has worked nothing less than a miracle.

In the fourth section, as a result of the principle of causality, Draper asserts, "There is thus no room at all for what is called 'chance determination,' or 'accident' as opposed to causation." Nevertheless, he is not asserting that chance and accident lack meaning. To explain the meaning of accident Draper uses the battle of Salamis, a battle in which the victory of the Greek fleet was insured by

the partial destruction of the Persian fleet in a series of storms. He states that "the anti-Persian storms were *historical accidents* but were not meteorological accidents." For, even though a storm may modify the form and pace of history, it is the mode of production that actually determines its fundamental course. That is, "when an event whose causes lie in one field (in this case, meteorology) has an effect on events in another field (here, society), it appears as an *accident in relation to the latter field.*"

It seems that Draper uses the word to refer to different but not contradictory things. They are: accident as appearance, and accident as actual. As actual, it indicates that the field of meteorology is not the same as that of history. As appearance, it registers the state of man's ignorance or, to cite Draper, "a human-subjective point of view," "*the relativity of human knowledge and truth.*" What is at stake in both usages of the word may perhaps be suggested by stating that, with adequate meteorological information, it is not outside the realm of possibility to infer accurately the entire course of history. For the field of meteorology, though different from, is integrally related to the field of history by the pervasive principles of causality. An accurate inference, therefore, is impossible only because the needed facts are unknown, not because the two fields lack the needed relation. Thus, so far as Draper is concerned, there seems to be more than meets the eye in Laplace's contention that, if only the masses and their velocities were known, the mind would be competent to foretell the movement of nature, "of which man and his works are a part," for all eternity.

He suggests the meaning of chance in the following sentence: "What introduces the element of 'chance' into crap-shooting are two facts: (1) we probably do not *know* all the causal factors involved, though they are far from unknowable; and (2) whether we know or do not know them, the player is unable to *control* the causal forces." Chance, therefore, and accident "*are measures of human knowledge and ignorance,*" and words such as possible, probable, likely or maybe, indicate the varying degrees of that ignorance. For this reason, they should never be taken to mean that the principle of causality has stopped working.

The emphasis placed on the paucity of man's knowledge seems, however, to make a dogmatist of anyone who holds the principle of causality to be an unquestionable fact. At least, Draper never shows how the principle is to be verified

and, hence, how it may be rescued from the charge of being dogmatic. I say this even though, in giving the reasons for his conviction that socialism will eventually triumph, he does assert that the truth of any conviction, "like all human truth, is tested and confirmed only in practice (in struggle)." But, whatever reassurance this gives for the eventual triumph of socialism, it cannot be used to verify the principle of causality. For the plausibility of now practicing anything either in the past or in the future is, at best, quixotic and, at worst, impossible except for those who, like God, have access to the Eternal. Or is the principle of causality, instead of an unquestionable fact, nothing more than a fruitful working hypothesis, a Marxist convention, a devout conviction? If so, how is it possible and why is it necessary to make a fuss about the scandalous fantasy of the so-called idealists?

### Idiot's Delight?

Be this as it may be, Draper summarizes the Marxist view of determinism and causality in the fifth section. He writes:

"(a) Every event is the inevitable result of all preceding events. Given all preceding events, it could not have happened otherwise. And this inescapably produces the corollary that—

"(b) With regard to any future event posed, there are only two alternatives. That event is either inevitable or impossible. All the events which have taken place determine those which will take place, with the relation of cause to effect. And if, as we have said, a given constellation of causes can produce only a certain determinate effect, then the italicized statement is unavoidable: 'The event either will take place or it will not take place.' The italicized statement means: 'The event either must take place or it cannot take place' — inevitable or impossible. There is nothing 'in-between' on the objective plane of the world of natural law which we have been discussing."

These two paragraphs unequivocally indicate that the possibility of choice does not exist. Without choice, however, an error cannot be made. And without error, true and false are absolutely precluded except, perhaps, as noises. Naturally, someone may protest that Draper is only referring here to nature and history, not to man. Thus what Draper is saying would in no way preclude true and false. But this would be to protest that man and his works are not a part of history, a protest for which the exposition offers no grounds. Someone else may point out that Draper, later in the article, does speak about choice, even about "a moral choice." And so much the worse, if not

for Draper, at least for morality; because only an intellectual cretin could speak about morality after proposing such a view of determinism.

