

The

NEW

INTERNATIONAL

From August 1947 to the Election

**THE RECORD OF
TAFT-HARTLEYISM**

by Anne Temple



***The Truman Upset
And Labor Politics***

by The Editors

Class Forces Behind Tito

by Hal Draper

Newsletter:

Behind the Iron Curtain

by Valentin Toma

THE REVOLUTION IN FINLAND

by Victor Serge

Review of Mills' "The New Men of Power"

by Ben Hall

NOVEMBER 1948

TWENTY-FIVE CENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

NOTES OF THE MONTH

The Truman Upset and Labor Politics 259

THE RECORD OF TAFT-HARTLEYISM 259

By Anne Temple

CLASS FORCES BEHIND TITO 271

By Hal Draper

NEWSLETTER: BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN 278

By Valentin Toma

THE YEAR ONE OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION 282

VII—THE REVOLUTION IN FINLAND

By Victor Serge

BOOKS IN REVIEW 287

C. WRIGHT MILLS' "THE NEW MEN OF POWER"

By Ben Hall

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Max Shachtman, national chairman of the Workers Party, has been giving a series of four lectures in New York on contemporary political problems, and we are making plans to publish at least part of these contributions in THE NEW INTERNATIONAL. . . . The first two were: "The Russian Revolution—A Re-Evaluation," and "Stalinism—Wave of the Future?" . . . The former is likely to appear next month. . . . Meanwhile, the continuation of his report on the Fourth International congress is pending. . . .

Definitely scheduled for next month's issue are: *Labor Politics and the City Machines*, by William Barton, in which the author sets forth an interesting angle on American municipal politics; an article on the economic crisis in France and its consequences, by Henry Judd; and a number of book reviews which were crowded out of this issue.

Valentin Toma's first promised newsletter from Eastern Europe and Russia's satellite zone appears in this issue. . . . We are hoping to be able to make this a more or less regular feature of the magazine. . . .

The October 15 issue of *La Batalla*, organ of the Spanish POUM (Workers Party of Marxist Unity), has some nice things to say about us which we pass on. Reviewing our July and August issues, it writes: "Among the Marxist journals published in the world, we can say that none is comparable to THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, with respect to the investigation and analysis of contemporary political problems. Every issue of this theoretical journal of the Workers Party supplies its readers with an assemblage of criticisms and interpretations on all political phenomena, economic developments and social events. On the basis of its contributions, every militant interested in theoretical study can arrive at his own orientation and conclusions on all these questions." . . . However, it is not modesty which causes us to make demurrals at the word "all" in "all political phenomena," etc. But we would like to deserve this compliment, and shall try to deserve it indeed. . . .

The draft resolutions for the forthcoming national convention of the Workers Party are being issued in mimeographed bulletins for pre-convention discussion. Interested readers can obtain them by writing to the Workers Party, 4 Court Square, Long Island City 1, New York. Most of them are fifteen cents each.

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THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

A Monthly Organ of Revolutionary Marxism

VOL. XIV

NOVEMBER 1948

NO. 9

NOTES OF THE MONTH

The Truman Upset and Labor Politics

We might as well jump right into the fascinating subject of the Mystery of November 2, in spite of the fact that (by the time this is in print) everybody and his favorite commentator will already have taken a crack at enlightening the populace on such things as the fundamental flaws of pollstering, etc. If we do, however, it is not for the purpose of explaining away a prediction—we were fortunate enough to have made none—but for a much more limited and much more important reason: in order to look into what lies ahead for labor political action, for the building of a party of labor's own.

More than that: in order to analyze what the election has shown—the social forces abroad in American life at work on the people as a whole and on the labor movement in particular; the pushes and pulls, the climate of politics, the class forces that are operating to bring about such upsets and bewilderment in the ranks of the professional “practical” politicians.

The latter, the professional practical politicians, thought they had the people figured out the same way as they have always figured out—so many votes on a string to be pulled by adept manipulators, from the wardheelers to Tom Dewey's supposedly up-to-date general staff. But the people did not “figure out,” and a dozen honored formulas of “practical politics” bit the dust. We shall see what some of these formulas were.

Now a lot of labor leaders (and their followers) have stood in mystic awe of what they respectfully referred to as “practical politics.” Their devotions led to incantations like the following: *A labor party? The trouble with you, my friend, is that you don't understand practical politics in this country, see? Now all experience has shown. . . .*

Well, what “all experience has shown” did not fare so well recently. The ready-packaged formulas of the practical politicians went up in smoke, under the impact of real political forces.

There was the puss-in-the-corner formula of politics, according to which the Ins and the Outs are supposed to swap places rhythmically as the “public” gets “tired” of the old faces. There was the formula that the party which wins Congress on the off year gets the presidency two years later, a formula which now

goes into the discard along with “As goes Maine. . . .”

There is this new formula about the “sympathy vote,” according to which Truman swept the board because people felt he was the underdog. One highly paid columnist even wrote a post-election think-piece in which he proved the power of this mighty sentiment by quoting an anonymous woman who emerged from the voting booth to tell a friend: “I was going to vote for Dewey but, oh dear, I just couldn't let poor Mr. Truman down!” Far be it from us to deny the existence of the sympathy vote, but we wonder how the formula works when it gets applied to Henry Wallace, who was certainly the most kicked-around candidate in sight. . . .

Now we're not interested in taking apart these notions of what makes the American people tick merely for the sake of muckraking. We're interested in pointing to the reason why these shallow explanations arise. And that is because the practical politicians have not quite gotten used to the idea that *more and more, more than ever*, the workers and little people are lining up their votes on what they consider to be the *political issues*—not on the irrational drives and irrelevant considerations (like how good a family man Earl Warren is) which are supposed to be the peculiar province of “practical politics.”

If the reader fails to be impressed by this as a noteworthy change, he should remember that the practical politician has largely proceeded in this country on the assumption that that isn't so. It would indeed be impossible otherwise to explain the “well-planned,” “modern,” “brainy,” “streamlined” campaign of No Issues engineered by Dewey and his strategy board—a strategy which came in for a deal of ribbing from sophisticates even before the election but which was still assumed to be tailored to fit the “voting cattle.”

We, among others, have constantly spoken of the need for politicalization of the politically backward masses of this country, thinking of this politicalization in terms of the formation of an independent political *organization*. But it is necessary to recognize that the most elementary form of political consciousness is certainly the habit of voting on the political issues and nothing else. No election showed the ad-

vance in this respect more than the recent one, despite the form it took. It is easier to underestimate than to overstate this.

That is *one* reason for radicals, who may tend to be impatient with the slow political development of American labor, to be heartened and encouraged by the election returns. Not because Harry Truman was elected, but in spite of that fact.

Another one of the bromides of practical politics is that people vote for *men*, not programs or platforms. Above all, not for programs and platforms! This fact—and there has always been a great deal of truth in the allegation—has even been extolled as the American way of life. But this too was never less true than in the November 2 election.

One need only ask: Did the majority vote for Truman the *man*, apart from the politics he represented, or which they thought he represented? One has to think back only a few months, not more than four. It is true that the little man in the White House has grown in stature by virtue of his surprise victory, since nothing succeeds like success, but look—

Labor turned out to vote for a man who had conducted the most anti-labor administration in over a decade; who had brought back the most hated of anti-labor weapons, the injunction, and had used it to break three great strikes; who had (not long ago) appealed to Congress for a law far more vicious than the Taft-Hartley Act, a law to draft strikers into the army; who for three quarters of his administration had become a stench in the nostrils of labor and a laughingstock in the country by force of repeated boners; and who tried to make up in a last splurge with a lot of liberal-sounding speeches for his anti-labor acts, with fair talk for foul deeds; who four months ago was the Man Nobody Wanted.

No one can claim that it was Truman the man who drew the votes. The workers were *trying* to vote for their political needs and desires, not for the famous Best Man. And if they had to express these needs and desires through Truman—*because they were given no other alternative*—that fact only underlines (1) the blind alley that labor political action is in; and (2) the fact that the people were ready to vote *in spite of* the “man.”

This is confirmed from another side by what happened to Wallace. There is no doubt that Wallace had a *personal* appeal far greater than is represented by his one and a quarter million votes. What swamped him was the fact that his putative “voting cattle” came to understand too well the meaning of his Stalinist politics.

We are sure the readers of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL are themselves quite used to the idea of voting on issues, on program, on politics; but we stress that this familiarity on their own part should not blind them to the unusual quality of the recent election.

There has always been good ground for the cynical view that the voters are sheep, herded by political manipulators, incapable of independent thinking and judgment; good ground, not because “the people are dumb” but because of their political backwardness.

But the workers have shown that they will not be led by the nose. The easiest thing to do is to sneer: “Yes, yes, so look whom they vote for—an injunctionist!” To be sure, by re-electing an injunctionist and strikebreaker, they have shown they are still blundering in a blind alley. But they were blundering in search of political independence, not of Truman’s coat tails! To come to any other conclusion is to reduce the amazing upset of November 2 to a Dipleyesque curiosity instead of viewing it as a social portent.

The effect of the upset on labor itself has been as plain as a pikestaff, and a good deal more widespread than that medieval weapon. The reaction comes in from everywhere: “We did it!” From Kroll and Meany to the men in the UAW shops, the biggest wave of *self-confidence in the power of its own political action* has rolled over all of labor’s ranks. David stands almost amazed before the fallen Goliath.

The reaction has been compared to the effect of Roosevelt’s victories in spurring labor political action. The comparison does not hit the bull’s-eye. There are two differences.

(1) In supporting Roosevelt, labor considered itself part of a *coalition*—with the New Dealers, the South, the city machines. It was an uneasy coalition but it held for a while because at least it seemed to be a winning team. The psychology of the labor leaders under Roosevelt was: “Don’t rock the . . . coalition.” Moderate your demands so as not to scare off the city bosses, so as not to alienate the Southerners. Roosevelt’s incantation before this formula was: “Phil (or Bill), you know I’d love to go along with you boys, but—what’ll So-and-So say?”

In 1948 the coalition was not revived; it was broken. The fetish of Democratic Party unity was split open. Even aside from the States Rights schismatics, the city machines were even less enthusiastic about Truman than was labor, or at least just as unenthusiastic. Labor feels that *it* saved Truman’s neck, not any coalition; and this feeling is more important politically than the question of the value of Truman’s neck.

It scarcely even matters, from this point of view, that labor’s “We did it” is not quite accurate. Truman’s re-election was certainly based to an important degree on part of the rural vote, influenced by the fear that a Republican victory would cut into government support of farm prices. But these voters are not organized to take advantage of whatever weight they swung. Labor is. Precisely because of the difference between Roosevelt’s combination and Truman’s, labor’s political self-confidence is at an all-time high.

(2) Everyone always felt that the center of the Roosevelt coalition was—Roosevelt himself. *Ah, the master politician! that old Roosevelt charm! what consummate craft! what liberal appeal!* And here comes a little man without charm, no radiant appeal, no master craftsmanship, no coalition; and he—this five-times-removed imitation of a New Dealer—rides in against all odds on labor's vote.

So it wasn't the Roosevelt magic! It was labor's political power. So it wasn't the coalition! It was labor—"We did it." What the Truman victory has shown to labor is that labor was not just a contribution to the Roosevelt pulling power.

What it has revealed is that labor's political action is a class power, the force of the working class as a class in modern society—the biggest social power in the country, the king-maker.

This new high in the workers' political self-confidence (cockiness, if you will) is a *lighted fuse under Truman*.

The next period is going to see a somewhat different kind of expectation than greeted Roosevelt's re-elections: *Come across now! Don't hand us that line about the South and the bosses. They didn't elect you, did they?*

Truman may imagine himself to be in the driver's seat, especially after all the adulation in the press ("Miracle Man" was the caption under his picture on *Newsweek's* cover), but there is a crackup due. The case is the inverse of the recent California driver who, after running his car into a lamp post and then through a shop window, was reported by the press as telling the judge earnestly: "Honest, judge, I thought somebody else was driving!" Truman may think he is behind the wheel, but there is a showdown coming.

And it can't be very long. Which brings us to a last point about election formulas.

It is a reaction we have to this recent national pastime of beating the pollsters over the head. We do not want to give the impression that we are springing to the defense of these natural scapegoats, diversionists and pariahs, but there is a feeling that they have not been used with a maximum of justice by the politicians and press whom they misled.

For they too were following a formula of "practical politics" which has established roots and good grounds in the past. As the best example, we direct attention to the fact that Roper quit poll-taking in early September, *confident that nothing could change substantially in the next two months.* Ex post facto, Gallup and Crossley now admit that they did not give sufficient weight to the *trend* of the last two months or so.

In terms of past performance, they were not unjustified. Fifty million voters make a big unwieldy mass; it takes time to move. "All experience has shown" that this inert mass can move, but at the pace

of an ice flow in a glacier. A few people may change their minds between now and the election (assumed the pollsters on good authority) but not enough to affect the results.

But 1948 was different. If there was any one reason why the polls went haywire—and we are not making a revelation but an interpretation—it was not so much that the pollsters miscalculated the sentiments of the people as that they miscalculated *the tempo at which those sentiments were changing* in the last few months.

With good reason. Never before have the political reactions of the mass of people shown themselves to be so sensitive, so dynamic, so quick to change, so politically tensed-up that all the little molecules in that big mass of voters could reorient themselves in the face of the political pulls.

As a writer in *Fortune* magazine put it a while back (perhaps cribbing from Engels): "Slowness of inception of U. S. labor action is no guarantee that, once started, it will not speedily reach extremes."

This characteristic of the upset is perhaps the most significant of all. This may be because it is usually so hard to see, especially for impatient well-wishers of the working class: the capacity of the working class for apparently sudden forced marches which bring it onto heights toward which it previously had struggled by inches. The sitdown strikes of the '30s were not aberrations. And this has to be especially borne in mind now when the question of a labor party, which seemed to have come so much nearer just before the election, has now again been delayed.

The most farsighted and thinking militants in the labor movement have seen for years that labor needs its own party, that it can make a start in solving its pressing problems only through really independent political action. Instead, the labor leadership has been blindly and self-defeatingly following the policy of the "lesser evil," considering that it is "smart" practical politics to choose between the two capitalist politicians periodically presented by the Democrats and Republicans, plumping for the one that was "least worst" and then congratulating themselves on defeating the "main danger."

Regularly they found themselves with another "main danger" on their hands—and finally with nothing. For four elections they mobilized their strength for Roosevelt, took the New Deal, then took the war deal; and after the war deal, they looked around themselves and took inventory of the results of fifteen years of lesser-evil politics. And they found themselves, in 1947, with a president who was breaking more strikes per month than ever; a Congress, the notorious 80th, which was belaboring them with anti-labor laws; a Democratic administration using the loyalty purge to cut down union militants.

And in the face of all this, they still had nothing—that is, no political instrument of their own to swing their political weight *for themselves*. They had to take a long breath, hold their nose, and go for Truman; because he too was a lesser evil, and they were caught in their own system as in a trap.

The lesser-evil injunctionist won. In their unexpected relief, one could hear the labor leaders blowing out deep breaths from New York to California—just as if the lorn maiden of labor had acquired a Galahad. They reacted like a racetrack gambler who has been losing thousands steadily on a system to beat the horses, and desperately throws his last couple of dollars on a long chance; when—O delight!—the long chance gallops in and pays off fifty. “Look,” he chortles, “didn’t I tell you my system will work?” He forgets that he has been losing his shirt on his system, and even the fifty looks so good only because he was expecting to lose his underdrawers too.

Depression changed to euphoria. The pre-election indications that even the top labor heads were thinking in terms of a new party came to nothing.

For shortly before November it had looked for a while as if there was an immediate prospect of a third-party development powered by leading unions. There was the universal expectation that a bad defeat for Truman, coupled with the defection of the Wallaceites and the Southerners, would deal a shattering blow to the Democratic Party. Walter Reuther had issued his well-known statement which was widely interpreted as meaning a drive for a labor-based third party if the Democratic Party cracked up. William Green himself had come out for a third party.

It is now obvious that this immediate prospect has been laid by the heels as a result of the Democratic victory.

It is paradoxical at first blush. *If* the election had shown a marked swing to the right with a Dewey-Republican victory (which in itself would have been no cause for joy), then the labor movement might have been compelled to swing to the left, to break with the old parties and form its own party.

But since there was not a right swing but a left swing (which is good in itself), the labor movement is likely to remain bound for another period to its lesser-evil and tail-the-Democrats policy—and this is not good.

That is the way it is working out, however, and it shows that the labor movement still has another lesson ahead of it.

The labor leadership proclaims that they are girding themselves for a really big play this time: no labor party, no third party—they are going to take over and transform the Democratic Party . . . they say. In this pronouncement, they too indicate that they can no longer continue to put forward the perspective of merely “supporting” the Democrats. Even in their own minds, and before their rank and file,

they are making a turn—to “capturing” the Democratic Party.

To be perfectly fair about it, if this is a proposition for really taking over the Democratic Party and converting it into a labor party or a farmer-labor party, transforming it into our own party, not what it is now and has been—then no dogmatic objection can be made to the aim. There are only two things wrong with the scheme:

- (1) The labor leaders are not serious about transforming the Democratic Party *into a labor party*; and
- (2) They cannot do it.

“But look at Michigan!” we will be told. Hasn’t the Auto Workers union captured the Democratic Party in that state?

