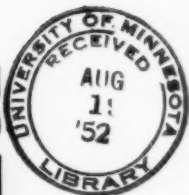


Political affairs

JULY 1952 • 25 CENTS



BETH GURLEY FLYNN

[1] Freedom for the Communist Leaders!

JOHN SWIFT

[7] Reuther's Seizure of the Ford Local

PETTIS PERRY

[24] Puerto Rico and the Fight for Its
Independence, II

SIMON W. GERSON

[35] The Jury System and Democratic Rights

M. ALPATOV

[45] On the Transition from the Ancient
World to the Middle Ages

HERBERT APTHEKER

[60] Corruption, Inc. (*Book Review*)

Masses & Mainstream

announces with pride

the publication next month

of a new book by

W. E. B. DU BOIS
IN BATTLE FOR PEACE

The Story of My 83rd Birthday

with comment by Shirley Graham

An exciting human document, with a profound message for America in this election year . . . it unmaskes the war-makers and shows how peace can be won.

Popular Edition, One Dollar

ORDER YOUR COPY NOW

*From your local bookshop, trade union, organization
or by mail from:*

MASSES & MAINSTREAM

832 Broadway, New York 3, N. Y.

Re-entered as second class matter January 4, 1945, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. POLITICAL AFFAIRS is published monthly by New Century Publishers, Inc., at 832 Broadway, New York 3, N. Y., to whom subscriptions, payments and correspondence should be sent. Subscription rate: \$2.50 a year; \$1.25 for six months; foreign and Canada, \$3.00 a year. Single copies 25 cents.

PRINTED IN U.S.A.



Vol. XXX

A T

By Eliz

THE F
ment h
leaders
must b

In th
year in
peace,
ple, the
large a
new pr
to be
twelve
munist
Nation
were i
and T
a lengt
they w
1949 o
teach t
the gov
by forc

A Theoretical and Political Magazine of Scientific Socialism

Editor: V. J. Jerome

Freedom for the Communist Leaders!

By Elizabeth Gurley Flynn

THE FIRST YEAR of their imprisonment has drawn to a close for eight leaders of the Communist Party. It must be their last.

In the summer of 1948, an election year in the U.S.A., when the issues of peace, the rights of the Negro people, the rights of labor, were looming large as campaign challenges, and a new progressive third party was about to be launched in Philadelphia, twelve national leaders of the Communist Party, then constituting its National Board, were arrested. They were indicted under Sections Two and Three of the Smith Act. After a lengthy trial of over nine months, they were found guilty in October 1949 of *conspiracy to advocate* or teach the necessity of overthrowing the government of the United States by force and violence, and of organiz-

ing a society of persons (namely, the Communist Party of the U.S.A.) to teach, advocate or encourage such overthrow. William Z. Foster, Chairman of the Party, although indicted, was not tried, having been severed from the case because of illness.

In the summer of 1951, after an appeal to the Circuit Court of Appeals and then to the United States Supreme Court, the infamous thought-control sections of the Smith Act of 1940 were upheld as "constitutional" and the convictions of the eleven Communist leaders affirmed, by a six-to-two decision. Justice Clark, who as Attorney General had initiated the prosecution, took no part in the judgment of this case. Justices Black and Douglas dissented. Two of the six, Justices Jackson and Frankfurter, wrote separate opinions,

dissenting from some aspects of the majority views but joining in the majority decision.

The Supreme Court did not review the conduct of the trial or the sufficiency of the evidence; nor did it review the jury challenge of the defendants. The Supreme Court based itself entirely on the lower court's findings in these respects. It did not review the question as to whether the defendants had received a fair trial by an impartial jury; it did not examine the conduct of the judge, as to whether the due process was properly safeguarded; nor did it examine whether this had been a trial of books rather than of men. The Supreme Court narrowed the issue on appeal to the question of the constitutionality of the law, which it upheld.

In the summer of 1951, the mandate of imprisonment for a five-year term came down from the U.S. Supreme Court. On July 2, seven of the defendants surrendered and were sent to various Federal prisons, as follows: *Eugene Dennis*, General Secretary of the Party, and *John Gates*, Editor of the *Daily Worker*, to the Federal Penitentiary at Atlanta, Georgia; *Jack Stachel*, veteran Communist leader and organizer, to Danbury, Connecticut, Federal House of Correction, because of ill-health; *Irving Potash*, a leader of the Fur and Leather Workers International Union, to the Federal Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas; *Carl Winter*, Chairman of the Party in Michigan, and *John Williamson*,

Labor Secretary of the Party, to the U.S. Penitentiary at Lewisburg, Pa.; and *Benjamin J. Davis*, Chairman of the Party's Negro Commission and former New York City Councilman, honored as a distinguished spokesman of the Negro people, to the Federal Penitentiary at Terre Haute, Indiana.

Four of the defendants in that first Smith Act case—*Gus Hall*, Chairman of the Party in Ohio; *Gil Green*, Chairman of the Party in Illinois; *Henry Winston*, National Organizational Secretary, and *Robert Thompson*, Chairman of the Party in New York State—did not surrender, and became political refugees. Three months later, Gus Hall was arrested in Mexico, taken by force to the border and turned over to the waiting F.B.I. The denial of a hearing or any proper extradition proceedings in Mexico created tremendous protest in that country. Comrade Hall was tried, without precedent in American legal history, on a "contempt" charge in New York City before Judge Sylvester Ryan and was vindictively sentenced to three additional years of imprisonment. He has been recently returned to the Federal Penitentiary at Leavenworth.

The Supreme Court decision unleashed an immediate chain reaction, in a series of Smith Act prosecutions over the country. Since June 1951, seventeen men and women were arrested in New York City, fifteen more in California, six in Pennsylvania, six in Baltimore, and seven

in Haw
second
tions, tr
was in
four m
frame-u
for spee
tually m
minist
of a vio
tences
two yea
defend
A Calif
trial an
which
months
set for
trial is
In the
"overt
eral Pr
is requ
ject of
some c
papers.
the Fed
are now
series o
speech
attenda
etc., ev
an "ove
vice, in
ken wo
Bill of
overt a
a centu
context
tory tu
into "c
empha

in Hawaii—a total of 51. Of this second round of Smith Act prosecutions, the first trial to be completed was in Baltimore. Two women and four men were found guilty in a frame-up trial which made a record for speed, and where the judge virtually made membership in the Communist Party tantamount to proof of a violation of the Smith Act. Sentences varying from five years to two years were meted out. The defendants are on bail, pending appeal. A California trial and a New York trial are now in process, both of which are already running into months. The Hawaii trial has been set for September; the Pittsburgh trial is not yet scheduled.

In the first Foley Square trial, no "overt acts" were alleged and Federal Prosecutor McGohey said "none is required." This became the subject of nation-wide criticism, even in some extremely conservative newspapers. After the 1948 codification of the Federal criminal law, overt acts are now required and in the present series of trials the indictments specify speeches, articles, teaching of classes, attendance at meetings, conventions, etc., even the leaving of buildings, as "overt acts." This fraudulent device, involving the written and spoken word, is in direct violation of the Bill of Rights. Around these alleged overt acts, the Marxist literature of a century, with excerpts torn out of context, footnotes distorted and history turned upside down, is converted into "evidence." Certain words are emphasized and dramatically stressed

in the readings to the jury and through the "testimony" of stool-pigeon witnesses, such as *revolution, dictatorship of the proletariat, seizure of power, shattering the bourgeois state*, etc., etc. With the device of scissors-and-paste "Marxism," the prosecution attempts to distort and misrepresent the liberating ideas of scientific Socialism into their opposite.

The lurid tales of bought-and-paid-for stool-pigeons, fantastic and incredible as they are, are not rejected, remote in time and geographical location from the defendants though they may be. Cloak-and-dagger tales are spewed out by a cast of traveling professional F.B.I. informers, who have already appeared in Los Angeles, in the Pittsburgh sedition trial, in Baltimore, in Washington before the Subversive Control Board, and are now being trotted out for appearance in New York.

The very distance in time and place and the obscurity as to details make it difficult to rebut such vagaries. Third party, hearsay testimony is a stock-in-trade. The lack of a bill of particulars in Smith Act cases adds to the defendants' difficulties as to what to expect from the Government. The arguments, books, papers, pamphlets, readings, stool-pigeon testimony follow the Foley Square pattern, where the defendants used to say if they went to a ball game they'd never be missed. Not men and women, but in actuality books were—and are—on trial!

Yet it was not really the books

which were on trial. It was not the principles of Marxism-Leninism that were actually on trial, since those same principles were in existence in 1940 when the Smith Act was passed; yet that law was not invoked against the Communist leaders until 1948. The real issue was the political struggles against the dangers of war and fascism which threatened the country then, and threaten it today. It was not the clear and present danger of revolution in the United States that frightened the American imperialists; it was the clear and present danger to them and their war plans of world peace, of an end to the fascist peril, of victories of the people for democracy and freedom. It was to silence the voices of the Communist leaders as vanguard spokesmen for these demands of the people, that the Smith Act was invoked in 1948, close upon the heels of the Taft-Hartley Act, that the McCarran Act was passed in 1950 and that further indictments and trials were projected.

When they found that silencing the Eleven did not outlaw the voice of the Communist Party, fifty more Communist and working-class leaders were indicted. In an appearance before a Sub-Committee of the House of Representatives on January 12, 1950, to discuss Department of Justice appropriations for 1951, Raymond P. McWhearty of that Department said that 12,000 cases depended on the outcome of the (first) Communist trial in New York. This he cynically called their "work load"

for 1951. But they have not been able to carry out their plans. Regardless of the outcome in the present Smith Act cases, which are affected by the social composition of the juries, their method of selection, and the political climate, and above all by the extent of the mass resistance, no defendant is pessimistic. We are greatly encouraged by the changes taking place in our country—the growing sentiment for peace, the growing opposition to the Smith Act on the part of trade unions, the mood for Amnesty for the Smith Act victims which is spreading across the land, and the mounting opposition to the new Smith Bill, which would place trade unions under Government control, à la Mussolini and Hitler.

However, there is no evidence of let-up on the part of the reactionary forces when and where they believe they can get away with it and make political capital out of these prosecutions. Such is the case in Pittsburgh, where in addition to a pending Smith Act case, Andy Onda, James Dolsen and Steve Nelson have been framed and convicted under an old sedition law. The first two are out on bail on appeal; but Steve Nelson, Communist Party Chairman in Western Pennsylvania, a valiant fighter against Franco in the Lincoln Brigade, has been singled out for special punishment. He is in prison, denied bail and given the most ferocious sentence yet inflicted in this period—twenty years, plus a fine of \$10,000; plus costs—over \$13,000!

Judge Montgomery, who forced

Nelson
a memb
outfit,
nism,"
Suprem
Musma
ring as
these th
ever, th
admits
"swamp
over th
from
burgh
out in
sentenc
no acci
is time
steel st
in the
ing Ne
class st
Steve
the An
er of
cism,
the Ar
even i
and co
be nul
our du
the fac
tried
ideas
has be
which
or tri
jury. I
miner
the yo
voted

Nelson to trial without a lawyer, is a member of a local ultra-reactionary outfit, "Americans Batling Communism," and a candidate for the State Supreme Court, to which Judge Musmanno was elected, after starring as the main witness against these three Communist leaders. However, the *Pittsburgh Press* of July 16 admits that this trial judge has been "swamped with protests," from all over the United States, as well as from foreign countries. The Pittsburgh Civil Rights Congress pointed out in its protest against the savage sentence of Steve Nelson that "*it is no accident that this vicious sentence is timed with an attempt to smash the steel strike, whose principal front is in the Pittsburgh district.*" Railroad-ing Nelson to prison is part of the class struggle there.

Steve Nelson is a valiant son of the American working class, a builder of unions, a fighter against fascism, a Communist whose faith in the American people grows greater even in a prison cell. He is serene, and confident that this sentence will be nullified by their demands. It is our duty and responsibility to bring the facts to the people. Steve Nelson, tried for advocacy of his political ideas with books as the "evidence," has been deluged by malicious lies which, while not a part of the charges or trial, served to intimidate the jury. But the steel workers and coal miners who know Steve Nelson over the years, who are aware of his devoted service to his class, are not

fooled by this slander. The reactionaries have taken on more than they can go through with, in this case. Steve Nelson's case is rapidly becoming known throughout the world—his imprisonment is an indictment of U.S. imperialism and its hypocritical protestations about democracy peddled to other peoples around the world.

The statement by the National Committee of the Communist Party, signed by William Z. Foster and Eugene Dennis in June 1951, sounded a timely warning to all Americans. It is valuable to read it again after a year has passed. It pointed out that the Vinson decision nullified the 160-year-old Bill of Rights and substituted thought-control, when it assaulted the legality of an American political party, which it declared a "criminal conspiracy." The National Committee statement emphasized that this decision registered a victory for "creeping fascism"—for the McCarthys, McCarrans and MacArthurs. "*Only a new tempo of united action, of popular resistance, can save us from full-fledged fascism and a third world war.*" It pointed out that "Admission to the concentration camps and gas ovens was not restricted 'only' to card-carrying Communists." The statement pointed out further that "Communists have always opposed the force and violence of capitalism and all reaction, of imperialist aggression, of strike-breaking, and lynch terror. The Communist Party advocates social progress and teaches that funda-

mental change can only be achieved by democratic processes in accord with the Declaration of Independence. It opposes putsches, palace revolutions, and the adventures of minority cliques."

Exposing the real motives of the action, the statement continued:

The Sixty Families of corporate wealth are not really afraid that revolution will break out in our country next week, next year, or in the next decade. That isn't why they jail Communists and scrap the first Amendment as dangerous. But the Sixty Families are very much afraid of the American people's growing peace sentiment. They are afraid that the people will impose this popular will for peace, put an end to the orgy of war profiteering and thwart Wall Street's ambition to rule the world. . . . For the war mongers, free speech is a "bad risk," because the people are speaking for peace. . . .

The Sixty Families are afraid of the American people because they fear peaceful co-existence and peaceful competition with the socialist system. They are afraid that increasing numbers of Americans will learn the truth about the Soviet Union, about its working-class democracy, and what it is like to enjoy the fruits of an ever-expanding economy of abundance in a land rid of monopolists and free from fear of economic crisis. They are especially afraid that the American workers and the Negro people will wake up to the fact that the countries of Socialism and People's Democracy are invincible and steadfast defenders of world peace.

I know of no better words to express the thinking of all Smith Act defendants today than the ringing

words of the National Committee statement:

We Communists are going to stand firm. We are going to fight for our own rights, and for the rights of all the people—Negro and white.

We will maintain our place in the ranks of the working class which gave our Party birth, championing the interests, welfare and future of the American workers and common people.

We Communists will fight to keep our leaders out of jail, and to free them if they are imprisoned. We will make full use of every opportunity to function as a legal political party, and strive to regain the rights of which we and the people have been deprived.

We are going to resist the attempt to drive us underground. But we are also going to protect our members and our organization. We are going to guard the integrity and working-class principles of our Party, and preserve its ability to function under any and all circumstances.

We will not capitulate to the book-burners. We will continue to study and teach the working class science of social progress, of Marxism-Leninism, and to apply it in the interest of our class, our people, our country.

We Communists will not yield to the warmakers. We will continue to rally millions of people to effective struggle for world peace. We will continue to join with all who combat both the Truman and the MacArthur war program, and strike to halt the spread of war, whether in Asia or in Europe. We will continue to expose the Hitler Big Lie that the Soviet Union, the land of workers' democracy, threatens the United States. Together with millions,

(Continued on page 65)

By John

THE LES
seizure
mobile
important
as it is
Commun
Local
union.
union in
in the la
the most
in trust
here is b
rations i
on all u
In rec
the scen
portant
gressive
been un
onstratin
to establ
coalition
These a
nated in
formatio
sive adm
due to t
ing corr
and pro

Reuther's Seizure of the Ford Local

By John Swift

THE LESSONS of the Walter Reuther seizure of Local 600, United Automobile workers are of the greatest importance for the labor movement, as it is for every progressive and Communist trade unionist.

Local 600 is not just another local union. It is the biggest single local union in the country. It is situated in the largest and, in many respects, the most turbulent of the trade unions in the trustified industry. What happens here is bound to have direct reverberations in the U.A.W. and an effect on all unions.

In recent years Local 600 has been the scene of some of the most important advances made by the progressive forces. These advances have been unique in many respects, demonstrating anew that it is possible to establish progressive united front coalitions within Right-led unions. These achievements, which culminated in the early part of 1951 in the formation of a united front progressive administration in the local, were due to the application of the following correct policies by the Left-wing and progressive forces:

1. The tactic of the united front from below was correctly seen as the main and decisive lever to help unite the ranks of the Ford workers in struggle around one or more immediate issues. This was achieved around such issues as the struggle against speed-up, lay-offs, the five-year contract and for Negro rights. The very struggle for unity of action around concrete issues helped to break up, and later, to dissolve, old encrusted factional divisions, and to create and cement unity on a departmental, unit-wide (building) and then plant-wide (local union) basis.

2. The Left-wing and progressive workers recognized that unity had to be forged first of all between the progressive white workers and the great mass of the Negro workers. This was achieved by developing the struggle around the special demands of the Negro workers for upgrading on the job and for full representation in the top posts of union leadership. The Negro workers, while participating in the various caucuses, represented an independent force

united on the propositions of Negro rights and Negro leadership within the union. The alliance established with this grouping greatly facilitated the progressive development of the local and the Negro-white unity which became one of its hall-marks.