In practice, that view of determinism not only guarantees that Stalinism inevitably flows from Bolshevism but it also makes Trotsky's struggle against Stalin an illusion. For, given that view, Stalin as well as Trotsky could do no other than they did. And the same explanation, which certainly is the kindest and easiest way to account for it, holds true of Draper's article. Or does Draper dwell on a platform from which he may snipe at the universe with impunity, a free agent using the events of history as cards in a game of idiot's delight? Even without such a specious possibility as this question suggests, the view still remains an idiot's delight. Instead of a game, it describes a fact.<sup>1</sup>

In theory, at least one thing is clear: the view cannot be called a heresy. For every heresy, in addition to a large element of error, always contains a small element of truth, two elements which the principle of causality liquidates. By the same token, my use of heresy to describe the conviction against which Draper is inveighing becomes unwitting flattery, since it too is based on that view of determination. In other words, by washing away the possibility of thought, the stream of causality drowns the very substance of meaning. Instead of being stated, the view can only be regurgitated.

Since the view is described as "the Marxist view," this implies that Marx saw things in this manner. Thus, a verbal judgment, including those made by Marx himself, is nothing more than an irrepressible flow of noise generated by a palpitating larynx. Undoubtedly Marx's more irascible critics would be pleased if this were true. For *Capital*, along with the rest of his writings, could then be dismissed as an irresponsible physiological expression. But even the most perverse of the irascible critics, those highly imaginative, yet colossal liars, though concocting an amazing amount of nonsense about the writings of Marx, have never had the audacity, the lack of wit to ascribe to him a view that puts an end to responsible discourse.

To urge that Marx accepts the fact that other people, as well as himself, are capable of thinking and of choosing and of acting, seems unnecessary. Or if necessary, then useless, since whoever needs to be reassured has simply lost his mind. But it is not without point to indicate that Marx unquestionably rejects the ground on which Draper bases his convictions.

The ground is indicated in Draper's

1. This should not be taken to mean that Draper's exposition is entirely without virtue. For it is an excellent recapitulation of the first two chapters of Bukharin's *Historical Materialism*.

assertion that man and his works are a part of nature. That is, whatever differences may be found in society and nature, these differences are, according to Draper, differences in degree, not in kind. This means, for example, that the relations among men and those among animals, since they are rigidly controlled by the principle of causality, are not totally dissimilar, but merely vary in degree. But Marx repudiates such an idea, insisting that, between nature and society, there exists a difference in kind. He writes:

"Where there exists a relationship, it exists for me; the animal has no 'relations' with anything, cannot have any."

Obviously, a distinction in kind, not one of degree, is alone compatible with this assertion. For in order for there to be a distinction in degree, an identical relation of some type would have to exist for both Marx and the animal.

A distinction in kind is also substantiated by Marx's analysis of the false insight shared by the economic prophets of the eighteenth century. Their fundamental error is that of considering man "not as a product of history, but of nature." To drive home the point that man is not a part of nature, let alone one of its products, he then writes:

"Man, however, is in the most literal sense of the word a *zoon politikon*, not only a social being, but a being that can develop into a person only in society."

And the insistence that man literally is a *zoon politikon*, a being completely outside the community of the brute, definitely means that man and his works are radically different from the animal and natural events.

This radical difference, this qualitative distinction is also apparent in the course of Marx's analysis of *surplus population*, a lugubrious term for the unemployed. In distinguishing between the development of population in nature and its development in society, he observes:

"An abstract law of population exists for plants and animals only, and only in so far as man has not interfered with them."

### Society and Nature

The ability of man, an ability totally lacking in plants and animals, to control the population of nature is a fact that can be explained only on the basis of a distinction in kind. Moreover, since the capitalist mode of production is adequate for the advance to socialism, man can create a society that would make a museum piece of the so-called surplus population.