The fact is, however, that the UAW did *not* capture the Michigan Democratic Party. It merely picked up the pieces. There was no opposition to speak of, because there was virtually no state organization left when the Auto Workers stepped in. *If* the Democratic Party had been as badly cut up in the election as was expected, then there might have been a similar situation nationally, or an approach to such a situation. *But then the attempt would not have been worth while.* If it was worth while for the UAW in Michigan, it was only because of the continuing pro-Democratic orientation of the CIO nationally.

A labor gossip columnist (Riesel) has vouchsafed the “inside dope” that the general staffs of the CIO and AFL are planning to outflank the Democratic Party by making a kind of sneak attack in the primaries. The strategy is supposed to be this: Only a small number vote in the primaries; if the PAC and AFL-LLPE mobilize their strength for the primary elections, they can nominate their own candidates under the Democratic label; thus the Democratic Party will be “captured.” But in the first place, if the AFL-CIO go all-out in the primaries, then these latter will no longer remain the quiet, formal affairs they are now.

And in the second place, even capturing primaries here and there does not mean capturing the Democratic Party *machines*. (In California, for example, where cross-filing in the primaries is permitted, the victory of one party in the primaries of another party has only the significance of eliminating opposition in a given election; it has no effect on the control of the machine.)

In fact, one has to ask: What is the *concrete* meaning of “capturing the Democratic Party?” The Upton Sinclair-EPIC forces in California once “captured” the Democratic Party in that state—for one election; Sinclair’s defeat saw control reverting back to the old hands. If labor forms its own party, its first setback would *not* mean that it loses control. What does it mean in the case of the Democratic Party?

The fact is that the basic structure of the old parties does not depend on the electorate—on the

“voting cattle”—either in the primary or general elections. Just because the labor movement provided the votes for Truman does not mean that it can take over Truman’s machine by means of those votes.

What holds together one of these old-party political machines—the Democratic or the Republican? First and foremost: patronage.

Truman’s victory has meant revival for the Democrats not primarily for any moral reason, but because it means that the Democrats retain the Washington pork barrel. An all-out attempt to transform the Democratic Party *into a labor party* would have to be directed not merely against the local bosses but against the Truman administration. Labor’s votes may have elected Truman, but Truman is not going to hand over his party to his saviors from across the class lines.

The second element that the old-party machine depends on for its basic character is formed by the innumerable threads of its connections with the moneybags, with business, with the capitalist press, and with capitalism in all its aspects. Lundberg has documented and traced these connections in his *America’s Sixty Families* in sufficient detail to show that this is no abstraction but the American political reality.

Of course labor can “take over” the Democratic label here and there, but it takes over only a shell. After toiling and moiling with as much sweat and energy and time as they would need to build their own party, the labor forces would find themselves at exactly the same place as if they *had* built their own party: they will have taken over themselves.

We emphasize that this is true *if* the aim is to transform the Democratic Party *into a labor party* (as we will be told it is). Actually, the aim of the top strategists will be considerably different. It will be merely a reshuffling of the labor leaders with the old-line politicians. The former want nothing more than a continuation of the old coalition of the capitalist politicians and labor, because these capitalist-minded labor leaders are just as dead set against following a really independent class line in politics as ever. They will not go further under their own steam. And this far they *can* go.

But a genuine labor party is not merely one in which labor leaders replace a few other politicians in the councils of the donkey. It is a party based on labor’s organizations, one which does not pull its punches out of tender regard for the vested interests of capital; a party which the workers can recognize not merely as their “friend”) but as *their own*.

And this, in the last analysis, is also what was wrong with the Wallace party. In control of the party and dictating its policy was a force which the workers recognized to be alien to the labor movement, as alien

as are the Democratic politicians. This force was the Communist Party, which imposed upon the Wallace movement its appeasement-of-Russia policy.

Back in early 1948, ten million votes was no pipe-dream for the Wallaceites; there was a groundswell which registered the widespread desire for independent third-party action. And in spite of its sponsorship, the Wallace movement showed that the “practical” objections to building a third party could not hold water. It got on the ballot in forty-five states: *how long will it take Reuther and Green and the rest to capture the Democratic Party in forty-five states?*

The electric shock of the Truman upset has not quite subsided in labor’s ranks, but already the first results of the president’s re-election appear to be disquieting. There are not yet any official pronouncements, but all indications are that Truman will carry out his Taft-Hartley pledges to the extent of eliminating any law by that name from the books and restoring the right to a closed shop. A new law will take the place of both the Wagner Act and Taft-Hartley, one which may even retain the hated injunction features of T-H.

It is not too risky to make this statement right now: If this new law had been proposed in 1947 to replace the Wagner Act, the labor movement would have raised a violent howl; now it may be hailed as a victory, the fruits of labor’s good and faithful services at the polls. This is how the lesser-evil policy works regularly.

The over-all question before labor is: Can Truman give the workers what they *want* and *need* and *must have*? We do not believe he can or wants to do so. He has a war economy to run, not a love feast with labor. Why should he be expected to change his spots, this injunctionist and strike-breaker? *Out of gratitude perhaps?*

The payoff will come by 1950, when the next congressional elections take place. On the one hand, the labor leaders will have to show what they mean by and what they can do about “taking over” the Democratic Party. On the other hand, as disappointment with Truman mounts, there will be a new impulsion toward labor-party and third-party action. The character of that election itself sets the goal: *building local and state organizations to run independent labor candidates.*

There is the immediate goal for militants and labor-party advocates in the unions. It is not a long distance off; it is just around the corner. It may be that the sneak attack on the Democrats may have to be lived through for experience before the labor-party wave rolls over the labor leadership. But the time to start is—now.

The Record of Taft-Hartleyism

From August 1947 to the Presidential Election

"Before the 1948 elections are finished, the Taft-Hartley Act will be hailed as the greatest single contribution the Republican Party had made to this nation."—Fred A. Hartley, Jr., *Our New National Labor Policy*, p. 194.

The electoral uprising on November 2 was undoubtedly the result of a number of factors and probably no one of them can be assigned a decisive role by itself. But it would appear from all accounts that the greatest *single* contribution to Truman's victory was the Taft-Hartley Law.

For one thing, this was practically the only live question on which Dewey locked horns with Truman in the course of the campaign. Dewey emerged from his cloud of platitudes and generalities with an all-out endorsement of Taft-Hartley. This provided the main impetus behind the participation of the CIO and AFL political arms in the campaign and the piling up of a large labor vote. The appeal to the workers was: Defeat Taft-Hartley at the polls.

Dewey's decision to go out on a limb on this one issue, and not on any of the controversial questions, is paralleled by another deviation from the early strategy of the Republicans.

The original campaign against the passage of the law naturally had to be based on its potentialities—on the way it *could* be used against labor. The GOP tactic, for a year, was to delay sharpening the claws of the monster until after the election. This is testified to by Hartley himself, who disagreed with the policy:

No sooner had the Taft-Hartley Law been enacted over the Truman veto than the Republican leaders of both the House and Senate decided that no more legislation to which organized labor could possibly object would be passed until after the presidential election of 1948. . . .

Republican leaders had an election to win; sound legislative principles were cast aside. [*Our New National Labor Policy*, pp. 171, 173.]

Three Decrees

When the first anniversary of Taft-Hartley was "celebrated" on August 22, 1948, the refrain in the reactionary press was: "You see, it wasn't as bad as you thought, was it now? Has American labor been 'enslaved' as the labor alarmists predicted? No sir, just some inequities corrected. The unions are still in existence, strikes still occur, wage increases have been won, etc., etc." As we shall show, this line of reassurance was eyewash even then, but the amazing thing is that enforcement of the law took a new stiff turn *in the very month just preceding the election*.

During these crucial weeks when, behind the backs of the pollsters, sentiment against Dewey must have

been already crystallizing on the molecular level, the National Labor Relations Board handed down three Taft-Hartley decisions which delivered body blows against labor's rights. These were the decrees which (1) banned mass picketing; (2) permitted scabs to vote in plant elections; and (3) held international unions responsible for the actions of their local bodies.

There are two things to be noted about these decisions:

(1) While it was the first two which were the greatest shock to the rank and file of labor and the pro-labor public, it was the third which was most deeply resented by the labor *leadership*. And it was these top officials in the driver's seat who were in a position to push the gas pedal down to the floor in the operation of the AFL's Labor League for Political Education and the CIO's PAC.

(2) These three decisions were especially electrifying for another reason. Even in the opposition to the passage of the law, with all the deep black and sometimes even exaggerated pictures that were drawn in labor's agitational speeches and exhortations against the bill, *these* particular interpretations had scarcely even been raised among the hundred other union-busting possibilities hiding in the elastic wrinkles of the act. Not only was the Taft-Hartley knife thrust right into labor's ribs just before it went to the polls, but the worst fears about its future uses were confirmed.

Toward a Balance Sheet

Naturally, in retrospect, one asks: Why on earth did the T-H buccaneers unfurl their skull-and-crossbones even before boarding ship and thus take the risk of scaring the prize away? The first answer that occurs is, of course: overconfidence that the election was in the bag anyway. But in addition the Taft-Hartley machinery, once set up and in operation, had an independent momentum of its own. The cases leading to the three pre-election decisions had been pending for some time, and the united front of the employers and Denham (NLRB general counsel) was getting impatient. Even Walter Lippman was referring to Dewey's election in the past tense, wasn't he?

We have put the spotlight on the immediate pre-election splurge of Taft-Hartleyism, but of course the three decisions noted did not have an effect divorced from the preceding year's buildup.

The intensity of resentment against T-H varies appreciably even in the labor movement, and this intensity of feeling is usually directly proportional to the degree in which the operation of the law has had

its impact on sections of organized labor. There is even the impression abroad among some—no less opposed to the act than others—that at least up to now the Taft-Hartley bark has been worse than its bite, and that while its full consequences might be worse in the future (if not repealed), yet its effect has so far been important only in the case of certain hard-hit unions (like the miners).

This is not true. A sober balance sheet will also avoid the opposite error of exaggerating its lethal qualities, but will cast some light on the paths which anti-labor legislation can be expected to take even if the second Truman administration repeals the existing law in favor of a “compromise,” as a strategic retreat to “previously prepared positions.”

Without doubt the Taft-Hartley Law is the most severe legislative blow which has been struck at labor.

In form the Labor-Management Relations Act (as it is called) was proposed as an amendment to the Wagner Act of 1935, but it was actually a repeal of essential features of the act.

The Wagner Act stated that workers had the right to organize into unions of their own choice; it prohibited employers from interfering with workers who wished to exercise this right; it required employers to recognize and bargain with unions representing the majority of the workers; and it set up enforcement machinery under the National Labor Relations Board, which also conducted elections.

The Taft-Hartley Law restates the “right of workers to organize” and then proceeds to list every possible obstruction, limitation, and impediment to make the exercise of this right difficult, if not impossible. It is not so crude as to make union organization impossible or illegal; it simply wraps the process in a maze of difficulties, and challenges the workers to get through. Thus Gulliver was brought under control by the Lilliputians. The sleeping giant was tied up with hundreds of little strings, and his conquerors were people who measured the length of his little finger.

The scope of the law is far broader than the old Wagner Act. It applies to all industries or activities in interstate commerce or which affect interstate commerce. And its interpretation has been to bring thousands of activities hitherto outside the scope of the government into the network of the law. So ill defined are the T-H provisions on this point, as in countless other cases, that it has been termed the Full Employment Bill for Lawyers.

Senator Robert A. Taft, who piloted the bill through Congress, let the cat out of the bag with his April 1947 statement that “This bill is not a milk-toast bill. It covers about three-quarters of the matters pressed upon us very strenuously by the employers.” Later, in September, Taft made his point even

clearer: the bill “proposed to curb . . . the power of labor leaders to force higher wages.”

Let us see how T-H has worked out to satisfy the capitalist class on at least three-quarters of the matters it pressed for.

1. Affidavit Roundup

The first question which faced the labor movement was whether or not to sign the non-Communist affidavits.

The law provided that in order to use the services of the National Labor Relations Board (for holding union shop elections, for pressing unfair labor practice charges against employers, etc.) a union had to be “in compliance.” That meant that its elected officers and Executive Board members had to file non-Communist affidavits, and the union had to register with the NLRB and file annual financial statements.

This outrageous government intervention into the internal affairs of the union movement and dictation of its officers was vigorously protested by the AFL and the CIO. But when the time came to lead a fight, first the AFL and then the CIO meekly submitted, and voted at their conventions late in 1947 to permit compliance.

John L. Lewis, whose union, the United Mine Workers, has a tight hold in the mining areas, broke with the AFL on this question and his union has still not complied. With few other exceptions most of the AFL internationals have filed the necessary papers.

In the CIO, Philip Murray’s Steelworkers, likewise strongly entrenched in their industry, have refused to comply, although there are indications that there may be a change of policy. The Steelworkers Union challenged the constitutionality of this section of the law, but the Supreme Court decided against them. The National Maritime Union also lost its case in court when it attempted to challenge this and other provisions of T-H. A referendum of its membership recently voted in favor of compliance.

The Stalinist-controlled unions, by and large, have refused to comply. Where they have done so, as in the case of the Farm Equipment Union, they have simply shifted the CPers to so-called technical posts, placed front men in the elected officers’ positions, and have gone smoothly on. What motivated the FE was obvious; they lost bargaining rights for 17,000 workers at the Caterpillar Tractor Works to the UAW, because the FE did not appear on the ballot.

In many cases the unions themselves have taken over the intent of this provision of the law by passing constitutional amendments barring Communists from holding local office or serving as delegates to conventions. Lewis, for example, has such a provision which he enforces internally as strongly as Taft and Hartley might desire. Murray, for all his denunciation of the non-Communist affidavits as an invasion of the democratic rights of unionists, had the last convention of the Steelworkers pass a constitutional amendment

barring Communists from all future conventions and from local office.

Thus the reactionary intent of the legislators stimulated the labor leaders to conduct their own witch hunts and "anti-red" purges.

The latest figures issued November 6 by the National Labor Relations Board reveal that 174 national unions and 10,331 local unions are in compliance. Of the national unions in compliance, 94 are affiliated with the AFL, 31 with the CIO, and 49 are independent. Non-Communist affidavits had been filed by 98,256 officers of local and international unions. These affidavits, as well as the other forms required for compliance, must be filed annually, and constant attention must be paid to this paper work if the union is to stay on the NLRB's good books. The major non-qualifying unions remain the United Electrical Workers, CIO, the Steelworkers, CIO, and the independent United Mine Workers.

2. The Right to Organize

Under the new restrictions the organization of new workers—after all, only one fourth of the nation's workers are organized—has either slowed down or stopped completely. The difficulties confronting workers are formidable.

The law, under the guise of granting "free speech" to the employer, now permits him to herd his workers into a meeting where he can freely attack the union; he is free to tell them that if they join or vote for the union, it will make their jobs and working conditions worse, and that he might even close down the plant. None of this is "directly intimidating," according to the Taft-Hartleyite NLRB set up by Truman.

The employer is "free"—free to conduct the most open and flagrant kind of anti-union campaign without running into any conflict with T-H. In one case, the NLRB upheld the right of the employer's foremen to distribute leaflets attacking the union. Company unions have begun springing up with the blessings of T-H.

As soon as a union organizer appears near the factory gates, the employer can request an election among his employees, even though the union is totally unprepared for it. A "no" vote for the union means that another election cannot be held for a year, and thus union organization is stalled. Or the employer can set up a phony company union and forestall the legitimate union in that manner.

The AFL presented the testimony of 171 field representatives and union organizers to the congressional "Watchdog Committee" which was set up to check on T-H operation. They pointed out that whereas under the old Wagner Act the union could usually arrange an election in a month or two, under T-H, with all its provisions for employer stalling and slow processing, nine and ten months go by with no action. Workers in the meantime are told by the employers that

the union is doing nothing for them and they are likely to lose interest by the time the election rolls around. Employers can discharge the most active union workers and indulge in discriminatory acts with little fear of penalty.

The impasse in new organization is highlighted by what has happened in the South. Operation Dixie has ground to a standstill. The CIO has all it can do to hold on to what it already has, much less conquer new fields. Matters are equally bad with the AFL organizing drive. The director of the drive, George Googe, reported that organizing activities had been cut down about 75 per cent, and this was an optimistic figure.

The statistics issued by the National Labor Relations Board reveal what has happened to new organization.

Through March 1948 unions had submitted only 3400 petitions for certification as collective bargaining agents under T-H; during a similar period in 1947 they had filed about 6300 petitions. A similar comparison on representation elections actually held showed that only 1377 elections had been held under the new law, contrasted with 6920 elections under the old Wagner Act, so drastically has new organization been curtailed.

3. Unfair!

When the unions harassed by anti-union actions of employers attempt to bring them up before the NLRB on charges of "unfair labor practices," they find themselves stalled again. The T-H Law, for the first time, allows employers to file "unfair labor practice" charges against unions—and the law specifically gives them priority over union complaints.

Since the enactment of T-H, employers have filed 420 charges against unions for unfair labor practices; they received top priority in consideration, and the board issued twenty-eight complaints against unions. During the same period unions and workers filed 1550 charges against employers—more than three times as many—but the board only issued eighteen complaints against employers, and these after long delays. Thus the board has proceeded against unions seven times as often as against employers.

Nor can the workers who have been fired for union activity get any comfort while waiting for these cases to be heard. Under the law, over 12,500 cases have piled up in the NLRB, more cases than in any other year. And the charges of unfair labor practices continue to mount at the rate of 300 a month.

The T-H dice are loaded heavily against unions on this score. If the employer commits an unfair labor practice, the NLRB's general counsel can use his discretion about seeking an injunction, and then he must issue a formal complaint. But if a union is involved, the general counsel is obliged to seek a federal court injunction even without a formal complaint.

