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*The
Enemy
Forgotten*

BY **GILBERT GREEN**

INTERNATIONAL PUBLISHERS

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THE ENEMY FORGOTTEN

By GILBERT GREEN

THE AUTHOR sets out to explain why the postwar decade is so different from the prewar decade, why during the earlier period the American scene was typified by progress and bold social experiment, while recent years are heavy with a deadening conformity. He approaches the problem from many directions, and comes up with answers that deserve wide and serious consideration. The principal trouble, he holds, is that the people lost sight of the main enemy, which he identifies as monopoly, and got lost in fear of a fictitious foe, the so-called danger of communism set up by the protagonists of the "cold war." He draws deeply from our history to show that the powerful stream of progressivism had its source in the struggle of the people against entrenched wealth and privilege, and that when this target was obscured or lost sight of, as during the recent period, the democratic elan subsided.

This is frankly a book of argument and polemic with the liberals and "Left-of-center" leaders in labor and political circles who have failed to keep the progressive spirit glowing. It is a sharp but friendly argument, for the author believes that these forces have much in common with the Left, and that they will again cooperate in a new democratic upsurge.

Writing in an atmosphere of relaxed world tensions and of a setback for McCarthyism within the country, the au-

(Continued on back flap)

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THE ENEMY FORGOTTEN

*Say not, the struggle naught availeth,
The labor and the wounds in vain,
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
And as things have been they remain . . .*

*For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.*

—Arthur Hugh Clough

TO LIL AND TO DAN, JO AND RALPH

I dedicate this book to them with the greatest love and admiration for the courage with which they faced five long years of harassment, unflinchingly taking the blows meant for me but viciously and cowardly struck at them.

I also dedicate this book to all American families whether communist, progressive, or liberal—who have been victims and have suffered as a consequence of the war hysteria and witchhunt.

The

ENEMY

FORGOTTEN

by GILBERT GREEN



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Publisher's Note

ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1956, at noon, Gilbert Green appeared at the U.S. Marshall's office at Foley Square in New York, and was taken into custody to serve a five-year sentence under the Smith Act. He had been a political refugee since July 2, 1951, when his fellow-defendants in the first Smith Act trial began serving their sentences. Subsequently, he was found in "contempt of court" for failure to surrender at the appointed date, and given another three years imprisonment.

In a letter to newspaper editors notifying them in advance of his intention to "cease being a fugitive from injustice and instead become its prisoner," Green wrote:

"Before the steel doors of political bigotry clang shut behind me, I am filing my own political brief before the highest court in the land—the court of public opinion. This is in the form of the manuscript of a book which I have just completed and am forwarding to possible publishers under the title 'The Enemy Forgotten.'

"I enter prison with head high and conscience clear. I have committed no crime against any of my fellow men or against my country. I know that the day will come when all America will recognize this to be true. I am also convinced that the day will come when prison doors will swing open for there will be no 'cold war' and, therefore, no 'cold war' political prisoners."

A few days before Green appeared to begin serving his sentence, we received in the mail the manuscript of the present book, with a letter from the author offering it for publication. As the author explains in his foreword, he assumes full responsibility for the work, since the circumstances in which he found himself did not permit him

to submit the manuscript to the judgment and criticism of his political colleagues. Nor was it possible to have the customary critical interchange between publisher and author, since the author was unavailable for consultation after his imprisonment.

In the judgment of the publisher these hindrances and difficulties should not be permitted to stand in the way of publishing a book which is offered as a political brief before the court of public opinion. Accordingly, the book is presented to the public in the form in which it was received, with the minimum of stylistic and editorial revisions required to prepare it for publication.

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Foreword

THE WRITING OF this book began in April, 1955, although its central theme had germinated earlier. It was already evident at the time of the 1954 Congressional elections that a change in national climate was taking place. McCarthyism, which had had its own way up to that time, received its first electoral trouncing. Reason was gradually gaining the upper hand over unreasoned hysteria and fear, even while the official witchhunt continued on its mad spree.

It was in this setting that the author undertook to explain what had happened to America. Why had this nation permitted itself to be taken so perilously close to the "brink" of a world war and a domestic version of fascism? The American people ardently wanted peace—yet they had been drawn into the bloody folly of Korea. They desired a continuation of democratic processes as embodied in the Constitution and its Bill of Rights—yet these revered documents were being torn systematically into shreds. Americans, so fiercely proud of their own national sovereignty, had no desire to deny the same independence to other nations—yet the postwar trail was strewn with example after example of State Department meddling and interference in the sovereign affairs of other states.

Why had all this occurred?

It seemed to the author imperative that an answer to this question be given. Without it, without knowing how we, as a nation, had gotten into this situation, there was no guarantee that the let-up in war hysteria and witchhunt frenzy would be anything more than partial and temporary. There was no guarantee that the democratic ground which had been lost would be regained and a firm foundation laid for a lasting peace.

Strictly speaking, of course, an answer had been given right along, and a generally correct answer. The Communists, and others as well,

had many times explained the main cause for the postwar wave of reaction. American capitalism had emerged unscathed from the horrible destructiveness of World War II. It had faced no problem of reconstruction—only that of reconversion. The war had brought with it a vast expansion of American productive capacity and a great enrichment of its financial and industrial tycoons. These believed that the spoils of victory belonged to them, namely, the right to dictate their own terms to a war-weary world, terms based upon the acceptance by other peoples of Wall Street economic and political supremacy. American capital was propelled in this direction by the very vastness of its productive capacity and its fear of another economic crash. And it was determined to gain such dominance by economic, political, and military pressure and, if need be, by war.

But World War II had been fought for more than the supremacy of the du Pont and Rockefeller empires over the I. G. Farben and Krupp empires. A world which had rejected the notion of *Deutschland Ueber Alles* was not going to meekly accept Wall Street *Ueber Alles*. The peoples of the world had fought the war for national freedom—for the right to live in their own ways, and if possible, in new and better ways. This was particularly true of the overwhelming majority of mankind, the colonial and semi-colonial peoples.

Thus the world became divided into hostile camps. McCarthyism and the domestic witchhunt were the misbegotten offspring of a misbegotten father.

This postwar development was not inevitable. It was not inevitable in this sense: the American people had the power to muzzle those who sought to profit from world tension, from astronomical armament expenditures, from domestic reaction, and from world war. For as strong as is the power of entrenched wealth, stronger is the power inherent in the people. This greater power, however, has not been applied in its full strength against the main enemy. The reason is that some lost sight of the traditional foe, while many relegated it to second place in their thinking. They were misled into seeing a fictitious foe. The title, *The Enemy Forgotten*, should not, therefore, be taken in a literal sense. The enemy has been more obscured than forgotten, as the book indicates.

The author's intention has been to deal with this subject from many different angles. He has not limited himself to explaining the past, but has attempted to point the way to the future, toward a great rebirth of American progressivism. He has deliberately used

conservative sources for his facts, figures and authorities quoted, so that no one could charge that these were chosen from "biased" sources.

The author also desires to make it plain that he wrote this book as a Communist, proud of his membership in the Communist Party. He believes that the main views contained in this book correspond to those of his party. Due to the circumstances in which the author found himself, it was impossible for him to submit this work to the collective judgment and criticism of his party colleagues. He and he alone, therefore, assumes the full responsibility for whatever weaknesses and errors in judgment the book may contain.

This book is being released for publication at an opportune time. Events have compelled many to view the world and national scenes more soberly. The historic Geneva Summit Conference of last summer has led to a great sigh of relief on the part of the world's peoples. The full promise of this conference is still unrealized. Powerful forces in our midst are still desirous of maintaining world tension and huge armaments. What has become known as the "Spirit of Geneva," however, has gripped the minds and stirred the hearts of men everywhere and has ushered in the hope of a lasting peace.

The present moment is opportune for still another reason. The great debate of 1956 is already in full swing. This book was written to be a voice in that debate. It is to be hoped that it will be given a fair hearing.

With the completion of this book the author is leaving for a period of enforced absence and silence. How long that period will be the reader will be able to determine more than the author.

February 20, 1956.

GILBERT GREEN

CHAPTER I

A CONTRAST IN DECADES

*They are slaves who fear to speak
For the fallen and the weak;
They are slaves who will not choose
Hatred, scoffing, and abuse,
Rather than in silence shrink
From the truth they needs must think;
They are slaves who dare not be
In the right with two or three.*

—James Russell Lowell

CHANGES—REASONABLE AND OTHERWISE

HAD RIP VAN WINKLE taken his twenty-year nap between the mid-'thirties and the mid-'fifties of the Twentieth century, his astonishment on awakening would have been great indeed.

We can see him trudging his way home. The autos whizzing by him are so different. Gone are the running boards, the box-shaped crates and the somber black colors. Instead there are flashy pastel exteriors, low-slung snub-nosed bodies and rear ends with a forward look. Yet this is as nothing compared to old Rip's surprise when he learns of no-clutch automatic transmission and power-drive steering.

A whole new world of kaleidoscopic change opens before his eyes and mind. Television, the jet plane, wide-screen movies, new plastic materials, miracle fabrics, wonder drugs, frozen foods, the polaroid camera—these are only a few of the amazing things still unknown in the 'thirties. But even greater than these is the veritable revolution in electronics. New electrical robots that "see," "hear," "feel," and even "think." Machines that can supervise and control automatically the most complex operations of multiple other machines. And yet

even all this pales before the greatest miracle of them all—the reality of atomic energy!