The reason for maintaining that man and his works are not a part of nature, that between nature and society a distinction in kind exists, is not something that Marx need pluck from his beard. At



least, a fundamental quality of causality cannot be found in some of the relations composing the framework of society. The quality consists of the lapse of time that always intervenes between a cause and its effect. In other words, there are relations in society that, instead of a temporal sequence, exhibit a quality of simultaneity.

### Inevitability of Socialism

For example, a wife becomes a widow neither before nor after the husband leaves the land of the quick, but at the very moment of his death. And marriage, the relation that allows for this example of simultaneity, certainly is an essential relation of capitalist society. Perhaps someone may protest that marriage is not a natural relation. But if the protest is intended to suggest that marriage is a fiction, the protestant lacks a sense of humor. For even though marriage may, so far as history and contemporary custom is concerned, be nothing more than a transitory relation, it definitely is a social fact, never a fiction.

Even if a social relation happens to exhibit a temporal sequence, this does not signify that it is a causal relation. To insist that it is makes as little sense as to insist that, because an arrow as well as a bullet kills, the arrow is also propelled by gunpowder. Moreover, in order for the principle of causality to be a quality of the social relations, it must exist only as a part of society, never in any way as a part of nature. For a distinction in kind does not permit it to operate in both places at the same time.

The fact that society is not controlled by the principle of causality, that between it and nature a distinction in kind exists, may well explain why Marx finds the methods used in examining nature to be completely worthless in examining society. At least, he states that, in examining the field of political economy, "neither microscopes nor chemical reagents are of use."

Be that as it may be, the lack of any resemblance between the convictions expressed by Marx and by Draper suggests that Draper's usage of the word *Marxist* is an infringement on the good will of the reader. Nevertheless, two of Draper's convictions have yet to be examined, and they may be in agreement with Marx. That is, Marx may find the triumph of socialism to be inevitable, and the meaning with which Draper invests this conviction may be compatible, if not identical, with Marx's meaning.

In order to suggest Draper's meaning, I compare it with the meaning proposed by Cannon, Johnson and Forest, with the heresy against which he is inveighing. According to Draper, they denounce as "un-Marxist any suggestion that capitalism can possibly be followed by a society other than socialism." The denunciation necessarily excludes a type of society

such as bureaucratic collectivism, which surely, according to Draper, now exists in Russia. Among the heretics opinion is divided about that nation. Johnson and Forest refer to it as state capitalism, a nervous confession of confusion. Cannon describes it by that contradiction in terms, a degenerated workers state, which keeps it, even though degenerated, within the realm of socialism. Each opinion, it should be noted, is at least verbally compatible with the conviction expressed in the denunciation, with the conviction that the meaning of inevitability is socialism or capitalism, nothing else.

The conviction, however, "like all human truth, is tested and confirmed only in practice (in struggle)." And, Russia being, as Draper insists, an example of bureaucratic collectivism, the truth of the conviction is obviously lacking. But this indicates that the truth of Stalin and his works is conclusively verified. Hence, the criterion disposes not only of the heresy against which Draper inveighs, but even of the reasons that led Trotsky to struggle against Stalin. And Draper, who accepts Trotsky's reasons, would thus seem to take a diabolic delight in continuing the error.

Even so, on the basis of the criterion for truth, Draper concludes that the paucity of man's knowledge, though sufficient to ascertain the inevitable triumph of socialism, is insufficient to determine the type and sequence of social orders leading to it. Actually this is not, nor is it intended to be, a complete rejection of the meaning accepted by Cannon, Johnson and Forest, since Draper considers his meaning a legitimate modification, a modification demanded by the turn of events in Russia. For this reason, prior to the advent of Stalinism, the meaning could properly be stated as capitalism or socialism. Today, however, it must be socialism or barbarism.

So far as Draper is concerned, the phrase, socialism or barbarism, is thoroughly compatible with a rigid doctrine of determinism. At least, he insists that the phrase is not "impugning his deterministic conviction," that it does not imply that the future affords two possibilities, either one of which may be realized. He explains that since what is going to happen is irrevocably determined by what has already happened, the phrase simply registers a speculation about the future. And it can be no more than a speculation precisely because of the paucity of knowledge possessed by man.