Again, if the union is found guilty, the employer

may sue the union for damages in any place where the union operates. But if it is an employer who is guilty, the union cannot sue the company for damages or obtain an injunction except at the discretion of the NLRB general counsel.

This double standard prevails throughout the T-H setup, even as to the definition of an "unfair labor practice." The law defines a bushful of union acts which can come under this term but treads on eggshells in defining similar acts for employers. Should the union breach its contract, it is entirely proper for the employer to fire all the employees or lock them out. But if it is the company that breaches the contract, the union would be guilty of an unfair labor practice if it declared a strike.

4. Union Shops

The T-H Law outlawed closed shops (which require workers to be union members before they can be hired) but did permit union shops under certain conditions. A union shop permits the employer to hire a non-union worker provided such a worker joins the union within thirty days. But every conceivable obstacle was set up in the way of winning union shops—which, of course, are vital to union strength.

Before a union can establish a union shop, it must first be recognized as the collective bargaining agent. An election must be conducted by the NLRB to determine if a majority of all the employees eligible to vote want the union to represent them.

Note that a majority of all the employees eligible to vote is necessary—not merely a majority of those voting. Thus the workers who are absent at the time of the election are counted as "no" votes. (If this procedure were followed by the government, not one of the men in the 80th Congress, which was elected by only one third of the eligible voters, would have been seated.)

If the union has won a majority of all eligible employees, it must then file a petition showing that 30 per cent of the workers want a union shop. The NLRB—in due time—will then proceed to hold a second election to see if the workers want a union shop. Here again a majority of those eligible to vote must cast their ballots in favor.

Can the workers then proceed to have a union shop? Only if the employer willingly consents to it. If he refuses, they may still have to go out on strike for it—after going through another long and involved set of procedures for calling strikes. The two elections give the union only the legal right to request the union shop.

This setup plays havoc in the case of industries with seasonal layoffs, floating populations, or casual labor. In such cases it is almost physically impossible for the unions to win the required majorities.

For example, in one Illinois election almost 5000 out of 6000 voting favored the union shop. Ordinarily

that would be considered a smashing victory. However, the total number of eligible voters was 10,600. It did not matter that some of these workers had drifted away and would not be back in the plant; others had gotten new jobs. The 5000 union-shop votes were not a majority of the *eligible* votes, and the union lost.

In spite of all this, particularly embarrassing to the sponsors of T-H are the votes that workers have cast favoring the union shop. Far from seizing on the occasion (as these legislators predicted) to "liberate" themselves from the dictatorship of the unions, the workers have reaffirmed their belief in their unions.

Over 18,000 union-shop elections have been conducted by the NLRB, and in 17,640 of them—roughly 98 per cent of the cases—the workers upheld the union shop. The majorities averaged over 95 per cent. Employers who balk at agreeing to the union shop are put in a more difficult position after the union has won an overwhelming victory at the polls.

As a result of this outcome, there is widespread sentiment to repeal this provision on the part of the union-busters. They have been kicking themselves for wasting taxpayers' money to produce union victories instead of union defeats. In the largest election held so far, among the 47,000 garment workers in the New York area, only a tiny handful of 448 workers voted against the union shop.

5. In the Building Trades

The two and a half million workers in the building trades have operated for years on the basis of a closed shop. But with the passage of T-H, General Counsel Denham insisted that the building trades came under the scope of the law and had to hold union-shop elections. The building-trades unions have supplied skilled help as necessary to the construction industry; but the problem of holding union-shop elections was complicated by the fact that no "bargaining unit" existed, because of the rapid turnover in the industry and because workers shifted from one job to another.

After spending one and a half million dollars and working ten months on the problem, the solution was decided on: 600 to 700 area elections. Cooperating employers were to supply the names of the workers. After a small test election in which the union shop won, the NLRB was all set to conduct a big-scale election in Detroit. But at the last moment, the Detroit Homes Builders Association, which had operated open-shop until 1941, refused to cooperate—its position might be "jeopardized." In other words, they wanted to have a free field to return to open-shop conditions after the building boom.

This complete breakdown of NLRB machinery does not affect the building crafts where they are strongly organized, but it does open the door to open-shoppers. Already, in Long Island and in the Middle West, builders are employing non-union help; and the present status of the union-shop elections leaves labor

in an exposed position if and when the employers decide to get tough.

6. Injunctions

The Norris-La Guardia Act of 1932 outlawed yellow-dog contracts and the use of the injunction in labor disputes. But the T-H Law specifically provided that the NLRB must go to court and secure an injunction without notice against a union for a host of reasons, in particular, union actions including secondary boycotts or "unfair labor practices." It is this provision of the law which has been used most strikingly against labor and which has aroused the most determined opposition.

Since T-H, the NLRB general counsel has sought injunctions twenty-nine times against unions and only twice against employers. The courts granted eighteen petitions against unions and one against the employer (the UAW case on insurance bargaining). The NLRB has the power to apply for injunctions in *any* of its cases against unions. Three unions in particular have felt the vicious thrust of the injunction provisions of the law—the miners, the printers, and the maritime workers. T-H gives the NLRB the despotic power of the Queen of Hearts in *Alice in Wonderland*: "Sentence first, verdict after."

No other provision shows more clearly the deadly intent of the law and the close collaboration of big business and government in the fight against labor. Again and again the NLRB has taken the initiative, even when business was a trifle reluctant, to push ahead full-steam against the unions.

An agile co-worker on this team was President Truman. Using the provision which allows the use of injunctions in cases of stoppages which would "imperil the national health and safety," Truman used the injunction powers to halt the pending strikes of longshoremen and other workers for the 80-day cooling-off period.

The NLRB general counsel has described the injunction provisions of T-H as "too powerful and sharp a weapon to be weakened and dulled by indiscriminate usage." He has since proceeded to make the use of T-H injunctions a familiar practice in labor disputes, and has apparently sought to keep the weapon sharp by constant whetting on the backs of labor. In sharp contrast to the T-H record of thirty-one injunction demands, during the twelve-year history of the NLRB under the Wagner Act, only on two occasions did the board seek a court restraint.

The injunctive process was invoked three times in the coal fields, and heavy fines of \$1½ million meted out to John L. Lewis and the United Mine Workers for contempt of court. But in the end even Judge Goldsborough adopted the position that there is nothing illegal about the miners' union-shop clause (without the sanction of an NLRB election) unless a complaint is filed charging an unfair labor practice.

The International Typographical Union has borne the brunt of the heaviest legal attack from General Counsel Denham's office. The case got national headlines when it was revealed that Senator Taft had brought pressure to bear on the NLRB to intensify and speed up its persecution of the ITU. He was acting as the spokesman for the Chicago publishers, whose printers have been on strike over a year. Taft himself is one of the owners of a newspaper, the Cincinnati *Times-Star*.

The ITU, which has enjoyed peaceful relations with its employers for decades and has long been cited as a nice, respectable "model union," is now engaged in a desperate struggle. After enjoying a closed shop for years, the T-H Law forced the union to work out a substitute "competency" clause which in effect gave it the same control.

Contracts embodying this clause were signed all over the country, but the Chicago publishers decided to try to break the power of the union. Led by the powerful Chicago *Tribune*, they launched the attack on the ITU; a strike resulted. Injunction proceedings last March restrained the ITU from insisting on closed-shop stipulations in contracts.

The NLRB, under pressure from Taft and the publishers, sought an injunction so sweeping as to outlaw the payment of strike benefits. Judge Swygert, who issued the original injunction, was appealed to again by the NLRB on the ground that the union had not obeyed it. In October, therefore, he found the ITU and its four top officers guilty of contempt of court because they had insisted on clauses discriminating against non-union help.

In great detail the new injunction instructs the officers and the union how they must conduct themselves in the future on contract matters. The union is to reimburse the courts for all the costs of this litigation. The decision is a serious blow to a union which has already spent over seven million dollars on the strike. ITU members throughout the country are paying five per cent of their weekly earnings to finance the strikers.

The savage persecution of the ITU by General Counsel Denham was a foretaste for other unions—regardless of how strongly established and well behaved they have been in the past. Long-standing union conditions, like the hiring hall in the maritime trades, are now endangered and are up for court rulings. In the case of the hiring hall typical NLRB confusion was revealed when one trial examiner declared it legal and a second declared it illegal—in two different sections of the country.

7. Raiding

This law, whose sponsors promised that it would eliminate jurisdictional disputes, has led to a plague of internecine union warfare.

The non-complying unions, usually under Stalin-

ist control, are not able to appear on the ballot in a union-shop election. In such cases their rival unions can step in and take over the plant. This pattern has become all too familiar. The AFL Retail Clerks are now invading the New York department-store field against the Stalinist-controlled locals of the CIO Retail, Wholesale & Department Store Employees, and have already won the bargaining rights at the Oppenheim Collins store.

Large plants of the United Electrical Workers have been taken over by the United Automobile Workers. John Green's Shipbuilders have opened their arms to government workers, to social-agency workers, to all and sundry. Unfortunately, the situation is often complicated by back-door deals with the employers, particularly in the case of certain AFL unions raiding the CIO plants. The workers often end up with worse conditions, even though they voted for the AFL. The employers reap benefits from this situation.

Perhaps the most vicious raids have been the forays into the International Association of Machinists by Dave Beck, the disreputable "labor czar" of the West Coast.

The IAM called a strike last April of its 15,000 workers at the Boeing Aircraft plant in Seattle. Beck's mouth watered for this juicy plum, and—while he thundered that T-H was a "slave-labor law"—he hid behind the law to furnish strikebreakers from his own Teamsters Union.

Beck first claimed, on flimsy grounds, that he wanted jurisdiction over 5000 workers but it was obvious that he wanted complete control. The IAM has had the dual job of fighting both Boeing and Beck.

8. Voting Scabs

Recent decisions of the NLRB have dealt further heavy blows against the unions.

In October for the first time the board ruled that striking employees may be permanently replaced and excluded from voting in an election. This decision applies only to economic strikes for wages and similar demands, and not for strikes against illegal practices by an employer. The strikebreaking replacements are permitted to vote, while those whom they "replaced" are excluded from voting.

The case before the board was brought by the International Association of Machinists against the Pipe Machinery Company of Cleveland. After a strike conducted by the IAM, an election was held last March in which both strikers and strikebreakers were allowed to vote. Of the total vote of 184, the IAM challenged 74; the company union and the company also challenged 74. The NLRB voted to count only the strikebreakers' votes, thus ensuring a victory for the company union.

This precedent-making decision shatters the pre-

vious practice under the Wagner Act which allowed only strikers to vote.

The IAM pointed out that the T-H Law states that nothing in the act "shall be so construed as either to interfere with or impede or diminish in any way the right to strike." But the board bobbed up with another provision of the law which states that "employees on strike who are not entitled to reinstatement shall not be eligible to vote," and candidly explained that this provision *does* limit the right to strike. In the board's words, it just "discourages its exercise in some situations by denying the franchise to those strikers who lose their right to reinstatement."

Another strikebreaking pattern has thus been added to the T-H technique. An employer can break a strike by the simple expedient of hiring strikebreakers, designating them as permanent replacements, and then proceeding to an election. Incidentally, the union's strike in this case followed, to a letter, all the prescribed rules and regulations. Also interesting was the fact that the board's decision was unanimous. All the niceties are observed: the strikers are not fired; they are simply replaced.

9. Mass Picketing Banned

In its tender regard for the sensibilities of scabs, another precedent-setting decision was handed down by the NLRB to the effect that mass picketing, "even where it is conducted peacefully," is illegal. Previous decisions had merely outlawed picketing where violence and intimidation were alleged. In the case under consideration, 80 to 200 pickets were considered to be mass-picketing.

The reason for the decision? "There is ample authority for the proposition that force of numbers alone has an intimidating effect upon employees otherwise willing to cross a picket line," and the massing of pickets "exceeds the bounds of peaceful persuasion." Since the T-H Law has been set up as the bill of rights for strikebreakers, the NLRB is naturally concerned that nothing should perturb these gentle souls.

Unions which have ignored this law are already being haled into court on charges and face fines and penalties. In addition, corporations are demanding that the unions reimburse scabs for wages they lost because they feared to cross the picket line.

10. Their Brothers' Keepers

A recent decision, as we have mentioned, broadened the responsibility of the international union for acts of its local organizations, even though the international may not have sanctioned the actions or even approved of them. In a case involving the International Longshoremen & Warehousemen's Union, of which Harry Bridges is president, the NLRB ruled that the international union was responsible for alleged illegal picket-line activities.

This decision has far-reaching consequences since it would open the door to international responsibility for all sorts of local acts. The CIO general counsel, Arthur J. Goldberg, has announced that he will appeal this decision, as well as the decision outlawing mass picketing. He pointed out that "The board's ruling with respect to union responsibility creates a doctrine of liability without fault."

11. Involuntary Scabbery

The last three decisions cited are but the most flagrant of a series of decisions which hamstring the union movement. Other momentous decisions have concerned the secondary boycott, and have forced unions to discontinue practices which they follow in the normal course of union functioning.

The decisions have forced workers to become strikebreakers in some cases, as in the case of the ITU local which prepares material for the use of the Chicago newspapers—which are being struck by members of their own union. The T-H Law so strictly interprets secondary boycotts that the NLRB has ordered workers to work on scab products coming from a struck firm under the threat of jail sentences: even where the strikers are members of the same union. The board has also handed down decisions instructing union men to cross picket lines or face court action.

Unions found guilty of violating injunction orders or of unfair labor practices run the risk of damage suits and court fines. Damage suits running into millions of dollars have been filed against unions, and already millions have been paid out, principally by the mine workers. The oil and transport companies have filed twenty-four damage suits against the striking West Coast oil workers. Ten of these suits claim damages amounting to \$27,000,000 and the remaining fourteen state that the "losses are too great to calculate at this time." These recent decisions have melted the soft soap out of the act and revealed its vicious intent. The brass knuckles are bared.

12. Political Action

Congress aimed to hamstring labor on the political field as well as on the economic: T-H made it illegal for a labor organization as such to contribute funds or to make expenditures in connection with political campaigns. CIO President Murray challenged the constitutionality of this section, along with other labor leaders, by making political endorsements which were carried in the union newspapers.

In his case the Supreme Court ruled that unions could spend money for *some* political purposes.

Which? The CIO case involved "only expenditures by a union to meet the costs of publishing an issue of a weekly union periodical containing expressions of advocacy and opinion in connection with a congressional election and distributing same."

However, in the case of an AFL painters' local

in Hartford which had bought radio time and newspaper space to urge defeat of Taft-Hartley congressmen, the ruling decreed that such actions were illegal, since "union monies were expended for publication of expressions of political advocacy intended to affect the result of the election and the action of the convention in an established newspaper of general circulation and for a broadcast by a commercial radio station." The penalty for the violation of the political-spending ban is \$1000 fine or one year's imprisonment for an individual, or both.

The theory seems to be that unions can go into politics provided they do so on a small scale and provided they do not tell too many people about it. Otherwise, it might actually affect the election! The CIO and AFL evaded this section of the law by operating through their parallel political organizations. However, in a number of localities, unions flaunted this provision and participated directly in the elections. Had the outcome of the elections been a Dewey victory, a large-scale investigation of such activities, and consequent charges, would have undoubtedly resulted. But the Democrats are hardly likely to bite the hands that fed them.

That is Taft-Hartley up to now—"now" being the re-election of Truman and the reconquest of Congress by the Democrats. As this is written, it is generally expected that the 81st Congress will "do something" to carry out the anti-T-H pledge of the Truman campaign; what that something will be is still in the making.

But the New York *Times'* Louis Stark, among other correspondents, makes clear that there is no thought of going back to the status quo ante—in other words, that the year-plus of T-H operation just described *has worn a permanent groove in capitalist labor policy:*

While spokesmen for both the AFL and CIO would be pleased to have the former Wagner Act re-enacted, they know that this will be impossible without certain changes.

However, they are not as yet committed to any specific proposal. Whatever may come out of the new meetings it is certain that the president will insist that labor and management try to work out a solution amicable to both sides. . . .

It is recognized by labor that some of the Southern Democrats who favored the Taft-Hartley Act and who are in the Senate may not wish to reverse themselves on the labor issue. Mr. Barkley . . . is looked to as the mediator in such a contingency. [November 8]

The hated symbol of the Taft-Hartley label may disappear, and labor's taut nerves be temporarily eased by its burial, while that well-known "friend of labor," Alben Barkley, arranges with his Dixie colleagues for a substitute operation on the Wagner Act. But *there is no going back* to the New-Deal-cum-Madame-Perkins halcyon days of class collaboration

(Continued on last page)

Class Forces Behind Tito

Conclusion of a Study on the Contradictions of the Stalinist Empire

In the first part of this study (*The Economic Drive Behind Tito*, last month) we investigated the economic root of the dispute between Tito and Moscow and found this in the conflict over the industrialization of Yugoslav economy. We sought to show that this was not merely a difference of opinion or conjunctural desire but was founded on the conflict of interest between an imperialist bureaucratic-collectivist class (Russia) and a native bureaucratic-collectivist class-in-formation (Yugoslavia).

It is our purpose now to trace, in the Tito-Cominform clash, some consequences and manifestations of this phenomenon, with the aim of exploring the nature of Stalinism and of Stalinist imperialism.

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It is this conflict over industrialization which gives meaning to an otherwise most peculiar controversy which raged through the polemics between the Yugoslavs and their Cominform critics. It will be necessary to start with some representative quotations since this element in the dispute did not at all penetrate into the American press reports—the correspondents, no doubt, deeming it meaningless “Marxist” hair-splitting.