Little wonder our old codger finds himself a bit dizzy. But it is only a matter of time before his mind learns to absorb all these changes and to sort them out and file them away in mental order. For these scientific and technological changes are all within man's ken. True, some of them defy the imagination, but like the brand new "piggy-back" train-to-truck transportation method, they make sense. These new changes represent progress even if one prefers his citric juice as packaged by nature to "real lemon" that comes in bottles and "fresh" orange juice that comes frozen in cans. This is true even if one has reservations about the benefits of chlorophyll or lanolin, or of GL 70 in tooth paste. It is true even if one cannot grasp the importance of plastic bandages that lift eggs or ball-point pens that flow profusely on everything but paper. These are still part of progress, even if some of them represent more advertisement than advancement.

There are other changes, however, that have taken place since the mid-'thirties that do not fall into this same category. These cannot be filed away into neat compartments of the mind. They cannot be treated like mechanical gadgets that one likes or dislikes. They are not mere matters of personal taste. They are changes that stun the mind, that defy reason, that refuse to become absorbed in any semblance of order.

The popular hero of the 'thirties and 'forties, the only President ever to be elected four times, was Franklin D. Roosevelt. Today, a new generation is being taught to view him, to quote the words of a letter sent to Mrs. Roosevelt which she reprinted in her newspaper column, as "the biggest 'sucker' in the U. S. or in the same class with Benedict Arnold."

In the mid-'thirties America feared the consequences of German rearmament. Today it is the U.S. which is driving toward a new German rearmament, riding roughshod over the fears of all Europe and the German people themselves.

Franco's fascist assault upon the democratic republic of Spain shocked most of America. Today this country has a military alliance with fascist Spain and bolsters Franco's regime with guns and dollars.

In the mid-'thirties America still looked upon militarism and conscription as something foreign to our national tradition. Today our armed forces are ten times and our military expenditures twenty times as large.

In 1936, Congress adopted what labor called its new "Magna Charta," the Wagner Labor Relations Act. Today that act is replaced

by the Taft-Hartley Act nationally and eighteen separate state anti-labor laws.

Even these differences do not tell the full story. Times were tough in the mid-'thirties. Millions were jobless. America was still in the grip of the deepest and longest economic depression of its history. And yet, out of those hard times something new emerged. In the struggle against the depression the people found a new unity, strength and confidence. A great spirit of progress animated the land. The people were not afraid to join "unpopular" organizations and to sign petitions for "unpopular" causes. They were not afraid of new ideas, even radical ones.

Things have changed since the decade when America said "there is nothing to fear but fear itself." Greatly undermined is the robust spirit of self-confidence, the progressive surging forward that recognized no obstacles. Postwar America bears many labels. It has been called the "Age of Conformity," the "Age of Suspicion," the "Age of Anxiety" and even the "Phenobarbital Age." No one, however, not even those most enthusiastic over what has happened has dared call it a new "Age of Enlightenment" or "Age of Reason."

THE AGE OF REPRESSION

The change is evident all about us. It is woven into the very fabric of the 'fifties. It is expressed in the tenor of our times so vastly different from that which inspired America in the days of the New Deal and the war against fascism.

Earl Warren, Chief Justice of the United States, in the first part of 1955, posed what the *New York Times* declared editorially to be a "startling" question. He said that he could understand why some people doubted "whether ratification of the Bill of Rights could be obtained if we were faced squarely with that issue."

When President Eisenhower was told of this remark he too was startled. Later, he was gratified to learn that the Chief Justice had qualified his observation with an expression of confidence in the "sober second thought of the American people" which "would bring about such ratification."

How far down the road of repression has America travelled for such a question even to be posed—and by no less a figure than the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court! Nor have all agreed with his estimate of the outcome. Irving Dilliard of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* did not. In 1953 he posed the same question and said:

"What I think about the state of our liberties is the blackest

thought I have had in my lifetime. I am convinced that the Bill of Rights would not be submitted and ratified as part of the Constitution were it presented in Congress today."

Moreover, wrote Mr. Dilliard: "I do not find the press today fighting for the principles and causes that the Bill of Rights embodies. . . . I find no reason to believe therefore that the press would lead a national campaign to adopt the Bill of Rights were its protections and guarantees introduced in Congress today."

It is to be noted that the Chief Justice expressed confidence in the American people, while Mr. Dilliard expressed lack of confidence in Congress and the national press. One could agree with both of them. Without appearing irreverent—for the Chief Justice has indicated some awareness of what has happened to constitutional liberties—one might ask with considerable justification: How would the august tribunal of the Supreme Court itself have acted had the Bill of Rights been presented to it for the first time? As for the Truman and Eisenhower Administrations, one wonders whether they ever read the Bill of Rights!

The government's disregard for the Bill of Rights needs no documentation. It is enough to mention that men and women are in prison today for the sole "crime" of harboring "dangerous thoughts"; that the weird tales of the paid informers Harvey Matusow, Louis Budenz and Elizabeth Bentley were invented in the Department of Justice; that Attorney General Herbert Brownell has led the campaign to nullify the Fifth Amendment, and that 259 organizations are now on the government's list of organizations *expurgatorus*.

Sworn to uphold and defend the Bill of Rights, the cynicism of the government's attitude is revealed in a simple well-known fact. Wiretapping, although illegal, is now a widespread practice. Representative Emmanuel Celler, chairman of a House subcommittee on wiretapping, became convinced in 1955 that "although wiretapping is a crime in some thirty-two states, and although there is a Federal law prohibiting the interception and divulging of a telephone conversation, wiretapping is virtually carried on uninhibitedly and unimpeded throughout the United States today." According to the *New York Times*, Representative Celler believes that "walls, pictures and furniture may all have 'ears'."

"The way wiretapping has spread in the last few years," writes the *New York Times*, "the phone company could do its subscribers and dime-droppers a service by substituting for the dial tone a recording that would say: 'Someone may be listening in.'"

Why has the federal government done nothing to halt this shameful invasion of personal rights under the First Amendment? The *New York Times* tells us: "The Department of Justice position on wire-tapping is one of the most interesting aspects of the over-all problem. The department has frankly declined to prosecute other wiretappers because its own men tap wires illegally."

THE TEST OF CIVILIZATION

When our main law enforcement agency so brazenly breaks and mocks the law, what can one expect from others? In October, 1955, J. Edgar Hoover reported a steady increase in crime in the last ten years. Since World War II the population rose 21.3 percent but crime increased by 62.7 percent. In the previous year, reported Hoover, there were more than two million major crimes and more than eighteen million lesser crimes. In an earlier interview with the *U.S. News and World Report*, Hoover predicted that, "The nation can expect an appalling increase in the number of crimes that will be committed by teen-agers in the years ahead." And New York Governor, Averell Harriman, in a special message stated, "It is a shocking fact that delinquency is growing at a faster rate than our child population."

The *U. S. News* had asked Philadelphia's Police Commissioner: "How do you account for the rise in juvenile delinquency?" He replied: "Throughout the country there is a general disregard for constitutional authority. I think this goes for the adults and is reflected in the thinking of the juvenile." What the Commissioner forgot to add is that when the government itself disregards the Constitution it is not surprising that people tend to disregard its authority.

Without return to morality in our public life there can be no ending of the present crime wave, for it is due to more than direct economic causes. It is due also to moral causes. It is a reflection of the widespread cynicism and hypocrisy of our time. It is an expression, individualistic and anarchistic, of the conflict between the nation's democratic traditions and its postwar reactionary course, between the positive goals of yesterday and the negative ones of today, between what we preach and what we practice—in short, between words and deeds. And no amount of moralizing will change this situation so long as the situation itself is not basically changed.

Nor can the situation be changed so long as moral depravity is condoned and sanctioned, nay, even glorified. Let us cite one typical example. In 1952, when Richard Nixon was running for Vice-Presi-

dent of these United States, he was caught red-handed with an unexplained private slush fund of \$18,000. Candidate Eisenhower and the Republican Party were momentarily embarrassed at this exposure and for a few days it appeared as if Nixon would be dropped from the ticket. But everything was soon straightened out when Nixon glibly passed it off as a special fund for "fighting Communism." After all, one can be forgiven any impropriety, any crime, so long as it is ostensibly for "fighting Communism."

What is the good, therefore, of moralizing to our youth when all around them they witness wanton corruption, gross deception and a cult of violence? In 1954, there was a big splash over the filth peddled to the nation's children and young people in comic books. So loud was the outcry that something had to be done about it. The publishing industry agreed to establish a watch-dog authority to remove all traces of "horror, sex and brutality." A year later, however, in 1955, a special New York State Joint Legislative Inquiry found that comic books currently on the stands contained the same objectionable material.

"Material allowed to stand," the report noted, "included scenes in which a person is kicked in the jaw, a man is prepared for 'a bath of molten steel,' a body is thrown in the river and a horse is urged to stomp a man to death." It added: "Our files are replete with comic books evidencing the fact that violence and brutality constitute the dominant theme in many publications currently stamped with the approval of the authority." In the words of the paid informer Matusow, "anything for a buck!"

A large "buck" it is, too. One hundred million dollars a year are spent on comic books, according to a survey of the University of California. This is more than that spent for the entire book supply for the nation's elementary and high schools. It is four times the amount spent for the purchase of all types of books for the nation's public libraries.

America's great sage, Ralph Waldo Emerson, said that the true test of civilization was not the census, the size of cities, nor the crops, "but the kind of man the country turns out." What kind of men and women do we seek to turn out with the present-day stress on "horror, sex and brutality," not only in our so-called comics, but in TV, movies and literature? What is the human crop we seek to raise in the arid, parched climate of intellectual repression, where new ideas are suspect and where free inquiry and free discussion are stifled?

In an article which appeared in the *Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors*, Dr. Robert M. Hutchins wrote: "Education is impossible in many parts of the United States today because free inquiry and free discussion are impossible. In these communities, the teacher of economics, history or political science cannot teach. . . . Even the teacher of literature must be careful."