3. While basing themselves primarily on the united front from below, on the unity of the rank-and-file, the Left-wing and progressive forces followed a broad united front policy to achieve unity on *every* level, so long as this unity was based on principle and took as its starting point the interests of the workers. Thus, when the surge of the rank-and-file for unity around progressive policies expressed itself in the election of many progressives in the various units, as well as on a local union scale, rifts began to appear in the Right-wing pro-Reuther caucus. The result, a united local union administration, representing a coalition of three main trends: the American Unionists, including conservatives and middle-of-the-road workers; the Progressives, embracing progressive and Left-wing workers; and the independent force of Negro workers of varied political views.

4. The experiences in Local 600 showed that, while unity must start with those issues to which the workers are most responsive, this does not mean that Left-wing and progressive unionists can limit themselves to those issues. They are duty-bound also to deal with such ques-

tions as foreign policy and Red-baiting. In the Ford Local the progressives did deal with those issues, at the same time emphasizing that disagreements need not lead to disunity or division. By showing the workers why they had a real stake in peace, by demonstrating to them the tie-up between the war program and their economic conditions — unemployment, speed-up, five-year contracts, wage-freeze, high taxes and high prices—the progressives succeeded in convincing thousands of workers of the need for a positive peace program, as against the war drive and war economy. In fact, Hogan, the candidate of the Progressive Caucus for local president in 1951, barely missed election (by only 420 votes) after making peace a central issue in his campaign. His advocacy of peace influenced the thinking of some of the more conservative leaders of the local.

It is these important developments which are the background for the action of the Reuther machine in violating union democracy and imposing an administrators'hip over the affairs of Local 600. The unity forged by the workers of this local no doubt alarmed Reuther. He found himself suddenly becoming isolated from the Ford Local. Those who had headed his caucus in the local only a year before, joined a united front essentially opposed to his policies. This did not yet constitute an immediate threat to Reuther's control

over the
certainly
base of
that, an
tions of
came fu
Furth
600 had
publicit
not alo
whole
ship of
outspok
the issu
binger
potentia
ing in
the rol
of its c
the for
Council
labor o
own lib
at all c
union
The
wipe o
of pro
not alo
siderati
whole
develop
Reut
situatio
his "pr
Wall
satiabl
Walter
preside
to "b

over the international union; but it certainly represented an important base of opposition and, more than that, an object lesson to other sections of the union as his policies became further exposed.

Furthermore, the example of Local 600 had received national and world publicity. It proved to be a challenge, not alone to Reuther, but to the whole Right-wing pro-war leadership of the C.I.O. Everywhere, the outspoken position of Local 600 on the issue of peace had become a harbinger and a promise of the great potential peace force that is awakening in American Labor. Likewise, the role of Local 600, particularly of its outstanding Negro leaders, in the formation of the Negro Labor Council, was seen by the Right-wing labor officialdom as a thrust at their own lily-white executive boards and at all other white-supremacist trade-union practices.

The pressure upon Reuther to wipe out this important bridgehead of progressive unionism, stemmed not alone from his inner-union considerations, but from the fear of the whole war camp aroused by the Ford development.

Reuther was embarrassed by the situation in Local 600, because it hurt his "prestige" with Washington and Wall Street and threatened his insatiable opportunist careerism. For Walter Reuther views his U.A.W. presidency only as a stepping-stone to "bigger things"—to the C.I.O.

presidency and, who can tell, perhaps, some day, to the U.S. presidency, as a home-grown American Attlee. For such things one must prove to be a reliable and worthy lackey, capable of acting with cynical and ruthless disregard of the union's constitutional guarantees to its members, especially where the rights of progressives and peace advocates are concerned. Reuther proved himself worthy of this dishonor. His dictatorial blow at Local 600 was meant to be the first in a new series of attacks upon the Left-wing and progressive-led forces in the labor movement.

WEAKNESSES IN UNITED-FRONT COALITION

If, as we have shown, Reuther acted from fear and weakness, not from strength, he was able to impose an administratorship on the local, and to get away with it, at least temporarily, because of a number of weaknesses which had developed in the work of the united-front coalition.

It is necessary to speak frankly of these weaknesses and errors, because only by analyzing and exposing them, can Communist, Left-wing and progressive workers learn from them, guard against their repetition, and transform Reuther's temporary victory into a lasting defeat.

Further, unless the errors and weaknesses in Local 600 are under-

stood, the erroneous inference may be drawn that nothing could have been done to prevent the Reuther seizure, that the attempt and its success were both inevitable. Hence, it could be falsely concluded that advances in Right-led unions are possible only up to a point, because the entrenched bureaucratic machines have the power to snuff out the progressive forces at will and to prevent a consolidation of progressive positions. Any such conclusion drawn today would be exceedingly harmful, dangerous, and defeatist.

Before entering into an examination of these errors and weaknesses, a word of caution is in order. Our criticisms should constantly be viewed against the background of the rich and positive achievements in this Local. Let us bear in mind that Right-wing officialdom can try to take over progressive-led locals only where the progressives have first achieved leadership. Therefore, the errors committed in Local 600 occurred at a higher stage of struggle than what progressives find in other Right-led unions. If, however, we deal at greater length with criticisms, it is not to deprecate the achievements, but, on the contrary, to help consolidate and expand them.

The united front coalition in Local 600 was completely unprepared for Reuther's sudden assault. As the *Michigan Party Forum* correctly observes: "The setting up of the Reuther administratorship over Local 600

was unexpected, a surprise to all including Party members and leaders." Nobody believed Reuther would dare go so far.

This proved to be a costly error. It meant that the Ford workers were completely unprepared for the new turn of events. The leadership of the local was shocked by the attack, so that for a number of days it was in a state of near paralysis. This meant that at the most critical moment, when the attack could still have been repulsed by a solid mass front of opposition, the Ford workers found themselves essentially on their own, without guidance or leadership.

The fact that the Party leadership held this false estimate meant that the Party members were unprepared for the new eventuality, and thus were unable to fulfill their vanguard role. The Reuther coup was thus carried through with relative ease, even though the Reuther administrator were in great fear of the workers.

While the resentment and opposition of the workers have since found continuous expression in many forms, the failure to meet the assault in a united and determined way undoubtedly created some momentary demoralization and defeatism among certain groups of workers. Had prompt effective mass action been organized, involving thousands of workers, Reuther could have burnt his fingers so badly that he would

never at
That
made
as well
requires
this erro
a logica
errors.
In th
illusion
country
do not
develop
ers. Th
the thi
local l
underst
part of
Comm
compr
The
House
made
clear.
ther a
was sl
with s
ther,
crat, r
ist w
tack o
verbal
only
way.
forces
ther's
artful
selves
gogy-
Reuth

never attempt such a venture again.

That this error in judgment was made by all forces in the coalition, as well as the Party State leadership, requires careful examination. For this error was not accidental; it was a logical sequence to a series of other errors.

In the first place, it exposed gross illusions that reaction rampant in the country would by-pass Local 600 and do nothing to halt the progressive development among the Ford workers. That such illusions could affect the thinking of conservative-minded local leaders like Stellato, can be understood. Why they were also part of the thinking of the Michigan Communists, is, indeed, difficult to comprehend.

The coming to Detroit of the House Un-American Committee had made the objective of reaction quite clear. Yet no one expected the Reuther action. Thus, the first illusion was shown to be closely associated with still another, namely, that Reuther, the reactionary Social-Democrat, ready helpmate of the imperialist war crowd, would limit his attack on the Ford Local merely to verbal missiles, that he would act only in a "legal," "constitutional," way. This indicates that the very forces who best understood that Reuther's most potent weapon was his artful use of demagoguery, had themselves fallen victims to this demagoguery. They could not conceive that Reuther would stoop so low as actu-

ally to cooperate with the vile, anti-labor, anti-Negro, pro-fascist House Un-American Committee.

As is frequently the case, when one set of illusions is destroyed, an opposite set replaces them. Illusions arise from a one-sided, false conception of objective reality. When the underlying premise for the given illusions is found to be false, but when the reasons for their rejection are not fully understood, the tendency may well be to shift abruptly to opposite ground. This is the danger now among certain Michigan Party leaders. Yesterday, they underestimated the danger of war and fascism and the despicable role of Social-Democracy as reflected upon their own scene. Today, they tend to hold either that fascism is already here or that war and fascism can no longer be stopped. Yesterday, they did not believe Reuther would cooperate with poll-tax Congressman Woods of the House un-American Committee; today, some of them no longer see any difference between Reuther and an outright fascist.

Such gyrations from extreme to extreme reflect failure to make an all-around estimate of the situation in the country and internationally. The danger present in such gyrations is clear.

For, if fascism is already here and if the enemy is so all-powerful, then what chance is there of maintaining a progressive leadership in the Ford Local, or in any local?

WHY DID REUTHER "SUCCEED"?

Let us ask ourselves: How was it possible for Reuther to get away with his high-handed seizure in a union in which the rank-and-file has over the years zealously fought for and guarded inner-union democracy? After all, the U.A.W. was not established from above. Its history certainly is not that of a hot-house product. Nor was it brought into being by mere Labor Board elections. It arose from the ranks of the workers themselves, through bitter conflict with the giant auto trusts and with their paid agents inside the union. Nor has the U.A.W. membership been cowed into submission by the Reuther bureaucracy.

What then explains the fact that, when Reuther's well-oiled machine moved in on Local 600, there was no wave of protest sweeping through the ranks of this great union? In the answer to this question lies the basic source of Reuther's strength and the basic source of Local 600's weakness.

From the outset of the progressive victory in the Ford Local, Reuther's basic strategy has been to try to isolate and seal off this local from its brother locals in the International. For this purpose he employed an old tactic. He set out to twist things about so that every proposal put forward by the progressives and every action on their part could be made

to appear as motivated by factional anti-leadership considerations. He realized that if this could be achieved, it would no longer be necessary to debate an issue on its merits; it could just be discounted as "factional" and "anti-leadership." He also knew that, once this objective was achieved, it would not be too difficult to make it appear as though every *inner-union disagreement* was in reality an *anti-union opposition*.

It must be said that in this effort to isolate the Ford Local by a clever distortion of its position, Reuther was quite successful. But all the diabolical cunning of which Reuther is so capable would not have sufficed had not the coalition leadership of the local unwittingly come to his assistance by playing into his hands.

Instead of consciously fighting to prevent isolation from the rest of the union, the Ford Local leadership inadvertently assisted it. How else, for example, can one explain the failure of the Ford Local to participate fully and actively in the life of the Wayne County Council of the C.I.O.?

Of course, the Ford Local did distribute its local paper to other plants. But the question has to be posed: How did it unite with other locals? How did it support the plans other locals initiated? Did it not, rather, frequently leave the impression of seeking close contact only with locals whose leaders shared its general outlook?

Unity
forged
interest
issues
tering
walls
their e
interest
Local 6
basis fo
lesson
was ne
firmly
came t
union
Let u
of unen
of the
it was
ognize
this pr
measur
guard
worker
mand
problem
fact, it
the Fo
ference
and th
take th
confere
did no
the nat
ington
And
conver
the Lo
fensive
it wer

Unity in the Ford Local had been forged around issues involving the interests of the workers. It is these issues which proved to be the battering rams that broke down the walls of factionalism. By keeping their eyes strictly on the workers' interests, the various forces of the Local 600 coalition found a common basis for working together. But this lesson from their own experiences was not applied consistently and firmly by the progressives when it came to fighting for unity in the union as a whole.

Let us take, for example, the issue of unemployment. It is to the credit of the Ford Local leadership that it was among the very first to recognize the serious consequences of this problem in the industry, took measures in its own local to safeguard the interests of the laid-off workers, and raised sharply the demand for immediate attention to the problem by the International. In fact, it was the insistent demand of the Ford Local for a national conference of the union on this matter, and the indication that it would take the initiative and call such a conference itself if the International did not act, which finally resulted in the national conference held in Washington in January.

And yet, when this conference did convene, Reuther was able to put the Local 600 leadership on the defensive and to make it appear as if it were raising this issue only to

"do a job" on the International leadership. Reuther launched his main attack upon Local 600's proposal to make the 30-hour week slogan a demand for immediate action. At a conference in which the overwhelming majority of the delegates were from locals in which there was no acute unemployment problem, Reuther was demagogically able to make it appear that the 30-hour-week demand at this time would jeopardize the earnings of those working full time and over-time.

Of course, behind this debate, a more fundamental issue was involved; namely, whether the unemployment in the industry was due merely to temporary dislocations resulting from conversion to war production, as Reuther insisted, or to more basic economic factors related to growing over-production in the consumer goods industries and the mounting signs of an approaching economic crisis.

But important as was this debate, far more important was the need to come out of this conference with a common program of action to alleviate the hardships caused by the unemployment which everybody admitted existed in large numbers. Local 600 put forth the blanket demand for an increase in unemployment insurance benefits to \$60 a week. Reuther, on the other hand, came out in support of the Moody-Dingell Bill which called for a substantial increase in unemployment insurance

benefits but fell short of the Local 600 demand.

Now, of course, the demand for \$60 a week is a superior demand and more adequately meets the needs of the unemployed. But under the concrete circumstances, especially when it became obvious that the majority was ready to go along with the Moody-Dingell Bill for the time being, the most important and decisive task was to organize a truly mass fight that would enact the Moody-Dingell Bill in this session. This did not happen. The delegates of Local 600 to this conference defended their local program, but did not call for the unity of all locals around that on which they could all agree.

Instead, the conference ended with no program of action which the delegates could bring back to their membership. Reuther was able to appear as a champion of the needs of the unemployed by mere talk. Nothing really was done, neither by the Reuther leadership nor by the Ford leadership, to organize the kind of mass movement that could have brought about the adoption of the Moody-Dingell Bill this year. The result? The Bill quietly died in committee. Feeble, indeed, was the voice raised for the bill by this powerful union of over a million workers.

Had the Ford Local leadership really gone all-out in the fight for this measure, a number of positive

results could have ensued: 1) There is the possibility that the Moody-Dingell Bill could have been enacted and unemployment insurance raised by some 50 per cent; 2) Reuther's charge of factionalism would have been demolished, because the local would have been acting in behalf of a measure sponsored by Reuther; 3) real unity of action could have been developed through the union, because once again this would have been in behalf of a measure which had the endorsement of the whole union; 4) the attempt to isolate Local 600 would have failed; 5) either Reuther would have been forced to go along with a program of real action in the union, or, he would have exposed himself as a do-nothing talk-artist; and, last but not least, the needs of the unemployed would have been defended in deeds and not merely in words. And under such circumstances it is highly doubtful whether even the brazen Reuther would have dared do violence to the Ford Local.

It must be frankly admitted that in the heat of the inner-union struggle, Reuther was able to maneuver the Ford Local leadership into forgetting the importance of a program of action as against mere words. After all, the question was not whether the unemployed would get the Moody-Dingell Bill or the \$60 a week advocated by Local 600. Reuther could no more deliver the Moody-Dingell Bill on a silver platter than could the Ford Local lead-

ership c
to be w
into m
united
the nee
leviated
Thus
ership
support
they we
of Reut
first, th
employ
worker
not of
who h
have v
gram
Moody
tant th
"better
have se
ers be
posed
The
around
could
ers, ei
him, a
of act
Let us
The
on the
gro ri
this un
courag
ers in
Negro
on its
Reu

ership deliver the \$60. If *either* was to be won, the masses had to be put into motion; for *only* through mass united and militant struggle could the needs of the unemployed be alleviated.

Thus, those in the Ford Local leadership who feared that by militant support to the Moody-Dingell Bill they would only add to the prestige of Reuther, forgot two simple things: first, the pressing needs of the unemployed workers; and second, that workers judge leadership on the basis, not of who *demand*s more, but of who helps them to *get* more. To have worked out a concrete program of struggle to *get* the lesser Moody-Dingell Bill was more important than sulkily to hold on to the "better" \$60 proposal. This would have served the interests of the workers best and also would have exposed Reuther best.

There were many other issues around which considerable gains could have been made for the workers, either with Reuther or without him, and issues around which unity of action could have been forged. Let us cite but one more example. The Reuther machine finds itself on the defensive on the issue of Negro rights—and well it should—for this union has scores of experienced, courageous and talented Negro leaders in its ranks, and yet not a single Negro is among its top officers or on its Executive Board.

Reuther tries to make up for this

by printing pictures of himself shaking hands with Walter White or A. Phillip Randolph. He covers all local unions with N.A.A.C.P. literature and encourages the N.A.A.C.P. to recruit U.A.W. members. In return for this favor, the Detroit N.A.A.C.P. circulates literature attacking the Communist Party. In mid-March, *at the very same time* that Reuther seized the Ford Local from its membership, a State F.E.P.C. measure was defeated in the Michigan House of Representatives by the vote of 46 to 45—*by only one vote!* But what did Detroit and Michigan labor do to compel favorable action on this measure? Little indeed. And what about Local 600? It, too, sat this one out.

Had a real struggle been organized for this measure the following could have resulted: 1) in all probability the extra vote could have been obtained and a victory registered for Negro rights; 2) real unity of action could have been forged between labor and the Negro people's movement; 3) the Ford Local could not have been isolated; and 4) Reuther would have had to think twice before launching an assault upon a local engaged in a mass struggle of this kind.

LESSONS FROM THE SET-BACK

What are the lessons to be learned from all this? The first lesson to

remember is that Karl Marx was right when he said that "shouting and doing are irreconcilable opposites." In the last analysis the workers will judge individual leaders, groups and parties by what they do. The progressives can never compete successfully with the shouters. They can only expose them through deeds, through action, through struggle.

The second lesson to be learned is, that workers' unity is not just a catchword. Working-class unity, like Negro-white unity, is a principle which must be fought for day in and day out, despite all obstacles. In the first place, this means unity from below. In the second place, this means unity around every and any proposal or issue that corresponds to the interests of the workers, *regardless of who initiated it or for what reasons.* In the third place, it means unity with everyone who is ready to fight for the same demand, regardless of why and regardless of other differences.