The subject of this controversy was: *the possibility of building socialism in one country!*

First, some samples from the Cominform mouth-pieces:

... the leaders of Yugoslavia are distorting the Marxist-Leninist doctrine on the possibility of building socialism in one country alone. Socialism cannot be built in one or several countries without the aid of the USSR or against it, without the aid of the popular democracies or against them . . . [Georghiu Dej, general secretary of the Rumanian Stalinist party.]

The draft program [of the CPY] . . . follows the un-Marxist un-Leninist nationalist idea that Yugoslavia can supposedly build socialism by herself, and the question of aid from the other Communist Parties and the Soviet Union and from the popular democracies in building socialism in Yugoslavia is to all intents and purposes ignored. [Yudin, Russian representative in the Cominform.]

Yugoslavia thinks that she is able to build socialism herself. . . . the Soviet Union built socialism alone in isolation, for she was surrounded by capitalist countries. Today, however, the countries of popular democracy which are building socialism are not isolated any longer. The cooperation with the Soviet Union . . . constitutes one of the mainstays of the planned economy, and the aid from the Soviet Union does not contain any political clauses. [Polish radio summary of article in *Glos Ludu*, Polish Stalinist organ]

The main rejoinder for the Yugoslavs was made by Milovan Djilas, No. 4 man in the Tito hierarchy:

The question of the possibility of building socialism in one country surrounded by capitalism has already been worked out by Comrade Stalin. Comrade Stalin's teachings show that it is possible in one country but not in all countries. Such a country was the USSR. However, Comrade Stalin does not say that the USSR is the only such country.

But to pose the possibility of building socialism in a country without the cooperation of the USSR and the other democratic countries is just as absurd as to say that other socialist countries can leave a socialist state isolated in the face of imperialism. This is absurd because Lenin's law is correct that the socialist economies of different countries must draw close to one another, must link up and not be separated. This rapprochement can take place solely on the basis of mutual cooperation, by taking into account historical peculiarities and stages of development, on the basis of voluntary agreement and mutual confidence . . .

However, the question is raised whether Yugoslavia is a country which can build socialism with its own forces, even without the aid of other countries. We leave this question unanswered, because cooperation with other countries already exists. It would be monstrous if Yugoslavia were to be forced by other countries with socialist economies to prove whether she could not build socialism alone.

If anyone had said that the Yugoslavs' tempo of socialist construction is too fast or that the Yugoslavs should have renounced one thing or another for the sake of the realization of the common socialist aim—if that had been said, it could have been discussed. But this is not what has been done. Instead, something which is obviously against the principles of Leninism is thought up, is then attributed to the Yugoslavs as their concept, and then our critics inveigh against it. [Borba, July 5.]

Djilas (we see in the lines I have italicized) delicately complains about the fact that the Cominform has hypocritically pitched the question on the “lofty” level of the theory of socialism-in-one-country when what is really at stake is a couple of other things: the Yugoslavs' tempo of industrialization, and whether they “should have renounced one thing or another for the sake of the realization of the common socialist [read: *Russian*] aim.” This last circumlocution means exactly the same thing as the policy ascribed to Zujovic: slowing or renouncing industrialization in the “higher interest of Soviet policy.”

Aid on a Silver Platter

The defensive protestation quoted from *Glos Ludu* should also be noted: “the aid from the Soviet Union does not contain any political clauses,” it assures us. This merely reveals that the Yugoslavs are aware that it does, and don't like it.

It is in fact this question of “aid from the Soviet Union” which is the meaningful heart of the controversy, and not the question of socialism-in-one-country—which is only the theoretical mask conferred by the Cominformers.

One needs only a slight acquaintance with Rus-

sian economic policy vis-à-vis its satellites¹ to know what the Russians mean when they insist that the latter must "build socialism" only "with the aid of the Soviet Union."

To put it bluntly (as the Titoists energetically avoid doing in their public articles and speeches—while talking about the "degeneration of the Soviet Union" in private bull sessions) it means: reconstructing the native economy *in dependence on the Soviet Union*, adjusting the native economy to *Russia's* needs and *its* "higher interests."

This is also the content of the "political clauses" which the Yugoslavs fear. The relationship and reaction is, *mutatis mutandis*, analogous to that of the Western nations to the Marshall Plan. Tito's reaction to Ella Winter's question about the Marshall Plan was not a vagary.

We have questioned the meaning of the phrase "aid from the Soviet Union," which is used in practically all the Cominform fulminations on this subject, and have interpreted it. It is interesting to find that Kidric raises the same suspicion about the cliché.

Those comrades who accuse us of posing the building of socialism without the aid of and even against the socialist camp have nowhere defined what they actually mean by the term "aid." Let us therefore be permitted to define the question of aid ourselves . . .

Economic aid can be understood in various ways. One may understand aid to mean a gift without any counterservices—so to speak, aid on a silver platter. On the other hand, aid can be understood as increasingly closer mutual economic cooperation and mutual facilitation of economic development

By the second, Kidric makes clear in his report, he means the mutual aid which is the outcome of normal foreign-trade and exchange relations between friendly but sovereign states. What he rejects is—getting something for nothing! Surely a curious point to polemize about at some length, as Kidric does. . . . He continues:

As to the first kind of aid—aid on a silver platter—we can and must openly and clearly say that we never requested it either of the Soviet Union or of the popular democracies, not because we were hostilely inclined toward the Soviet Union but . . . because the Soviet Union for us is a too precious fortress of international progress.

A touchingly generous reason, followed immediately by something less angelic:

What would such aid mean from the Soviet Union? It would mean, for example, to request—without any of our own efforts, *without the development of the forces of production in our country by our working people*, without economic counterservices—that the Soviet Union, *at its own expense*, with the efforts of the Soviet people themselves, creat a heavy industry, etc., in our country. [My emphasis—H. D.]

With the usual Aesopian language (although we must admit that Kidric is the most outspoken because of the nature of his subject) he neglects to add (but

1. See Valentin Toma's "The Russification of Economy in Rumania" in the August *NI*.

clearly conveys) that in the contingency described—

(1) the industry so built by Russia "at its own expense" would naturally *belong* to Russia and not to Yugoslavia;

(2) it would be built and planned to conform to *Russia's* needs and economic pattern for Eastern Europe, and not to Tito's vision of an industrially self-sufficient Yugoslavia;

(3) it would be built at the tempo, and to the degree, and with the distribution of such categories as consumers' goods and heavy industry, as were convenient to the Kremlin;

—that, in other words, *it would mean the Russification of Yugoslav economy.*

This is what "aid on a silver platter" means. The Russians offer a poisoned bonbon, and Tito politely demurs: "No, no, thank you, it would spoil my appetite, if you don't mind."

2

Just as the economic drive behind Tito explains the meaning of the controversy over "socialism in one country," so also it must be taken into consideration in fitting another piece of the jigsaw puzzle into the picture. This is the demand raised by the Yugoslavs for a Balkan Federation.

To be sure, in this case the immediately visible motivations are sufficient to account for this demand without any deeper probing. Tito knows that there are two strikes against him if he tries to stand alone and isolated against powerful Russia; he knows too that the Stalinist bureaucracies of the other satellites are, like him, chafing at Russian domination, even if—unlike him—they dare do nothing about it. Nothing could be more natural, therefore, than that he should look to an alliance with his fellow subdictators for mutual defense of their national independence against Russification. In addition, in this split-up corner of Europe where the crisscrossing of national and ethnic lines is wellnigh unravelable, the idea of Balkan Federation has historically been a standard slogan of all socialists and Marxists and indeed of all enlightened elements.

The idea of Balkan Federation is, therefore, in any case an inevitable accompaniment of *any* movement for autonomy from Russia in this region. But in addition, given the specific economic drive behind Titoism, Balkan Federation also becomes an *economic* necessity and not merely a political weapon.

For the Cominform accusations of "adventurism" directed against Tito have more than a kernel of truth. The frenzied pace of industrialization and economic development which is set by the Yugoslav Five Year Plan has, as we have seen, the slim physical basis of a country which is quite small, is lacking in many critical raw materials (like oil), is short on capital and skilled labor, etc. The belief is widespread,

even among foreign observers rooting for Tito's anti-Cominform resistance, that the marshal is riding for a fall, that he will infallibly break his neck in this attempt to leap over his own head, now that the rest of the Russian empire is mobilized against him.

That the Five Year Plan is in dangerous straits is obvious, and—even before the break with Moscow and the subsequent partial economic blockade—speeches by Edvard Kardelj and authoritative articles made it clear that the plan was encountering hard sledding, lagging badly, and meeting heavy (if passive) resistance especially from the peasantry.

The Balkan Federation Slogan

Backward Yugoslavia alone is too slim a basis for such ambitions as Tito's; his economic aspirations demand a wider economic area on which to rest. The traditional slogan of Balkan Federation therefore, takes on new meaning as an *economic* necessity in proportion as a counterweight is sought to the Russification of Balkan economy.

The slogan of Balkan Federation is in any form inherently an anti-Russian slogan today, and it was by no mere whim of the Kremlin that Dimitrov of Bulgaria was slapped down when he breathed it in January.² For Russia has its own solution to the "Balkanization" of the Balkans: namely, the integration of these states into the Russian empire (whether this means formal absorption into the USSR is immaterial). Balkan Federation solves nothing that "Russian federation" does not also solve; it therefore has meaning today only as an *alternative* to domination by Russia.

As long as capitalism ruled in the Balkans, the Stalinists could be champions of Balkan Federation as a handy weapon which hit against each national group of rulers; now that Russian imperialism rules, it is equally true that the slogan hits objectively at the current rulers. Thus the slogan which, before the war, expressed the negation of national sovereignty and Balkan separation, today means—separatism from the Russian empire. The "traditional" slogan is only apparently traditional; its content is new.

3

To give a practical meaning to the adventurist program of hothouse industrialization and bureaucratization, Tito is, then, forced to look outside his own borders for a bigger and more viable ground of operations against the Russian overlordship. He cannot find this by submitting to the West because his own social basis (bureaucratic economy) is thereby jeopardized. He therefore looks to the section of

2. A week before the Yugoslav explosion, the Belgrade news agency **Tanjug** announced that the Balkan Youth Council (a Balkan federation of the youth organizations) had been dissolved, after a meeting in which Guy de Boisson, chairman of the World Federation of Democratic Youth, laid down the line to representatives of the Yugoslav, Bulgarian, Greek and Trieste youth groups. Each national group would henceforth work under the direct control of De Boisson's young Cominform.

Europe already under bureaucratic collectivism. He seeks an "Eastern Union" which will bear to the Russian giant a relationship similar to that sought by Churchill in Western Union vis-à-vis the American giant.

But nowadays there is no fine line between imperialist oppressor and imperialist subject. Just as, under the hierarchic structure of feudalism, a landholder was a lord over his vassals and at the same time often himself the vassal of a more powerful lord, so today: the overlordship of American imperialism presently threatens the national sovereignty of and evokes the spirit of national resistance in states which are themselves the actual or would-be imperialist oppressors of other nations. So also Yugoslavian bureaucratic-collectivism, in the very process of attempting to mobilize the other satellites against Russia in the name of national independence, at the same time tries to dominate *them*. Tito dreams not merely of autonomy from Russian rule but of himself becoming No. 1 in Eastern Europe.

Yugoslav Sub-Imperialism

Dreams? More than that. His mouthpieces constantly insist that Tito-Yugoslavia is No. 1 in the world of the "popular democracies." This is truly remarkable in view of the fact that this claim recurs in the midst of appeals to these states to support Tito against the Cominform. It does not sound like a very diplomatic tack to take! The appeal is not: "Let us both assert our independence"; it is: "Support me, your leader."

The superiority of Yugoslavia over the other satellites is rubbed home in a number of ways in the course of appeals for support to these same satellites:

Every other party, with the exception, of course, of the CPSU, would have collapsed in a struggle such as the one that has been imposed upon us. [Djilas, *Borba*, July 5.]

No other Communist Party, except the All-Union [Russian] Communist Party could withstand such blows without falling to pieces like a house of cards. [Report of Tito to Fifth Congress; this sentence provoked "prolonged applause."]

. . . our party succeeded in . . . achieving in practice the greatest results after the All-Union Communist Party. [Ibid.]

[Our] Communist Party . . . has made the greatest advance toward socialism, after the All-Union Party. [Moise Pjade, *Borba*, July 10.]

. . . certain heads of other parties who arrived in their free countries in planes with pipes in their mouths, and who for four years, four times daily, vainly called on the masses to struggle, via radio, while we won our freedom with arms in our hands. [Ibid.]

And so on. At the Fifth Congress, Kidric's report dwelt for a whole passage on the "essential difference between us and the other popular democracies" with regard to the path and tempo of economic and social development since liberation, in a manner highly uncomplimentary to all the others.

This could be, of course, the "swell-headedness" of which the Cominform complained; and it cannot be denied that Tito and his entourage have grandiose plans for themselves. It is scarcely, however, a question of a personality trait. The Yugoslavs see a role opening before them.

The Case of Albania

The reaction of the other satellite dictators to Tito's break was complicated by the existence of this tendency. On the one hand (as was explained in the greatest detail by Max Shachtman in the August *NI*) Dimitrov, Rakosi, Pauker, et al. have the same yearning for a free hand from Russian tutelage as Tito struck out for. On the other hand, however, Tito is a rival bidder for domination over *them*.³

The matter went furthest in the relations between Yugoslavia and Albania, because of Albania's geographical position and size. It is well known that before the break Albania was practically a sub-satellite of Belgrade. Yet with the Cominform blast it was little Albania which went furthest in words and deeds in breaking off friendly relations. The day after the break, the Albanian CP statement flatly launched the accusation: "The leaders of the . . . Yugoslav Communist Party tried to convert the country . . . into a colony of their own. The Trotskyist leaders of the Yugoslav Communist Party have attempted . . . to annihilate the independence of our country and of our party."

On July 6 *Borba*, replying, unwittingly painted a detailed picture of a Yugoslavia engaged in as thorough a process of economic infiltration in Albania as characterizes Russian policy in, say, Rumania. Just as in the latter case the Russification of Rumanian economy has taken place largely through the formation of "mixed companies" in which Russian capital has the predominant control, so also were Yugoslav-Albanian mixed companies formed to develop the latter country. *Borba* itself underlines that this was done "on the model of Soviet mixed companies formed after the liberation of some popular democracies." The article reveals that—at a time when Yugoslavia itself is starving for machinery, technical equipment and personnel, and investment capital!—Tito poured quantities of these precious resources into Albania, just as if it were a province of his own. Thus were constructed or reconstructed Albania's naphtha industry, mining industry, the Dures-Pecin railroad, the hydroelectric power station near Tirana, copper production, new chromium mines, and a long list of various kinds of factories.

Borba's argument, of course, is that these sacrifices were made purely out of the generosity of the Yugoslav heart: "these facts . . . serve to unmask the utter shamelessness of the lies about the mixed com-

panies being a Yugoslav government instrument for the exploitation of Albania"—but the reader is reminded of Kidric's strenuous objections to getting "something for nothing" in the case of *his* would-be benefactor Russia.

Borba further reveals: Under an agreement made in June 1947, Yugoslavia granted Hoxha's satrapy a credit of two billion dinars. In the first half of 1947 goods valued at several hundred million dinars went there. This was followed by further deliveries amounting to 1350 million dinars. In 1948 an additional credit of three billion dinars was approved, and by June 1948 Yugoslavia had sent in 675 million dinars worth of goods out of its own production.

One can see, concludes Tito's organ, that there is no basis for "the wretched and insane clamoring about new Yugoslav imperialism, about the enslaving intentions which were allegedly to turn Albania into a colony." But the parallel, between the Yugoslavs' protestations to the Albanians and Russia's to the Yugoslavs, is almost exact. And the Hoxha bureaucracy or its leading section obviously had the same thoughts about "aid on a silver platter."

Naturally, Tito's hopes of becoming the dominant power among the satellites was not based upon his claims to prowess during the "war of liberation." Such an exalted position could be secured and maintained by Yugoslavia only on the basis of superior economic power. Hence the frantic drive to refit Yugoslavia's economy for its sub-imperialist mission in Eastern Europe by outbuilding and outstripping all the other satellites in industrial construction. Tito is goaded to an adventurist pace in the Five Year Plan not only by the desire for independence from Russian domination but also by the desire to substitute his own hegemony over the southeast portion of the bureaucratic-collectivist world.

4

From the plethora of copy poured out by commentators of all stripes, one would have gathered that the chief (if not the only) economic point of controversy involved in the break was over a question quite different from that of the industrialization of Yugoslavia: namely, the apparent dispute over the rate of collectivization of agriculture. There is, however, plenty of evidence that this cannot account for the break; on the contrary, the conflict, once it arose for other reasons, accounted for the pseudo-dispute over agrarian policy.

In the first place, for what it is worth, the Cominform resolution—even as an afterthought—did *not* criticize the Yugoslavs for lack of collectivization. The actual accusation in this section is something else: the CPY leaders "deny that there is a growth of capitalist elements in their country and, consequently, a sharpening of the class struggle in the countryside. . . . The Yugoslav leaders are pursuing an incorrect

3. "In Hungary, Rumania and Trieste there is panicky fear of Yugoslav 'expansionism,'" reports the well-informed weekly *East Europe*, published in London by emigres (July 22).

policy in the countryside by ignoring the class differentiation in the countryside and by regarding the individual peasant as a single [i. e., undifferentiated] entity. . . ."⁴

In the omnibus reply to the Cominform made by the Yugoslav leaders on June 29,⁵ they list ten Cominform charges, including some not even contained in the Cominform resolution. The question of the collectivization of agriculture figures nowhere among them.