A reporter for the Hearst *Chicago-American* interviewed the student leaders at Northwestern University a few years ago to find out something about the "Silent Generation." One of these leaders summed up the point of view of the rest when he said: "We just don't have any real goals, because we have not been given any goals. We're against Communism—fine. But what are we fighting when we fight Communism all over the world? . . . When Indo-China breaks with France, how do we know whether it's getting orders from the Kremlin—and should be opposed—or acting like we—the U. S.—did in 1776—and should be aided?" And the student who expressed this puzzlement was no radical. He was president of the Young Republican Club!

There is nothing wrong with the nation's youth. It is somewhat more bewildered because youth is more sensitive than age. It finds it hard to reconcile pious words with sordid deeds. It seeks progressive ideals to live by, progressive goals to fight for. When it finds these, it faces the world as the young ever must—with confidence and courage, with daring and audacity. But the goal of atomic war, or even of constant "cold war" tension and chronic crisis, cannot fire the heart or inspire the imagination of youth to do great deeds.

One of the interviewed student leaders said with resignation, "I guess it's not much of a world we're going into—but then, there's not much we can do about it." He was wrong. Very wrong. There is much that can be done. But for this it is necessary to follow the advice of Heywood Broun when he said: "We have a right to beat against tight minds with our fists and shout a word into the ears of old men. We want to know, we will know—'Why?'"

TODAY'S PARADOX

The year 1955 marked a turning point away from the postwar hysteria and witchhunt. Already in the 1954 Congressional elections the most rabid McCarthyite witchhunters went down to defeat. The Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) meeting shortly after the elections called for a "counter-attack on the civil liberties front" and

for removing all repressive legislation from the statute books. The Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) also decided to make civil liberties its first concern. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples (NAACP) likewise declared that, "In this day of pillorying, of browbeating, branding, and cunning indictment," it is necessary for the people "to stand firm upon the platform . . . as set forth in the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights and the Constitution." Liberals such as U. S. Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas urgently warned that unless individuals speak out "against the neurosis that has seized us . . . they are unworthy of their inheritance."

So widespread did the anti-McCarthy sentiment become that paid government informers began to recant and conservative voices more and more warned against the repressive trend. Some of them, such as former Senator Harry Cain of Washington, had a change of heart, for the political straws indicated that a new breeze was blowing. And in December, 1955, Mrs. Roosevelt and a number of other prominent liberals called for the amnesty of all Communists imprisoned under the Smith Act and for a cessation of further prosecutions.

All this is heartening. It indicates that there has developed a counter-current which can bring a reversal of the repressive trend and, in time, a new democratic surge forward. Willard Shelton, editorial writer for *Labor's Day* and the *CIO News*, was correct when he observed that "it is possible—possible, not certain—that the country is beginning to break out of its miasmatic preoccupation with the dangers of domestic communism and subversion. . . . There is something obscene, in the spectacle of a great free nation shivering in its boots before the rantings of the witchhunters."

Yes, "it is possible," but not certain. Why not certain? Because what has been happening in the country this past decade is not just a bad dream that will simply vanish upon awakening. Even dreams have their roots in reality. But the reactionary nightmare of recent years is more than a bad dream. It will not disappear by itself. To try to fight the reactionary trend without knowing its real cause, or by divining mythical causes, will accomplish nothing. An illness must first be known before it can be treated successfully. Aspirin can abate fever and diminish pain. It cannot cure disease.

What explains the great difference between the climate of the 'thirties and that of the 'fifties? The Reverend Norman Vincent Peale is puzzled by this. Pointing to the vast differences between the economic conditions of today and those of twenty years ago—the gen-

eral absence of breadlines, soup kitchens and of men selling apples on street corners—he is perplexed as to why more people are worried and seeking help than ever before. “In fact,” he writes, “their number seems to increase every day.”

How do we explain this paradox? America’s productive capacity since 1939 has far more than doubled. We have emerged from World War II unscathed. In contrast with prewar years, the postwar decade has been one of relative full employment. Big Business has reaped greater profits than ever in its history. We are also on the eve of great new technological advances which shall further revolutionize productive capacity. The atomic age, when it comes, could mean the production of material goods on a scale undreamed of in the past. It could mean abundance, leisure, culture, for all. And yet, we have been a nation with a bad case of nerves. More than half of our hospital beds are occupied by mental patients, and their number increases at the alarming rate of 250,000 a year. A few years ago Dorothy Thompson wrote an article “Why Americans Can’t Sleep,” explaining why the widespread use of sleeping pills has become a habit peculiar only to Americans. Ulcers too seem to gnaw more at American stomachs than at those of any other people. Why?

On March 11, 1955, Val Peterson, Civil Defense Administrator in Washington, issued a public statement. He urged “all citizens” to rush to build underground shelters “right now” and to stock them with food and water to last at least “five or six days.”

“We are recommending that this be done right now,” Mr. Peterson told a Senate Armed Services subcommittee, “because no man has any way of knowing when an actual attack may come . . . it may come sooner than later.”

Is there a relationship between statements of this kind and ulcers, sleeping pills and mental cases? We think there definitely is. We also think there is a relationship between all these things and a full-page advertisement that appeared in March, 1954, in the Hearst press. This appeared under the signature of Ulysses A. Sanabria, President of the American Television Corporation and an adviser to the Government’s Munition Board on matters of electronics. At a time when Eddie Fisher was crooning, “If I ever needed love,” Mr. Sanabria was trying to convince us that we needed something quite different—and needed it now. We shall quote one paragraph from his full page testament to insanity.

“If we ever needed complete mobilization for defense,” he pleaded, “we need it now—today. And it *cannot wait!* That drilling—that sound

of digging—in a basement—in a sewer! Who is it? What are they doing? We must know who that smiling stranger is who moved in next door—across the street—who opened a little shop down the block—who appeared one day as the efficient janitor of our home or office building! EVERYONE must be investigated and accounted for. The atom mine may come riding down the street in some innocent appearing lad's homemade jalopy . . . or under that pile of old rags in the junkman's rickety truck . . . or be distributed among several of those suitcases on that bus, or street car, to be quickly assembled in some sub-cellar in the dead of the night. . . . Our only salvation . . . if indeed the nefarious plan has not already been accomplished . . . is immediate total policing, full security measures and a nationwide dragnet. . . . But what is done must be done TODAY! Tomorrow may be too late. A phone may ring and for millions of us . . . perhaps you and me . . . there will BE no tomorrow!"

The vast majority of Americans rejected Mr. Sanabria's call for insanity. Most of those who read his advertisement undoubtedly considered him a "crackpot." But his statement, as insane as it is, must be considered as a product of and commentary on the hysteria of our time.

Few Americans rushed to dig holes in the ground on the recommendation of Mr. Peterson in behalf of the government. They had too much common sense. Yet if one accepted the advice of the "sane" Peterson and began digging—assuming one owned a plot of ground—how far off would he have been from the "crackpot" Sanabria? Peterson said we must start digging at once, or it may be too late. Sanabria said that we must start investigating anyone who starts digging—or it may be too late.

Too many, far too many, were affected by the madness of our time, and many of them still are. Even highly sane people. In early 1955 a new book appeared by the prominent liberal journalist, Elmer Davis. In 1954, Mr. Davis had published a best seller *But We Were Born Free*, indicting McCarthyism and its methods. In 1955, his book *Two Minutes Till Midnight* told us that we were on the verge of hydrogen war—only two minutes from midnight. Davis did not want such a war. He hoped it would never come. He was opposed to any talk of "preventive" war and sharply criticized the State Department and the Senator Knowlands for some of their fire-eating, war-ineiting pronouncements and policies. And yet, the central thought of the book, repeated in many ways, was that as much as Davis abhorred the thought of a hydrogen slaughter he believed it to be inevitable.

It "may not come at all," he wrote, "though I confess I cannot see how that could happen." Unable to see how a hydrogen war between the United States and the Soviet Union could be prevented, believing that the Soviet Union was preparing to launch such a war, Davis devoted over two hundred pages of his book to emphasize that if such a war should come we must not falter until victory is won.

When a man as sane as Davis, and a foe of McCarthyism, became so affected by the war hysteria, things certainly reached a sorry state. Making his own contribution to fear and confusion, Davis casually discussed such delicate questions as whether an initial hydrogen blow would cost the nation eight or twenty million lives. He concluded his book on an "optimistic" note—that if such a war came the first victims "will probably be the most fortunate." As for the less fortunate of us who survived the first destructive blows and the radioactive fallout, Davis told us that it was our task to fight on to save "the last best hope of earth," even if it all be rubble.

It is a shame that a liberal such as Davis should have been exerting his energies to frightening the American people with the imminent spectre of hydrogen war. His talents could have been put to better use in a sober discussion of how to guarantee that such a war would never come. The most amazing thing is that Mr. Davis is himself opposed to war mongering and wants peace. And the next most amazing thing is that he considered this new book a companion-piece to his earlier one against McCarthyism.

We do not know what Davis' views are today, since world tension has been reduced somewhat and with it the fear of war. But apparently as late as the Spring of 1955 Mr. Davis did not realize that by whipping up war hysteria, by scaring the people out of their wits with gruesome morbid nonsense about the danger of a Soviet hydrogen attack, he was doing more for McCarthyism than a dozen McCarthys put together. We are not accusing Davis of McCarthyism. We do not question his loathing of it. But a fire cannot be extinguished with gasoline. Unreasoned war hysteria has been the very fuel which has fed the flames devouring our democratic liberties.

For the McCarthys, the Knowlands, the Sanabrias—the real madmen of our day—and for the powerful financial interests who have consciously whipped up the war hysteria of the post-war years, this much can be said: there is method to their madness. On their part the war hysteria and the witchhunt have been well-calculated policies serving a definite objective. This objective has been to use America's great postwar industrial and military might to attain world domina-

tion. But for liberals, such as Davis, what can be said? Caught in the panic and the pressure of the ruthless drive of reaction, confused by the great changes in the world and the rapid turn of events, they lost their bearing. Many of them no longer know whom they are fighting and why.