It must be remembered that the struggle for working-class unity presupposes the existence of differences, for if there were no differences, there would be no need for waging that struggle. This is sometimes forgotten by people who seek some kind of non-existent "pure" unity, which can only be a unity with oneself, or no unity at all. Communists particularly must remember that the leap to mass class consciousness, to socialist consciousness, can be made

only from the springboard of growing unity of action of the working class. That is why labor bureaucrats fear such unity like the plague.

A third lesson to be learned is that the progressives must never confuse the bureaucrats with the union. They must never say or do anything that can be twisted into seeming to be anti-union. For it is the fighters for progressive policies, for working-class unity, who are the true defenders and the best advocates and champions of the union.

If the Local 600 leadership had not forgotten these things, Reuther would not have succeeded in violating the union constitution. This can be seen by the contortions through which some of his local union apologists had to go in order to explain his action against Local 600. For example, one of his leading Social-Democratic ideologists is Ken Morris, President of Briggs (Amalgamated) Local 212. In his "President's Column" in the March issue of the *Voice of Local 212*, Morris writes:

A basic democratic right within the U.A.W.-C.I.O. is the right to disagree with and criticize the leadership of our union . . . BUT WHEN THAT CRITICISM TAKES THE FORM OF BEING ANTI-UNION . . . THEN IT IS GOING TOO FAR. Then the union has a right to defend itself. (All emphasis as in the original article.)

Note how this apologist for Reuther dares not challenge the right of

the m
disagr
ershin
to sell
that
criticis
In t
raises
a unio
less e
ING
SION
DEM
AT.
when
demo
to ac
On
fuse t
for un
rule.
when
he n
of wh
oppo
woul
Bu
600?
a un
rived
infer
at, no
has a
about
Morri
fess
Sp
decis
the
Reut

the membership or of local unions to disagree with and criticize the leadership. He must falsify the facts to sell his membership on the notion that the Ford Local leadership's criticisms were "anti-union."

In this same column, Ken Morris raises another question. He says that a union cannot be held together unless everyone involved *"IS WILLING TO ACCEPT THE DECISIONS OF THE MAJORITY, DEMOCRATICALLY ARRIVED AT. Everyone can have his say, but when the decision has been made democratically, everyone is obligated to accept the will of the majority."*

Once again, Morris seeks to confuse the issue. No one denies the need for union discipline based on majority rule. Every unionist knows that, when his union has voted to strike, he must walk out, too, regardless of whether he personally favored or opposed the strike. Otherwise he would be a scab.

But how does this apply to Local 600? Where and when did it break a union decision democratically arrived at? Does Ken Morris wish to infer that once a decision is arrived at, no union member, or union local, has a right to criticize it? What then about the right to criticize in which Morris and the union leadership profess to believe?

Speaking of not accepting union decisions democratically arrived at, the shoe is on the other foot. It is Reuther and his henchmen who have

consciously, deliberately and with malice aforethought, refused to "accept the decision of the majority" of the Ford Local membership, because they do not like the officials and policies which were "democratically arrived at."

Reuther and his clique further violated the constitution of the union by removing the five unit officers on the trumped-up charge of Communism, despite the fact that these men had previously stood trial in their own local and had then been exonerated by the General Council of Local 600—the highest body in the local and the highest authority on matters of this kind.

Who then is refusing to accept the decisions of the majority? The real reason the axe fell on Local 600 is that it did disagree with and did criticize Reuther and his policies. It criticized the five-year-do-nothing contract. It called for its re-opening. And it had that right. For there is no provision in the U.A.W. constitution which says that everyone in the union must view the Reuther brothers as God's gift to the auto workers. Nor can there be. The right to criticize, to disagree, and, if you please, even to condemn, is an inherent right which the members of the U.A.W. must never relinquish. This is the real issue which Ken Morris seeks to conceal.

WEAKNESSES IN
PARTY WORK

If Reuther succeeded in isolating the Local 600 leadership from the rest of the union, by putting it into a position of appearing to be factional and anti-union, it cannot be said that this danger was not foreseen. Quite a few Ford workers recognized this danger, as did the Communist Party in Michigan. Reuther spread the lie that the leadership of the Local was subservient to the Communist Party. But actually the Communists felt so keenly the need for supporting the progressive coalition, that they actually remained silent on points of disagreement, remaining silent, in particular, on the danger of factionalism.

If the struggle for unity presupposes the existence of differences, as we have previously shown, this front of unity, if it is to continue and grow, must carry with it the right and duty to voice disagreement *within the coalition*. Such criticism if conducted honestly and frankly, if conducted within the framework of acknowledged agreement, is most beneficial to help carry the unity forward, to help collectively surmount new obstacles and difficulties, to help educate the masses in the course of the struggle.

To keep silent when errors are being made, to refrain from criticism where and when criticism is due, is not to serve the interests of unity but to undermine and destroy it. That this was not understood, that the Party was actually being made

subservient to the united front coalition, can be seen in the fact that precisely during the period of the progressive administration in the local, less attention was given by Detroit Communists to the Party organization among the Ford workers than heretofore. In fact, Party shop clubs did not meet regularly and the bureaucratic habit developed of working with and through a few individuals but not with and through the Party organization.

The Communists of Michigan were also wrong when they did not speak up against the dissolution of the Progressive Caucus as an independent grouping within the local coalition. This dissolution, while not formal, was nonetheless real, reflecting the false view that the interests of unity required a general leveling of all to one common floor.

If, however, the more advanced workers, the Left-wing workers, accept an agreed-upon program of immediate action as the common bond which unites them with the more conservative workers in the united front, this does not and cannot mean that they should surrender their own more advanced opinions. In fact, by giving up their more advanced independent views and their independent organization, by surrendering their right to criticize, they lose, by default, their chance to influence the united front in an ever more progressive direction. They thereby endanger the existence of the united front itself.

This is
wing co
win lar
vanced
the uni
generat
sure ai
united

As c
exampl
take an
partake
cism, c
Stellat
forces
with th
for the
the far
leader
to the
to "pr
Stellat
tended
reactio
liquid
in the
endan

It is
attent
Con
made
what
ago,
order
move
decid
conce
Wor
Ford
litera

This is so, because once the Left-wing ceases to exert pressure and to win larger masses for its more advanced policies, the pressure upon the united front becomes solely that generated by the Right-wing, a pressure aimed at the destruction of the united front.

As can be seen by the Local 600 example, the failure of the Left to take an independent position and to partake openly in constructive criticism, only created the illusion that Stellato and the more conservative forces around him saw eye to eye with the Left. Thus it became easier for the unprincipled Reuther to make the fantastic charge that the Stellato leadership was being "subservient" to the Communists. And in order to "prove" that this was not true, Stellato and his closest followers tended to make concessions to the reactionary pressure. In this way the liquidation of the Progressive Caucus in the name of greater unity, only endangered unity.

It is necessary at this point to call attention to a major weakness of the Communist Party in Michigan which made for dulling its sensitivity to what was happening. A few years ago, the Michigan Communists, in order to help build a great unity movement among the Ford workers, decided upon a policy of industrial concentration. Their campaign for *Worker* readers was centered among Ford workers. Through leaflets and literature, the Party in Michigan ex-

plained to the Ford workers every important issue. Not only economic issues, such as speed-up and run-away shops were dealt with, but also political issues related to war and peace, to Negro-white unity, to labor unity, to political action, etc. All of this sustained activity served to educate a substantial mass of workers who were thus equipped to resist the poison of Red-baiting. This undoubtedly helped create the conditions for progressive policies to become the policies of the Ford workers.

The decision to concentrate was therefore a wise decision, even if it led temporarily to a certain weakening of Party work on other fronts and in other places. For the very concept of concentration is in direct contradiction to the concept of trying to be equally strong everywhere. To be strong at the decisive places establishes the guarantee that qualitative changes will take place which will bring with them a growth of influence and strength all along the line.

In the recent period, however, there took place a fundamental departure from this policy of concentration. The fact is, that the Party organization was neglected, the number of *Worker* subscribers and readers declined, and the Party's propaganda and mass educational work also suffered. This led to a serious weakening of Party organization and of the ties between the Party leadership and the shop workers. Thus, days and even weeks passed before the largest por-

tion of our Party membership was even reached for a discussion on the new situation in the plant and the Local.

What are the main reasons for this departure from a concentration policy? First, one must, of course, take into account the exceptionally difficult conditions in which the Party has had to operate this past year. But this is by no means the sole explanation.

A second reason for a weakening of Party concentration was the concept that we must not "spoon-feed" our shop comrades. But no spoon-feeding does not mean no concentration, does not mean leaving our shop comrades on their own without the necessary daily help and guidance.

A third reason for the weakening of the Party's concentration activity was the conception that work elsewhere was being neglected and that the Party could no longer afford the "luxury." But was there concentration elsewhere? Was there an improvement in the work elsewhere? There was not. The fact is that despite all talk about the importance of concentration nationally on the auto industry, there was no concentration even in Detroit, the heart of the industry.

It also must be said that the whole question of the way in which the Party full-time leadership actually gives guidance to the Party's shop workers is something that needs review, not only in Detroit, but

throughout the Party. We are of the opinion that there is something wrong with our present methods of leadership, for many of them are bureaucratic obstacles to real mass work and to the proper training and education of the whole Party membership.

The leadership of the Michigan Party organization is by no means the worst example of this. In fact, it is one of the better districts in respect to the attention it pays to shop and trade union work. But there is something wrong when there are so many Party leaders in charge of this department or that department of state-wide work, mapping out this campaign or that campaign, while the basic organizations of the Party, the shop organizations, often barely breathe and live, face complicated problems, and are unable to play their full role as the Party in the shops.

What the Party needs today more than anything else, are concrete living examples of how to work, how to bring the Party's program to the workers, how to win masses for progressive policies, and how to consolidate the Party shop organizations in the course of struggle. What we need is to make the most concrete and painstaking evaluation of every victory and every set-back experienced by the workers, and to bring these lessons to the Party membership and the working class as a whole. And our best Party leaders must be those that have the closest links with the

worker
who co
the co
cies an
crete li

UNITY

The
enterec
for a p
trol of
sons de
of this
cation
ahead.

In t
Reuth
While
keep
added
strateg
power
electe
to kee
needs
the g
and f
issues
He w
into
kind
avera
ciple
thing
coalit
kind
Th
part
unite

workers, Party and non-party; those who constantly check and recheck the concrete application of Party policies and tactics on the basis of concrete living experience.

UNITY FOR VICTORY

The workers of Local 600 have now entered a new phase of the struggle for a progressive union and for control of their own local. And the lessons dealt with in the earlier sections of this article must find their application to the immediate struggle ahead.

In this new phase of the struggle, Reuther's basic strategy is simple. While continuing to maneuver to keep Local 600 isolated, he has now added two additional tactics to his strategy. The first is to do all in his power to keep the democratically elected local leadership off balance; to keep it from reacting to the daily needs of the workers, from fighting the growing speed-up in the plant, and from taking up the many other issues affecting the Ford workers. He wants the struggle to degenerate into a cat and dog fight, into the kind of struggle that appears to the average worker as merely unprincipled "power politics." He has everything to gain and the progressive coalition everything to lose from that kind of fight.

The second and most important part of Reuther's strategy is to disunite the united front, to break up

and split the progressive coalition. This he intends to do by hook or crook. Why is this so important for him? Because he knows full well that he cannot maintain his administratorship indefinitely. The demand of the workers for local elections is overwhelming. In fact, at this writing, he already has partly bowed to this demand by setting dates for the first of a series of unit elections, after which he promises to announce a date for a local election.

If the elected local leaders stay united, if they keep their eyes on the ball, that is, if they remember that the main enemy is the company and that their first responsibility is to defend the immediate needs of the workers, the progressives can give Reuther a trouncing. That is why he is taking no chances. That is why he has removed and disqualified some of the most militant and most popular unit officers and will probably disqualify more. That is why the election machinery is safely in his hands, in violation of the Local 600 By-Laws which call for the setting up of an election committee "democratically arrived at" by the vote of the membership. Let us repeat: Having gone so far, Reuther is taking no chances.

But the only assurance he has of winning an election in the Local is by splitting the unity of the progressive coalition. This he hopes to accomplish by keeping the false issue of Communism in the forefront, by

centering his fire on the Left and treating Stellato and his followers as "stooges." At the same time he is engaged in back-door horse-trading in an endeavor to buy off unprincipled careerist elements.

It should be quite evident, therefore, that the central conditions for the victory of the united front progressive coalition are unity, *unity*, and *unity*. A recent leaflet issued by the five of the removed unit officers, correctly declares:

Unless the Coalition is maintained, there is a GREAT DANGER OF DIVISION AND DISUNITY AND A REUTHER VICTORY.

WHOEVER SPLITS THIS UNITY FOR PORK CHOP DEALS, WILL STAND EXPOSED AND BRANDED FOREVER WITH THE HATRED AND DISGUST OF THE FORD WORKERS.

That the danger of disunity in the coalition and a victory for the Reuther forces is quite real, can be seen by the fact that here and there certain individuals have become frightened by the false issue of Communism and have drawn the wrong conclusions from the temporary victory of Reuther. This is reflected in the content of a recent leaflet issued by Stellato, in which he pledges not to make a deal with Reuther. The headline of this leaflet reads: "*LOCAL 600 BELONGS TO THE MEMBERSHIP—NOT REUTHER—NOT FORD—NOT THE COM-*

MUNIST PARTY."

Now, we have no disagreement with Stellato when he states that Local 600 belongs to the membership and ONLY to the membership. We who are Communists have not sought and do not seek to have Local 600 or any other labor union "belong" to the Communist Party. Stellato should know this. He should know that the Communists have all along fought for a democratic union. We do not want Local 600 to belong to the Communist Party; we want the right of Communists to belong to Local 600. We want Communists to work for the union and to fight for it, on an equal basis with those of other political persuasions. We have fought for the right of Communists to hold office in unions and for the right of the membership to elect Communists to office. For in the last analysis, it is only the rank and file which has the right to elect or reject.

But apparently Stellato feels it necessary to "prove" he is neither a Communist nor "subservient" to the Communists, by doing a "little bit" of Red-baiting on his own. This is borne out by the contents of his leaflet which refers to "rotten politics . . . played by some people, both on the left and the right." We do not know to whom, if anyone, Stellato is referring. If, perchance, Stellato is referring to the phony "left," namely the Trotskyites, we can readily agree with him, but then the designation "left" is false, for these disrupters

are de
are mo
refer
for go
that it
some
But
do a g
right
wants
sue in
the wo
When
nism
speaks
if it v
menac
to Re
what
canno
Comm
where
leads.
easy t
moral
the un
most

are decidedly not on the Left. But we are more inclined to believe that this reference to the "left" was thrown in for good measure on the assumption that it can do no harm and may do some good.

But Stellato is dead wrong. It can do a great deal of harm. For it falls right into Reuther's trap. Reuther wants to make Communism an issue in order to confuse and divide the workers and to split the coalition. When Stellato also makes Communism an issue and when he also speaks of the Communist Party as if it were some kind of a sinister menace, he actually is bringing grist to Reuther's mill. And no matter what Stellato says or does now, he cannot prove to be a better anti-Communist than Reuther. This is where a "little bit" of Red-baiting leads. It is the surest way to make it easy for Reuther. It will only demoralize the rank and file and split the unity which has been and is the most precious possession of the Ford

Local coalition.

The Ford workers have faced Red-baiting in the past. They faced it when they tried to organize the plant in the '30s, Harry Bennett's goons being only auxiliary storm-troopers. They faced it again when they discovered that Homer Martin, their International president, was a traitor in their ranks. They faced it in every local union election in recent years. As a result of these experiences they have learned to discern the hand of the company in every attempt to break up their unity by Red-baiting.

We are confident that, if the leaders of the progressive coalition stick together and work together, if they refuse to be distracted from the real issues and from the defense of the daily needs of the workers, if they learn the real lessons of the past period, they can have faith in the courage and good judgment of the Ford workers.

Having emerged victorious before, they can and will do so again.

Puerto Rico and the Fight for Its Independence, II

By Pettis Perry

AS WAS STATED in the first part of this article: "To the rest of Latin America, which is under the yoke of Yankee imperialism, Puerto Rico serves as a warning of the fullest extent of Wall Street colonialism." Some aspects of this colonialism were described in that installment. We intend here to deal with additional results of this colonialism, to refer to the particular role of Puerto Rico in terms of U.S. imperialism as a whole, and to offer certain proposals and suggestions concerning necessary tasks for our party.

Puerto Rico has been and is, essentially, an agrarian country. Under the exploiting drive of imperialism its former three-phase agriculture of coffee, tobacco and sugar, has become a single crop (sugar), big plantation economy, with greater and ever greater concentration of ownership characteristic of this development. When Puerto Rico was forcibly acquired (1898) fewer than 70,000 acres were used for sugar production; today over 400,000 acres are

so used. In 1898, there were over two hundred and seventy sugar-refining concerns in Puerto Rico; to-owned.

Land ownership is highly concentrated and significantly and increasingly alien. The bulk of the peasantry are landless, agrarian wage-workers. Of the minority with land in Puerto Rico, most own less than 20 acres, and the value of this land—possessed by 30,000 people—comes to seven percent of the total land value. On the other hand, the 350 persons who own over 500 acres of land each, possess fifty percent of the total land value in Puerto Rico!

The mass of agrarian proletarians—the wage-workers on the sugar plantations—are paid, according to the secretary of the Puerto Rican Association of Sugar Producers, \$2.46 per day, which is about forty percent less than the underpaid agricultural workers receive in the United States.