Zujovic and Hebrang were, as we have discussed, the main mouthpieces of the Cominform in the Tito regime. All documents and the subsequent voluminous speeches and articles of charge and counter-charge show that these two men did not as much as raise the question of speeding up the collectivization of agriculture. (The aforementioned rebuttal by the Yugoslavs refers to the pro-Cominform economic policy of this pair only in the following terms: "destructive sabotage of the tempo of the development and industrialization of Yugoslavia.")

Collectivization Soft-Pedaled

The Titoists were able to show at their Fifth Congress that Yugoslavia is not behind the other satellites in the collectivization of agriculture. In fact, as a result of the stir created, Rakosi of Hungary had to make a speech on July 2 in which, after the usual attacks on Tito, he assured his own peasants that the anti-Tito turn did *not* mean collectivization in Hungary: "The Cominform resolution," he said, "does not speak of collectivization, but emphasizes that it is not enough to build up socialism in the cities; socialism must also be built in the villages." (Socialism in the villages without collectivization? This of course is simply doubletalk.) Kidric's economic report at the CPY congress made a sharp point: "Some critics" attack us, he said, "because we have not carried out nationalization of the land," and he added: "Incidentally, this crime is not attributed to us by the Communist Parties of the popular democracies but by the Communist Parties of France and Italy."

Like the Western CPs, it is only the Western journalists who have brought up the question of collectivization as any important element in the dispute.

Let us therefore return to the charge which is made by the Cominform mouthpieces: that Tito refused to "sharpen the class struggle in the countryside" and struggle against the "kulaks." Against this charge the Yugoslavs defended themselves vigorously at their congress, with serried ranks of statistics, citations of laws passed, measures taken, and the like. We should also recall (as was described in last

4. The resolution points out, following this charge, that there is no reason for "smugness and complacency" on the part of the Tito regime in view of the fact that the land is not nationalized, etc. This is the only reference to collectivization even in passing.

5. The complete text is available in English in a pamphlet published by the Tito government in Belgrade, distributed through the Yugoslav embassies.

month's article) that the problem of the *atomization* of landholding is a hundred times more of an economic problem in Yugoslavia than any non-existent mass of "kulaks." Nor did the spate of denunciations of Tito by the Stalinist hacks of the neighboring satellites ever add any evidence to the general charge of the Cominform.

In short, the Cominform accusation about failure to "sharpen the class struggle in the countryside" and "pro-kulak leanings" cannot be taken at face value. But this is not to say that there is any mystery about why the accusation is made. It is, however, not a question of a dispute over economic policy but of a *struggle over the social basis of the Tito regime.*

Totalitarianism Reproduces

We have pointed out that the Tito bureaucracy needs an industrialized economy if it is to become an indigenously-rooted Yugoslav ruling class and not merely a proconsular administration for Russian domination. Bureaucratic collectivism requires an industrial basis; an agrarian hinterland can be ruled by a *foreign* bureaucratic-collectivist exploiting class, but it cannot provide the socio-economic basis for a *native* bureaucratic-collectivist ruling class.

Russia, however, has no desire to see its provincial gauleiters sink independent roots which inevitably give them a certain amount of independence from Moscow. If the over-all plan, from the point of view of Moscow's empire-wide integration of Eastern Europe in coordination with its own war economy, assigns to Yugoslavia the role of "an agrarian country [which] should deliver to industrially developed countries [Poland and Czechoslovakia] raw materials and food, and they to Yugoslavia finished industrial consumers goods,"⁶ then the drive toward industrialization which arises from Yugoslavia's own needs raises all the questions of national sovereignty.

But the Tito regime seeks native social roots in Yugoslavia even before its industrialization has gotten far—in fact, *in order to* have a native base on which it can rest while asserting sufficient independence from Moscow to go ahead with its own plans. This base can only be among the peasantry, the Yugoslav proletariat being tiny. Tito can remain in power only by neutralizing (certainly, by not exacerbating) peasant resistance, which is a continual problem even at the best. If Tito cannot depend on peasant support (more to the point: peasant toleration or passive acceptance), then he can rule Yugoslavia only as a simple agent of the Kremlin.

Therefore, wherever the danger of an independent national orientation raises its head (and this is true actually or potentially in every satellite) it is in the interest of Russia to drive its local Stalinist agency into collision with the popular masses so that the CP

6. See the quotation from Begovic at the end of last month's article.

will have to fall back on the Russian master as its sole support and the sole insurance of its rule.

Paradoxically, Russia cannot afford to permit its satellite Communist Parties and their leaders to be "popular"—i.e., to gain independent support among the masses. As agents of a terroristic dictatorship, they must rule by terror alone. Russian imperialism must reproduce its own totalitarian image in each of its vassals. (We are reminded of the not improbable theory that Kirov, the Leningrad boss who was supposed to have stood for a "soft" policy, was assassinated by the GPU precisely because his greater popularity with the masses tended to make him less dependent for his political existence on the all-powerful Vozhd.)

This is the meaning of the Cominform demand that Tito "sharpen the class struggle in the countryside." It is not an economic directive—hence the lack of any specification—but a political injunction: break with your native mass support, rely only on the Kremlin!

It is curious to note how this was formulated into a specific charge in the case of Constantin Doncea, the Stalinist vice-mayor of Bucharest who was recently purged. An AP dispatch of August 25 listed the accusations against him, and on the list is literally the following: "trying to make himself popular!" This comes next in line after: "neglecting the party line, surrounding himself with bourgeois [i. e., non-Stalinist?] elements, acting independently and taking no party advice. . . ."

The case of Wladislaw Gomulka in Poland raises the same question. Whether he was or was not actually guilty of "Titoism" or any other heresy, the fact is that Gomulka was the only figure in the regime who enjoyed an independent popularity of his own. *This is impermissible in itself.*

5

This discussion also casts light upon another of the issues vaguely raised in the Cominform resolution which was tossed from pillar to post in the numerous exegeses on the subject. This was the accusation that the Yugoslav leaders "belittle the role of the Communist Party and actually dissolve the party in the non-party Popular Front . . . it is only the Popular Front which figures in the political arena, while the party and its organizations do not appear before the people in their own name. . . ."

There is a great deal of truth in this charge. Hal Lehrman wrote back in 1946:

While Grol's opposition Democrats, who boycotted the elections and are now practically invisible, are a legally recognized party, Yugoslavia is the only country in Eastern Europe, or for all I know in the world, where the Communist Party is still illegal. . . . Yugoslav parties were required to file their by-laws with the minister of the interior. The Democrats complied, and the Communists refused. Indeed, the only public admission of the Communists' existence is their official

newspaper, *Borba* (Struggle), which confesses it in the masthead. Not even the number or identity of Communist deputies is formally known; they all registered themselves in the parliamentary lists after election as "People's Front" or "Independent." Notwithstanding this mummery, the Communists are in full control of the country, and other parties which once had meaning in the Front have become ciphers. [*Nation*, June 22, 1946.]

Lehrman explains this mummery as due to "the renowned Communist weakness for secrecy," and even appears to be content with the explanation. Aylmer Vallance, the Stalinist fellow traveler whom we have quoted before, notes another peculiar fact with a parenthetical raised eyebrow:

Today, though the pre-war law outlawing Communism has (oddly enough) never been repealed, the party is much more openly avowing its existence as the spearhead of social progress. [*New Statesman and Nation*, August 2, 1947.]

CP and Popular Front

In spite of these odd facts, as both Lehrman and Vallance indicate, it is only the second part of the above quotation from the Cominform resolution which is true; it is not true that the CP was "dissolved in the non-party Popular Front." Its relationship is a different one. The CP holds the only power as in any of the other satellites.

Thus in May 1946, speaking before his party convention while still a member of the government presidium, Dr. Dragoljub Jovanic (leader of the Serbian Peasant Party, and not related to two others of the same surname figuring in recent Yugoslav politics) said:

The CP has monopolized the National Front, the factories and public offices. In every ministry, in every public enterprise and institution, there is a confidential man from the CP who takes care of every individual, follows everything and decides his destiny.⁷

What was the actual relationship in Yugoslavia between the CP and the Popular (or National) Front?⁸ In the first place, the Yugoslav Popular Front (at least by the time of the break) was not a coalition of political parties but was an integral organization. It was also the only public political organization presenting its face to the people.⁹ The CP, as has been said, did not function publicly. Yet it existed—as *the inner machine which ran the Popular Front.*

7. The speaker's destiny was taken care of immediately after this speech: he was removed from his seat in parliament, lost his membership in the presidium and his professorship at the University of Belgrade.

8. With the outbreak of the fight with the Cominform, of course, the CP had to come out into the open, and staged its Fifth Congress. The opening words of Tito's report there were: "Nearly twenty years have passed since the Fourth Congress of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. This is a unique example in the history of the working-class movement, but. . . ."

9. This was made clear as far back as 1945. We quote the same Zujovic who was later liquidated: "There is no one-party system, but it is quite clear that the National Liberation Front is the only political organization in our country." (Quoted from his radio broadcast of March 1, 1945 by Constantin A. Fotie in *The Political Situation in Yugoslavia Today*, pub. April 1945.)

The relationship can be better explained perhaps by a comparison. In his path to power in Russia, Stalin was faced with the existence of a mass party, the Bolsheviks. Within that party he built up his own bureaucratic machine, which was not the less well-knit, disciplined and powerful for the fact that it did not function openly. Only after some years of development did the Stalin machine and the party become coextensive.

In Yugoslavia before 1941 the CP was small. The mass movement that Tito built and led to power was the Partisans. Within the Partisans, the CP was the inner machine of control. With the "liberation," the Partisans and the National Committee of Liberation gave way to the present Popular Front. The Stalin machine was to the Bolshevik Party what the Yugoslav CP is to the Popular Front.

The CP was not "illegal," of course; the Stalinists simply refrained from bringing it to public attention even to the extent of going through the forms of setting it up in the light of day.

Kremlin's Vanguard

This course was antipathetic to Moscow for the same reason we have sketched in the preceding section. For Russia, the CP was the natural channel through which the Cominform as an outside force could wield control of the country. In a Pickwickian sense, *the Russians require a vanguard party* in their satellites, not a popular mass party; they require a party of a selected minority which is the vanguard of Russian power in the land. Tito, as the only one of the Stalinist sub-fuehrers with native roots in a mass movement, did not need to rest on such a transmission belt for outside influence; he turned toward emphasis on the broader all-national apparatus, in which (most important!) the predominating peasantry could be most easily involved. The CP was turned into a conspiratorial apparatus within the Front; the less it showed its face, the better. This development was peculiar to Yugoslavia and was part and parcel of the process whereby the Tito bureaucracy sought to transform itself into a native bureaucratic-collectivist ruling class.

The Russians understood the meaning of this development, as they understood the threat implicit in a Doncea's attempt to "make himself popular," and reacted accordingly. Under pressure from the Cominform, as we have mentioned, the Yugoslav CP not only emerged into the open with all the fanfare of the Fifth Congress, but later even purged the cabinet of all non-CP elements. This may have been merely a concession to the Cominform, to permit the Titoists to argue that the CP does publicly play the leading role in the nation, contrary to the accusation; or it may reflect a narrowing of the base of the regime under Moscow's blows; or both. On this, time will tell.

We began by inquiring into the specific national features of the Tito revolt, but have seen that these specific features account only for the fact that Yugoslavia led the way in the inherent tendency of the satellites to break away from Moscow's complete domination. If in Yugoslavia the specific economic content of the dispute is over industrialization, this is only one form of the general question of the Russification of economy in Eastern Europe which applies with full force to all the other "popular democracies."

Under Russian bureaucratic collectivism, where political terrorism and the economic forms of complete statification are fused into an integral set of productive relations, planning (including planning for war) can take place only from above down, and only through totalitarian mechanisms; and this applies to its empire as to its home territories.

Within Russia the inherent contradiction between planning and totalitarianism (so vividly described by Kravchenko) stands in the way of the development of the forces of production. In the empire, the extension of this social system stimulates the development of a native bureaucratic-collectivist class in the satellites and thus produces the disintegrative tendency directed at the totalitarian unity of the empire.

One is reminded of the way in which modern capitalist imperialism, driven by its internal needs to export capital, stimulates the development of a native capitalist class and a native proletariat—that is, a rival capitalism and a potential gravedigger of imperialism. The disease calls forth the antibodies.

Some wave-of-the-future theoreticians (like Burnham) have speculated about the possibility of a "softening of the dictatorship" of Stalinism as its power increases. This is one version of the familiar neo-Stalinist apologia for Russian terrorism: it is regrettable but temporary, and will disappear as the capitalist world ceases to be a threat to the dictator (Henry Wallace).

But events have shown that the terrorism of the Stalinist system is not a defense mechanism against capitalist encirclement but an inherent part of bureaucratic collectivism. Just as American capitalism shows its basically anti-democratic character more clearly in its imperialist ventures abroad than in its bailiwick at home, so the immanent driving forces of bureaucratic-collectivist totalitarianism show up more starkly in its empire than in Moscow or even Irkutsk.

The dictatorship of the bureaucracy will not "soften" with years; it can only grow brittle, before it is shattered by the irrepressible revolt of the people.

HIAL DRAPER

Titoism in Poland and Yugoslavia

The news from the countries of "popular democracy" has lately announced sweeping purges in the Stalinist governmental circles. As usual the movement seemed to be coordinated by the Cominform center and carried through in accordance with the procedure established by Moscow. The purges which were started hit above all at the rank-and-file militants, sometimes at the second-line leadership.

Thus in the Rumanian Workers [Stalinist] Party, after the condemnation of Titoism by the Cominform, the "national-chauvinist" heresy of the former minister of justice Lucretiu Patrascano, who had been liquidated before the Yugoslav crisis, was denounced all over again. An example had to be made of someone—this always means, in the Stalinist book of methods, that the "example" is put into the category of criminals—and the deputy mayor of the Rumanian capital, Constantin Doncea, was elected as the victim.

Doncea had been a comrade-in-arms of the CP general secretary Gheorghiu Dej in the great railroad strike of 1933 at Grivitza and had been the principal defendant in court during the repression of the strike movement; but he was now accused of "bourgeois deviations" and graft. In this way the so-called deviation in the Rumanian party was demonstrated to be nationalist, chauvinist, bourgeois and corrupt.

In conformity with the tactics of Stalinism, after the preparation of the minor purges one waited for the spectacular example. It would necessarily have to be designed to give the Cominform the satisfaction of appearing to win a brilliant victory as a counterweight to the Tito setback, an appearance to be gained either through the size of the movement or because of the high personalities to be involved.

Thus came into being the case of Gomulka, the "champion of Polish national-communism."

Unlike the crisis with Belgrade, which necessitated a concentration of Stalinist forces on the Cominform level, the errors of the Polish leader and his comrades were judged by the leadership of the Polish party itself. Before the trial was even begun, the conditions for the capitulation had been already set up by the prosecutors from Moscow, the party leadership and the defendants. This is the way in which the "masterly self-criticism" of the cashiered general secretary was prepared.

There has been an abundance of comment in the European and American press on the crisis of Stalinism in the satellite states after the break with Tito. For lack of acquaintance with the state of affairs on the other side of the Iron Curtain, some have even perceived the outlines of a vigorous anti-Moscow movement in the Communist Parties of the Sta-

linist empire. This is a grave error, for it mistakes the wish for the reality.

Certainly there is, among the rank-and-file members of the party, a barely restrained antagonism to the Stalinists' governmental methods. There are vacillating elements even among the leaders. But their vacillations, as far as the line is concerned, were detected, and they were kicked out of their posts well in advance of the commanded purge. The least attempt at opposition has been mercilessly suppressed. The accused were not only removed from political life but also deprived of their liberty, as was seen in the case of Patrascano.

Why Gomulka Rose

The so-called heresy of Wladislaw Gomulka is a horse of a different color.

As a Stalinist militant of long standing and the inspirer of the Red Trade Union Opposition under the dictatorial regime of the colonels, the ousted general secretary of the CP is one of the few leaders of the Stalinist party who was well known in the proletarian circles in pre-war Poland. He survived all the storms which beat upon the illegal CP.

Dissolved in 1938 by the Comintern, the Polish CP was denounced then as a hotbed of agents-provocateurs and "Trotskyite diversionists" of the *Defensywa* (Ridz-Smigly's secret police). The party leaders like Dombal who were recalled to Moscow were liquidated. Only after Hitler's attack upon Russia were the illegal Stalinist groups re-formed in 1942 into a central organization, the Polish Workers Party (PPR).

The new party, which denied any historic link with its predecessor, barely succeeded in struggling against the current of anti-Russian hostility in Poland. For the people did not forget the Nazi-Stalin deal, which had wiped the country off the map for years. With the setting up of the Lublin Committee of National Liberation—created by Stalinist and semi-Stalinist elements, Polish refugees in Russia, and returnees in the territory liberated by the Russian army—the role of the Polish Workers Party as administrator of Moscow's policies in Poland was fairly established.

The obscure Bierut, an old Stalinist militant who had passed every loyalty test in Russia, took the key position—president of the committee and later president of the republic. He is also the political chaperone of the weak president of the council, Ossubka-Morawski, who hails from the pro-Stalinist group in the Polish Socialist Party and who was unknown before the war.