The explanation, though ingenious, turns the *Communist Manifesto* into a tip-sheet on the human race. Or Marx, if not a tout, certainly becomes, as a result of the doctrine of determinism, a cynical kibitzer offering useless advice to the proletariat. And, in a world where everything is inexorably determined be-

forehand, any attempt to follow the advice suggests that, instead of its chains, the proletariat would do well to lose its brains.

Though Draper's explanation appears suspect, the phrase, socialism or barbarism, is compatible with the conviction of Marx. In other words, though not needing the degeneration of the October Revolution as a reason, Marx holds the opinion that capitalism can be followed by a type of society other than socialism. He writes:

"Bourgeois productive relations represent the last antagonistic form of the process of social production, not antagonistic in the sense of individual antagonism, but an antagonism which develops from the social conditions of life of the individuals. However, the productive forces developing within the framework of bourgeois society create at the same time the material conditions for the liquidation of this antagonism. With this type of society, therefore, the preliminary history of human society ends."

At first glance, this passage may appear to confirm the conviction condemned by Draper, the conviction that capitalism is to be immediately followed by socialism. But the finality about which Marx is speaking does not refer to the bourgeois productive relations. On the contrary, it refers to their antagonistic form, an antagonistic form that other types of society may possess even after capitalism has passed away.

This usage of form may be illustrated by the term nationalized property. This form of property not only exists today in Russia, which now is a bureaucratic collectivist state, but the identical form also existed at the time of Lenin and Trotsky, at the moment when Russia was a workers' state. That is, the antagonistic form of social production, like the nationalized form of property, may be shared by various types of society.

### Capitalism or Socialism?

For this reason, the finality about which Marx is speaking does not mean the end of social antagonism. On the contrary, it refers to the fact that bourgeois productive relations bring the social antagonism to its final perfection by uncovering all the possibilities of friction that it will ever possess. Moreover, in stating that bourgeois productive relations create the conditions for liquidating the antagonism, Marx only suggests that the conditions are necessary, not in any way sufficient for socialism. He is simply stating that they make socialism a realizable possibility. In other words, there is no reason to believe that, after these relations have become a fact, Marx restricts the subsequent types of society to capitalism and socialism, nothing else. On this point, therefore, there is at least a

verbal compatibility between the conviction of Draper and that of Marx.

Before trying to determine whether Marx considers the triumph of socialism to be inevitable, several other interpretations of the doctrine are to be examined. Max Shachtman finds that the doctrine may have two meanings. After emphasizing that socialism "can be established only by *conscious*, deliberate, planned efforts," he writes:

"If we can speak of the 'inevitability' of socialism, then it is only in a conditional sense. First, in the sense that capitalism creates all the conditions which make the advance to socialism possible; and second, in the sense that the advance to socialism is a necessity for the further progress of society itself—even more, the only way in which to preserve society. 'In this sense,' wrote Bukharin, along with all those who understand Marxism, 'we may also speak of the historical necessity of socialism, since *without it* human society cannot continue to develop. If society is to continue to develop, socialism will inevitably come. This is the sense in which Marx and Engels spoke of 'historical necessity!'"

The meaning of the first sense indicates that Shachtman finds it plausible, even "worthy of the name 'scientific,'" to describe what is merely possible as inevitable. But to urge that a possibility can in any way resemble an inevitability, a meaning evidently originated by Shachtman, is, if not absurd, certainly unique.

On the basis of this sense, it presumably is "scientific" to insist that the birth of a child in the United States creates all the conditions which make its advance to the presidency inevitable. Thus, in addi-

tion to being either absurd or unique, the first sense becomes a politician's ruse, a clever hoax.

In the second sense, the further progress of society refers to the things enabling man to cease being a victim of necessity, to the values and the material means consistent with freedom. If Shachtman means anything less than this, then the further progress of society can be achieved without making the advance to socialism. In other words, the further progress of society is identical with the advance to socialism. For this reason, the second sense is as weird as the first. That is, Shachtman is urging that the advance to socialism is a necessity for the advance to socialism.