What are the fundamental facts concerning the political status of

Puerto
century
erated"

PUERT
REM

1. An
Rican l
mitted
day, wi
over to

six such
can am

2. Th
United
stitution
Puerto

3. Th
an elec
of the
Govern
veto po
Puerto

4. Th
States
Rico, a
Puerto
all Fed

5. Th
Federal
First C
sits in—

6. Ju

Puerto Rico, now, more than half a century since U.S. imperialism "liberated" it?

PUERTO RICO
REMAINS A COLONY

1. Any law passed by the Puerto Rican legislature must first be submitted to the U.S. Congress which day, with six times the acreage given over to the crop, there are but thirty-six such firms, and these are Yankee-can amend, suspend or revoke it.

2. The Supreme Court of the United States may declare unconstitutional any law passed by the Puerto Rican legislature.

3. Though Puerto Rico now has an elected governor, the President of the United States, and not the Governor of Puerto Rico, has final veto power over enactments of the Puerto Rican legislature.

4. The President of the United States, not the Governor of Puerto Rico, appoints the judges of the Puerto Rican Supreme Court, and all Federal officers in the island.

5. The Court of Appeals from the Federal Court in Puerto Rico is the First Circuit Court of Appeals which sits in—Boston!

6. Jurisdiction over such matters

as sea and air transportation and radio communication involving Puerto Rico rests in Washington.

7. War and peace for Puerto Rico, the conscription of her sons, the shipping of those men for army duty beyond the shores of Puerto Rico—all these matters of life and death are vested in Washington, not in San Juan.

8. All tariff and navigation regulations, as all coinage and postal directives concerning Puerto Rico, are controlled by the United States.

9. Puerto Rico has no treaty-making powers and is bound by treaties signed by the United States, though her people have no part in making them.

The President and the Congress thus have control of Puerto Rican political life; but the people of Puerto Rico cannot participate in the election of the President and have no representatives in Congress. Puerto Rico is allowed one Resident Commissioner in Congress, but he has no vote.

This is the actual situation today, and none of this will be altered with the coming into force of the new Constitution of Puerto Rico, just approved by Congress and scheduled

to be rubber-stamped, amid fanfare, on July 25, 1952—the anniversary of the landing, in 1898, of U.S. troops in Puerto Rico. Fitting birthday for a charter which, despite its demagogic words about liberty, is really expressive of the colonial, enslaved position of Puerto Rico!

This Constitution, whose introduction and acceptance reflect the great restiveness of the Puerto Rican people, is not a charter of freedom, but rather a sleep-inducing prescription aimed at deluding and placating the independence-loving masses. This was all but stated in so many words by the Resident-Commissioner of Puerto Rico, Fernos-Isern, when he introduced the Bill providing for Congress' approval of the Constitution. The honorable gentleman referred to the Organic Act of 1900, the Foraker Act, giving legal expression to Puerto Rico's colonial status and said his Bill would not "disturb" the "legal and economic provisions of our organic act" and that, indeed, "The Federal provisions of the present organic act would be reaffirmed under my bill" (*Congressional Record*, March 14, 1950).

The real nature of the document was momentarily illuminated also by

an objection raised in Congress against one of its sections. This was section 20 of Article II which was practically identical with the Human Rights Charter of the United Nations. This section recognized the existence of certain enumerated "human rights" including free education, a job, an adequate standard of living in terms of food, clothing, housing, medical care, special care for mothers and infants. It urged "the greatest possible expansion of the system of production" and "the fairest distribution of economic output."

All this was countered by a joker which read: "The rights set forth in this section are closely connected with the progressive development of the economy of the Commonwealth and require, for their full effectiveness, sufficient resources and an agricultural and industrial development *not yet attained* by the Puerto Rican community."

Nevertheless, the Congress of the United States would not approve this paper "Constitution"—which actually formalizes colonial status—unless this section were completely deleted. A sultinglly specious reason offered for Even the *New York Times* stated edi-

torially
ing the
tremely
Latin A
of the
knowle
ideals v
plemen
No,
adequa
babies
Congre
tional"
Judd,
Comm
accord
and so
the fa
imper
ences
man o
for W
Cult
seeks
people
Roose
the O
step
stamp
and su
After
was f
langu

torially (May 27, 1952), that expunging the section would "make an extremely bad impression throughout Latin America," particularly in view of the section's "escape clause, acknowledging these are long-range ideals which Puerto Rico cannot implement today."

No, these "long-range ideals" of adequate food, and special care for babies were "socialistic" according to Congressman Halleck, "unconstitutional" according to Congressman Judd, and "unworkable, except in a Communistic state such as Russia," according to Congressman Wood; and so the section was deleted. In the face of the naked brutality of imperialism, even demagogic references to rights and equality and human dignity become too dangerous for Wall Street's representatives.

Culturally, too, U.S. imperialism seeks to smother the Puerto Rican people. As President Theodore Roosevelt himself put it: "After the Organic Act of 1900, the next step was the resolute attempt to stamp out local customs and culture and substitute English for Spanish."* After a fifty-year struggle, Spanish was finally adopted, in 1948, as the language for school use; but the fact

is that, despite this law, even today, most textbooks in use in Puerto Rico, especially from the sixth grade up, are in English, not Spanish. The insultingly specious reason offered for this is that Spanish translations are unavailable!

Wall Street's music, art, fiction, radio programs and movie productions have swamped Puerto Rico. There are, indeed, many more Spanish-speaking movies available in New York than in Puerto Rico and the shoddy outpourings of Hollywood are shown in Puerto Rico without even the elementary courtesy of Spanish titles.

The possession of Puerto Rico is significant to the U.S. imperialists, not only in terms of the rape of its resources, the merciless super-exploitation of its working masses and the privileges of tax-free investments. Puerto Rico has special significance to U.S. imperialism in the fact that it is a key army, naval and air base for the whole Latin-America area. It is the headquarters of the Caribbean Command of the United States Army and a center for intensive training of military and naval

* T. Roosevelt, *Colonial Policies of the United States* (New York, 1937), p. 101.

cadre.

Puerto Rico, particularly its University, serves as a training center, too, for apologists and ideologists of U.S. imperialism and a meeting place for many professional and cultural organizations devoted to bulwarking imperialism.

POLITICAL PRISONERS

Political prisoners have existed in Puerto Rico ever since Wall Street "liberated" it. And today, as these lines are being written, approximately three hundred of the best sons and daughters of the Puerto Rican people languish in filthy jails. What this means may become clearer if it is pointed out that, proportionate to population, 300 political prisoners in Puerto Rico are the equivalent of 22,500 in the United States!

Political prisoners in Puerto Rico come from the Nationalist, Independentist and Communist parties. Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos, leader of the Nationalist Party, has recently been sentenced to 84 years' imprisonment, having been convicted on twelve counts, each count being a speech. Blanca Canales, a woman leader of the same party, was sentenced to life imprisonment and is now in a Virginia penitentiary. Oscar Collazo, also of that party, faces execution in August, for his part in a misguided, violent politi-

cal demonstration before the White House during which a guard was killed.* Duesdedit Marrero, defender of peace and Puerto Rican independence, valiant Communist youth leader, was sentenced to 4-6 years in prison for collecting signatures to the Stockholm peace pledge. He has already been in jail for twenty months, with bail refused, pending appeal, and then set at the prohibitive sum of \$25,000. Only this month mass pressure forced the Courts to set bail at \$9,000. In the opening days of July, five Communist leaders were jailed, under a 1910 law, for opposing the fake "Constitution."

These prisoners of thought-controllers and colonial enslavers suffer terribly from filth, overcrowding and bad food. Their hundreds of relatives are harassed and all who seek to aid them are subjected to intimidation and indignities.

* * *

Such are the basic facts about Puerto Rico, a nation enslaved and exploited by our country—by the ruling class of the United States. This colonial oppression looms, in more ways than one, as a very significant challenge for our working class.

The imperialists and their Social-

* As we go to press news comes that President Truman has commuted the death sentence to life imprisonment. This act, forced by mass pressure, was timed to coincide with the demagogic proclamation of "commonwealth" status for Puerto Rico.—Ed.

Democ
tion to
said th
progre
ment a
positiv
ance t
their s
hope t
in this
progre
speedi
streng
enorm
ter liv
measu
of the
Latin
streng
throug
Onl
and p
coloni
can t
and g
mover
full co
THE
PU
In a
Rico's
mind
case
peopl
Rico
States
is the

Democratic lackeys give major attention to Puerto Rico. But, it must be said that, so far as I know, the Left-progressive forces in the labor movement are not countering this with a positive approach of fraternal assistance to the Puerto Rican people in their struggle for freedom. It is my hope that the entire labor movement in this country, but first of all the progressive forces, will overcome speedily this defect; for this would strengthen our labor movement enormously in its own fight for better living conditions and would immeasurably strengthen the well-being of the working classes throughout Latin America. It would, above all, strengthen the fight for peace throughout the hemisphere.

Only to the extent that the labor and progressive forces oppose the colonial oppression of Puerto Rico, can the working-class and peasant and general democratic, peace-loving movements in Latin America have full confidence in us.

THE FIGHT FOR PUERTO RICO'S FREEDOM

In approaching the fight for Puerto Rico's freedom, we should keep in mind that we are not fighting in this case for some "under-privileged" people in the United States. Puerto Rico is a possession of the United States. It is an outright colony. That is the first thing to be understood.

The second thing to be understood is that the United States, like Great Britain and France, is an imperialist nation, at present the strongest imperialist nation in the world. This, of course, has been well understood, for some time, by the peoples of Latin America, and it must as forcefully be known by the working class of the United States.

An understanding of this would make clear the main problems confronting us with respect to Puerto Rico and its struggle for independence. First among these is the need to support the fight to improve the living conditions of the Puerto Rican people. This includes:

a) The application of all laws dealing with social security and welfare to Puerto Rico as to the United States. This does not exist at present. For example, application of the social security laws of this country of \$26 weekly for 26 weeks would be a major improvement over the \$7.68 a month now doled out. Only anti-labor laws such as Taft-Hartley, McCarran, Smith Act, etc., are applied, but not the Minimum Wage Law, not the Social Security Law, etc.

b) A program for large-scale housing and other public works that would guarantee mass slum clearance in Puerto Rico and that would at the same time enormously relieve the unemployment situation.

c) Large-scale appropriations for the health needs of the Puerto Rican people.

d) \$100 million appropriation for schools.

e) Puerto Rico's right to refine all of its sugar.

f) An increase in the quota for Puerto Rican sugar (which was 910,000 tons in 1949 and 100,000 tons for domestic use, *i.e.*, for Puerto Rico). This would require amending the Sugar Act.

g) Immediate release of all political prisoners in Puerto Rico.

ON THE QUESTION OF INDEPENDENCE

The basic demand of the Puerto Rican people at the present time is for the complete independence of their country from U.S. imperialism. Every time this question is raised there are various and sundry arguments, which run something like this: Puerto Rico cannot become independent because it is too small to win its independence, and once we have socialism it wouldn't want to be independent. This is like saying that self-determination is impossible under capitalism and unnecessary under socialism. Both are wrong. It is true that Puerto Rico must have the support of the American working class and the progressive forces to win its independence. But this fight for independence cannot wait

until Socialism is achieved in the United States.

We often hear: What would Puerto Rico do without us? By "us" is meant, of course, the trusts that are enslaving Puerto Rico. Indeed, it is because of "us" that Puerto Rico is in its present economic plight. For this reason, independence for Puerto Rico demands that the people of our country give all possible assistance to the Puerto Rican people, so as to enable them to raise their own well-being and to develop their own economy to the highest possible degree. If the people of this country would give Puerto Rico a few hundred million dollars each year outright and would develop large-scale trade with it on the best possible terms and were to extend it large-scale loans with no interest whatsoever, they could not begin to pay back to the Puerto Rican nation for the oppressive retardation of its economic development, for all of the indignities and exploitation it has suffered at the hands of U.S. imperialism.

They most certainly could not make amends for the countless tens of thousands of people whose destruction has been brought about by the misery and starvation imposed upon them by the ruling class of this country.

Still another argument is advanced that Puerto Ricans do not

want to
States
the
apply
indee
tion.
score
Rican
liberal
shack
and
sovere
Comm
suppo
suppo
Negro
and a
that,
peopl
that
tion,
separ
the
freely
If,
cans
separ
that
natio
ever
way
ensla
it m
PUE
IN
TH
suffe

want to be separated from the United States and consequently they reject the right of self-determination as applying to Puerto Rico. There is indeed much confusion on this question. What needs to be said on this score is that the fight of the Puerto Rican people is an anti-imperialist, liberation struggle to smash the shackles of its colonial oppression and to secure full freedom as a sovereign nation. This fight we, the Communists of the United States, support, and strive to win for it the support of the working class, the Negro people, all anti-imperialists and all progressives. It is conceivable that, given certain developments, the people of Puerto Rico, in exercising that right to national self-determination, might choose a step short of separation. But that is a matter for the Puerto Rican people to decide freely in its own interests.

If, on the other hand, Puerto Ricans decided that they wanted to be separated and so took that position, that would likewise be self-determination. As matters stand now, however, Puerto Rico has no say one way or the other, because it is an enslaved nation. To decide its course, it must first achieve freedom.

PUERTO RICANS IN THE UNITED STATES

The grinding poverty and intense suffering have induced, particularly

during the last decade, an emigration of Puerto Ricans to the United States. This has resulted in a Puerto Rican population in New York City, of some 350,000. These masses, discriminated against, ghettoized, have most certainly not escaped poverty. Rent-gouging faces them, and jobs are closed or, where open, mean long hours, intense speed-up and very low wages. Struggle has brought some break-through in recent years—as into the shoe and electrical industries—but the basic pattern remains as indicated.

There is, also, an increasing emigration, in some cases through contractors, of Puerto Rican people as agricultural migratory workers. This has been especially true along the East coast, but lately the Puerto Rican migratory workers have gone as far West as Ohio and Michigan. It is expected that this year at least 20,000 Puerto Rican agricultural workers will come to the United States. Almost invariably these workers, like the Mexican workers in the South-West, are the lowest paid and work under the worst possible conditions, because the labor movement has systematically evaded mass organization of the migratory agricultural workers.

The coming of thousands of Puerto Ricans to New York City, brings Negro and Puerto Rican workers into close proximity with

one another, with the many problems they have in common.

The fight for the liberation of Puerto Rico is very closely related to the fight for Negro liberation in the United States. There are common bonds born of common struggle and common aspirations for freedom, between the oppressed Negro people and the colonially enslaved Puerto Rican masses. It is therefore necessary for us in our day-to-day work to find the means of uniting the struggles of the Negro people with those of the Puerto Rican people.

The fight for Negro liberation and the liberation of Puerto Rico reinforce each other. Indeed, the unity of the Negro people, and the Puerto Rican people, together with the working class and other oppressed masses in this country, would provide a powerful instrument in the fight for complete freedom of all the oppressed. For the national and colonial question is an integral part of the proletarian struggle for socialism.

To the extent that the Puerto Rican people understand the Negro question in the United States they can play a great role, particularly as emissaries to the rest of the 150 million people of Latin America on behalf of the oppressed Negro people in this country, while battling for their own freedom. To the extent, on the other hand, that the Negro

people of the United States understand the Puerto Rican question, they could in turn play a big part, while fighting for their own freedom, in advancing the cause of Puerto Rican liberation. There are, too, close ties between the Mexican people in the United States and the Negro and Puerto Rican peoples. The conditions affecting these peoples, their status and their needs are not identical, of course, but while seeing differences, we must see what is common in their positions. And what is common is a common fight against the identical imperialist oppressors.

Important to the whole fight for the freedom of Puerto Rico is, first, the fight against chauvinism as it is directed at the Puerto Rican people.

There is a lack of boldness in bringing forward a mass struggle for the full integration of the Puerto Rican population in the United States into the political and economic life of the country, and particularly for the right of representation. There are many other expressions of chauvinism that cannot here be gone into. Suffice it to say that a key task of the working class in this country, in line with everything stated above, is to bring forward and develop in the most far-reaching manner, Puerto Rican leadership. The labor movement needs to do some of the things that the Abolitionists did with re-

spect
neces
for P
go be
gressi
with
quest
the a
in th
pend
Puert
To
Puert
State
follow
a)
econ
tion
in th
b)
that
peop
and
c)
equal
d)
Puert
gover
e)
cond
mass
f)
terror
peop
THE
PC
Th

spect to the runaway slaves. It is necessary to create every possibility for Puerto Ricans in this country to go before all working-class and progressive organizations, beginning with the trade unions, to explain the question of Puerto Rico, soliciting the aid of the people of this country in the fight for Puerto Rican independence and in defense of the Puerto Ricans in the United States.

To advance the interests of the Puerto Rican masses in the United States, it is necessary to fight for the following demands:

a) The elimination of all social, economic and political discrimination against the Puerto Rican people in the United States.

b) Enactment of an F.E.P.C. bill that will apply to the Puerto Rican people, as is proposed for Negroes and other groups.

c) Equal pay for equal work, and equal access to jobs.

d) Full representation for the Puerto Rican people in all levels of government.

e) Improved health and housing conditions for the Puerto Rican masses.

f) An end to police brutality and terrorism against the Puerto Rican people.

THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S POSITION

The Communist Party has a cor-

rect position on Puerto Rico which it has firmly declared on many occasions. Our position is for the independence of Puerto Rico. In the recent years the National Committee has endeavored to make our Party conscious of its vanguard responsibility in the need to win our working class for solidarity with the anti-imperialist struggle of the Puerto Rican people.

Yet it must be said that our day-to-day work and attention to this question is spotty and sporadic. What little work has been done in the country on this question has been mainly in New York. While New York is the basic Puerto Rican population center, there is no excuse for districts like New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Ohio, etc. (all of which are growing centers of Puerto Rican people) showing such serious weakness and lack of attention to this question. In this regard, the National Committee bears a great responsibility. This is true no less as regards those areas where there is no considerable Puerto Rican population. Puerto Rico cries out for a drastic turn in the work of the Party and the whole labor and progressive movement.