That is why they were obliged to resort to Gomulka, the underground leader in Wieslaw, to fill the post of general secretary of the party. For the gang sent in by Moscow—headed by the intelligent Berman, the practical Minc and the diplomatic Modzelewski—had one quality very unfavorably regarded in anti-Semitic Poland: they were Jews.

In no other country is the almost general antagonism toward the agents of Moscow more in evidence than in Poland. This is one of the reasons for the continual efforts made to enlarge the political base of the regime.

The fusion of the old Polish Socialist Party (PPS) with the Polish Socialist Workers Party (PPRS) of Ossubka and Szwalbe, which included not only militants of the younger generation like Cyrankiewicz but also the old social-democratic trade-unionist Stanczik who had returned from London; the attempt to take over the party of Mikolajczyk, by splitting it and merging it with an agrarian group created by the Stalinists; their creation of a "democratic" petty-bourgeois pseudo-organization (the *Stronitzwo Demokratyczna*), and their effort to line up Catholic elements of the Labor Party (PP) for the regime—all these illustrate their systematic effort to break out of the circle of isolation.

Working on another front, the Stalinists of the Polish Workers Party everywhere made a big display of patriotism. Here is the source of the myth which was widely spread among the peasants, workers and petty bourgeoisie, especially in the new territories, to the effect that Gomulka was first of all a Pole and secondly a Communist.

Placating Nationalism

There is nothing spontaneous about the origin of this belief. It is the result of the same systematic Stalinist maneuver. Of all the satellites it was Poland which made the most elaborate show of its intellectual and even political independence from Moscow—under the orders and with the permission of Moscow. They wished at any price to go along with the nationalist current, which was very strong, even among the CP members. They bought the neutrality of the peasantry and middle strata, by concessions not paralleled in the other satellite states.

The policy of Gomulka and Minc must be understood in the light of the following figures which show the changes in the social structure: 62 per cent of the population work as peasants or artisans on the basis of individual economy; 14 per cent are employed in private industry; and only 24 per cent of the wage workers are involved in the nationalized enterprises.

It is especially in the so-called "recuperated" regions in the western part of the country, which had been German and were administered by Gomulka's ministry, that a peasant policy was followed designed

to create a well-to-do stratum of farmers capable of producing an immediate yield to take care of the food needs of the country. Here it is that one most often hears the self-confident slogan of the peasant cultivators: "The Peasant Is the Power."

There is a history behind the accusation that Gomulka is guilty of Tito-like heresy. It dates back to 1946. By a dialectic jest of circumstances which bear little resemblance to today's situation, the accuser was Cyrankiewicz, then the general secretary of the Socialist Party. At that time Tito was still the hero of the Stalinists in the satellite states and his example was obligatory.

Cyrankiewicz opposed General Secretary Gomulka's drive to bore from within the SP. He liquidated the most hardened "cryptos" like the old priest Matuszewski, who was minister of information, and also put an end to the activity of the minister of justice, another Stalinist agent who had capitulated. In the course of an agitated conversation Cyrankiewicz reminded Gomulka of these maneuvers and exclaimed: "You will not get anywhere with me with your Tito complex!"

Stalinists First and Last

But Cyrankiewicz was brought into line. He ceased all resistance to the fusion of his party with the Stalinist party. Matuszewski triumphantly returned to the Executive Committee for the liquidation of the Socialist Party and prepared its predetermined fusion, carrying out the task of first purging its cadres.

Although at the Socialist congress in the winter of 1947 Cyrankiewicz had declared himself against the fusion, "because Poland has need of the Socialist Party," he very quickly learned the new catechism. He was entrusted with the ungrateful job of throwing mud on world socialism. His "denunciation" of the "betrayal of the right-wing socialists," written in the customary jargon, begins with a quotation from Lenin in the best style of the Muscovite church. . . .

The general secretary of the Socialist Party, which was transformed into a "company in the process of liquidation" by the order of the Cominform and by the betrayal of its leaders, is going to have his little bit of satisfaction. Obviously repudiated by the mass of socialist militants, four-fifths of whom refused to pass before the purge tribunals instituted by the Jesuit Matuszewski, Cyrankiewicz is a general without an army; but he is no longer going to have to face his *bête noire* Gomulka in the leadership of the "unified" party. As a counter-service, it was Cyrankiewicz who, symbolically, offered the presidency of the fused party to Boleslaw Bierut, Moscow's trusted agent.

A little by-play behind the scenes . . . the roles have been reversed.

The Gomulka episode demonstrates that Moscow

needs victories, especially victories against public opinion in the satellite countries. Gomulka has been cut down politically because—in the minds of many simple Poles (and international journalists)—he represented a desire for independence from the Kremlin. The time has come when Moscow can no longer tolerate the existence of even such a state of mind. He performs a great service for the Cominform by confessing his guilty responsibility for a policy which was decided on and initiated by the Kremlin.

From now on, the Polish peasant in Lower Silesia knows that Moscow is everything and Gomulka nothing. It is a necessary lesson to kill any dreams of independence.

If tomorrow Gheorghiu Dej or Zoltan Vasz follow in Gomulka's footsteps, it will not be because of their supposed nationalist political heresies that they are dumped. It will be because the worker of Brasov and the peasant of Alföld have been taught to look upon them as a Rumanian or Hungarian first and a Communist second.

The struggle between the Yugoslav CP leadership and the Cominform has lately entered upon the phase of a grim struggle for influence in the state apparatus.

Nowhere is the right of the people to influence the policies of their country more of an illusion than in Yugoslavia (the "new-type democracy") or, for that matter, in Yugoslavia's twin-brother "popular democracies." Thus, when I asked a Yugoslav friend about the repercussions of the Tito-Cominform clash, he referred me for answer to an anecdote which dates back to the years when the fierce conflict was raging between Tito's Partisans and Draja Mikhailovic's Chetniks.

This tale concerned a Serbian peasant who is whipped by one group of soldiers as an "enemy of the people" for saying that he supports the Chetniks; meeting another group of soldiers a little later and remembering the lesson, he is whipped again as a "traitor to his country" for saying that he supports the Partisans; finally, meeting a third group of soldiers, he skips the preliminaries and merely offers his back. . . .

The fact is that the struggle of the top cliques over control of the political and military apparatus does not touch the lower strata of Yugoslav society.

The living conditions are strictly regimented, and mobilization for extra voluntary labor goes on as always. "Tito needs soldiers"—this is the commonest tune which the citizens of Yugoslavia have to sing in their serried ranks.

Only a few days after the outbreak of the Tito-Zhdanov feud, the capital's newspapers published a news item released by the official agency and no doubt emanating from the Ministry of the Interior.

In a statement issued by the Central Committee of the Yugoslav Socialist Party, its president, Dr. Belic, and its general secretary, Raikovic, make known the decision of this body to liquidate the party. One reads in the text of this statement that "under these conditions [!] the activity of the party is no longer possible." The declaration is countersigned by the regional secretaries of Voivodina (Novisad) and Belgrade. The organization's effects have been turned over to the Ministry of the Interior.

Thus ends the painful situation of Yugoslav socialism, as a result of the Tito dictatorship.

Yugoslavia's Socialists

Up to now two organizations claiming to be continuators of pre-war Yugoslav socialism have been in formal existence in the Titoist "democracy." The more important group, called the Socialist Party of Yugoslavia, represented the militants of the old party, led until 1944 by Zifko Topalovic. The other group harked back to the dissident social-democracy of pre-war days whose central figure was the old militant and eminent university professor of biology Divac, who had virtually withdrawn from all activity since 1946.

These two organizations were subjected to a regime of strict surveillance under the political police; they had not the slightest leeway to carry through even the most modest course of political action; they had no headquarters, no press and no international relations with sister parties abroad; their leaders were blackmailed and often arrested without cause; their party workers had no liberty to carry on any propaganda at all since they would be fired from their jobs if they did so. Yet in spite of these rather discouraging circumstances both groups succeeded in securing the adherence of a large percentage of the militants of the pre-war socialist and trade-union movement.

Tito tried to absorb the socialist cadres into the Popular Front. For this reason two socialists, who were widely known for their popularity and their participation in the national-liberation struggle, were elected to the Front. But, since the socialists remained hostile to the dictatorship, their organizations were subjected to strong and unremitting ideological pressure and police pressure, and they were denounced in the government press and in meetings as "traitors."

What were the reasons motivating Rankovic, the minister of the interior, in liquidating the Yugoslav Socialist Party? (For of course no one can seriously swallow the story that the organization requested its own dissolution.) As a result of the struggle with the Cominform, the position of the Titoist leadership was certainly weakened. The consequence would certainly have been that the prestige of democratic socialism, which opposed the terror, would have grown in the eyes of the majority of the worker-militants who were

disgusted with this Stalinist quarrel. To prevent such an ideological development, the Socialist Party was suppressed and socialism was labeled "subversive."

Stalin's Fifth Column

If anyone had been uncertain about the character of the clash between the Titoists and the Stalinists—a struggle between the bureaucratic tops of the state apparatus—the dispute between the "Red Books" and "Blue Books" in Belgrade was enough to dissipate any doubts.

In the Cominform's Red Book (a pamphlet), the Titoists are accused of treating Russian experts in Yugoslavia in a manner insulting to their position. The prompt reply of the Blue Book shows that the demands of the Russian bureaucrats had been satisfied to a degree which indeed shocked the Yugoslav following of the Tito dictatorship. According to the Titoists' revelations, a Russian expert received four times the salary of a cabinet minister and as much as ten times the salary of a higher-echelon officer.

The call to battle issued by the Cominform against Tito is not addressed to the people—as the Stalinists do in the bourgeois countries—but to the Yugoslav CP itself. And according to the news which leaks through the almost impenetrable barrier of the Tito party's organizational life, Moscow addressed itself not even to the simple militants of the party but rather to the influential leaders of the political and especially military apparatus.

The most serious center of anti-Tito opposition is in backward Montenegro, a region which produced a big percentage of the Partisans.

In a speech at the Congress of the Popular Front of the Republic, at Cetinje, Blajo Jovanovic (president of the council in this constituent republic of the federated Yugoslav state) declared in so many words: "There are people in our party who approved certain points in the Cominform resolution. There is no longer any room in our ranks for these traitors and cowards." He was here alluding to the purge of the Montenegrin government. His deputy president of the council, Bajo Ljumovic (former Yugoslav ambassador to Warsaw), and four other ministers found themselves among the "traitors and cowards."

The opposition has its centers in the army and diplomatic corps. Those who make up the core of the opposition are, in their majority, Montenegrin fellow countrymen of Jovanovic.

The former chief of staff, General Arso Jovanovic, who was killed by a border guard near Vershetz (Banat) while attempting to flee into Rumania, was Montenegrin. This second Jovanovic was a former captain in the royal army who rallied to Tito's Partisans from the very start. Considered one of the closest collaborators of the dictator, he had participated in the last congress of the party at Topcider in the suburbs of Belgrade; he was in fact one of the prin-

cipal delegates from the army and voted for all of the unanimous resolutions backing Tito's line.

Lieutenant-General Branko Petricevic, who was arrested when he tried to flee the country, was also Montenegrin; he had been a pre-war political commissar. So also was the third of the would-be refugees, Colonel Vlado Dapcevic, who succeeded in reaching Rumania. The last-named, who had been the political commissar of an artillery corps, is the brother of the legendary commander of the First Proletarian Army Division, Peiko Dapcevic, who left the country before the congress and is at present in Moscow.

From the same military clan come the staff officers Lukic and Garcevic who fled to Hungary, and General Popivoda, former deputy commander in chief of the air force, who succeeded in landing a military plane in Rumania.

The existence of serious defections in the diplomatic corps is due to the fact that the Yugoslav diplomatic apparatus abroad was integrated into the Russian apparatus, to which it was subordinate; this is true also of the diplomatic staffs of the other "popular democracies." Among the diplomats there is the Montenegrin Radonja Golubovic, ambassador to Rumania up to his resignation; after the arrest of Zujovic and Hebrang, he was slated to become the rallying point of the Yugoslav Cominformists, together with Generals Dapcevic and Popivoda.

Purges and Peasants

The disintegration of the former CP leadership is evident. Among the principal Stalinist leaders condemned by the Yugoslav CP congress as agents of the Cominform, Sreten Zujovic, former secretary of the Yugoslav Popular Front, member of the party Central Committee and minister of finance in the government, was one of the five top colleagues of Tito. His party name Zirni (The Black) was as popular among the Partisans as that of Leijka-Rankovic or that of Jica Ianko (Moise Pjade). Andrej Hebrang, who was accused of anti-Titoism along with Zujovic, was a member of the Politburo of the party and is a Croatian leader like Tito himself.

The inexorable purge organized by the UDBA (the secret police—formerly known as the OZNA) is directed at all circles suspected of the slightest heresy. The former "Department for the Defense of the People" (this is what the initials OZNA stood for)—renamed the "State Security Administration" (UDBA)—was set up to suppress anti-Stalinists, but now specializes in the business of detecting and liquidating supporters and semi-supporters of the Cominform-Stalinists in the party itself.

From the economic standpoint, the blockade organized by the Cominform countries is making itself felt. In the last eight months, prices have gone up 100 per cent, while wages have gone down. Bread is of bad quality (80 per cent of the mixture is Indian-corn

flour). In this fertile country there is a lack of textiles, of industrial products, of agricultural implements, even of fruits and meats. The Five Year Plan is in danger, since the one-sided organization of economic relations with Russia and the "new democracies" served the country in poor stead after the outbreak of the conflict.

As counter-measures, an internal loan of 3½ billion dinars has been floated; dealings with England, America and Argentina have been resumed; a \$500 million loan from the World Bank has been requested. But the question still remains whether all of that is capable of ensuring Yugoslavia's shaken economic stability.

Tito's refusal to collectivize the Yugoslav countryside has deep-rooted reasons. The peasants have been lying low up to now but they have created insoluble problems for the regime. They work almost only for their own needs. Why sell—they ask—if it is impossible for us to buy what we need?

Collectivization would have created extraordinary disturbances in the country. The Tito regime would have been obliged to fall back on the support of Russia to a greater degree than before. And this is exactly what Tito wanted to avoid. So would the leaders of the other "popular democracies" like to avoid this, but they have no other choice.

Present in all of the recent utterances of Titoism is the consciousness that they represent a regime which emerged from fierce struggles against the foreign invader, that they represent a national-liberation movement. Consider, for example, the speeches of Lazar Kulicevski, head of the Macedonian federal republic of Yugoslavia and leader of the Macedonian Partisans, and of Colonel-General Vukmanovic

(called Tempo): they hurl reproaches at the Bulgarian Stalinist leaders for their doubledealing and above all for their absence from the struggle against the Nazis, a struggle "which they launched only after the arrival of the Red Army made it possible for them to emerge from their safe havens."

The Hungarian CP and its leader Mathias Rakosi is bombarded with attacks by the Croatian premier Vladimir Bakaric, who accuses Rakosi of having returned from Moscow by airplane only after the victory.

Widespread comment has been provoked by Tito's latest speech, delivered to the First Proletarian Division, an élite army unit which elected him as its delegate to the party congress. After attacking the Cominform, instead of the usual formulas protesting fidelity to the Soviet Union and Generalissimo Stalin, the marshal called upon his listeners to struggle for the unity of the fatherland, of the Yugoslav army, and of the Communist Party.

The last reshuffling of the cabinet, which strengthened the position of the Titoist leaders by eliminating the petty-bourgeoisie and pan-Slav fellow travelers, confirms the line of resistance to the Cominform. By every means at their disposal, Tito and his gang are fighting Moscow's drive to bore from within the leading circles and middle strata of the bureaucracy.

For they are well aware that the maintenance or reversal of the relationship of forces, which is at present favorable to the Belgrade regime, depends in large measure on which way the state bureaucracy goes. It is the state bureaucratic apparatus which will (except in case of war) determine the outcome of the quarrel between Tito and Moscow; for the people of Yugoslavia are excluded from all democratic rights.

VALENTIN TOMA

The Year One of the Russian Revolution

VII—The Revolution in Finland

This installment is the first part of Chapter 6, "The Truce and the Great Shift."—ED.

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Events in the Ukraine took a peculiar turn.

The Rada [Ukrainian bourgeois parliament] solicited the aid of both the Allies and the Central Powers at the same time for its struggle against the revolution. France sent funds to the Ukrainians. These patriots and defenders of law and order and private property sold their country to the highest bidder. But the Allied press, which denounced Bolshevik "treason" with end-

less rage at the very moment that the Bolsheviks were engaged in a desperate struggle against the Germans, completely ignored the real treason of the Ukrainian nationalist bourgeoisie which was instrumental in prolonging the World War for several months.

How true it is that statesmen and the molders of public opinion never concern themselves with truth or historical reality! The interests of the ruling class are their only concern. This interest demanded that they discredit the Bolsheviks at any price, in order later to slaughter them. Let the facts speak for themselves.

On February 9, the Red Guard en-

tered Kiev. The Ukrainian Rada no longer controlled more than a few towns in the vicinity of Vinnitsa.

It was then that the Germans offered their armies to impose recognition of the Rada on the Soviets. This they accomplished by the terms of the treaty of Brest-Litovsk. The sly cutthroat adventurer Petlura was already the real leader of the Rada. On the same day the Reds entered Kiev, he signed a peace treaty with Germany in which he contracted, in return for German military support, to furnish one million tons of grain (this figure was later to rise to 2,160,000 tons), 180,000 tons of meat, 30,000 sheep, 40,000 tons of sugar, etc.

He also agreed to supply the needs of the German army of occupation.

From the Rumanian front to the borders of the Caucasus the workers' Red Guard had just won a series of brilliant victories. The revolution was everywhere successful.