WHY REACTION IS STRONG

One of the major differences between the mid-'thirties and the mid-'fifties is that in the former period it was relatively easy to distinguish between the progressives and liberals on the one hand, and the reactionaries and pro-fascists on the other. The first grouping was associated with the interests and strivings of the common people; the second grouping, with the interest and grasping of what Roosevelt dubbed the "economic royalists."

There were "crackpots" then, too. Plenty of them. There were reactionaries and pro-fascists by the score. They held positions of great power and were at all times a real menace. But throughout that period they were on the defensive. They were never the wave, only the backwash.

The great strength and vitality of the labor and liberal forces, their superb morale and inner confidence, their fighting gusto, arose from the fact that they knew their main enemy. Not all about him. Not all that it would take to defeat him. There were many misconceptions and illusions. Many errors and retracing of steps had to take place. But the movement of the people was directed against the economic and political power of Big Business, of monopoly.

It is this which gave the mass movement its moral fervor, militancy, and sense of direction. It is this which gave it its inner unity, for it helped to unite otherwise diverse forces, both economic and ideological, into one common phalanx of opposition to the common Big Business foe. It is this which gave labor its crusading spirit, something it has been searching for ever since. It is this which gave the young generation hope and courage, as it did the jobless, the dispossessed farmers and the oppressed Negro people. All were filled with a common exhilaration of a new found strength.

What explains the relative weakness of the labor and liberal movements of today? In many respects these are larger and stronger than ever before. Organized labor is a towering giant, seventeen million strong. It has long grown out of its swaddling clothes. It has become a power in the land. Alongside of it the other movements of the

people have likewise grown. The Negro freedom movement is certainly a force incomparably stronger than it was in the 'thirties. It has won important gains. The NAACP, in particular, has become a great mass organization. The Farmers' Union is also influential. New middle class liberal organizations have emerged and grown. All these groups pay more attention to politics than ever before.

Yet, despite this greater strength of the mass organizations, despite a recent growing awareness of the grave danger of extreme reaction and fascism, the democratic forces of the people are still largely on the defensive. With all that is positive and healthy in the current signs of progressive re-awakening, there is even now no guarantee that a real political and moral counter-offensive will be launched against reaction.

That the danger of McCarthyism is not completely over is recognized by some labor and liberal forces. At the end of 1955 the National Committee for an Effective Congress issued a public statement in which it warned that extreme reaction was working intensively to recreate an atmosphere of fear and suspicion in which it may become once again a dominating political factor. "Given some major international debacle," the statement declared, "or even a serious deterioration in our foreign relations, it will move with as much vigor and concentration as do its congressional spokesmen."

But if this danger persists, if the liberal and progressive forces are still unable to rout extreme reaction, the reason for this state of affairs—and we shall set out to prove it in subsequent chapters—is that a considerable portion of the nation's labor and liberal forces have lost sight of the main enemy. This explains why it is no longer easy to delineate between many liberals and reactionaries. Both join together on one common thesis—that Communism is the enemy. And so long as this is true, so long will a fundamental change be impossible.

This book, written from an avowedly Marxist point of view, shall seek to prove that the enemy of the people is not Communism but special privilege which has grown up to become the monster of Big Business monopoly. Only through the struggle against the predatory special interests can the American people find their way forward toward lasting peace, greater democracy and abundance.

The great majority of the American people have not been for the witchhunt and war hysteria. The majority of the people have been and remain liberal minded. When they see the issues sharp and plain, are given firm, frank leadership, are given the perspective of fighting their historic enemy, they rally in overwhelming numbers time and

time again. But when they are told that the nation is menaced by an external foe, when they no longer see clearly the difference between the position of their leaders and spokesmen and those of reactionary Big Business, confusion is the inevitable consequence and strength dissipates into weakness.

If the New Deal coalition is no more, it is because the Big Business enemy of the people was forgotten by some and obscured by others, and the mass movement became derailed into a sterile fight against a fictitious foe. An end was brought to the renaissance of the cultural and humanist movement that found its source in the great Niagara of peoples' struggles. Reaction came to power. Even some of those who fought the good fight in the 'thirties turned into pessimists, cynics and defeatists.

When we referred previously to Elmer Davis and his new book, we were not thinking of him as an individual. His quandary is typical of so much of liberal opinion today. On the one hand it desires to remove the blanket of fear from the land. On the other hand, by accepting the main premise of reaction, it only adds its own "liberal" patches to the reactionary crazy-quilt. It, therefore, is confused and tries to go in two directions at the same time. Unfortunately, a large section of labor and especially its leadership is ensnared in the same contradiction in which Davis finds himself.

To know the enemy is the great need of our time.

CHAPTER II

THE GREAT PROGRESSIVE TRADITION

*Arise! Do battle with the descendants of those
Who bought land in the loop when it was waste sand,
And sold blankets and guns to the army of Grant,
And sat in the legislatures in the early days,
Taking bribes from the railroads!
Arise! Do battle with the fops and bluffs,
The pretenders and figurantes of the society column . . .
Arise! And make the city yours,
And the State yours—*

—Edgar Lee Masters in *Spoon River Anthology*

THE DEMOCRACY OF JEFFERSON AND LINCOLN

THROUGHOUT THE PAGES of our history as a nation, the struggle of the common people has been directed against what William T. Evjue, liberal editor of the *Madison Capital Times* refers to as the "American Elite." This "Elite" has been made up of the procurers of great wealth, known at various times as the "Propertied Interests," the "Monied Aristocracy," the "Trusts," the "Monopolists," and more recently as just plain "Big Business."

The history of this nation is the history of the struggle of the Many against these Few. It is this struggle which won whatever democratic liberties and economic gains the people possess. It can truly be said that the people's struggle against the predatory interests constitutes the great American progressive tradition.

Whenever the forces of entrenched power and wealth were recognized as the enemy, the people rallied to fight them with a militancy,

fervor and enthusiasm unsurpassed anywhere in the world. When, however, this enemy was lost sight of, or became obscured—and this has happened a number of times—unity disappeared; new movements which at first possessed great striking power lost their punch, became flabby or were wiped out entirely, and the plutocrats ruled the roost once again, more cocky, more arrogant, more supreme and powerful than ever.

The first battle of this war had to be fought in the infancy of the Republic, between the democratic forces led by Thomas Jefferson and the forces of special privilege led by Alexander Hamilton. Hamilton sought to turn the revolutionary victory to the exclusive benefit of the mercantile, banking and landed interests. He feared democracy. For him the people was “a great beast.” Jefferson, on the other hand, feared the growing economic power of the privileged interests. He saw in the large number of small independent producers, particularly those on the land, the economic foundation for the prosperity of the nation and for its democracy.

In the late 1820's and 1830's, the forces of agrarian democracy united with the city workers once again and fought and won a battle wresting the federal government from the hands of the Eastern banking and manufacturing interests. The history of that period and of Andrew Jackson's attacks upon the “monied capitalists,” and “this hydra of corruption, the Bank,” is well known. He, too, saw a thriving democracy that was based on the extension and protection of the small independent producers.

Another aspect of the struggle between the people and those of special privilege loomed ever more to the fore. This was the decisive mortal combat over the issue of slavery. The slave system, serving the interests of a small, slaveowning aristocracy, collided with the best interests of the nation, North and South. It came into conflict with the interests of Northern capitalists who required untrammelled national rule in order further to extend their system. It also came into collision with the interests of the nation's wage-earners, the working class, which could not raise its own status and living standards so long as Negro labor remained branded. Slavery also clashed with the forces of agrarian democracy which feared its extension into the new Western territories and sought federal guarantees of free land.

How much the concept of Jeffersonian democracy still prevailed in the consciousness of the nation of that period, despite the tremendous growth of industry, can be seen in Abraham Lincoln's discussion of labor and capital. In his First Annual Message to Congress in

March, 1861, he uttered his now famous words that "Labor is prior to and independent of capital," and "Capital is only the fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed." He followed this with an exposition of what he considered the basis of a "just and generous and prosperous system."

"A few men own capital," he went on to say, "and that few avoid labor themselves, and with their capital hire or buy another few to labor for them." But, Lincoln pointed out, "A large majority belong to neither class—neither work for others nor have others working for them. In most of the Southern States a majority of the whole people, of all colors, are neither slaves nor masters; while in the Northern a large majority are neither hirers or hired. Men with their families—wives, sons and daughters—work for themselves, on their farms, in their houses, and in their shops taking the whole product for themselves, and asking no favors of capital on the one hand, nor of hired laborers or slaves on the other."

Even in respect to those who worked for others, Lincoln did not see them as frozen in that status. "There is not," he asserted, "any such thing as the free hired laborer being fixed to that condition of life. . . . The prudent, penniless beginner in the world labors for wages awhile, saves a surplus with which to buy tools or land for himself, then labors on his own account another while, and at length hires another new beginner to help him. This is the just and generous and prosperous system which opens the way to all—gives hope to all, and consequent energy and progress and improvement of conditions to all."

This dream of a small producers' America had not changed much in the four score years separating Lincoln from the Founding Fathers. While serving his country abroad, Benjamin Franklin, in 1782, had written: "The truth is that though there are in that country [America] few people so miserable as the poor of Europe, there are also very few that in Europe would be called rich; it is rather a general happy mediocrity that prevails."