* * *

The people of Puerto Rico, the working class and the peasantry, have in their Communist Party a

stalwart vanguard. The Communist Party of Puerto Rico is heroically waging the battle against the splitting tactics of the labor reformists in the United States and in Puerto Rico, who are daily attempting to divide the labor movement, thus weakening the struggle for independence.

It has carried on a struggle in the face of the most ferocious attack by U.S. imperialism against its leaders and members. It is battling to prevent the Puerto Rican youth from being

sacrificed on the battlefields in the interest of the Wall Street monopolists. Our brave brother Party, under the leadership of Cesar Andreu, is holding high the banner of unity with all Puerto Ricans who desire peace, independence and equality.

It is the high duty of our Party to extend fraternal solidarity to the valiant Communist Party which is in the forefront of the struggle for the well-being and national liberation of the Puerto Rican people.

By S

"In
accus
speed
nal p
where
comm
Amer
Unit

ON M
system
New
Comm
under
the I
Unit

second
Feder
has b
Comm

Th
the
South
(com
State,
Bron
millio
contra
situat
New
of a n

The Jury System and Democratic Rights

By Simon W. Gerson

"In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed . . ."—From the Sixth Amendment, Constitution of the United States.

* * *

ON MARCH 31, 1952 the Federal jury system in the Southern District of New York was challenged by 16 Communist defendants standing trial under Smith Act indictments in what the law knows as the case of the *United States v. Flynn*. This is the second time in three years that the Federal jury system in this district has been attacked in the courts by Communist defendants.

This is not because the situation in the United States Court of the Southern District of New York (comprising eleven counties of the State, including New York and Bronx counties and serving four million people) is peculiar. On the contrary, there is evidence that the situation in the Southern District of New York is simply a crass example of a national situation—the systematic

undermining of the constitutionally guaranteed democratic jury system as part of the total drive of the war camp to destroy the basic rights of the people. This takes on increasingly the aspect of retaining the *form* of the jury system, while destroying its democratic *essence*. This is carried on by the judicial bureaucracy of a Big Business-dominated government.

While the jury challenges were part of larger struggles against political frameups, they inevitably took on special characteristics of their own, at times evoking support far beyond that won in the cases as a whole. For by clear and easily demonstrable facts they became exposures of the techniques of bourgeois class rule by which the *form* of trial by jury is maintained but the *essence* is revealed as that of naked class oppression. They disclosed the elaborate fiction by which the government can boast of conviction by "due process" and a jury of one's peers, while denying to the defendants in fact the only kind of fair trial possible for a political party, trial in the marketplace of public opinion.

But ruling class perversion of the

constitutional democratic jury system cannot be seen alone. It is part of the assault on the ancient, hard-won rights of the American people and the constitutional and judicial guarantees gained over the generations. There is mounting evidence of the systematic attempt to destroy the right of counsel asserted by the Sixth Amendment (note the attacks on rights of lawyers to defend progressive clients and the savage sentences meted out against the Dennis case lawyers, Vincent Hallinan, as well as the conviction under the Smith Act of Baltimore attorney Maurice Braverman). The recent years are filled with evidence of attacks on the Eighth Amendment ("excessive bail shall not be required"). Legislation to circumvent the Fifth Amendment and its prohibition against compelling persons to incriminate themselves is already in the Congressional hopper. The Fourth Amendment with its prohibition against searches and seizures is likewise under attack.

The vaunted independence of the judiciary is also under the severest fire from reaction. Those few remaining Federal judges with old-fashioned notions about independence have been sharply reminded to rid themselves of any such ideas. Thus, Federal Judge J. W. Waring of South Carolina was virtually hounded into retirement and from his home because of his notable decisions upholding the Constitution

against Dixie-crat white supremacists. Federal Judge Delbert Metzger of Hawaii was not re-appointed because he granted normal, legal guarantees to Smith Act defendants.* Even conservative Federal Judge Samuel Kaufman was brutally assailed in the Hearst press and elsewhere for entirely lawful rulings in the first Alger Hiss case. Reaction is clearly determined to make of the judiciary a supine arm of the war-minded executive power. The Federal bench is to carry out the orders of the Department of Justice and J. Edgar Hoover's FBI—or else!

The total, of course, spells out the systematic effort of a war-minded ruling class to destroy the Bill of Rights and its keystone First Amendment guaranteeing the inalienable rights of free speech, press and assembly. If unchecked, these steps will move our land by seven league strides towards an American version of fascism.

* * *

Challenges to the jury system are exceptional but by no means rare. Almost invariably they are bound up with wider struggles for democratic rights. Significantly enough, the most important jury challenges in the past 70 years have been advanced by Negro defendants and have formed an important phase of the struggle of the Negro people, sup-

* Federal Judges on the mainland are appointed for life. In the territory of Hawaii, however, they are appointed for fixed terms.

ported
basic
the
last
Scott
sidered
ber of
lenger
cases.
wing
system
challe
was,
grand
exclu
major
propo
The
the ju
v. De
tem
clusio
privile
theref
partia
cratic
an or
class.
that t
virtua
Negro
tions
humb
who
overv
the c
Th

¹No.
Fay v.
Ackerm
245 U

ported by white progressives, for basic constitutional rights. Among the most important of these in the last two decades was the second Scottsboro case. It can also be considered hardly accidental that a number of the most important jury challenges in recent years came in labor cases. On at least one occasion Left-wing socialists challenged the jury system in a World War I case.¹ That challenge, unsuccessful though it was, pointed up the fact that the grand and trial jurors were composed exclusively of members of the two major parties and were substantial property owners.

The 1949 Communist challenge to the jury system in New York (*U.S. v. Dennis*) charged that the jury system favored "by multiple over-inclusion the wealthy, propertied and privileged class in the community, thereby necessarily destroying its impartial, representative and democratic character and turning it into an organ of the favored group and class." The challenge pointed out that the jury system by pre-selection virtually excluded "manual workers, Negroes, residents of the poorer sections of the community and those of humble station in life, among others, who in the aggregate comprise the overwhelming majority of those in the community qualified to serve."

The challenge did not charge that

there was complete exclusion. It pointed out that there were *token* inclusions of some groups in order the better to conceal the *effective* exclusion of the mass of qualified manual workers and Negroes. This challenge was rejected by Federal Judge Harold Medina despite its wealth of proof on the ground, among others, that the proof had been selective in character. The jury challenge was never passed upon by the Supreme Court; but the sole judge to discuss it, Justice Hugo Black, flatly declared in his dissenting opinion: "*The record shows a discriminatory selection of the jury panel which prevented trial before a representative cross-section of the community.*"

The Communist challenge of 1952, discussed below, analyzed in detail 13 successive panels, thus avoiding the argument of selectivity. It concentrated on attacking the crass upper-class character of the jury system and its virtual exclusion of manual workers, Negroes and Puerto Ricans and shifted the emphasis from pre-selection of jurors to the administration of the system by which the exclusions were largely accomplished. While it operated on some new facts and adopted some varying methods of proof, it continued the magnificent fight put up in 1949 and merged with the general struggle of democratic-minded citizens for the representative, cross-section jury required by law and Supreme Court decisions

¹ *Norris v. Alabama*, 294 U.S. 587 (1935); *Fay v. New York*, 332 U.S. 261; *ILWU v. Ackerman*, 82 F. Supp. 65; *Ruttenberg v. U.S.*, 245 U.S. 480 (1918).

—law and decisions more honored in the breach than in the observance.

* * *

The history of the struggle for trial by jury forms an important part of the struggle against feudalism. While some students trace trial by jury to the Magna Charta, there is strong evidence indicating that in its modern form trial by jury emerged as part of the struggle of the rising bourgeoisie against feudalism. Significantly enough, it was only during and after the "Glorious Revolution" in England in the late 17th century that a number of bourgeois-democratic procedural guarantees began to be embedded in the common law. It was at that time, for instance, that counsel was permitted to appear for persons accused of treason against the crown.²

Nor can this be regarded as historical accident. Trial by jury represented one of the forms by which the rising bourgeoisie fought decaying feudalism. It expressed at the level of the legal super-structure the changes that were in process in the marketplace. Trial by a jury of one's peers was one of the legal expressions of that equalitarianism that the growing merchant class demanded for itself against feudal restrictions and became one of the weapons with which to battle feudalism and its advocates.

Trial by jury was an important

² *The Sixth Amendment*, by Francis H. Heller, University of Kansas Press, 1951, p. 10.

feature of the struggles of the American colonists fighting British monarchical rule. The demand for an impartial trial by a jury of one's peers formed part of the Declaration of the Continental Congress in 1774 and its denial was one of the complaints embodied in the Declaration of Independence two years later. While the supporters of Thomas Jefferson actually carried the fight for jury trial most vigorously in the early years of the Republic, even many conservatives supported it.

Debates over the issue raged in the Constitutional Convention in 1787 and in the First Congress. Trial by jury was regarded by the more progressive forces of the infant Republic as an inherent part of the Bill of Rights, without which the Constitution would not have been ratified by the several states. It was Madison, a member of the First Congress from Virginia, who advanced in 1789 the first drafts of what was subsequently to become the Sixth Amendment. After extended debate, reflecting the popular demands for a Bill of Rights, the Sixth Amendment was adopted by the First Congress in language taken from that of George Mason, co-worker of Jefferson and Madison. Writes Heller (p. 34):

The available information thus permits only the following limited conclusion as to the immediate genesis of the Sixth Amendment: in its basic structure, compactness of arrangement, and enumeration of rights the amend-

ment follows the recommendation of the ratifying convention of Virginia, which in turn was but an amplification of the corresponding section of the Bill of Rights drawn up by George Mason. . . .

* * *

Marxists, together with other serious students of history, acknowledge that trial by jury represents a great historical advance in jurisprudence over feudalism. The historical advance represented by the jury system is noted, for example, by A. Y. Vyshinsky, in his textbook, *The Law of the Soviet State*, published by Mcmillan in 1948 (pp. 506-7):

The classical form of the bourgeois court is the 'court with jury' . . . In its modern form, such a court was created by the bourgeoisie in consequence of its victory over feudalism and was progressive as compared with the bureaucratic and caste courts of the noble-landowner estate. While bourgeois democracy flourished, such a court undoubtedly served as a bulwark of the political freedoms proclaimed by the bourgeoisie at the time of its triumph over the power of the feudal monarchy.

Thus, too, the liberal American jurist, New York State Supreme Court Justice Bernard Botein, wrote:

The historical association of the growth of expression and the jury system in England, particularly in the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, is clear. Again and again during that period efforts to inflict criminal punishment for the expression of criticism,

dissent or unorthodoxy foundered upon the rock of a jury which was inspired and courageous enough to sustain freedom of belief, speech and press. In this country, because of that association, the right of a jury trial was a major tenet in our early concept of freedom.³

V. I. Lenin early recognized the progressive character of the jury system as against the bureaucratic Czarist judicial system. Discussing a case in 1901, in which brutal police officers were virtually whitewashed for a police station killing of an allegedly tipsy peasant, Lenin wrote:

Why was not this case tried by a judge and jury, but by a court of Crown judges and representatives of the estates? Because the government of Alexander III, having declared ruthless war on every public aspiration towards liberty and independence, very soon found that trial by jury was dangerous.⁴

Lenin valued trial by jury not as an abstraction but as a concrete way in which the democratic impulses of the masses might find some expression in the struggle against the oppressive Czarist bureaucracy — a spirit akin to that expressed by the American revolutionists in their struggle against the Crown's judiciary 125 years earlier. Lenin attacked those Czarist publicists who scoffed at trial by jury as "trial by the street." Writing in the above-quoted article, Lenin said:

³ *Trial Judge*, by Justice Bernard Botein, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1952.

⁴ V. I. Lenin, *The Iskra Period*, International Publishers, New York, 1929, Vol. I, p. 80.

Trial by the street is valuable because it breathes a living spirit into the bureaucratic formalism which pervades our government institutions. . . . That is why the reactionary publicists and the reactionary governments hate, and cannot help hating, trial by the street (pp. 81-82).

Commenting on the attempts to restrict or eliminate jury trials, Vyshinsky observes: "Precisely for the reason that such a court is a bourgeois-democratic organization, it was under attack by every sort of reactionary element." He continues:

As class contradictions become acute in bourgeois states and the ground under the feet of the exploiter classes becomes less and less firm, the most reactionary cliques of the capitalist classes jettison bourgeois-democratic forms, freedoms and guarantees and conduct an attack also upon the court with jurors, which is, as we have seen, the court's classic bourgeois-democratic form. Upon the program of a single national front—to defend the bourgeois-democratic forms of state administration against reactionary attempts to trample them under foot and destroy them—is also the struggle to preserve the court with jurors . . . (cited work, pp. 509-10.)

It was precisely to *preserve* the democratic character of the jury system that the Communists challenged the undemocratic jury selection method in the Southern District of New York. This is part of the consistent struggle of the Communist Party, as defined by the Communist

Party Constitution, which "upholds the achievements of American democracy and defends the United States Constitution and its Bill of Rights against its reactionary enemies who would destroy democracy and popular liberties."

Our fight was not premised on any theory of a "classless" jury, Olympian in its detachment. Quite the contrary. Our fight was primarily *against* the systematic exclusion from the Federal juries of manual workers, Negroes and Puerto Ricans, and for a representative jury system. We recognized the validity of Marx's caustic words on "the conscience of jurors" and his devastating attack on the sniveling hypocrites who told radicals on trial in 1848, that "no greater guarantee" is needed than the abstract "conscience" of a jury—particularly in a political case, a trial of a political party.

Ach, mon Dieu! [wrote Marx.] Conscience depends on consciousness, on the entire form of a man's life. A republican has a different conscience from that of a royalist. A "have" has a different conscience from a "have-not." A thinker has a different conscience from that of one who has never had a thought. When property or other qualification alone decides who is called to obligations of a juror, his conscience is likewise a "qualification" conscience. That is the point: the "conscience" of the privileged is a privileged conscience.⁵

⁵ The Proceeding against Gortschalk and His Comrades (1848), quoted by Vyshinsky, cited work, p. 514.

It
ces"
and
this
that
tack

W
chal
men

T
O
whic
now
man
pan
gran
a sir
T
the
drav
Look

M
who
of t
com
ploy
B
Bure
Prop
cent
trict,
male
N
of s
hood
sent
popu
point

* S
dicted
Mario

It was these "privileged consciences" that convicted Eugene Dennis and his ten comrades in 1949. It was this system of "privileged conscience" that the Communist defendants attacked in 1949 and again in 1952.

* * *

What are the facts of our jury challenge—facts which the government could not refute?

The facts are stark and simple:

Of the Federal Grand Jury of 23 which indicted the 15 Communists* now on trial there was not a single manual worker or Negro. On the panel of 75 from which the indicting grand jury was drawn there was not a single manual worker or Negro.

The petit jury lists—from which the present "jury of our peers" is drawn—were hardly any better. Look at the uncontroverted facts:

Manual workers and other groups who constitute more than 50 per cent of those qualified to serve as jurors comprised but 7 per cent of the employed males on the jury lists.

BUT—those classified by the Census Bureau as Managers, Officials and Proprietors, who comprise only 15 per cent of the employed males in the district, constituted 44 per cent of the male jurors.

Not even small businessmen, owners of small shops and factories, neighborhood retail stores, etc., were represented to nearly their proportion in the population. The defense offer of proof pointed out: "The frequent appearance

of such leading corporations as Bristol Myers Co., Universal Pictures, National City Bank, Benton and Bowles, Southern Pacific Railroad, and banks, brokerages and utility companies, is notable."

Even among the manual workers, few as they were, the lists showed a disproportionate selection from that category employed by large utilities—the New York Telephone Company, the Consolidated Edison Company and similar outfits. There was almost a complete absence of workers from the large unionized industries such as garment, light metal, fur and building trades. An owner or manager has 121 times the chance of being selected for jury duty that a laborer has, the uncontradicted defense analysis points out. A resident of the "silk-stocking" Manhattan 9th Assembly District has 31 times the chance of jury selection that a resident of the largely Negro and Puerto Rican 14th Assembly District has, the same analysis said. The lack of Spanish surnames on the list of 3,725 names on the last 13 panels proved to any reasonable person the systematic exclusion of Puerto Ricans.

The exclusion of Negroes could not be demonstrated statistically, because the government resisted bitterly—and successfully—the defense effort to subpoena U.S. Census Bureau data on this vital question. But it could not effectively contradict the defense facts which showed that:

Manhattan's lily-white 9th Assembly

* Seventeen Communists were originally indicted on June 20, 1951. Two, Israel Amter and Marion Bachrach, were severed because of illness.

District (known as "the area of the golden eagle and the silver spoon") had 427 persons on the jury lists, or 61 times as many as the adjacent Negro and Puerto Rican 14th Assembly District.

In Manhattan's 6th Assembly District, 69 per cent of the jurors came from Stuyvesant Town and Peter Cooper Village, both, until recently, virtually all-white. *No jurors were drawn from the two unsegregated public housing developments in the same district, the Lillian Wald and Jacob Riis Houses.*

Very few jurors were drawn from the Negro ghetto districts of Harlem and the East Bronx.

It was on the basis of this irrefutable evidence that the defense demanded the dismissal of the indictment and charged flatly that the jury system was rigged and stacked against the defendants, making a fair trial impossible. The motion was denied by the judge, but the charge was not thereby disproved. The process of questioning and examining the prospective jurors (known to the law as *voir dire*) proved to the hilt our charge that a fair trial by an impartial jury was impossible from the current jury lists—even granting, for the moment, that it is possible to try the untriable, the doctrines of a political party! Very few, if any, of about 200 persons on the panel were manual workers; only three Negroes were present. Of those who got on the present jury of 12 there is not a

single manual worker or Negro. (One of the four alternate jurors is Negro.)