The Soviet Republic of Odessa and the Soviet Executive of the Rumanian front forced the Rumanian government to declare a cessation of hostilities on February 8. Then with the support of Muraviev's little Red Army of less than 4,000 men, which traveled from Kiev to the front in one night, they launched an offensive in the direction of Jassy, inflicting the severe defeat of Rybnitsa on the Rumanian conquerors of Bessarabia. The Rumanians lost twenty cannon.

The diplomatic corps at Jassy became alarmed, and through its intervention Rumania signed a treaty ending the Russo-Rumanian conflict on March 8. The Rumanians formally renounced all claims to Bassarabia and engaged to evacuate the country. In the Don region, the Crimea and the Kuban, the Whites were beaten. The victories of the Reds in spite of the numerical weakness of their troops were won with the spontaneous support of the poor peasants and the working class.

Ukrainian Tug-of-War

This was the situation as the Germans entered the Ukraine with twenty-nine infantry and four and a half cavalry divisions, between 200,000 and 250,000 soldiers altogether. Antonov Avseyenko and his courageous lieutenants, Piatakov, Eugenie Bosch, Muraviev, Sivers, Sablin, and Kikvidze¹ were able to rally in opposition only 15,000 poorly organized men scattered over an immense territory. The German troops easily broke the desperate resistance of the handfuls of revolutionists who opposed them here and there.

In actuality neither men nor arms were lacking. The peasants were more than willing to resist the invasion. What was lacking was organization. There was no central—and very little, if any, local—authority, no army, no officers, no cohesion, no coordination. All the old institutions had disappeared. The new were barely born with the greatest difficulty, and amid chaos.

Armed bands were formed nearly everywhere. The Ukraine with its cheap white bread attracted adventurers from all over Russia. Its country villages offered a marvelous experimental ground

1. A Maximalist S-R who had been released from prison by the February Revolution, Kikvidze at the age of 23 was one of the organizers of the October Revolution on the Western front. A partisan leader, then leader of a Red Army division, he became one of the most talented generals of the revolution. He fought against Krasnov, was wounded thirteen times, and killed at the age of 25 in the Don country on January 11, 1919.—V. S.

for the most fantastic "realists," more or less nationalist, Ukrainian socialists, Left Social-Revolutionaries, Anarchists and the anarchistic. Little local armies were formed under the banners of the various parties. It often happened that the flags and insignia of a revolutionary party served to justify the existence of a feudal armed band.

The influence and organization of even the Bolshevik Party left much to be desired. There were fights in the party between the Ukrainians and the Russians, between the central committees and the local committees. The national question was far from settled in the minds of the Bolsheviks.

The Anarchists and the Left S-Rs, who were frequently united, carried on tremendous activity. The Anarchist Baron exercised a dictatorship in Ekaterinoslav for a time. The Anarchists at Nikolaev revolted but evacuated the town at the approach of the Germans. Nikolaev held out for four days without them. Marussya Nikiforova's detachment, fighting under the black flag of anarchism, carried on a two-week street battle with the counter-revolutionary population of Elizavetgrad. Bands of White officers from the Rumanian front crossed the Ukraine to reach the Kuban. Czechoslovakian troops retired before the German advance under orders from the Allies to take up a position along the Volga. German troops revolted. Petlura's nationalist sharpshooters, called *Haidamaks*, roamed about the country. Villages, bristling with machine guns, defended themselves ferociously against everyone. Local republics such as the Donetz Workers' Republic sprang up.

Red detachments completely undisciplined, often drunk, and sometimes com-

manded by adventurers who later had to be shot, discredited the Soviet government with the local population. They plundered and assassinated almost everywhere. At times the strongest units retreated before the invaders without firing a shot; at other times a handful held out magnificently, like the thirty-five Reds who held back two German regiments at Putivle. At Lozovaya a whole battalion, called the Lenin battalion, sacrificed itself to cover the retreat of a Red army.

German Terror

It required uncommon strength of character to carry on revolutionary struggle amid this terrible chaos. A woman distinguished herself in the Ukraine, an old Bolshevik whose name, by an unjust fate, is too little known to history—Eugenie Bosch.² One of the conquerors of the Winter Palace, G. Chudnovsky, met his death in the Ukraine.

Most of the battles were fought along the railways; armored trains played a large part in the campaign. Let us mark the stages of the German advance; March 14, they were in Chernigov; March 16, Kiev; March 30, Poltava; April 10, Kherson; April 20, the Crimea; May 6, Rostov-on-Don.

The Germans had come in search of grain. They stopped at nothing to wrest it from the peasants. There were stories of peasants whipped en masse, executed, and buried alive. The occupation, which was received with joy by the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie, became a rule of terror.

The Ukraine peasants replied with a secret war, scattered, but implacable and harassing. Blood ran in the smallest villages.

THE REVOLUTION IN FINLAND

The treaty of Brest-Litovsk consummated the sacrifice of the Finnish workers, in whom the Russian revolutionists had rightly placed the greatest hopes.³

If Russia was, as Lenin often remarked it to be, one of the most backward countries of Europe, Finland was one of the most advanced in the world. Her customs, her advanced political education, the victories of her socialist movement,

3. Lenin wrote from Zurich on March 11 (24, new style), 1917: "Do not forget that bordering on Petrograd we have one of the most advanced and truly republican countries, Finland, which under the protection of the revolutionary battles in Russia has developed its democracy in relative peace from 1905 to 1917 and conquered the majority of the people for socialism . . . better organizers than we, the Finnish workers can aid us in that respect: they will go forward in their own way toward the establishment of the socialist republic." (Third of the *Letters from Afar*, written before Lenin's return to Russia.)—V. S.

even her industrial structure, seemed to ensure the easy victory of socialism.

The Finnish people had never known either serfdom or despotism. A part of Sweden since the twelfth century, Finland, a country of small proprietors whom feudalism had never overcome, passed to Russia in 1809 through the alliance between Napoleon and Alexander I. Constituted a grand duchy, she enjoyed a large degree of autonomy under the empire, all the larger since the Finns were able to defend their autonomy against the attacks of her grand dukes, the czars of Russia. Finland kept

2. Ceaselessly active as a Bolshevik from the earliest days, exiled to Siberia, then an émigré, Eugenie Bosch played a very important role in the Ukrainian revolution, where she directed the resistance of the Soviets to the German invasion. Exhausted, sick and condemned to inaction, she committed suicide early in 1924. She was a great but little known figure of the revolution.—V. S.

her diet [parliament], her own money, her postal system, her schools, her own army, and her own internal administration. She grew up, like the other Scandinavian countries, as a part of Western Europe. Nicholas II's brutal attempts at Russification only succeeded in estranging the entire Finnish people.

Two years after the Revolution of 1905, which forced the czar to grant her a constitution, Finland instituted universal suffrage. In the first election in 1907, the Social-Democrats obtained eighty seats out of two hundred in the *Sejm* (parliament). The 1916 elections gave them an absolute majority, 103 out of 200. This majority voted the eight-hour day and an intelligent program of public legislation.

Then parliamentary socialism found itself on the point of dying. Was it possible to continue peacefully marching toward socialism with ballot in hand? The Finnish bourgeoisie allied itself with Kerensky against the Red Social-Democratic diet, which the provisional government in Petrograd, carrying out the line of the autocracy, declared dissolved. Russian soldiers guarded the closed doors of the Helsingfors parliament. In the following elections the Social-Democrats gained (from 375,000 votes the year before, to 444,000 votes) but lost some of their seats (from 103 to 92). This result was obtained by cynical fraud on the part of the bourgeois parties.

But no more than the Finnish proletariat could resign itself to this electoral defeat could the bourgeoisie content itself with so precarious a victory. An extra-parliamentary settlement was on the order of the day.

The bourgeoisie had foreseen it for long, and prepared conscientiously for civil war. The Social-Democracy, twenty years in the school of the "powerful" German Social-Democracy and dominated by reformist illusions, hoped to avoid the conflict.

Since 1914 the Finnish bourgeoisie had been preparing to conquer its national independence by force of arms, under cover of the imperialist war. Three thousand young Finns of the wealthier classes in the 27th Jägers Battalion of the German army fought against their hereditary enemy, Russia. Clandestine military schools existed in various places throughout the country.

After the fall of the autocracy, a volunteer rifle corps was formed in the North to maintain law and order. This was General Herrich's *Schutzcorps*, the first White Guard unit formed in the open. Its headquarters were at Vasa on the Gulf of Bothnia; it received arms from Sweden and Germany. The bourgeoisie demanded the withdrawal of the Russian troops who had been assigned, since the beginning of the war, to protect the country from the Germans.

The October Revolution provoked an

echo in Finland: the great general strike of mid-November, brought on by a serious famine which affected only the poorer classes and by the reactionary policies of the Senate, which seemed inclined to place the reactionary, Svinhufvud, at the head of a dictatorial directorate.

The workers quit work everywhere. The railways stopped. Workers' Red Guards, supported by Russian troops in places, occupied all public buildings. Bloody encounters occurred between the Whites and the Reds. The deputies argued. The frightened bourgeoisie consented to the application of the eight-hour law and to the enactment of a new program of social legislation, as well as to the democratization of power, which passed from the Senate to the *Sejm*.

And the victorious general strike of the workers ended in the constitution of a bourgeois cabinet, headed by the same reactionary Svinhufvud! It was the abortion of a revolution. Finnish revolutionists are of the opinion that the seizure of power was possible at that time; it would even have been easy; the support of the Bolsheviks would have been decisive.

Comrade Kuusinen,⁴ then one of the leaders of the center of Finnish Social-Democracy, later wrote: "Not wishing to risk our democratic conquests, and hoping to skip that great historical turning point by clever parliamentary maneuvers, we decided to elude the revolution. . . . We did not believe in the revolution; we had no hope in the revolution; we did not want it at all."

With leaders of such mind, the cause of the Finnish proletariat was certain to lose.

Social-Democrats Take Power

But the general strike revealed their own strength to the workers, and to the bourgeoisie their peril. The Finnish bourgeoisie understood that it was lost without reinforcements.

Svinhufvud asked the Swedes to intervene. The Whites armed feverishly in the North, where they collected large stocks of food. The government cleverly extended the famine in working-class centers by holding back reserve food supplies. The proclamation of Finnish independence changed nothing. The possibility of

4. Kuusinen rallied to communism during the Finnish revolution. The quotation is borrowed from his remarkable pamphlet entitled *The Finnish Revolution, an Essay in Self-Criticism*, published in 1919. Kuusinen today is a member of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.—V. S. [At the time Serge wrote, Kuusinen was already one of Stalin's leading hatchetmen in the Comintern. Today he is the head of the Russian province bordering Finland, director of Stalinist operations in Finland; during the Russo-Finnish war he became the head of the short-lived fake "People's Republic" of Finland, sitting on Russian bayonets.—Ed.]

Swedish or German intervention alarmed the workers more and more.

To cap matters, the *Sejm* voted (by 97 to 87) a motion containing unmistakable allusions to the necessity for a bourgeois dictatorship. The problem of power was posed once more, even more seriously than on the eve of the November general strike.

This time the Social-Democrats realized that all chances of a parliamentary solution were exhausted. It was necessary to fight.

The red flag was hoisted over the Workers' House in Helsingfors during the night of January 27. The rest of the city was rapidly captured, and the Senate and the government took refuge at Vasa. In a few days the Reds mastered the larger cities of 9bo, Vyborg and Tammerfors, and the whole southern section of the country, without meeting any serious resistance. This too-easily-won victory was disquieting.

The Social-Democratic leaders (Manner, Sirola, Kuusinen, etc.) formed a workers' government, the Council of People's Delegates, under the control of a supreme Workers' Council of thirty-five delegates (ten from the party, ten from the Red Guard, five from the Helsingfors workers' organizations).

What were they to do? "To march day by day toward the socialist revolution," declared the People's Delegates. They instituted workers' control of production, made easy by the high degree of concentration of the main industries, lumber, paper and textiles; they put a stop to the sabotage of the banks. Public life and industrial production soon returned to an almost normal state.

Reformism at Work

Was the dictatorship of the proletariat possible? Was it necessary? The leaders of the movement did not think so, although five hundred thousand, out of a total population of three million, were engaged in industry. The workers and agricultural laborers together numbered half a million men. The small and middle farmer, the rural majority, could be won over or neutralized by the revolution.

Unfortunately, "Until they were defeated, the majority of the leaders were not at all clear as to the goals of the revolution." (O. W. Kuusinen.) *Without either the expropriation of the wealthy classes or the dictatorship of the laboring masses, they tried to establish a parliamentary democracy in which the proletariat was the leading class.*

The principal measures taken by the Council of People's Delegates were: the institution of the eight-hour day; the payment of wages for time out during the revolutionary strike; the emancipation of servants and bondsmen from the farms (they were hired by the year by the farmers and subject to very severe

laws); the abolition of the old method of allocating land, which was based on a system of *corvée* and tribute; the abolition of rents for small tenants; the institution of judicial reform; abolition of the death penalty (very rarely applied, in any case); tax exemption for the poor (the minimum taxable income was set at 2,400 marks in the cities and 1,400 marks in the country, instead of 800 and 400 marks, a special tax was laid on incomes of more than 20,000 marks); a tax on apartments of more than one room; liberation of the press from ancient regulations; workers' control of the factories.

Other measures became necessary later, in the course of the civil war, such as the requisition of grain and potatoes, the suspension of bourgeois newspapers, laws against the exportation of securities, the obligation to work for able-bodied adults from eighteen to fifty-five years of age.

This workers' revolution was fought under the banner of an ideal democracy, which received concrete expression in a constitutional project drawn up toward the end of February for a referendum in the spring. This beautiful scheme is worthy of consideration:

An Assembly of people's representatives elected every three years by universal, direct and secret suffrage (women had the vote and the age limit was twenty years) according to the system of proportional representation, was to be the supreme authority of the "People's Republic of Finland." Besides the usual democratic liberties, the constitution provided for personal inviolability, the right to strike, the right of strikers to guard industry against strikebreakers, and the neutrality of the armed forces in labor disputes. Any amendments to the constitution were to be submitted to a referendum vote. A minority in the Assembly which could muster one-third or more of the votes had the right to veto all but tax legislation. Any legislation instituting indirect taxes or customs, which fell heavily on the poor, had to have a two-thirds majority to pass. The import of prime commodities was exempted from all taxation. In case of war, the government was empowered to take extraordinary measures against "enemies of the constitution." The right of the people to revolt in case the majority of its representatives attacked the constitution was recognized. The people enjoyed the right of initiating laws. Any project presented by ten thousand citizens was to be immediately discussed. Officials and magistrates were to be elected every five years and subject to recall by one-fifth of the electors at any time. The Council of People's Delegates, the executive power of the Finnish state, was to be elected for three years by the Assembly, which also appointed its president and vice-president, who were not eligible for immediate re-election and

who enjoyed no special powers. The government was to be checked by a "Control Commission for the Administration and Application of Laws." Two members of this commission could veto any new legislation. The election of judges, who were under government control, local autonomy, and workers' representation in all administrations, completed the project.

Contrary to the usage of bourgeois democracies, this constitution would to a certain extent have united the legislative, executive, and judicial powers in the hands of one body, the Assembly of People's Representatives. The government itself was reduced to purely executive functions.

A Finnish revolutionist has remarked of this constitution: "In theory, it attained the widest development of bourgeois democracy, a development actually impossible under a capitalist system. This bourgeois democracy could only go forward to the dictatorship of the proletariat if the workers were victorious, or backward to a bourgeois dictatorship if they were defeated." It was a beautiful and completely utopian project.

"The weakness of the bourgeoisie," Kuusinen says, "led us into democratic illusions, and we decided to march toward socialism by parliamentary debate and the democratization of the government."

Such was the terrible effect of reformism on the Finnish socialists. Such was their fatal misunderstanding of the laws of the class struggle.

The White Counter-Revolution

The bourgeoisie displayed much greater realism.

It immediately set on foot a small White army, of which the *Schutzcorps*, the 27th Jägers Battalion of the German army (composed of young Finns, as we have remarked), a brigade of Swedish volunteers, and numerous other volunteers recruited among the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois youth, were the backbone; about five thousand men altogether.

A former general of the Russian army, a Swede by birth, Mannerheim, took command of these troops and promised to "re-establish law and order in fifteen days." The booty of several fortunate expeditions against Russian garrisons in the North, expeditions carried out with the complicity of the Russian garrison commanders, provided the Whites with arms.

At the beginning of the hostilities, the Red Guard was composed of only fifteen hundred poorly armed men. The Whites, who were masters of the Bothnian Gulf cities, Uleaborg, Vasa and Kupio, in addition to the agrarian provinces, took the offensive along a front that stretched from the Gulf of Bothnia to Lake Ladoga.

There were Russian garrisons in the cities of Sveaborg, Vyborg and Tammerfors. A section of the Baltic fleet was anchored in Helsingfors. Antonov-Ovseyenko, Smilga and Dybenko had formed Bolshevik organizations among these troops and sailors. The Russian garrison at Tammerfors, commanded by the revolutionary officer Svechnikov, repulsed Mannerheim's first attacks.

Thus protected by the Russians, the Finnish Red Guard could have armed and organized. But at this moment the Brest-Litovsk treaty forced the Soviet Republic to withdraw its troops. There remained only a thousand or so volunteers incorporated in the Red Guard, who mostly wanted nothing better than to return to Russia. Svechnikov, together with a Finnish socialist Ero Happolainen, directed the operations.