Franklin's estimate of what constituted poor and rich can be questioned. In his enthusiasm for America he certainly overlooked the status of the Negro slaves whose conditions of oppression were worse than the poorest of Europe, or of the many indentured servants and debt-ridden poor. Yet one thing is plain. Franklin's dream was that of a predominantly petty-bourgeois country with little disparity in wealth. This, too, was Lincoln's dream even though, just before his untimely death, he noted with profound foresight:

"I see in the near future a crisis approaching that unnerves me and causes me to tremble for the safety of my country. As a result of the War, corporations have been enthroned, and an era of corruption in high places will follow. The money power of the country will endeavor to prolong its reign by working upon the prejudices of the people until all the wealth is aggregated in a few hands and the public is destroyed. I fear at this moment more anxiety for the safety of my country than ever before, even in the midst of the War. God grant, that my suspicions may prove groundless!"

THE RISE OF MONOPOLY

The period following the Civil War rudely shattered illusions of an agrarian paradise based upon small farmers, self-employed artisans and wage-earners. America was rapidly becoming an industrial nation. The war had proven to be a bonanza for Northern capitalists. Great new fortunes were made particularly where investments were directly tied up with the war or with the subsequent opening of the West. Railroads, mining, iron and steel, lumber and meat packing produced the greatest fortunes. The sordid tale of how they were made—how the treasury was pilfered, the public swindled, the soldiers periled with shoddy fire-arms and goods—has all been described in such works as *The History of Great American Fortunes* by Gustavus Meyers and *The Robber Barons* by Matthew Josephson. Charles and Mary Beard, in their *Basic History of the U. S.*, estimated that by 1872 the Government had given the railroads land grants totalling 155 million acres. Approximately half of New Mexico, Arizona and California were given outright to the railroad corporations.

A new army of industrial laborers was being recruited, men and women who could live only by working for some capitalist and whose status as hired workers was becoming more and more fixed. The opposite of what Lincoln had considered as essential for "a just and generous and prosperous system," was taking place.

Lincoln's America was still one of small enterprises. Monopoly was virtually unknown. But the story of the 'seventies, 'eighties and 'nineties was one of increasing concentration of productive power and wealth leading to the formation of giant trusts and monopolistic combines. By the turn of the century these had achieved dominance over the nation's economic life.

This was made amply clear when the Commission on Industrial Relations, set up by Congress in 1912, made its final report in 1915,

contained in eleven volumes. This report found that "control of manufacturing, mining and transportation" was "to an increasing degree passing into the hands of great corporations through stock ownership." It further found that the control of credit also had become centralized in the hands of a "very small number of powerful financiers," who thereby held "the final control of American industry." With "few exceptions" each of the great basic industries was "dominated by a single corporation." Where this was not the case, effective control over the industry was nearly as complete through stock ownership in "supposedly independent corporations and through credit."

This was not a simple process of the big fish swallowing the little ones. It constituted a life and death struggle for survival, in which the industrial and financial sharks ferociously fought each other for supremacy. And victory went to those who succeeded in most ruthlessly devouring or destroying all smaller forms of capitalist life.

Trustified capital represented the greatest oligarchy of power and wealth ever seen in this country. Wendell Phillips, towering giant of Abolition days, witnessing the rise of this new and grave threat to democracy, joined to fight whole-heartedly with the rising labor movement of that day. "I confess," he declared in 1871, "that the only fears I have in regard to republican institutions is whether, in our day, any adequate remedy will be found for this incoming flood of the power of incorporated wealth. No statesman, no public man yet, has dared to defy it. Every man that has met it has been crushed to powder; and the only hope of any effectual grapple with it is in rousing the actual masses, whose interests permanently lie in an opposite direction. . . ."

Wendell Phillips was correct. The only hope did lie in "rousing the actual masses." He was also correct, unfortunately, when he feared that no "adequate remedy" would be found in his day.

THE PEOPLE VERSUS THE TRUSTS

In the ninety years that separate us from the end of the Civil War, the "actual masses," that is, the workers, the farmers and city middle classes, have been roused many times to fight the new enemy. Numerous bitter, protracted and bloody encounters have been fought between the people and the trusts. The period just prior to the turn of the century was replete with wave after wave of such struggles, both economic and political.

The corporations seeking to outrace each other for supremacy

needed ever greater profits with which to obtain the capital to erect their great industrial empires. These were obtained by the most savage exploitation of the workers. This, coinciding with the gradual disappearance of the frontier, made larger numbers of workers realize that they were being squeezed in the vise of the wages system and that their only salvation lay in organization and struggle. Thus some of the most bitter strike struggles in American history were fought from the mid-'seventies through the 'nineties. Armed violence and frame-up were used against the embattled workers on a scale unprecedented in the past. The first national convention of the Knights of Labor, held in 1878, referred to the "recent alarming development and aggression of aggregated wealth."

Farmers, too, began to see their dream of an agrarian small-producer paradise fade away. Unrest swept the plains. The farmers were up in arms over the vicious class legislation and land grants enacted by Congress in favor of the rich, particularly the railroads. They were aroused over the oppressive railroad freight rates which futher increased the growing disparity between what they received for their farm products and what they had to pay for manufactured goods. Nor were they alone in their opposition to the power of the trusts. V. L. Parrington, in his *Main Currents in American Thought*, shows that "Men as dissimilar as Horace Greeley, Thaddeus Stevens, Wendell Phillips, Henry C. Corey, and Peter Cooper, made common cause with the western farmers in seeking to wrest the control of government from the bankers and establish what they conceived to be a just democratic economy."

Every popular political movement since the 'seventies has been, essentially, an anti-monopoly movement. This was true of the agrarian Granger and Greenback movements. Peter Cooper, Greenback candidate for President in 1876, warned, "There is fast forming in this country an aristocracy of wealth—the worst form of aristocracy that can curse the prosperity of any country." And in 1882, he said, "we have no aristocrats except those who have sprung up in a night—like toad-stools do in a dung-hill." The same anti-monopoly character marked the Populist movement in the '90s, the Bull Moose movement of 1912, the Robert M. LaFollette third party movement of 1924, and the New Deal movement of the 1930's.

The leaderships of these movements were not always dedicated to the stated cause. Many times political charlatans latched on to the anti-monopoly struggle of the workers and farmers in order to gain political advantage for themselves and to mislead the movement. This was true of William Jennings Bryan, despite his fiery "Cross of Gold"

speech. It was certainly true of Theodore Roosevelt, despite his statement that the rights of man came before the rights of property. It was true of others as well.

There have been times when both major parties considered it good politics to promise the "regulation of the trusts and corporations." Even so pliant a tool of the railroad interests as was President Grover Cleveland found it advisable to engage in a verbal tiff with the "trusts, combinations and monopolies," which he admitted were trampling the average citizen "under an iron heel," and "fast becoming the peoples' masters."

Nor were the masses who fought monopoly rule clear-sighted as to objectives and how to achieve them. Most often they were muddled and confused, taken in by quack currency and utopian trust-busting schemes. One thing, however, cannot be disputed. All the great popular movements which have arisen since the Civil War have borne this essential character—they were grass-root stirrings of the common people against the ever growing economic encroachments and political power of big capital. Monopoly has been the enemy. The great progressive tradition has been the struggle against this enemy.

This tradition found its way into the nation's prose and verse, into the writings of Walt Whitman, Frederick Douglass, William Sylvis, Mark Twain, Frank Norris, Eugene Debs, Edward Bellamy, Theodore Dreiser, W. E. B. Du Bois, Upton Sinclair, Carl Sandburg, and many others. Edgar Lee Masters caught something of the spirit of the struggle against the plutocracy and etched it into his *Spoon River Anthology*. Two decades after him, in the midst of the "great depression" of the 1930's, Stephen Vincent Benet, in his *Ode to Walt Whitman*, sang the same song of aversion to the common foe but in even more passionate metre:

*Many, yet few; they robbed in the broad daylight,
Saying, "Give us this and that; we are kings and titans;
We know the ropes; we are solid; we are hard-headed;
We will build your cities and railroads"—as if they built them! . . .*

*And, after them, the others,
Soft-bodied, lacking even the pirate's candor,
Men of papers, robbing by papers, with paper faces,
Rustling like frightened paper when the storm broke.*

When economic storms broke, when conditions were bad, when mass unemployment was greatest, when the farmers were in debt and the "little man" was being shoved to the wall even more than

usual, it was then that the enemy was more plainly seen and the people's wrath grew to white heat. When the economic weather was relatively calm many lost sight of the enemy and new illusions took hold. But each time that the enemy was forgotten the subsequent shock at awakening was more powerful than the previous one.

The shock of the 1930's was the most powerful of all. It followed a period of "good times" in which illusions of permanent prosperity grew to new heights of absurdity. America had entered World War I as a debtor nation. It came out of it the creditor. Wall Street had been the only victor in the war. Its productive plant had suffered no physical destruction. While European capitalist countries were occupied with overcoming the destructive effects of the war and with rebuilding their shattered economies, U.S. capital had no such problems. It was in an excellent position to consolidate the foreign markets it had grabbed during the war and to win new ones. The economic crisis of 1920-21 proved to be of short duration. Even the steady decline in farm income, the chronic depressed state of coal mining and textile production, did not loom too large in face of what appeared to be an endless spiral of prosperity. The 1924 LaFollette third party venture that polled nearly five million votes also was short-lived. It was a product of the disillusionment which followed "the war to end war," a reaction to the corporation's open shop drive to smash trade unionism, and to the deterioration in farm income. But things soon "settled down." The La Follette Progressive Party folded its national tent, labor meekly returned to limiting itself to economic struggles and the nation to the status quo. When the prosperity bubble finally burst, it was more like the detonation of an atomic blast. And the "mushroom" that followed it was a great popular upheaval.