Instead of the values and the material means to be achieved by socialism, Bukharin is only speaking about the material means allowing the values to be realized. That is, if the material means are to continue to develop, then the advance to socialism needs to be made. But since the material means are only one aspect of socialism, Bukharin's meaning, unlike Shachtman's, is not an unenlightening tautology, not a clever hoax.

The talent for hoaxes reaches spectacular proportions with Shachtman's observation that "all those who understand Marxism" take the doctrine of inevitability in a conditional sense. The observation neatly disposes of Cannon, Johnson and Forest as well as of Draper, and this is not a great loss. But it also disposes of Plekhanov, Lenin and Trotsky, whose understanding of Marxism has generally been considered adequate.

In other words, Plekhanov finds the triumph of socialism not to be in any sense conditional but, quite the opposite, an "absolute inevitability." And Lenin,

though disagreeing with Plekhanov on a variety of matters, seemingly endorses the veracity of this fact. For in 1921, even when considering Plekhanov a political fraud, a Menshevik incompetent, Lenin states "that one *cannot* become an intelligent and *genuine* Communist without having studied—I say advisedly *studied*—all that Plekhanov has written on philosophy, for it is the best of its kind in international Marxist literature." Trotsky, too, has no truck with the idea that the arrival of socialism is to be taken in a conditional sense. He writes:

"The lucubrations of certain intellectuals on the theme that, regardless of Marx's teaching, socialism is not inevitable, but merely *possible*, are devoid of any content whatsoever."

There is a fundamental difference between this usage of inevitability and Draper's. So far as Plekhanov, Lenin and Trotsky are concerned, the process guaranteeing the advent of socialism does not suffer from the blight of causality. Instead of invoking a mechanical process, they leave man free to think, to choose, to act. For example, commenting on the coming victory of the proletariat, Trotsky writes:

"Marx had no doubt that the working class, at the cost of errors and defeats, will come to understand the actual situation and, sooner or later, will draw the imperative practical conclusions."

Thus, though socialism can never be irrevocably forestalled, its arrival depends on a conscious act and is not, as it is for Draper, a natural event.

(Concluded in Next Issue)

THOMPSON CONLEY

# The Rumanian Church Is Statified

## How Stalinism "Coordinates" the Orthodox and Roman Confessions

In spite of their avowal of militant atheism, the Communist Parties in the Russian satellite countries have not scrupled to use the Orthodox churches of the Eastern European lands for their own political ends. This has been going on since their rule began.

Stalin's puppet "popular democracies," like all other totalitarian dictatorships, are driving hard toward the integration of every section of social life into their regimes. Nothing—absolutely nothing—is permitted to escape this drive. Sooner or later the ruling Stalinist party gets around to the

*gleichschaltung* (as the Nazis used to call it) of the smallest youth organization, the most timid women's movement, the most insignificant sport association, the most distant reading circle, and finally even the humblest parish. Willy-nilly all of them are laced into the straitjacket.

What has been taking place in Rumania is an especially illuminating example.

It should be explained first that most of the Rumanian people belong to the Orthodox Church. The spiritual head of this church was once the Greek patriarch, but with the Great Schism the religious cen-

ter of Eastern European Christianity shifted toward the Russian church. After the First World War, each of the various national Orthodox churches (with the Rumanians in the lead) declared its complete autonomy, proclaimed itself autocephalous, and set up its own patriarch.

But in Transylvania, a Rumanian province which for a thousand years belonged to the Catholic Austro-Hungarian empire, the population of four million Rumanians found themselves divided along religious lines. A good half of them are Orthodox. Another sec-

tion opted for Catholicism 250 years ago; this section constituted itself an important branch of the Greek Catholic Church, called the Uniate. This split was effected by the traditional policy of the House of Hapsburg—which was to create, through the Catholic Church, a spiritual basis for the denationalization of the backward peoples of its multi-national empire.