* * *

A close study of the Federal jury system in the Southern District of New York, which encompasses Wall Street as well as Union Square, indicates a major trend toward the destruction of bourgeois-democratic institutions. The monopolist ruling class turns its back on bourgeois-democratic institutions born in revolutionary democratic struggle. It must either destroy or pervert these institutions. Democratic processes, even of the very limited bourgeois type, become a fetter on a ruling class bent on imperialist war abroad and fascist rule at home.

Unable to discard the jury system at one fell swoop, the leading minds of the ruling class are determined to pervert it to a supine instrument of monopoly-capitalist rule. Thus, they hope to maintain the fiction of democratic judicial practice while carrying through the substance of reactionary policy. In the Southern District of New York, Senior Judge John C. Knox was the leading architect of the system that produced the present hand-picked juries. Significantly enough, his activity in this direction took on wide scope during the depression years when he assumed the task of weeding out of juries the unemployed and persons on relief. "Persons who have a grievance against the government," Knox

wrote
the a
self
spirit
detac
requ
He t
mitte
unde
migr
Ju
recru
"bett
taine
the "
necti
men
Gran
office
insur
regist
well
giste
recru
rolls
voter
is su
keep
Rica
P
of th
ficht
pelle
bein
appa
tion
indie
whic

wrote, "or who are dissatisfied with the conditions that expose them to self-denial are not likely to have the spiritual contentment and mental detachment that are essential and requisite to competent jury service.⁶ He told a Senate Judiciary Subcommittee in April 1947, that among the undesirables "were the Negro, immigrant and whatnot."

Judge Knox deliberately sought to recruit for Federal jury service the "better people." On this basis he obtained a new jury commissioner with the "proper" social and business connections and encouraged the recruitment of jurors through the Federal Grand Jurors Association, personnel officers of various banks, utilities and insurance companies and alumni registers of Ivy League colleges, as well as *Who's Who*, the *Social Register*, etc. Many of the persons thus recruited still remain on the jury rolls. Some use of the registered voters' list now obtains, but even this is subject to manipulation which still keeps workers, Negroes and Puerto Ricans off Federal juries.

But it became clear in the course of the 1952 jury challenge that the fight in the *Dennis* case had compelled changes. More use is now being made of the voters' lists and an apparently random system of selection is now in use (itself a damning indictment of the jury system under which 12 persons were chosen to

convict the 11 Communist leaders in 1949!). It became clear that the method of stacking the jury is by crafty and conscious administration in the bowels of the judicial bureaucracy, the office of the clerk, etc. Workers, Negroes, foreign-born persons are "excused" on a variety of technicalities—alleged inability to spell, to fill out forms correctly, some even on "appearance and manner." A large percentage of workers and small shopkeepers are excused on "economic" grounds, that is, loss of wages or income during periods of service.

Obviously, all of these are shabby excuses, part of the vicious techniques of exclusion of working people from the jury system. Without detailing all the steps possible, it is clear that labor and other democratic forces should fight for sweeping revisions of the system in order to democratize it. One step, already written into a number of United Electrical Workers and other union contracts, is to compel employers to pay full wages to workers serving on juries. Another is to raise the pay scale of jurors. (A whole series of such proposals were made to Judge Knox and other Federal judges of this district by a delegation of leaders of the Citizens Emergency Defense Conference on May 1, 1952.)

But whatever the form of the struggle for democratization of the jury system, it must be seen as one of the problems before the *whole*

⁶ *Journal of the American Judicature Society*, June, 1947.

democratic camp in American life, a struggle to which the Communists have made notable contributions. It is a struggle in which Communists join with all democratic forces, irrespective of political views or attitude on foreign policy. *It is above all a problem for organized labor.* All signs point to increased use of the coercive powers of the judicial apparatus against those who seek elementary improvement of their economic conditions. Thus, the new Smith Bill with its draconic provisions for seizure of striking trade unions is a harbinger of new and unprecedented use of legal powers against the working people. The struggle against judicial reaction, therefore, must receive a new priority by organized labor which should join with Communists, the Negro people and the courageous and far-sighted members of the legal profession in this battle. The struggle must be a broad one, inside and outside courtrooms and legislative halls, for it is clearly a battle to return to the Bill of Rights. To defend democratic rights is to defend living standards—this is axiomatic.

In this struggle we Communists join with every other democratic-minded American, irrespective of views, in the common fight to preserve a common democratic heritage. Our belief in, and fight for, what we regard as the highest form of democracy, Socialism, does not preclude this common struggle with those who do not accept Socialism as a final aim. On the contrary, precisely because we hold that Socialism can only be reached through the enhancement of democratic rights, do we struggle, together with democrats who may disagree with us, to preserve and extend every democratic gain won down the years.

The jury issue is one of those questions upon which we gladly join hands with all who oppose judicial reaction. Defense of the elementary democratic content of the jury system and exposure of its hypocritical, purely formal and actually upper-class character represents one of the sectors of struggle for all genuine defenders of the Bill of Rights. In that fight we Communists will continue to make our own contribution in the future as we have in the past.

By M

THE O
cernin
mark
of the
ciety.
of scie
tionary
slave s
Weste
sively
the an
ism w
moven
masses
by th
history

Two
cover
tion. T
speech
Collect
"The
nated
the sla
toilers
serf-ov
ploitat
exploit
set of

* Tra
of Histo
J. V
Language

On the Transition from the Ancient World to the Middle Ages*

By M. Alpatov

THE COMMENTS of J. V. Stalin concerning the revolution of the slaves mark a new stage in the development of the Marxist-Leninist science of society. For the first time in the history of science the question of the revolutionary transition from the ancient slave social relations to feudalism in Western Europe was comprehensively answered. The replacement of the ancient social relations by feudalism was shown to be the result of the movement of the broad popular masses, the result of a struggle waged by the first revolutionary class in history.

Two statements by J. V. Stalin cover the various aspects of this question. The first of them occurs in his speech to the All-Union Congress of Collective Farm Shock-Workers: "The revolution of the slaves eliminated the slave-owners and abolished the slave form of exploitation of the toilers. But in their place it set up the serf-owners and the serf form of exploitation of the toilers. One set of exploiters was replaced by another set of exploiters."¹

* Translated from *Voprosy Istorii (Problems of History)*, July, 1949.

¹ J. V. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism* (Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1940), p. 457.

The second statement is to be found in his report to the Seventeenth Congress of the C.P.S.U. (B): "... the non-Romans, i.e., all the 'barbarians', united against the common enemy, hurled themselves against Rome, and bore her down with a crash."²

These statements by Stalin bring into focus the close tie-up between the revolution of the slaves and the barbarian invasions in the process of the transition from the slave social relations to the feudal. Unquestionably, the essentially new point in Marxist science is that this process, in its social and political content, was nothing short of a revolution of the slaves.

Let us consider several theoretical questions which will clarify the methodological significance of Stalin's statements.

In considering the problem of the revolution of the slaves, we must draw a distinction between the two essential propositions contained in Stalin's statements. First, was the slave class capable of overthrowing the slave state, abolishing the slave-owners and the slave form of exploi-

² Stalin, cited work, p. 480.

tation? Second, was the slave class capable of replacing the overthrown slave state by a new, more progressive state, was it capable of creating new, more progressive social relations to take the place of the old social relations?

How did Karl Marx and Frederick Engels answer these questions? The founders of Marxism made a number of observations on the struggles of the slaves of antiquity, on the transition from the ancient world to the Middle Ages. Their views on the question are set forth most fully in one of Engels' later works, his well-known *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*. We know that Engels considered the crisis in the slave mode of production the basic cause of the fall of slave society and the birth of feudalism. Since a continual mass influx of slave labor power was an indispensable condition for the existence of slave economy, the general economic crisis began with the cessation of the wars of conquest and the curtailed influx of slaves.

The system of *latifundia* run by slave labor no longer paid; but at that time no other form of large-scale agriculture was possible. Small production had again become the only profitable form. . . . One country estate after another was cut up into small lots, which were handed over . . . to tenants, who paid a fixed sum and had hereditary rights. . . . For the most part, however, these small lots of land were given out to *coloni*, who paid for them a definite yearly amount, were tied to the soil and could

be sold together with their lot. . . . They were the forerunners of the medieval serfs. The slavery of classical times had outlived itself. Whether employed on the land in large-scale agriculture or in manufacture in the towns, it no longer yielded any satisfactory return—the market for its products was no longer there.³

Nevertheless, this transition to the *coloni* form, as we know, provided no way out of the economic crisis within the framework of the slave social structure itself. Commerce had been limited even in the flourishing period of slave economy, but now the economic ties between the estates, the towns, and the individual provinces were increasingly loosened. In this deep-going crisis, the exploitation of the producing classes was intensified to an intolerable extent:

The Roman state had become a huge, complicated machine, exclusively for bleeding its subjects. Taxes, state imposts and tributes of every kind pressed the mass of the people always deeper into poverty; the pressure was intensified until the exactions of governors, tax-collectors, and armies made it unbearable. That was what the Roman state had achieved with its world rule. It gave as the justification of its existence that it maintained order within the empire and protected it against the barbarians without. But its order was worse than the worst disorder, and the citizens whom it claimed to protect against the barbarians longed for the barbarians to deliver them.⁴

The example of Gaul gives some

³ F. Engels, *The Origin of the Family . . .* (International Publishers, 1942), p. 136.

⁴ Engels, cited work, p. 135.

idea of
"Alre
publ
been
inces;
ing th
it. . .
cline
art; f
the to
a low
sult o
the m
empir
oppres
ture o
Eng
follow
alley
had n
nomic
freem
one co
produ
yet. N
a com
All
able co
Marxi
antiqu
revolu
from
to ano
conqu
of the
conqu
of tha
hasten
tem an
ism. I

⁵ Eng

idea of the situation in the provinces. "Already in the last years of the republic the policy of Roman rule had been ruthlessly to exploit the provinces; the empire, far from abolishing this exploitation, had organized it. . . . General impoverishment; decline of commerce, handicrafts and art; fall in the population; decay of the towns; relapse of agriculture to a lower level—such was the final result of Roman world rule." . . . For the mass of the people, the Roman empire was "their worst enemy and oppressor" and "the half-baked culture of Rome provided no substitute."

Engels evaluates the crisis in the following way: "This was the blind alley from which the Roman world had no way out: slavery was economically impossible, the labor of freemen was morally ostracized. The one could be the basic form of social production no longer; the other, not yet. Nothing could help here except a complete revolution."⁵

All this leads us to the indisputable conclusion that the founders of Marxism regarded the transition from antiquity to the Middle Ages as a *revolution*, a revolutionary transition from one socio-economic formation to another. The way for the barbarian conquest was paved by a deep crisis of the slave mode of production. The conquest took place in the conditions of that crisis and was a factor that hastened the fall of the antique system and the development of feudalism. In refuting Eugen Dühring,

who saw the conquest as something sufficient unto itself, an exclusively external phenomenon, Engels specifically emphasized the social content of the barbarian conquest, its revolutionary role in establishing feudal relations in place of slave relations. "The conquests of the Germans, the establishment of states on the conquered territories in which the village predominated, as opposed to the cities of the ancient world, were parallel to the metamorphosis of slavery into a less oppressive serfdom and other forms of peasant dependency."⁶

Engels stresses this same idea of the *internal*, revolutionary content of the barbarian conquest of the Roman empire in his *Dialectics of Nature*:

Wherever *slavery* is the dominant form of production, labor becomes a slave activity, i.e., something dishonorable to free people. This in itself bars the way out of such a mode of production, whereas, on the other hand, its elimination is necessary, for slavery is an obstacle to the development of production. All production based on slavery and every society that rests on it perished because of this contradiction. In most cases the contradiction is resolved by the forcible conquest of the declining society by other and stronger societies (Greece was vanquished by Macedonia, and later by Rome). As long as the latter, in their turn, rest on slave labor, all that occurs is shifting of the center, and the entire process is repeated at a higher stage, until, at last, (Rome) was conquered by a people

⁵ Engels, cited work, pp. 134-37.

⁶ Marx and Engels, *Collected Works* (Russian edit.), XIV, p. 370.

who introduced a new mode of production in place of slavery.⁷

Consequently, Marx and Engels thoroughly elaborated the problem of the role and character of the barbarian conquest in the process of transition from the ancient world to the Middle Ages. On the one hand, they refuted the "romanistic" theory of such bourgeois reactionary historians as Fustel de Coulanges, who constructed a continuous historical process in which medieval Europe was the direct continuation of the Roman Empire, leaving no room for revolutions, and affirming the eternal and unshakable domination of large-scale private property, exploitation and the disfranchisement of the masses of the people. On the other hand, the thesis of the founders of Marxism on the revolutionary transition from the ancient world to the Middle Ages smashed the nationalistic theories of such German historians as Weitz, Zoma, Brunner and others who saw the fall of the Roman Empire as the triumph of the German "national spirit" over the decaying Roman world. Opposing the German chauvinistic interpretation of the fall of the Roman Empire, Engels wrote:

But what was the mysterious magic by which the Germans breathed new life into a dying Europe? Was it some miraculous power innate in the Germanic race, such as our chauvinist historians romance about? Not a bit of it. The Germans, especially at that time, were a highly gifted Aryan tribe, and

in the full vigor of development. It was not, however, their specific national qualities which rejuvenated Europe, but simply—their barbarism, their gentle constitution.⁸

Soviet historical science examines the question of the barbarian conquest of the Roman Empire particularly in the light of these conclusions.

However, it follows from the remarks of Stalin that there is a second and more important side to the problem of the transition from slave to feudal society, namely, the question of the role of the oppressed masses of the Roman Empire themselves, the role of the basic exploited class of antiquity—the slaves—in that revolution which divides the slave and feudal forms of social relationship. It is well known that the question of the role of the masses of people as the decisive force in the progressive development of history is one of the basic principles of Marxism.

The question of the role of the proletariat and the peasantry occupied an important place both in the scientific theory of Marx and Engels and in their practical revolutionary activity (the Revolution of 1848 and the Paris Commune). This question is further developed and applied to the era of imperialism in the works of Lenin and Stalin as an essential part of the Marxist-Leninist teachings on the bourgeois and socialist revolutions.

With regard to the role played by the slaves as the revolutionary class

⁷ Marx and Engels, cited work, p. 450.

⁸ Engels, *Origin of Family*, p. 142.

of an
slave
lem
foun
level
itself
about
too s
time
mitte
ing to
popul
the w
were
revolu
rule o
Th
narily
nated
more
schol
have
factu
struct
strug
cient
able
playe
tion
tiquit
be ob
eral
evalu
of al
antiq
period
early
been
Marx
Marx
critic

of antiquity in the shattering of the slave mode of production, this problem was not worked out by the founders of Marxism, due to the level of knowledge about antiquity itself at that time. Historical facts about the struggle of the slaves were too scattered and fragmentary in the time of Marx and Engels. This permitted bourgeois historians, in seeking to belittle the role played by the popular masses in history, to create the well-known legend that the slaves were incapable of accomplishing a revolution and of overthrowing the rule of the slave-owners.

This legend has been extraordinarily long lived. It has firmly dominated the minds of scholars, and, moreover, not just of the bourgeois scholars. Marxist science did not then have at its command the necessary factual material to be able to reconstruct the true picture of the class struggle of the oppressed in the ancient world; it was particularly unable to solve the problem of the role played by the slaves in the destruction of the social relations of antiquity. This historical material could be obtained only through a fresh general re-examination and critical re-evaluation from a Marxist viewpoint of all the documentary sources of antiquity, particularly of the later period of the Roman Empire and the early Middle Ages. This had not yet been accomplished in the days of Marx and Engels. The founders of Marxism carried out an enormous critical re-examination of the then

known material on ancient history, but they naturally could not undertake a task for the solution of which the historical facts had not yet been accumulated.

The examination of the problem of the revolution of the slaves has become possible only in our own time. Soviet historical science, which has cadres of Marxist students of antiquity, has gone a long way in the critical re-examination of antique sources, particularly the documentary material preserved from the later Roman Empire and the early Middle Ages.

The historical facts reported to us by Herodian, Eumenius, Salvianus, Mamertinus, Libanius, Ambrosius of Milan, Eunapius, Ammianus Marcellinus, Eutropius, Prosper, Zosim, other source material of narrative, ethnographical and juridical character, numismatics, all of the "prophets" of whom there were many in that stormy epoch—all this rich fund of historical documentation is neglected or distorted by bourgeois historians. Only Soviet scholarship, which uses Marxist-Leninist historiography, can reconstruct, at least in general outline, the picture of the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed masses in the period of the fall of the Roman Empire. For the first time, we see the sanguinary class war which raged throughout the "world" empire, reaching the utmost bitterness and embracing a whole historical period. . . .

There can be no doubt that Soviet

historians still have a great deal of work to do before they will be able to show, in all its concrete historical details, the class struggle which destroyed the Roman slave empire. Nevertheless, the source material available to us already permits us to draw the basic methodological conclusion concerning the character of the transition from slave to feudal social relationships.

This methodological conclusion has been formulated in Stalin's succinct thesis on the revolution of the slaves and constitutes a major contribution to the treasury of Marxism. It deepens and develops further the view held by Marx and Engels concerning the transition from the slave to the feudal social formation through a new and extremely important proposition already quoted from Stalin: "The revolution of the slaves eliminated the slave-owners and abolished the slave form of exploitation of the toilers."