A general Red offensive launched in the beginning of March failed, but convinced the Reds that victory was in their grasp. The government's efforts at organization, from January 15 until April 1, resulted in a workers' army of about 60,000 men (30,000 of them in reserve), and in numerous partially successful battles.

The leader of the White government, Svinhufvud, obtained the help of the kaiser. Twenty thousand German soldiers under the command of Von der Goltz disembarked at Hagoë, Helsingfors and Loviza, taking the Reds from the rear. The capture of Helsingfors, after a stubborn street battle in which the Germans and the Whites used workers' wives and children as a cover (100 of them were killed), was followed by ferocious reprisals.

Artillery bombarded the Workers' House. A Swedish newspaper published the following information: "Forty Red women, who were said to be carrying arms, were led out on the ice and shot without trial." There were more than 300 dead picked up in the streets.

Government Wavers

The moderate tendency in the workers' government represented by Tanner was so strong that rigorous measures against the Whites in the interior were not adopted until it was too late. The revolutionary courts frequently condemned counter-revolutionists to nothing more than a fine or to the mild pains of imprisonment. If there were any summary executions, they were entirely on the initiative of the Red Guard.

The indecision of the government, differences among the leaders, refusal to push forward with the revolution, the half-heartedness of the agrarian reforms, and the effect of the Brest-Litovsk treaty weakened the Reds. The arrival of the Germans demoralized them; at this moment Germany was at the height of her power.

Mannerheim surrounded Tammerfors, where 10,000 Reds under Russian officers resisted furiously. The city was taken house by house, after several days' battle. Two hundred Russians, among them two valuable leaders, Colonel Bulatsel and Lieutenant Mukhanov, were shot. Several thousand of the besieged got away; 2,000 were shot or massacred; 5,000 were made prisoners.

At Tavastehus, between Tammerfors and Helsingfors, the decisive battle was fought. Twenty to twenty-five thousand Reds concentrated on this point, driven back from the North by Mannerheim and from the South by Von der Goltz. Their retreat to the east was cut off. In defiance of orders they had brought their families and often all their meager possessions with them. It was more a migration than an army. These masses, who easily became a rout, could hardly maneuver. The Whites raked them with shrapnel. Although surrounded, they fought heroically for two days before they surrendered. Several thousand of the men managed to open a retreat toward the east.

The surrender was followed by a massacre. The killing of the wounded was the rule. There remained 10,000 prisoners, who were interned at Rikhimyaki. Vyborg fell on May 12. Several thousand of the Red Guard took refuge in Russia.

White Terror

The victors massacred the vanquished. Since ancient times class wars have always been the most frightful. There are no more bloody and atrocious victories than the victories of the reactionary classes. Since the bloodbath inflicted on the Paris Commune by the French bourgeoisie, the world had not seen anything comparable to the horrors of Finland.

From the first shot of the civil war, "belonging to a workers' organization in White territory meant arrest; to have been an official in such organization meant execution. The massacre of socialists reached such proportions that it ended by interesting no one."⁵

At Kummen, where forty-three Red Guards fell in battle, nearly 500 persons were executed. There were "hundreds" executed at Kotka, a town of 13,000 inhabitants. "They didn't even ask their names; they just led them away in groups." At Raumo, according to a bourgeois newspaper, "500 prisoners captured on May 15 got the punishment they deserved the same day." "April 14, in Toeloe, a suburb of Helsingfors, 200 Red Guards were killed with machine guns. . . . The Reds were hunted from house to house. Many women perished."

At Sveaborg the public executions were set for Trinity Sunday. In the neighborhood of Lakhtis, where the Whites took

thousands of prisoners, "the machine guns worked several hours a day."

"On one day alone 200 women were killed with dum dum bullets; pieces of flesh flew in every direction."

At Vyborg 600 Red Guards were lined up three deep in front of the fortress moat and coldly picked off with machine guns. Among the intellectuals who were murdered we mention the editor of the *Social-Democrat*, Jukho Raino, and the writer Irmani Rantmalla, who while being led to his execution by boat "threw himself overboard hoping to drown, but his coat prevented him from sinking. The Whites killed him in the water with gunfire."

There are no figures on the total number massacred. Current estimates run between ten and twenty thousand.

The official figure for the number of Red prisoners interned in concentration camps was 70,000. Famine, vermin and epidemic ravaged the prisons.

A report signed by the well-known Finnish doctor, Professor R. Tigerchtet, stated that "From July 6 to July 31, 1918, the number of prisoners in the Tammerfors concentration camp and the neighboring prison varied between 6,027 and 8,597. Of the prisoners, 2,347 died in these 26 days, and the average mortality among the prisoners reached as high as 407 per thousand per week."

On July 25 there were still 50,818 revolutionists in Finnish prisons. In September of the same year 25,800 were still waiting trial,

For a time the bourgeoisie thought of exporting the "labor power" of its prisoners. A law was passed authorizing the shipment of those condemned to hard labor to foreign countries. Germany, depopulated by the war, was ready to exchange chemical and mineral products for this penal labor force. The German revolution forestalled the project.

This social purge continued for months in every section of the country. On May 16 warrants were sworn out for the former Social-Democratic deputies who had remained in the country. (The revolutionists had already perished or fled.) Three of the deputies "committed suicide" in prison during the night of July 2. A dozen more were condemned to death. The supreme court upset this decision in January 1919 and passed one death sentence, six sentences of life imprisonment, four twelve-year sentences, one eleven-year, five ten-year, five nine-year, fifteen eight-year and two seven-year sentences.

"Many of those condemned," Kataya wrote, "were Social-Democratic traitors to socialism, who had spent all their lives serving the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie revenged itself blindly." As usual the White terror made no distinctions between the reformists—whom the victorious bourgeoisie no longer needed—and the revolutionists.

With law and order re-established, the Finnish bourgeoisie began to consider a monarch, to be chosen from the Hohenzollern family. The more and more precarious situation in Germany, however, put an end to this plan.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that more than 100,000 Finnish workers were struck down by the White terror, either shot or given long sentences—altogether about one quarter of the working class.⁶

"Every organized worker has either been shot or imprisoned," wrote the Finnish Communists in the early part of 1919.

This information permits us to make an important observation on the White Terror, which has since been confirmed in Hungary, Bulgaria, Italy, etc. The White Terror is not to be explained by the frenzy of battle, by the violence of class hatred, or by any other psychological factor. The war psychosis only plays a secondary role. In reality it is the result of a plan and of historical necessity. The victorious owning classes realize clearly that they can only assure their domination on the morrow of a great social battle by inflicting a bloodbath on the proletariat that will cripple it for years to come. And as the working class is much more numerous than the owning class, the number of victims *must* be very large.

The total extermination of all the advanced and intelligent elements of the proletariat is the objective of the White Terror. *Thus a defeated revolution—regardless of the circumstances—will always cost the proletariat infinitely more than a victorious revolution, no matter what hardships and sacrifices the latter may require.*

One more observation:

The slaughter in Finland took place in April 1918. Until this time the Russian Revolution had shown magnanimity toward its enemies almost everywhere. It did not turn to the Red Terror. We have mentioned bloody episodes during the vile war in the South, but they were exceptional. The victorious bourgeoisie of a tiny country, that was counted among the most advanced in Europe, reminded the Russian workers that *Death to the Vanquished!* is the law of social war.

VICTOR SERGE

6. Although it maintained silence about these facts, the bourgeois press of all countries raised a great noise about the "crimes of the Reds." It might be instructive therefore to give the number of victims of the Reds as calculated by a White Guard author, Henning Soederhjelm, in a book translated from Swedish into English for the purpose of propaganda in other countries (*The Red Insurrection in Finland in 1918*, London, 1919). Soederhjelm estimates that "more than a thousand" persons fell behind the lines from the fire of Red rifles; but his statistics never mention more than 624 persons.—V. S.

5. Most of these facts are well known . . . and the description given is certainly an understatement if anything.—V. S.

Books in Review

Labor's Leaders

THE NEW MEN OF POWER: AMERICA'S LABOR LEADERS, by C. Wright Mills. Harcourt, Brace, N. Y., 1948, 323 pages, \$3.50.

The American labor officialdom is subjected to a pitiless examination by C. Wright Mills. These several thousand men, "generals" of the "most democratic societies of their size in the world," says Mills in his opening pages, "are the strategic actors, they lead the only organizations capable of stopping the main drift toward war and slump." Weighing them carefully against this task, Mills finds them wanting and concludes his work with this sentence: "Never has so much depended upon men who are so ill-prepared and so little inclined to assume the responsibility."

Having proved to the hilt that those who can and should stop the "main drift" cannot and will not do so, the author loses balance in an effort to find the way out. He becomes blinded to the very guide marks which he himself carves out and loses control over his own excellent material, ignoring conclusions which flow inescapably from his investigation. This work divides into two clearly defined aspects: Mills, posing the role of the labor leadership within the framework of the problems of contemporary society, is powerful, convincing, illuminating. But Mills outlining his own program, and we must add, sketching the purported program of the "far left" (Trotskyists), succeeds only in creating a bizarre fog. This latter part of his work is of interest mainly as a curiosity which can be overlooked without detracting from the unquestionable importance of the book.

What is the American labor leader? Mills adds much to our knowledge, documenting his investigation with facts and statistics assembled in large part from a series of questionnaires addressed to all leaders of AFL and CIO international unions and heads of city and state federations. The labor leaders are "of lowly origin." Most of them began as wage workers, as did their fathers. However, they come not from the lowest sections of the population, the unskilled and semi-skilled, but from among the highly skilled workers, foremen, farmers, or of small businessmen. Many were workers whose ambitions were leading them out of the working class into the professions, but who became derailed into labor leadership. Mills informs us that "David Dubinsky for instance or Julius Hochman went into the shop with the vaguely contradictory ambition of leading the workers toward 'emancipation' while saving

enough money to study medicine or law." Walter Reuther could be cited as another example. He started out as a tool and die maker who worked as a leader while he attended college with the aim of becoming an engineer. He participated in the socialist student movement and with the depression and later the rise of the UAW became diverted from his engineering career back into the labor movement. The labor leaders, says Mills, "are in an unkindly phrase 'petty bourgeois' in origin."

The union leader "organizes discontent, then he sits on it exploiting it in order to maintain a continuous organization; the labor leader is a manager of discontent." To maintain his position he builds a machine inside the union based upon patronage ("porkchops") but at all times he must "deliver the goods" to the rank and file. His horizon is limited to securing this or that immediate short-term gain. He supports the capitalist system but seeks within it peaceable and cooperative relations with the business class which will give him a junior partnership with the owners of industry, security for the union, and higher wages for the workers. He "stands between the company bureaucracy and the rank and file of the workers, acting as a shock absorber for both."

Security for the union he identifies with the security of his own position which gives him power, a standard of life above that of the ranks and freedom from the monotony of industrial labor. The culmination of this stability he seeks by the regularization of the whole economy to free it of shocks and crises. He therefore accepts the "liberal rhetoric" of peaceful cohabitation of union and industry under the benevolent auspices of the liberal capitalist state. The New Deal embodied all his aspirations. Becoming its ardent champion, he helped shunt aside the political development of the labor movement.

He fears the power of industry in government and is alarmed at the possibility of fascism but has no long-range policy beyond that of a quick grasp for speedy small-time gains. He is opposed to the formation of an independent party of labor and hopes to achieve his aims within the framework of the Democratic-Republican party system. His social philosophy gives him a sense of "sobering responsibility" which pushes him further and further away from the rank and file. It is the lowest ranking leaders with the closest ties to the workers who "reflect more hope, expectation and trust" in the long-term development of the union movement.

Modern society is drifting toward war, slump and totalitarianism. Mills considers the aims, character and ideology of the labor leadership in this context. The only group apart from the "far left" which has a consistent long-term program is the so-called "sophisticated right," that is, the most far-sighted thinkers of big business. (Stalinism in the labor movement is analyzed separately and is not considered in this connection.) Through the Marshall Plan they seek unchallenged domination of world economy in the interests of the profit makers. They plan for the militarization of society, the increasing merger of the state, industry and the military. The cost of their plans, which can culminate only in a new war which they fully expect, must be borne by the poorest sections of the population. The labor union must be either destroyed or completely integrated into the militarized state. Their immediate strategy is to reach some kind of agreement with the existing labor leadership to insure the system against a radical, socialist development of the American working class. They want to suck the labor leadership into their policy of control by the state and guarantee a pro-capitalist, pro-imperialist labor movement.

The labor leader, far from standing in the way of this program, helps to further it by his own ideology which views the state not as it actually is, the instrument of the ruling capitalist class, but as the impartial arbiter between classes. "The labor leader is walking backward into the future envisioned by the sophisticated conservatives. By his long-term pursuit of the short end, he is helping move the society of the United States into a corporate form of the garrison state." The leaders of the CIO and AFL, despite the many differences between them, are fundamentally alike in this respect.

A powerful analysis and correct in all its essentials. But what to do? For Mills properly tries to find some mode of action corresponding to the facts. And here Mills is at his weakest.

The power of the union must be linked with the intellect: such is the author's formula for describing the task of developing a union leadership freed of its narrow vision and capable of undertaking the tasks ahead. The key is the "union-made" intellectual, a master of every skill required by a labor organizer, a research man, an organizer, a political thinker, whose role, says Mills, "would be difficult to overestimate." He will find labor leaders, appreciative of his knowledge and abilities, who will listen to him "if he does not frighten them." But what shall these intellectuals teach the labor leaders? Mills does not really know . . . somehow they must sound the alarm against the "main drift." Here Mills is no longer dealing with real men

acting in life with real ideas but with the straw men of his own imagination.

The specific proposal advanced by Mills, in fact his only such proposal, is the formation of an independent labor party. He takes consolation from some of his statistics which reveal that a small percentage of labor leaders favor the "eventual" formation of such a party. Others who do not go so far are intensely concerned over the political power of industry and the possible rise of fascism. It is these men who, if they are not "frightened" by the intellectuals, offer hope.

But the problem, as Mills should certainly realize, hardly begins with the formation of a labor party. He has cogently demonstrated how the labor leadership as a social grouping fears instability and seeks peaceful class relations. A program which would propose the abandonment of collaboration with the capitalist class and its state, for the adoption of a program of class struggle aimed at the complete transformation of society, cannot but "frighten" a stratum steeped in pro-capitalist ideology. The formation of a labor party would not change the character of the present labor officialdom. Far from abandoning their social philosophy in forming a labor party, the leadership will adjust the new party to it. They will seek to restore "stability" for themselves with new political methods, and to adopt a new and more effective (for themselves) mode of collaboration with the capitalist class and its state. Mass labor parties have existed in all the nations of Europe, only to be led by men whose political philosophy was identical with that of the present American labor leadership. They proved

incapable of stopping war and fascism.

The labor leadership of today, petty-bourgeois in nature, loyal to capitalism, more and more divorcing itself from the ranks (to restate Mills' own description) cannot by its very nature become the necessary leadership of tomorrow. This or that individual exception, however important, cannot change this fact. A new leadership drawn from among the militants, close to the rank and file, trained in class, socialist politics and unionism must replace them. The formation of a labor party and the political battles which will be thrust upon it will help raise these elements to the fore. New times—new men. Mills again helps us to understand the mechanism of making and unmaking labor leaders. "When something goes wrong in the economy, then new leaders with other ideas are likely to rise. . . . Democracy in the unions . . . often proceeds by upsurges and revolution rather than by smoothly operating democratic machinery." But he does not fully pose the task of changing the existing leadership nor state clearly with whom and how he would replace it.

An early definition fixes the "far left" as the "two Trotskyist groups" but the less said about Mills' exposition of the purported "left" program the better. Readers of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL can judge the expert character of his detailed description of the far-left program by the following single sentence: "The American left focuses its political attention more on domestic politics than on foreign affairs."

He does not in fact present and analyze the program of the genuine American left with the same care and objec-

tivity as the rest of his material. We cannot and do not, of course, expect Mills to advocate our program, but we can expect that before recounting it at length and with apparent authority he acquaint himself with it and present it objectively. This neglect is all the more irritating because of the excellence of Mills' work as a whole. It is, in spite of its shortcomings, an indispensable asset for socialist unionists.

BEN HALL

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TAFT-HARTLEYISM —

(Continued from page 270)

before the Second World War saved democracy all over again.

The general euphoria of the labor leaders at the unexpected turn of events on November 2 will take more than a few days to wear off before they again remember whom they are dealing with: what Congressman Hartley pointed out the day before the election in a prediction that "regardless of which party wins control," "there will not be any major changes" in the treatment of labor by the government:

The president himself [said Hartley] on seven different occasions employed the law in the interest of the national public health and safety. The law is not nearly so drastic as that suggested by the president when he wanted to draft strikers two years ago.

Major change or no, the "compromise" will be cooked up; and—so practical are our "labor states-

men"—a bill which, if proposed a year or two ago as an emasculation of the Wagner Act, would have headed into a storm of labor protest and indignation, may be meekly accepted as a *victory* by the AFL-CIO officialdom. It is the old story of a labor leadership that insists on hanging into the coattails of its class enemy on the political field: after being beat on the head, it is a positive pleasure to be slapped in the face.

Like a football player who has been penalized for foul play, the government may now have to fall back a few yards in order to drive at the same goal. But whether the odious name remains behind or not, the Taft-Hartley Law has beaten out the path and blazed the course for anti-labor regimentation—whatever the tempo of the next period may be. It has been a laboratory for the development of one thousand and one ways to hogtie labor; its comparatively short life is sure to leave a new permanent scar on the body of American democratic traditions.

ANNE TEMPLE