The Greek Catholic Church was thus founded in order to serve as a center of Rumanian loyalty to the Austrian empire, but it soon became instead the center of a Rumanian national and cultural renaissance (the movement called "Latinism"). It supplied the main support of the nationalist party; indeed the majority of the nationalist leaders were from the clergy of the new Uniate church.

### **The Church Under the Dictatorship**

The Rumanian Communist Party, whose leaders came riding in on the gun carriages of the Russian army and took control of the country, set about bringing the church into line with their new despotism.

To achieve this end they had to turn to the extreme right-wing clerical elements, as the only ones they could utilize. Thus, for example, the first minister of culture they appointed was "His Holiness" Burducea, who had held high office under three fascist dictatorships and belonged to the elite of the Iron Guard.

At the time of his appointment, this gentleman was the head of the organization of "democratic" priests (how the dictatorship loves to use the "democratic" camouflage!). Such of the opposition press as still existed denounced him; since public opinion had not yet been completely gagged, the truth could not be hidden. M. Burducea was withdrawn from circulation.

Immediately after the armistice, the Rumanian Orthodox Church resumed relations with the Russian church, for the first time in about three decades. A made-in-Moscow rapprochement was inaugurated by

an exchange of visits between the leaders of the two churches. Then one fine day the Rumanian church found itself without a head, and the Stalinist party seized on the occasion to get their own candidate elected as patriarch.

This was the former archbishop (metropolitan) of Moldavia, Justinian Marina, the former vicar of the metropolitan see of Iassy. Ambitious and unscrupulous, His Holiness Justinian has carved out an unparalleled career under the Stalinist dictatorship—in record time, too. This favorite of the CP was well known to have been a fascist sympathizer, but he quickly mounted up the various rungs of the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

### **The Persecution of Catholicism**

As supporters of the Vatican, the Uniate Church of Transylvania and the Rumanian Catholic Church, which included an important religious minority in Moldavia, became the butt of systematic persecution. In May 1947 about 350 Greek Catholic priests were arrested in order to intimidate the believers and prepare for the liquidation of their church. Already with the occupation of Eastern Galicia in 1939 the Russians had taken the first steps toward the fusion of the Ukrainian Uniate Church with the Russian Orthodox Church, to take place after the war. Stimulated by this "success," the Rumanian leaders of church policy tried the same persuasive methods there employed.

First of all, the Catholic bishops were convened in May 1948 at the ministry of culture and advised to go over to the Orthodox Church. On their refusal to submit, the attacks and persecutions multiplied. The high dignitaries of the Greek Catholic Church were publicly denounced by the Orthodox Church of Transylvania for endangering "the religious peace of the country."

The new patriarch Justinian went even further: on the occasion of the installation in office, he

called them "the tools of the imperialists." And along with these denunciations and verbal darts went more concrete measures: the denunciation of the Concordat, governmental steps against the confessional schools, recall of bishops, and arrests among the members of the clergy.

### **The Fusion Is Put Through**

Under this attack the Uniate clergy's will to resistance was quickly broken. And so we find that 38 Greek Catholic priests and archpriests were assembled at a recent conference at Cluj, representing 423 priests in Transylvania and Banat, and there they "unanimously" decided to return to the bosom of the Rumanian Orthodox Church. The farce of "unanimity" in such cases is met with magical regularity in all the totalitarian regimes.

The Communist Party leaders were in a hurry. By October 3 the Greek Catholic delegates had already been received at Bucharest by the patriarch and the Holy Synod. The ceremony for this long-delayed but now precipitate reunification was fixed for October 21.

In a solemn reception Justinian, Patriarch by the Grace of the Communist Party, announced the "re-establishment of the spiritual unity of the people." The strayed but happily rescued sheep saluted the "Constitution of the Rumanian Popular Republic" and "the future of the nation," and motivated their fusion by the necessity of organizing the movement for "the defense of peace" all over the world.

Thus—for the greater glory of Father Stalin, and without any other benediction—ended an old spiritual and cultural institution which had survived through the vicissitudes of endless discussions and merciless struggles. Next on the agenda for the new despots? It is soon going to be the turn of the Rumanian Catholic Church to bend the knee before the persecutions.

VALENTIN TOMA

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