This proposition rests fully upon the interpretation of the role of the oppressed masses in history which is contained in the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, and constitutes its continuation and development. This view of Marxist-Leninist science, hitherto developed with regard to the bourgeois as well as the socialist revolution, was extended by Stalin to the revolution which took place in the course of the transition from slavery to feudalism. The correctness of this proposition is proved by the whole course of history, which

teaches that the chief moving force of any revolution that puts an end to the old exploiting mode of production and establishes a new mode of production is the mass of the people, and primarily that oppressed mass of the dying base whose productive labor formed the vital foundation of this base, and whose class struggle, in the final analysis, determined the fate of this mode of production.

The class upon whose labor the slave system rested and upon whose struggle the historical fate of that system depended was the slave class. Under feudalism this class was the peasantry. It is therefore not accidental that Stalin, in defining the transition from antiquity to feudalism as a revolution of the slaves, should characterize the chief motive force of the subsequent bourgeois revolution in the way just quoted.

Under capitalism, such a class is, as we know, the proletariat. Hence, it is precisely these oppressed classes of the dying social order, and no other social group, which represent the basic striking force of the revolution that occurs in the transition from one set of social relations to another. These classes are the only classes that are interested in the complete destruction of the old mode of production.

The entire course of history has proved that the revolution of the slaves could have triumphed under definite historical conditions, that is, at the historical moment when the relations of production of the dying

slave s
tute r
ress o
of the
new cl
the be
produ
withi
cial f
advan
basic r
its all
the ru
The
umph
As lo
was st
could
That
Spart
in A
other
ing
amon
army
tion o
move
instan
toilin
testif
of th
Rom
did
that
man
that
pour
form
histo
risin
its t

slave system could no longer constitute the form for the further progress of social production. In the heart of the old system of social relations new classes were formed which were the bearers of the growing mode of production. Finally, there took shape within this old formation those social forces which were capable of advancing in a united front with the basic revolutionary class, of becoming its ally in the struggle to overthrow the ruling class of the old system.

The slaves could not have triumphed as a separate, isolated force. As long as the slave system of Rome was stable, the slaves, standing alone, could only shake the Roman state. That was strikingly shown by the Spartacus revolt. Everything we read in Appian, Sallust, Plutarch and other authors of antiquity concerning the sympathetic sentiments among the Roman peasantry and army, and even about the participation of the peasantry in the Spartacus movement, points merely to isolated instances of wavering among the free toiling population and by no means testifies to mass and decisive support of the uprising of the slaves by the Roman peasants and soldiers. This did not take place despite the fact that towards the end of the republic many of the peasants were poor, and that many democratic elements poured into the army after the reforms of Marius (104 B.C.). The historical tragedy of the Spartacus uprising was precisely that, in spite of its tremendous sweeping character,

it remained, on the whole, an isolated uprising of the slaves. In the final analysis, the ruling class succeeded in retaining its power over the peasantry and preserving control over the army. The slaves took action then without strong allies and that made their victory impossible.

A different situation prevailed towards the end of the empire. This was a situation of the general crisis of the slave system, which also determined the principal features of the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed masses. The basic characteristic of this revolutionary period, as distinguished from the wave of slave revolts in the period of the republic, was that now not only the slaves acted, but also a powerful bloc of anti-slavery forces. In the first place, the numerous masses of the *coloni* were the allies of the slaves. The colonate was that socio-economic institution which narrowed the difference between the position of the slaves and the peasantry in the process of production and thereby created a firm foundation for their military and political alliance.

The most powerful movement of the revolutionary masses in the last centuries of the empire was the revolt of the Bagaudae and the Agonists which were struggles of the slaves and the *coloni* acting in a united front. In particular, Gaul, whose population, according to all data, was hostile to the Spartacus uprising, now became the center of the revolt of the Bagaudae. This movement had par-

ticular significance because it occurred in a province which served as a buffer between the Roman empire and the barbarian world beyond the Rhine which constantly threatened Gaul with invasion.

The example of the Bagaudae brings into particularly clear relief the second feature of the revolutionary wave of this period—the fusion of the movement of the slaves and the *coloni* with the movement of the soldiers. The Roman army, which was now made up in considerable part of those same slaves and *coloni*, could no longer serve as a reliable bulwark of imperial power. Gaul teemed with deserters, who served as a constant supply of reserves for the detachments of the Bagaudae. Soldiers often formed the main nucleus of the rebel military forces. The leaders of the biggest Bagaudae uprisings—Maternus at the end of the second century, Eliandus and Amanus at the end of the third century—were formerly soldiers in the Roman army.

Thanks to the participation of elements of the army, the Bagaudae were able to organize military forces along Roman lines. Their troops very often were armed every bit as well as the Roman legions. Cases of imperial troops going over to the side of the Bagaudae or refusing to fight them were not infrequent: Diocletian, for instance, was obliged to execute almost the whole of the famous legion of Fivianus, one of the best in the Roman army, for refusing to fight

the Bagaudae. Purges of the army, involving mass execution of soldiers, became a practice.

The merger of the struggles of the slaves, the *coloni* and the soldiers infused a stubborn character, great force and sweep into the movement of the Bagaudae. While the Spartacus uprising was, in a certain sense, a narrow development, the movement of the Bagaudae dealt a number of successive and powerful blows to the Roman rule in Gaul from which it never recovered. This movement arose towards the end of the second century and was then suppressed, but it was resumed with fresh vigor in the third century. After subsiding to some extent in the first half of the fourth century, it again flared up at the end of that century and never ceased until the fall of Roman power itself in Gaul. This was a war against the slave system conducted on a broad scale. The Bagaudae expropriated the estates and lands of the slave-owners throughout the vast territories of Gaul and, in part, in Spain. They were strong enough to lay siege to and capture large cities of the size of Augustodunum (Autun). They liberated prisoners from dungeons and liquidated Roman power on the freed territories.

It should be stressed here that in their struggle the rebels usually made no distinction between the Roman magnates and the Gallic aristocracy, which was also struggling for separation from Rome. The acknowledged task of the movement was to elimi-

nate t
of the
the leg
gaulda
into R
emper
Other
anus
thems
own a
own r
emph
resent
and
torian
was a
move
essent
stage
But
anoth
barba
an es
gener
of th
self
troop
origi
made
and
powe
ways
of th
the e
of th
organ
histo
whic
powe
of th
the e

nate the social and political system of the slave-owners: there is basis for the legend that the leader of the Bagaudae, Maternus, tried to penetrate into Rome in order to overthrow the emperor Commodus and seize power. Other leaders of the Bagaudae—Elianus and Amandus — proclaimed themselves emperor, organized their own administration and coined their own money. It is necessary to reject emphatically the version often represented in the sources themselves and maintained by bourgeois historians, that this whole movement was a movement of "brigands." The movement of the Bagaudae was an essential part of the last victorious stage of the revolution of the slaves.

But this anti-slavery bloc had still another ally—the barbarians. The barbarians cannot be considered as an exclusively external force. It is generally known that a large section of them lived within the empire itself as slaves, *coloni*, mercenary troops, federates, etc. The external origin of these elements by no means made them foreign to Roman society and the Roman state. As a "world" power, the Roman Empire was always a mixture of all of the peoples of that time: barbarians living within the empire were a component part of the Roman social and political organism, but as has been shown by history, they were a destructive force which acted against the slave-owning power from within. The greater part of the barbarians, however, came into the empire as conquerors.

Stalin comments upon the barbarian conquest as a second feature of the process of transition from slave to feudal social relations. There can be no doubt that this conquest became possible only in conjunction with the revolution of the slaves. This follows from the course of the events themselves. It is known that the barbarians warred against Rome for five centuries, but this war was unsuccessful as long as the Roman state had sufficient internal forces to hold off the external onslaught. Only when these internal forces of the empire, which constituted its resistance to the barbarians, were basically undermined by the revolution of the slaves did the invasion of the barbarians, resumed in the third century, result in their victory over Rome. The barbarians invaded Roman territory and, by fusing their blows with the blows of the revolution of the slaves, were at last able to overthrow Rome. The barbarian invasions were essentially a second aspect of the revolution of the slaves.

The fact that the last and decisive stage of the revolution of the slaves and the last onslaught of the barbarians against the empire began at the same time attracts attention. Engels paid particular attention to one side of this process. Considering the reason why the third century marked the beginning of the general onslaught of the barbarians against the borders of Rome, Engels wrote:

Such an explanation is not to be sought in the conditions of internal Ro-

man life; on the contrary, the empire was still everywhere putting up a successful resistance and in the intervals between individual periods of extreme anarchy was still producing—exactly at this time—mighty emperors. Consequently, the attacks of the Germans were called forth by changes which took place among themselves.⁹

The chief of these changes which enabled the barbarians to mount a general and decisive assault against the Roman borders, Engels holds, was the advancement of the material culture of the barbarian tribes.

First of all, it is necessary to point out that we are indebted to Engels for the first really scientific study of the question of the development of the productive forces of the barbarians in the third century, which served as a strong impetus for their mounting an assault against the empire.

However, from the point of view of modern Marxist science, that is only one side of the question. Guided by the remarks of Stalin, Soviet historical science must develop further Engels' thesis on the reasons for the barbarian offensive against the Roman empire and amend it with the proposition that the second and, moreover, most important reason for the barbarians assuming the offensive was the beginning of the final and decisive phase of the revolution of the slaves within the empire itself. The third century is characterized by the beginning of the general political crisis of the slave mode of produc-

tion, the beginning of that "extreme anarchy" about which Engels speaks. The principal expression of this political crisis was the revolution of the slaves which began in the third century, particularly the intensification of the movement of the Bagaudae.

From that time on, the periods of political stabilization of the empire, when it was able to repulse the barbarian invasions, became shorter and shorter. Under the blows of the slaves, Rome approached its death. In that general background of decline, the successes of individual fortunate emperors could not essentially change anything. It is no accident, therefore, that the beginning of the new phase of the revolution of the slaves should at the same time have been the beginning of the new barbarian onslaught against the empire.

These combined internal and external blows against the slave empire, were, as far as their social and political content was concerned, nothing else but a revolution of the slaves, for the main task of the revolution was to abolish the slave system and eliminate the slave-owners and their rule. The struggle of the slaves, as the class completely interested in destroying the slave empire, constituted the basic factor in this general struggle. The allies of the slaves, the *colonis*, were for the most part nothing but yesterday's slaves. Moreover, their struggle against the oppression to which they were subjected by the slave-owners meant a struggle for the abolition of slavery, for the overthrow

⁹ Marx and Engels, cited work, XVI, pt. 1, pp. 371-72.

of the
slavery

For
quero
the co
marily
tomor
the str
overth
gle fo
threat
slaves
chised
Final
that b
were,
same
that t
in the
state,
the b
ans, g
struct
volts
sessed
the sl
of the
barba
the R
slave-
explor
Co
tive a
er th
elimi
out
cond
empi
came
contr
form

of the slave state as the bulwark of slavery.

For their part, the formidable conquerors, the barbarians, were, under the conditions of a slave system, primarily potential slaves, the slaves of tomorrow. From this point of view, the struggle of the barbarians for the overthrow of the empire was a struggle for the elimination of the direct threat of their own conversion into slaves, into exploited and disfranchised subjects of the Roman state. Finally, it should not be forgotten that both the slaves and the *coloni* were, in great part, made up of the same barbarians. The circumstance that the slaves were no longer alone in their struggle against the slave state, that their blows were backed by the blows of the *coloni* and barbarians, gave the slave struggle the destructive force that no other slave revolts in all previous history had possessed. This time the revolution of the slaves, combined with the revolts of the *coloni* and the invasion of the barbarians, proved able to destroy the Roman slave state, eliminate the slave-owners and put an end to slave exploitation.

Consequently, Stalin gives a positive answer to the question of whether the class of slaves was capable of eliminating the slave system, pointing out that in the concrete historical conditions of the fall of the Roman empire, the victory of the slaves became a fact. This constitutes the new contribution made by Stalin to the formulation of this question by Marx

and Engels.

As to the second question of whether the class of slaves was capable of replacing the old system by a new, more progressive system, and to become the ruling class, Stalin answers in the negative. Developing the thesis of Marx, Engels and Lenin, Stalin stresses, as we have seen, that in place of the overthrown slave-owners and the slave form of exploitation, the revolution of the slaves "set up the serf-owners and the serf form of exploitation of the toilers. One set of exploiters was replaced by another set of exploiters."

The point is that the slaves, like the peasantry, while playing the role of the main battering ram in the destruction of the old system, at the same time, as history shows, could not establish hegemony in those revolutions for which they provided the moving force. They found themselves in no position to take power into their own hands and enjoy the chief results of those revolutions. They only paved the way for the coming to power of the new exploiters. Marx and Engels repeatedly pointed out the inability of the slaves to free themselves by seizing power. In particular, Engels pointed out in his *Bruno Bauer and Early Christianity* that the oppressed class in Roman society was "the slaves, who had neither rights nor will, and who, as the defeat of Spartacus had shown, were unable to emancipate themselves."¹⁰

¹⁰ Marx and Engels, cited work, XV, p. 607.

The entire history of antiquity, from the formation of the first slave states in the valleys of the Nile, Tigris and Euphrates to the last centuries of the Roman empire, is the history of the spontaneous and unsuccessful struggle of the slaves. Because of this, the consciousness of the slaves, as Engels shows, was shackled by the conviction that their struggle was hopeless, and this, in the final analysis, furnished the soil for the growth of Christianity. Lenin also commented on the spontaneous character of the uprisings of the slaves in his treatise on *The State*: "The slaves as we know revolted, rioted, started civil wars, but they could never create a class-conscious majority and parties to lead the struggle, they could not clearly realize what they were aiming for, and even in the most revolutionary moments in history they were always pawns in the hands of the ruling classes."¹¹

Stalin proceeds from the same thesis in his evaluation of the results of the revolution of the slaves. The experience of history has shown that as a result of the revolution of the slaves, as well as of the revolution of the serfs later on, power passed into the hands of new exploiters who, taking advantage of the fact that the oppressed masses had decisively finished off the old system, assumed power and wielded it against the overthrown old system and against the people.

In the bourgeois revolutions in

the west, as is known, the bourgeoisie came to power through the efforts of the masses. Concerning this, Marx wrote: "The bourgeoisie is, to say the least, a class devoid of heroism. Even its most brilliant achievements, in England in the 17th century and in France in the 18th century, were not won by itself but were won for it by the plebeian masses, the workers and peasants."¹²

At the same time, the course of the revolution was such that the masses of the people always went further in their struggle than the bourgeoisie wished. The bourgeoisie, upon seizing power, proceeded to crush the revolution which had brought it to power and to crush those masses of people through whose efforts it had gained that power.

The revolution of the slaves, which destroyed one exploiting system and served as the transition to another exploiting system, could only lead to the establishment of the power of the new, growing aristocracy which represented the newly-born serf form of exploitation. This class could have been recruited from the various sections of the propertied classes who, for one reason or another, were interested in the overthrow of the slave system. But nearly all the historical evidence that has come down to us from the contemporaries of the revolution and from the first centuries of the Middle Ages points mainly to the fact that the social force which

¹¹ V. I. Lenin, *The State* (New Century Publishers, 1942), p. 21.

¹² Marx and Engels, cited work, XV, p. 83.

seized the power of the Roman empire was the barbarian aristocracy.

The continuous civil war in the last period of existence of the Roman empire was accompanied by a struggle for power between various groups of the nobility. The barbarian nobility held a particular position in this struggle. The other hostile groups represented various factions among the slave-owners. In the course of its history the empire experienced more than one change of the slave-owning faction in power, as is reflected in the frequent change of emperors, but this was always an internal conflict within the class of slave-owners itself. Having developed out of communal-tribal relations, the barbarian gentry was the carrier of the newly-born feudal exploitation, which was steadily developing in the conditions of the decay of the slave order. That is why its victory, as far as objective results were concerned, could not but differ fundamentally from the victory of any other social group which contended for power.

At the same time, this new class had the greatest advantages in its struggle for the seizure of power. It consisted chiefly of military aristocrats who were at the head of the armies of the barbarian conquerors. Its military forces took Rome twice (Alaric's invasion in 410 and the vandal invasion in 455). Later on, the nobility of these mobile barbarian tribes seized the Roman provinces (Gaul, Spain, North Africa). An-

other part of the barbarian aristocracy stood close to the central power. In the last centuries of the existence of the empire, the propertied classes included many aristocrats of barbarian origin. They penetrated into the state apparatus and made up a considerable part of the officers' corps of the Roman army. They had at their command the barbarian troops who served in the Roman army. In the conditions of constant military mutinies, the last Roman emperors could not count on the loyalty of the legions. They, therefore, surrounded themselves with paid barbarian detachments which virtually held the capital in their hands. This gave the barbarian military leaders the most favorable opportunity for organizing a *coup d'etat* in Rome itself. That is why such a *coup d'etat* was accomplished by the commander of the barbarian forces which guarded the capital and the person of the last Roman emperor, Odoacre (476).

What were the results of the fall of the empire? There is no doubt that the slaves and the *coloni* attained significant social results. Engels pointed out that with the fall of the Roman empire, "Ancient slavery had gone, and so had the pauper freemen who despised work as only fit for slaves. Between the Roman *colonus* and the new bondsman had stood the free Frankish peasant."¹³ This statement of Engels is developed further in Stalin's classical formulation: "The revolution of the slaves

¹³ Engels, *Origin of Family*, p. 141.

eliminated the slave-owners and abolished the slave form of exploitation of the toilers." But the political as well as the chief social and economic fruits of this revolution were enjoyed by neither the slaves and the *coloni* nor by their allies, the barbarian masses. As Engels pointed out: "The slaves could free themselves, abolishing slavery alone out of all the institutions of private property."¹⁴ The principal results of the revolution were enjoyed by the new set of exploiters who grew into a new ruling class and organized their own state on the ruins of the slave empire.