This upheaval was directed against the real enemy, the monopolists. That is why Roosevelt, understanding the popular mood, proposed a "New Deal" for the "forgotten man" and said that the "unscrupulous money changers stand indicted in the court of public opinion, rejected by the hearts and minds of men." Later, facing the violent opposition of reaction, he denounced the "economic royalists" and the "old enemies of peace—business and financial monopoly."

It is true that the New Deal had for its objective the preservation of the capitalist system. It also is true that despite the attacks on them, the monopolists continued to make great gains in further centralizing and consolidating their hold on the national economy.

Roosevelt recognized this in his special message to Congress in April, 1938. He wrote: "Among us today a concentration of private power without equal in history is growing." Asking whether the fears "that our liberties are in danger" were justified, Roosevelt answered, "if there is that danger it comes from that concentrated private economic power which is struggling so hard to master our democratic government. . . . No people," he declared, "least of all a people with our traditions of personal liberty, will endure the slow erosion of opportunity for the common man, the oppressive sense of helplessness under the domination of a few, which are overshadowing our whole economic life."

Thus Roosevelt, even though he defended capitalism, periodically put his finger on the enemy. That is why Big Business so hated him and considered him a "traitor" to his class. Roosevelt committed the one unpardonable sin—he rode the crest of the anti-monopoly wave and frequently gave expression to the feelings of the people.

WHAT THE PEOPLE WON

It is inevitable that the progressive tradition should consist of the struggle against the power of entrenched wealth. It could not be otherwise. And it is of no small significance to our generation that our predecessors fought this fight with fire and fury.

This should be obvious, but it is not. Today it is quite fashionable for historians, journalists, political spokesmen and even some labor leaders to make, as Matthew Josephson has appropriately said, "genuflections before the possessors of wealth." Whatever gains the American people have won in the past, whether in the form of liberties or of a higher standard of living, are all currently credited to American capitalism in general and to the ruling class in particular.

So much of a habit has this become that men who fought tooth and nail against unemployment and social insurance but two decades ago, today demand credit for these reforms as examples of the benevolence of American capitalism. It is as if a thief fleeing in the night were compelled to drop some of his ill-gotten loot and then were to demand public acclaim for his "generosity!"

To such extremes is this taken that there are historians who now believe that it would have made no great difference in the long run whether Hamilton had won over Jefferson, or whether the Civil War had been fought at all. They even insist that the reforms of the New Deal period were bound to come anyway, and that it made little

difference that a great national upheaval took place to bring them about.

In his book *A Public Philosophy*, published in early 1955, Walter Lippmann even argues that the American constitutional system suffers from the influence of the Jeffersonians. In this book, which some have lauded as the greatest of the century, Lippmann sees new merit in Hamilton's desire for a modified form of monarchy. The crisis in our constitutional system, according to him, arises not from the grave threat of extreme reaction, but from the fact that the people are not to be trusted and have attained too much influence on government for their own good. He wants a clearer differentiation between the "governors" and the "governed."

While Lippmann cannot be considered a liberal by any stretch of the imagination, he has been a critic of McCarthyism. And yet, his real difference with McCarthy, except for immediate policy questions, does not revolve around matters of substance. He favors a strong executive free of the influence of public opinion. In fact, his book must be considered a dangerous ideological-philosophical defense of the reactionary drive to wipe out the very foundations of American democracy. The public philosophy Lippmann advocates is one of re-educating the American people to "voluntarily" give up their democratic heritage and to accept the "ancient principle" of the right of rulers to rule by "the mandate of heaven." Toward this end he seeks the cooperation of America's philosophers, educators and churchmen. This he calls defending "popular government" and a return to "basic principles" and the "traditions of civility."

That Hamilton is now portrayed as the sagacious, wise and far-sighted leader, and Jefferson as the impractical, near-sighted visionary, tells us more about the intellectual climate of our times than of Jefferson's. What would have been the results, let us ask, had the people not fought and wrested certain concessions from the mercantile, banking and landed interests? Had it not been for acts such as Shays' Rebellion in 1786, the struggle for the Bill of Rights adopted in 1791, the "Whiskey Rebellion" of 1794 and the militant battle against the Alien and Sedition Laws in 1798-99, the great majority of Americans would never have won even a semblance of democratic liberties.

Under such circumstances the whole history of the nation would have been different. The land would have been handed out as huge domains for the rich, and the mass incentive removed for the conquest of the frontier and for large-scale immigration. In addition, Hamilton's banking policies would have established a tight centralized

control over currency and credit to the disadvantage of the small independent producers. And these, in turn, would have made impossible the constant expansion and enlargement of the American home market, without which American capitalism itself could not have developed as rapidly and to the extent that it did.

It is not that too many concessions were won by the common people in that period, as our reactionary historians would now have us believe. It is too bad that the people were not strong enough to force far greater concessions. Had it been possible from the outset of the Republic to remove the scourge of slavery, what a great boon that would have been! The nation would have been saved four years of bloody civil war. Had this been possible, the South today would not be a land of Dixiecrat congressmen and the Negro people would not still be fighting to win the inalienable rights that should have been theirs from the first day of the Republic. Likewise, had the debt-ridden farmers and artisans been strong enough to get the Constitution adopted without the system of checks and balances which was designed, in the words of James Madison, "to protect the minority of the opulent against the majority," American democracy would have been all the stronger.

THE FOUNDATION FOR THE AMERICAN DREAM

The Jeffersonian concept of agrarian democracy was illusory in the sense that industrialization, with its concentration and centralization of production, was inevitable. And yet, it based itself on this solid truth—that economic independence and political independence go hand in hand, that it is impossible to be economically enslaved and politically free. The material roots of Jeffersonian democracy were the continued existence of the frontier with its free land and the continued predominance of small-scale production. It is these which also provided the material foundation for the American Dream of a land of freedom and equality of opportunity.

Therefore, it can be said that the illusions of the pre-Civil War period were inevitable, for the material groundwork did not then exist for a higher form of democracy based upon the social ownership of the means of production.

The existence of a frontier wilderness was the single most important factor giving substance to the American Dream. It made possible the satisfaction of the land hunger of at least a portion of those who preferred to work for themselves as against toiling for others. It made

possible a certain greater fluidity of class relations unknown in Europe. It also had adverse aspects. In the first place it explains, at least in part, why the white masses did not earlier come into collision with the slave system. In Europe, land could be obtained only by taking it away from the feudal barons and lords. In the U.S. it could be had, at least for the younger and more venturesome souls, by pushing the frontier farther west. Only when the slave system itself began to push westward and to threaten the very existence of free land did the agrarian masses and with them many workers, begin to see the slave system as the direct and immediate enemy of the nation. The influence of the frontier was also a factor which explains why no greater opposition developed against the barbarous extermination of the aboriginal peoples, the Indians. It also explains why many agrarian masses went along with the Northern land speculators and Southern slaveowners in support of the Mexican War of 1846-48, in which approximately half the territory of Mexico was stolen.*

Thus the frontier was looked upon as the guarantor of greater economic independence and political freedom. It was viewed as a safety valve against the growing pressure of industrial capitalism. The feeling of independence that it gave was not limited to those who followed Horace Greeley's advice and went West. America, with its sparse population, needed a constant influx of manpower to hew its forests and to work its mills. The frontier was a sieve through which the sands of migration poured. At the same time, it constantly kept enlarging the home market and the demand for Eastern manufactured goods. This, in turn, increased further the demand for additional workers in Eastern factories. These mutually interrelating factors therefore gave the workers certain advantages in the sale of their labor power, especially at times when the demand for labor was considerably greater than the supply.

The myths and illusions in capitalism fed by the frontier on a scale unknown and impossible in Europe was its most harmful aspect. No other country could have produced an Horatio Alger. And while today's generation would laugh at his crude moralizing and fantastic yarns of how fame and fortune smiled on his heroes, it was the

* Abraham Lincoln, then a young Whig member of Congress, spoke out against the war. Joshua R. Giddings, another congressman, called it "a war against an unoffending people, without adequate or just cause, for the purpose of conquest; with the design of extending slavery; in violation of the Constitution, against the dictates of justice, humanity, the sentiments of the age in which we live, and the precepts of the religion which we profess."

unfrozen state of class relations and the ability of an individual, here and there, to climb from the bottom to the top of the heap which made them palatable. Some aspect of the illusions of yesterday continue to persist, although these are bolstered today by quite other factors, of which we shall have more to say later.

AMERICA'S REVOLUTIONARY TRADITION

The fact that America had no hereditary feudal system and tradition to overcome, as did Europe, also was a material factor bolstering the American Dream. There was, of course, a feudal landed aristocracy in the South basing itself upon a barbaric slave system. This left its mark on all national life and development. But there was no strongly entrenched feudal structure such as had existed in Europe for centuries. This is cited as proof by some historians of the contention that the American Revolution was not really a social revolution such as was the French. Professor Louis Hartz, in his recent book *Liberal Tradition in America*, reads into this lack of feudal background the evidence for his claim that liberalism is "natural" to America, that is, that the class conflict in this country was never sharp and bitter, as in Europe.

Hartz believes that the differences that separated the Tories from the Revolutionists, the Jeffersons from the Hamiltons, the Lincolns from the Jeff Davises and the reactionaries from the progressives throughout our history, were not too great. These, for him, never represented extremes, only two sides of American liberalism. He says that historians such as the Beards, Parrington and others, tended to deal with American history in terms of "struggles against class exploitation," instead of "in terms of American liberalism," and thus were guilty of mechanically applying European conditions to America. This also is Hartz's explanation for the weakness of the Socialist movement in this country. "In Europe," he asserts, "the idea of social liberty is loaded with dynamite; but in America it becomes, to a remarkable degree, the working base from which argument begins." In this way Hartz succeeds in proving—at least to his own satisfaction and to those who would like to have us forget the great tradition—that there never was a real American Revolution, that there never has been a real internal enemy that threatened liberty and rights, that Americans never had to fight for freedom, for in the words of Tocqueville, Americans were "born free." Bunker Hill, Valley Forge, Daniel Shays, Nat Turner, John Brown, Sojourner Truth, Gettysburg,

Molly Maguires, Haymarket, Ludlow, Republic Steel Massacre, Hunger Marches! If these symbols stand for anything in the national consciousness, it is that Americans were not "born free," but like other peoples had to spill their blood for freedom!

The anti-colonial character of the American Revolution did make it somewhat different from the French. Not in class content, but in form, for they were both capitalist revolutions. The American Revolution was directed against a foreign governmental power and conducted under the instruments of state power set up by the united thirteen colonies. It therefore did not have the identical features of a revolution in which the dominant class overthrown is of the same nation as is the revolutionary class. This does not mean that there was national unity in the war against King George. Quite the opposite. Professors Allen Nevins and Henry C. Commager—not Beard and Parrington, mind you!—estimate that during the Revolution, "at the lowest computation, twenty-five thousand Americans bore arms for the Crown," and, "nearly all the important property owners of the province of New York were Tories."*

The specific character of the American Revolution as a war for independence did leave many tasks unfinished. This later required a democratic phase of the Revolution and is the significance of the struggle for the Bill of Rights and the election of Jefferson. The failure to wipe out all feudal class relations, even in the Jeffersonian democratic phase of the Revolution, only compelled the nation later to go through a "Second Revolution," in the form of the Civil War. The peculiarity of this second revolution was that it, too, did not take the form of a revolution directed against an established federal government, but in defense of that government. The slaveowners were the "rebels" seeking to overthrow the duly elected government of Abraham Lincoln. That did not make the Civil War any less a real revolution, for the feudal slaveowning class was defeated, ousted from

* "When Howe evacuated Boston, almost a thousand loyalists sailed with him, and another thousand soon followed . . . When the British evacuated Charleston, a great crescent-shaped fleet of a hundred ships sailed down the bay with departing loyalists—a magnificent and tragic sight. Upper Canada and the Maritime Provinces received more than sixty thousand refugees, the West Indies thousands more, and England a dejected host."—Nevins and Commager, *The Pocket History of the U. S.*

It would be good to remember these facts when we read current sob stories about the "poor refugees" who fled from Eastern Europe. Tories always flee revolution like night the sun!

political power and its main private property, the slaves, taken from it and set free.

These particular features of the American bourgeois revolution do have bearing on the specific national character of the American revolutionary tradition, which is not identical with that of the French, or for that matter, of any other country. It is a gross distortion and nonsense, however, to read into these facts the conclusion that liberalism is "natural" to America and that class conflict never took on sharp and bitter forms. Nor do they change the basic class character and great world significance of the American Revolution, which was a forerunner of the French, and, in the words of V. I. Lenin, "one of those great, really liberating, really revolutionary wars." Furthermore, as William Z. Foster, National Chairman of the Communist Party, pointed out in his *History of the Communist Party of the United States*: "The Revolution also had far-reaching international repercussions. It helped inspire the people of France to get rid of their feudal tyrants; it stimulated the peoples of Latin America to free themselves from the yoke of Spain and Portugal; and it was an energizing force in the world wherever the bourgeoisie, supported by the democratic masses, were fighting against feudalism."

THE CRISIS OF THE AMERICAN DREAM

The end of the nineteenth century marked the end of the frontier, the rise of monopoly to supremacy and the beginning of the crisis of the American Dream. The early anti-monopoly movements were mainly agrarian middle class revolts. As such, they sought to recapture the past rather than conquer the future. But this attempt to get capitalism to return to free enterprise and small-scale production was as fruitless as age trying to recapture youth. The village smithy could shoe a horse and hammer a plowshare. He could not produce an automobile or a tractor.

It would be wrong to conclude from this that the anti-monopoly movements have been without consequence, although great is the attempt to convince the American people of that. These movements and struggles have not diminished the economic and political power of the monopolies which is greater at this time than ever before. However, they have been of greatest importance.

Had the workers not fought for and won their right to form and build trade unions, where would our much vaunted standard of

living be? The twelve-hour and ten-hour day finally gave way to the eight-hour day and in the 1930's to the forty-hour week, not because of the generosity or far-sightedness of the captains of industry. It was the result of the unremitting sacrifice and struggle of the workers themselves.

Lincoln showed great insight when he observed that "the sheep and the wolf are not agreed upon a definition of the word liberty," and that "with some the word liberty may mean for each man to do as he pleases with himself, and the product of his labor; while with others the same word may mean for some men to do as they please with other men, and the product of other men's labor." How the monopolists define the word "liberty" can be seen by the wire which J. P. Morgan sent to Judge Elbert H. Gary, head of the U. S. Steel Corporation, during the great steel strike of 1919. Morgan wired: "Heartfelt congratulations on your stand for the open shop, with which I am, as you know, absolutely in accord. I believe American principles of liberty are deeply involved, and must win if we stand firm." Principles of liberty were involved, but not on the side of Morgan and his class.

The right to organize was not the only right won despite the arrogance and power of the monopolies. Other economic concessions were obtained and some political reforms. "From the agrarian agitation—supplemented by proletarian and middle class recruits," wrote V. L. Parrington, "has come the Australian ballot, the Initiative and the Referendum, the Recall, the Direct Primary, and popular election of Senators. . . . If agrarianism lost its great battle over the currency, it won the battle over the income tax."

Since then these very reforms have been used by the monopolists and their ideologists to prop up old and erect new illusions in capitalism and the two-party system. These concessions, nevertheless, represent partial victories for the people. Of especially great importance were the concessions gained during the New Deal, particularly the right of labor to organize and the establishment of unemployment and social insurance.

Economic monopoly and political democracy stand at two opposite poles, as the Jeffersonians and the progressives who followed them well understood. In the pre-monopoly stage of capitalism, a degree of freedom was required by the capitalists to insure for themselves free access to the market. But monopoly seeks to smother competition. It fears the new strength of the popular masses. Its tendency, therefore,

is to stifle democracy. It seeks complete obedience from government and eschews popular liberty. It secretly advocates the kind of public philosophy which Walter Lippmann, one of its most capable spokesmen, believes the time has come to fight for openly.

Thus, it is false to think of repression as representing but a characteristic of the post-World War II period, or of McCarthyism as but the expression of a "lunatic fringe." The whole trend of modern monopoly capitalism is toward repression, toward undoing the very process of greater liberty brought into being by the Age of the great Enlightenment, which was the age of the great bourgeois revolutions. The only way to counter this trend in our time is by an ever greater marshalling of the democratic forces of the people.

In the course of the struggle the people also have learned to measure their own strength more accurately against that of the enemy. With all of the many illusions of the present day, they are by no means identical with those of yesterday. The majority of workers realize that their fate is that of wage-workers and that there is no escape from that class position. This is one of the most important reasons why the trade unions have emerged as great mass organizations and are here to stay. The workers, farmers and city middle classes also have learned that there is no return to the past. They no longer believe in *laissez-faire* capitalism, or in "rugged individualism." They now demand from society and the government the right to work and to a living wage as workers, and the right to a decent income as independent producers, small merchants or professionals. This is one of the most important new developments in mass consciousness brought into being by the great struggles of the 'thirties, even though it has carried with it new illusions that economic crisis can be prevented permanently through governmental expenditures.

There have been two other developments which mark the present stage of struggle against the monopolies as different from the past. The first of these is that the center of the struggle against Big Business has shifted from the countryside to the city. More and more the industrial workers set the pace and take the lead. This is of great historic importance, as we shall show later. A second major development is the emergence of the Negro people as a conscious mass force on the political arena, closely allied with the labor movement. This, too, is of great historic import.

These developments explain why Big Business is so jittery about public opinion, why it spends fabulous millions in direct outpourings

of propaganda and even greater millions in attempting to control public opinion through its complete ownership of radio, television, newspapers and magazines.

There is good reason for this fear on the part of the monopolists. They know that deep in the instinct of the masses, in the experience of their daily lives, in the lessons they have imbibed from the past, is the latent realization that the enemy which they really have to fear and stand on guard against is the age-old enemy.

The first signs of a new awakening have already made their appearance. There is a growing awareness of the immense danger inherent in the new wave of corporation mergers. There is growing opposition to the policies of giving more and more of the nation's natural resources to the monopolists, particularly oil, water power, timber and atomic energy.

In Justice Douglas' book *An Almanac of Liberty*, he refers to the great fear held by the liberal Justice Louis Brandeis, along with many others of his day, that the "oligarchy of big business" would turn America into "a nation of clerks, all working for some overlord." Then Douglas makes the valid observation, "The lessons Brandeis taught have been largely forgotten." Yes, they have been largely forgotten by many. But not for long!

CHAPTER III

THE FICTITIOUS FOE

“And, in heaven’s name, who are the public enemies?” exclaimed Dr. Leete. “Are they France, England, Germany, or hunger, cold, and nakedness.”

—Edward Bellamy, *Looking Backward* (1888)

A man cannot be too careful in the choice of his enemies.

—Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

THE “NEW RADICALISM”

WHAT ARE THE reasons given for obscuring or forgetting the enemy—and by those who claim to continue in the great tradition? Some argue that the monopoly beast is no longer avaricious but as gentle as a lamb—and how can a lamb be an enemy? Others argue that while Big Business is still an enemy, its fangs have been greatly drawn, and, therefore, it is not nearly as dangerous as yesterday. Still others, and by far the largest number of those who have ceased to fight the enemy, argue that while monopoly is still a foe to be on guard against, it is by no means the main one. They contend that the country faces a far more sinister and imminent threat—Communism—and that in face of this greater threat it is the duty of all good Americans, including old enemies, to unite. We shall discuss this later position first.