It is well known that the only progressive system which could have been established after the destruction of the slave system was feudalism. It is also known that feudalism in western Europe developed as the historical synthesis of two sources: on the one hand, there were the feudal elements which had matured within the slave system itself and, on the other hand, there were the feudal elements that had grown up as a result of the disintegration of the communal-tribal system of the barbarians. It must be recognized that the determining force in this process of the formation of a new mode of production was the masses of barbarians headed by their own aristocracy which was in the process of feudalization. It was the barbarian aristocracy which had replaced the slave form of exploitation of the toilers. Under

resented the only class able to take power and, annexing to itself the fragments of the old Roman aristocracy, to organize its own rule. Engels indicates that there

... had to be placed a substitute for the Roman state, and this substitute could only be another state. The organs of the gentile constitution had to be transformed into state organs, and that very rapidly, for the situation was urgent. But the immediate representative of the conquering people was their military leader. To secure the conquered territory against attack from within and without, it was necessary to strengthen his power. The moment had come to transform the military leadership into kingship; the transformation was made.¹⁵

This was no longer the state of the slave-owners, but of the young class of feudal lords. The principal foundation for this new political system was the new economy. The organic union of its component barbarian and Roman elements required a certain period of time which, in its social and economic content, was a peculiar pre-feudal period: "... the Roman system of *latifundia* worked by slave-labor or the newer large-scale agriculture worked by forced services . . ." were equally alien to the economic system of the early centuries of the Middle Ages. The social foundation of the new state was the new relations of exploitation which had replaced the slave form of exploitation of the toilers. Under

¹⁴ Marx and Engels, cited work, V, p. 468.

¹⁵ Engels, *Origin of Family*, pp. 138-39.

the new conditions, as Engels again points out, "the relation of powerful landowners and subject peasants which had meant for the ancient world the final ruin, from which there was no escape, was for them the starting-point of a new development."¹⁶ This was how the new exploiting system of feudalism took shape.

In this connection, there is one more essential feature which Stalin points out when he stresses the significance of the revolution of the slaves as a social leap which led to another system. This is the inevitably limited scope of the revolution. Speaking of the revolutionary transition from the Roman empire to the Middle Ages, Engels saw it as his task to emphasize, above all, the completeness of the collapse of the old antique society and to point out the new elements the barbarians had brought with them, as compared to the declining Roman empire. This idea runs all through his *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, and is also to be found in *The Peasant War in Germany* in which he writes that the Middle Ages "had done away with old civilization . . . in order to begin anew in every respect. The only thing which it had retained from the old shattered world was Christianity and a number of half-ruined cities, deprived of their civilization" (p. 51). In noting that the revolution of the slaves "liquidated the slave-owners and abolished

the slave form of the exploitation of the toilers," Stalin does not neglect the other side of the question, that "in their place it set up the serf-owners and the serf form of exploitation of the toilers. One set of exploiters was replaced by another set of exploiters."

Stalin also stresses the limited nature of the revolution of the serfs. For us, the contemporaries of the Great October Socialist Revolution, the scope and depth of past revolutions has less significance than it had previously. Their strength cannot hide their weakness and limited nature. That is why Stalin prefaces his characterization of past revolutions with the following words:

The history of nations knows not a few revolutions. But those revolutions differ from the October Revolution in that they were one-sided revolutions. One form of exploitation of the working people was replaced by another form of exploitation; but exploitation, as such, remained. One set of exploiters and oppressors was replaced by another set of exploiters and oppressors; but exploiters and oppressors, as such, remained. Only the October Revolution set itself the aim of abolishing *all* exploitation and of eliminating all exploiters and oppressors.¹⁷

This, in our opinion, is the manner in which the problem of the revolution of the slaves and the barbarian conquest should be put, in the light of Stalin's propositions. This is the direction that historical science must take in its examination of the question.

¹⁶ As note 15, p. 141.

¹⁷ J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, p. 442.

Book Review

CORRUPTION, INC.

By Herbert Aptheker

How To Get Rich in Washington, by Blair Bolles. W. W. Norton, N. Y., \$3.75.

MR. BOLLES' VOLUME is not, and does not pretend to be, an attempt at a full disclosure of political corruption in the United States. His work ignores state, county and city governments. It examines only the activities, during the post-World War II years, of the half dozen or so Federal government agencies, in Washington, which have been officially investigated, and it relies completely upon the reported findings of those official investigating committees.

Yet even so partial and hasty an uncovering of the cesspool which is bourgeois political life is enough to show its completely putrid character, is enough to show, as Mr. Bolles says, that "anything goes."

Here are some typical case histories:

Item: A General Crawford was in charge of army purchases for the Detroit arsenal. Official investigation disclosed: that a manufacturer to whom the general awarded lucrative contracts had paid the General's travel and hotel expenses at the same time that the Government was meeting such ex-

penses; that the General used government property with which to improve his summer home, but that he never paid for this property; that the General's direct subordinates had "borrowed" \$200,000 from manufacturers who had also—by sheer coincidence, of course—been awarded contracts. The disclosure of the above was somewhat irregular, so that General Crawford was "punished"—he is now in charge of the Edgewood Arsenal in Maryland. Kicked into the "sticks" as it were!

Item: Mr. William Helis is a distinguished citizen. He is distinguished enough to be the friend of such renowned figures as Mr. Frank Costello and General Vaughan, the President's Military Aide. Mr. Helis is in the race track business. Business has been good. He wants a new race track. That requires lumber, and lumber is supposed to be rationed so that homes may be built for war veterans and their families. But what are the housing needs of mere GI's when the racing needs of Mr. Helis are involved? So, Mr. Helis sees General Vaughan and General Vaughan calls the Office of Housing Expediter and \$150,000 worth of lumber is released to Mr. Helis and he builds his race track. P.S.—Mr. Helis

gives
along
cratic
Item
Cross
of blo
this t
mass t
Kai-sh
the bl
unit—
juven
unit!
Item
Accou
of the
It rep
been
Item
surpl
ships.
is set
the c
Asset
tions
surpl
is pe
(that
surpl
dispo
Item
ment
dolla
ships
ously
war
ously
ships
Item
get t
ratio
lem
know

gives General Vaughan \$4,000 to help along the work of the Missouri Democratic Party.

Item: With the war's end the Red Cross finds it has an enormous quantity of blood plasma. A general mentions this to a purchasing agent for that mass blood-letter, Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. The purchasing agent buys the blood plasma at fourteen cents a unit—and then sells it—as a “male rejuvenator”—for thirty-five dollars per unit!

Item: The government's General Accounting Office studies the records of the War Contracts Administration. It reports that at least \$500,000,000 have been “wrongfully dispensed”!

Item: The war's end finds a huge surplus of everything from shirts to ships. A War Assets Administration is set up and charged with seeing to the disposal of the surplus. The War Assets Administration pays corporations for the service of disposing of the surplus. As examples: one corporation is paid \$4,571 for disposing of \$14 (that's right, fourteen dollars) worth of surplus goods; another gets \$17,614 for disposing of \$120 worth of surplus!

Item: During the war the government paid over four and a half billion dollars for fewer than two thousand ships which private corporations graciously and patriotically built. After the war other private corporations graciously and patriotically bought back the ships—for three billion dollars *less!*

Item: With the right friends one can get the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to “finance” anything. The problem arises for R.F.C.: How does one know whether a particular application

is a good risk? Well, of course, the friend says so. Yes, but for the record, how does one know? Why, one hires a corporation whose business is to ascertain this. For example: In 1950 the American Hotels Corporation asked the R.F.C. to lend it half a million dollars for two of its hotels. The R.F.C., with full seriousness, turned this request over to The Hockenberry System, a “Community Service for Hotels.” And The Hockenberry System said it would be just fine to lend the money—and billed the R.F.C. for the advice. Now, it happened that E. J. Hockenberry was president of the Hockenberry System and—Vice-President of the American Hotels Corporation, but only a suspicious mind would see anything more than coincidence here, of course!

When one of the Senators suggested that the R.F.C. showed a remarkable subservience to the advice of the Chairman of the Democratic National Committee, President Truman told him off in his inimitably elevated manner: The Senator, said the President of the United States, was “an overeducated s.o.b.”

Final item: The Bureau of Internal Revenue is responsible for collecting Federal taxes. Back in 1943, four friends of Al Capone were sentenced to ten years in prison for extortion. In 1947 they retained two lawyers. One was Paul Dillon, Truman's manager in St. Louis; the other was Maury Hughes of Dallas, a close friend of Tom Clark, then Truman's Attorney General. The Board of Paroles of the Department of Justice, incidentally headed by Tom Clark, agreed to free the four at once, provided they first

settled an income tax lien held against them by the Internal Revenue Bureau. The lien was for over half a million dollars. The Bureau was accomodating; it settle for less than half, and the four friends of Capone were released in August, 1947. To this story is to be added the fact—and it is to Mr. Bolles' credit that he does add the fact—that when Joe Louis, the great Negro boxing champion, attempted to compromise a tax lien against him, not of half a million dollars, but of \$50,000, the Bureau refused and thus forced him—over age and past his prime—to resume his fighting career.

* * *

So far, so good. Mr. Bolles' work is an accurate and sprightly-written condensation of official reports of corruption in Federal government agencies. But, what does he make of this corruption? What is its source? How does he explain the enormity of it? What shall be done about it?

Alas, here Mr. Bolles' book is a dis-service, rather than a service. For Mr. Bolles' viewpoint is that of the boss of the original muckrakers, back half a century ago. That was S. S. McClure, whose *McClure's Magazine* made a fortune by printing the exposés of corruption written by Lincoln Steffens, Ida Tarbell, and others. And what were McClure's instructions to his correspondents? Steffens tells us: "We'll point out that democracy is at fault; that one man has to run a city just as one man has to run a business to make it a success" (Steffens' *Autobiography*, P. 374).

Mr. McClure's great concern that the individual possess the means of

production is but the reverse side of his contempt for democracy. But this idea that corruption is somehow reflective of the "inefficiency" of democracy is tenaciously spread and widely held and is, indeed, the essence of Mr. Bolles' position.

For Mr. Bolles, early in his work, asserts a false "apathy" among the masses to this issue of corruption. He finds, quite incorrectly, that they "accept casually" this wholesale corruption. It is true that capitalism seeks to inculcate apathy and cynicism, and that with some, because they see no alternative, it succeeds. But to attempt to shift the onus for the corruption to the people is itself part and parcel of capitalist corruption. Moreover, the vast majority of the people most certainly do not "accept casually" the corruption. It embitters the masses as it hounds them, from the pushcart peddler to the cab-driver to the small store-owner whose lives are made miserable by grafting gangsters in uniforms, to the workers whose living costs go up and whose taxes go up and who see the pigs swilling at the public trough filled with their sustenance.

And Mr. Bolles makes this whole position even more explicit in the conclusion of his book. He writes:

"The laziness of the ordinary voter makes political machines necessary to get out the vote. The foolishness of the ordinary voter makes high-powered advertising techniques necessary to influence the vote. These machines and technicians cost money—tens of millions of dollars. No citizen is entitled to be surprised that the men who supply this money try to get something for

it."
Mr.
is an
real
chines
Long
McCl
the c
busin
that
the p
fens,
his D
was
that
Busin
—"T
class
has
great
respe
robbe
En
ally
tific,
ment
a gre
...
by c
social
Ne
attrib
mon
book
of a
to g
ism's
spell
are
Hera
they
norm
Mr.

it."

Mr. Bolles is wrong. The corruption is an attribute and a method of the real controllers of the political machines, the real bosses—the monopolists. Long ago Lincoln Steffens saw through McClure's instructions. He saw that in the campaigns, demagogues, hired by businessmen, berated "grafters," but that "it was businessmen who bribed the politicians." And long before Steffens, Walt Whitman, while seeing in his *Democratic Vistas* that government was "saturated in corruption," knew that the heart of corruption was Big Business—that "all-devouring word"—"The depravity of the business classes of our country is not less than has been supposed, but infinitely greater. . . . The great cities reek with respectable as much as non-respectable robbery and scoundrelism."

Engels put it precisely and scientifically in *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*, discussing capitalism's displacement of feudalism: "Trade became to a greater and greater extent cheating. . . . Oppression by force was replaced by corruption; the sword, as the first social lever, by gold."

Nor is the corruption an inevitable attribute of the "ins," to be cleansed, momentarily, by the "outs." Bolles' book, focussing on the national set-up of a Democratic administration, tends to give that impression and imperialism's ideologists like Walter Lippmann spell it out: "The scandals themselves are disgraceful," he writes (*N. Y. Herald Tribune*, April 7, 1952), "but they appear to be . . . merely the normal scandals of a falling regime." Mr. Lippmann's bias undoubtedly ac-

counts for his lamenting the fall prior to the descent, as it does his omitting the fact that graft is Republican as well as Democratic (after all, while Seagram's Distilleries gave \$30,000 to the Democratic Party, it gave \$20,000 to the Republican!), that if, in this sense, Washington is a cess-pool, then Albany is a sewer. No, Mr. Lippman. These are not "the normal scandals of a falling regime"; rather, they are the normal scandals of a falling system.

Nor is this corruption an attribute of "human nature" as Mr. Bolles' work might also lead one to believe. When scandals broke in the 1870's E. L. Godkin, editor of *The Nation*, wrote in his journal (May 22, 1873): "All being corrupt together, what is the use of our 'investigating' each other?"

But "all" are not corrupt. The exploiters are the corrupt, not the exploited. Walt Whitman saw that, too, for after describing the corruption of the burgeoning post-Civil War bourgeoisie, he wrote: "True, indeed, behind this fantastic farce, enacted on the visible stage of society, solid things and stupendous labors are to be discovered, existing crudely and going on in the background, to advance and tell themselves in time."

* * *

The unprecedented graft of the Truman era is, as Mr. Bolles writes, "eating away at the heart of America." But he doesn't tell why. Capitalism is corruption and monopoly capitalism is corruption twice tainted, and this monopoly capitalism, this imperialism in general crisis, is corruption incarnate.

This is why, as Dimitroff wrote, "Fascism delivers up the people to be devoured by the most corrupt, most venal elements," all the while "fascism hypocritically denounces corruption" as an attribute of bourgeois-democratic government, to be eliminated, even as McClure put it fifty years ago, by "one man," by a dictator.

In our own country and in our own time, and this is what Bolles omitted, the war-seeking and war-making imperialist ruling class debases culture and art and life. It seeks to destroy the principles of justice and truth—as it seeks to destroy creative life itself. It is rotten to the core, and in the political market-place this appears with ghastly clarity in total, institutionalized, shameless corruption. Alexander Bittelman put this precisely when he wrote: "A war-waging and war-preparing gov-

ernment thus dominated by the monopolies and actually handled by their open representatives must inevitably become rotten with fraud and corruption as well as with reaction and violence against the people" (*Political Affairs*, March, 1952, p. 4).

Failing in diagnosis, Bolles fails in therapy. Falsifying the source of corruption, he is impotent to combat it. But seeing the corruption which disgraces our country today as the product of a bi-partisan Wall Street-inspired drive toward war and fascism, one sees that the struggle against corruption is a struggle, as the National Committee of the Communist Party said, in December, 1951, to "organize for independent political action to clear the government of grafters, warmongers, war profiteers, and pro-fascist racists and reactionaries."

we v
for
the
sions
ment
the i
peop

T
appe
"F
wait
Blac
gen
whi
priv
our
us n
In

we will continue to advocate and work for a Five Power Pact of Peace, as the only way to end international tensions, lift the crushing burden of armaments, and achieve a lasting peace in the interests of our own and all other peoples.

The statement issued the urgent appeal:

"Fellow-Americans! We dare not wait for the fulfillment of Justice Black's prediction that some future generation will regain the rights of which we have all now been deprived. This challenge has come to our generation. It must be met by us now."

In this spirit, all-out efforts must

be made to place before the people the issue of repeal of the Smith and McCarran Acts, of amnesty for the victims of the Smith Act, and an end to all prosecutions under these pro-fascist laws. This paramount issue must be advanced as a major topic for discussion in the current election campaign, and as a test for all candidates.

A tremendous mass movement can and must be built around these demands so that another year will see the Communist leaders liberated, the Bill of Rights restored and peace guaranteed in the world.

Freedom for the Communist leaders in 1952!

Just Published!

A LANTERN FOR JEREMY

a new novel by

V. J. JEROME

"The appearance of *A Lantern for Jeremy* is a literary event of first magnitude. It is remarkable in both substance and form. In the telling, it reminded us of the best of the Irish story tellers. The village and all such villages are lost now, ground into the dust, but here it lives and sings and gropes in the dark and suffers terribly. The lad grows in it and with it and out of it and never completely leaves it. Revolution touches it and it leaps from medieval death to modern life, just as now remote villages in Asia span centuries in a day."—KENNETH LESLIE, in *The Protestant*

At all bookstores • Price \$2.50

A Great Publishing Event!

HISTORY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES

By William Z. Foster

“How have the American Communists used their theories and Marxist-Leninist teachings to promote the advance of the American working class to leadership in the nation? What policies and programs of action have they produced and applied to build the alliance of the working class with the Negro people, the working farmers and city middle classes? How is the Party being built, how does it function, what is its role in the daily struggles of the masses, what is the content of its inner life? How does the Party fight opportunism and bourgeois influences in its midst?

“Foster’s book gives the answers. Prepare to learn, study and popularize the *History of the Communist Party of the United States* and its great lessons for today and tomorrow.”

—ALEXANDER BITTELMAN in *Political Affairs*, Jan., 1952

•
A New INTERNATIONAL Book Scheduled for
August Publication
Price \$6.00

•
NEW CENTURY PUBLISHERS
832 BROADWAY, NEW YORK 3, N. Y.