In 1949, when the “cold war” was barely three years old, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.,⁴ Harvard professor, ADA leader, and chief liberal ideologist, wrote an important book, *The Vital Center*. This became

the ideological-political bible for those liberals who had grown up in the New Deal tradition and now sought a rationale for switching enemies.

Schlesinger argued that the trouble with liberalism in the past had been its one-sided preoccupation with the struggle against the Right, against reaction. "In this book," he wrote in the Foreword, "I have deliberately given more space to the problem of protecting the liberal faith from Communism than from reaction; not because reaction is the lesser threat, but because it is the enemy we know whose features are clearly delineated for us, against whom our efforts have always been oriented. It is perhaps our very absorption in this age-old foe which has made us fatally slow to recognize the danger on what we certainly thought was our Left. . . ."

Thus Schlesinger admits that the age-old foe has been reaction and that the progressive tradition has been the fight against it. How deep rooted this tradition is can be seen by the great lengths to which Schlesinger must go to lay an ideological foundation for his departure from it. He says that liberalism has suffered from a basic fallacy, the failure to take into account what Freud called man's "propensity to do evil."

"Official liberalism," according to Schlesinger, "had long been almost inextricably identified with a picture of man as perfectible, as endowed with sufficient wisdom and selflessness to endure power and to use it infallibly for the general good." But, "the Soviet experience, on top of the rise of fascism, reminded my generation rather forcibly that man was, indeed, imperfect, and that the corruptions of power could unleash great evil in the world."

Nearly every page of this book is saturated with the same gloom and pessimism toward man and society. While calling for a switch in enemies, Schlesinger does not claim that this will solve anything. "Indeed," he moans, "we have no assurance that any solution is possible. The twentieth century has at least relieved us of the illusion that progress is inevitable. . . . We must recognize that this is the nature of our age: that the womb has irrevocably closed behind us, that security is a foolish dream of old men, that crisis will always be with us."

At the conclusion of his book there is this peroration: "We must grow up now and forsake the millennial dream [what he had called 'the bubble of the false optimism of the nineteenth century']. Given human imperfections society will continue imperfect. Problems will always torment us, because all problems are insoluble, that is why

they are important. The good comes from the continuing struggle to try and solve them, not from the vain hope of their solution.

"This is just as true of the problems of international society. 'What men call peace,' Gilson has well said, 'is never anything but a space between two wars;' . . . The pursuit of peace, Whitehead reminds us, easily passes into its bastard substitute, anesthesia."

So man is born to evil, power leads to corruption; solutions are impossible for all important problems are insoluble, security is a foolish dream, crisis will always be with us, peace is only the interval between wars, and the pursuit of peace leads to anesthesia! And this dish full of obscurantist balderdash, of reactionary pessimism and cynicism, was served up to a hope-hungry nation as the "liberal faith" of the "vital center," as the "spirit of the new radicalism."

The note of pessimism that pervades much of liberal thought is not exactly new. Parrington, in his *Main Currents in American Thought*, noted that the early "Emerson optimism," had given way to "Dreiserian pessimism." "For a hundred and fifty years," wrote Parrington, "western civilization had sustained its hopes on the rich nourishment provided by the great age of the Enlightenment. Faith in the excellence of man, in the law of progress, in the ultimate reign of justice, in the conquest of nature, in the finality and sufficiency of democracy, faith in short in the excellence of life, was the great driving force in those earlier simpler days. . . . Now we have fallen so low that our faith in justice, progress, the potentialities of human nature, the excellence of democracy, is stricken with pernicious anemia."

But the big difference between the liberal Parrington and the liberal Schlesinger is that Parrington perceived the growth of pessimism as stemming from the crisis in the American Dream which came to the fore with the rise of monopoly. He knew that something was wrong with the social system, with capitalism, and not with man. And in that elementary understanding he was a towering giant as compared to Schlesinger.

The great service of the muckrakers and critics of the early 1900's, the Beards and Parringtons, the Dreisers, Sinclair Lewis' and Lincoln Steffens', was that they insisted on probing beneath the surface of things, punctured much of the mythology relating to American history, and fearlessly exposed conditions as they were, making America see itself as it really was. Their pessimism arose from their failure to comprehend the answer to the problem, although later, both Dreiser and Steffens did find that answer in socialism.

Let us return to Schlesinger. He says that man is not perfectible. What is meant by this? There is no such thing as abstract perfectibility. Everything is a product of evolution and environment. Nothing remains the same, not even Schlesinger—we hope. Man is a product of social development. Up to now this has been the history of the struggle to wrest a livelihood from nature. As man has increased his capacity to do so, to create a surplus, class struggles developed between those who owned the means of production and those from whose labor that extra surplus was siphoned away. Each change in social system has been a change of growth and development, an advance of man from a lower to a higher stage of social existence. Each has enabled man to further develop the productive forces and to master nature, and with this has come increased knowledge and culture. Today, man stands on the threshold of the greatest advance of his career. For the productive forces of society have reached a point at which abundance is just within the reach of all mankind. Classless society, based upon the well-being of all—the dream of man over the ages—can now become a reality for the first time. Thus the real history of man is but to begin.

Hence there is no basis for pessimism, except on the part of those whose fate is so linked with the dying system of monopoly capitalism that they think all must die with it. But every end is also a beginning. Every birth, an ordeal. And sad indeed is the fate of those who see only the ordeal and not its end.

The optimism of Emerson and of pre-monopoly America as a whole was the optimism of a forward moving, advancing, progressive social system. As such, it was justified. Its mistake lay in failing to see the limitations of capitalism and believing that American capitalism was evolving as a classless society. It was not mistaken, however, in its faith in man and in his ultimate ability to conquer nature and to build a society free from oppression and exploitation. And for all of its illusions, it was as superior to Schlesinger's mournful prognosis as is a song to a wail.

If the trouble lies with human nature, then, indeed, there is no hope for America or for world mankind, and the future belongs to reaction, to fear, to atomic destruction. Marxists challenge this concept. They have abiding faith in man and his future and in America's future. As Eugene Dennis, General Secretary of the Communist Party, wrote in his book *Ideas They Cannot Jail*: "We Communists know that human society moves, and that it moves in the direction of democratic advance and social progress."

Schlesinger's agonizing reappraisal of the foundations of the "liberal faith" was meant to serve one purpose—to explain the switch in enemies. True, he still characterized reaction as a threat and even said it was not a lesser one. The fact is, however, that he feared extreme reaction mainly because it might be followed by the victory of the Left. "I am persuaded," he wrote, "that the restoration [why restoration?!] of business to political power in the country would have calamitous results that have generally accompanied business control of the government; that this time we might be delivered through the incompetence of the right into the hands of the totalitarians of the left."

This is an interesting formulation. The Right are only the "incompetents" but the Left the "totalitarians." And lest there be any mistake about his attitude toward Big Business, he adds, "but I am persuaded that liberals have values in common with most members of the business community—in particular, a belief in free society—which they do not have in common with the totalitarians."

There can be no doubt that Schlesinger is persuaded he has more in common with Big Business than with the Left, which he thinks he can change from being the Left by the epithet "totalitarians." He goes to considerable pain to ridicule the charge that the big capitalists are aggressive and desire domination. "Not only does the business community lack the skill to govern society in its own interests," says Schlesinger, but, "it is increasingly lacking the will to do so." The great danger comes not from capitalist aggression, according to him, but from what he describes, borrowing from Freud again, as the "capitalist death urge."

Schlesinger's book was written before the 1952 Republican victory and the subsequent proof on the part of Big Business of its lack of will to govern, as exemplified in the "Cadillac Cabinet!" It was written before McCarthyism emerged as a sinister national force. It was written before the Democrats were being accused of "20 years of treason," and Schlesinger, James A. Wechsler of the *New York Post* and other liberals were being repaid for their slavish anti-Communism by being accused of Communism themselves.

These events have certainly made many liberals re-evaluate the question of whether the Right is merely incompetent or whether it represents a threat to the peace and liberty of the American people. But it is important to note that the "new radicalism" as propounded by Schlesinger did not see the real danger of reaction but joined with the extreme Right in making Communism the enemy. In doing so,

its proponents assume great responsibility for what transpired since then.

THE DEADLY LOGIC OF THE BIG LIE

Despite the re-evaluation which many liberals have begun there is a grave danger that this will be so half-hearted, so devoid of a probing search for the truth, that it will accomplish little. We particularly have in mind the current practice of a number of liberals who, beginning to see the grave danger of extreme reaction, think they are meeting this threat by placing their stress upon what they call the "external threat of Communism" as opposed to McCarthy's emphasis on the "internal threat."

One such liberal is James A. Wechsler. After his appearance before the McCarthy Committee in 1953, Wechsler wrote a book, *The Age of Suspicion*, in which he describes the "quiet horror" of this experience and correctly observes that the battle against McCarthyism—with or without the man—"is far from over." But he is far from correct in his advice as to how this battle is to be won. It will not be won, he warns "by men who are so distracted by the McCarthy danger that they dismiss the external challenge of Soviet imperialism." He accuses McCarthy of distorting reality "by picturing the bedraggled communists as far more menacing than the massive Soviet power, and by identifying with the communists all those who reject McCarthy's intolerant version of history."

We shall skip over the fact that this book was written as another one of those "I done it" confessionals of ex-Communists. It is unfortunate that Wechsler felt called upon to distort and discredit the account of his best years of youthful idealism and courage merely so that no one could call his anti-Communist conversion anything but complete. The age of suspicion is also, for some, the age of contrition. Nor shall we discuss who it is that is "bedraggled," the Communists who fight with honor for convictions and principles, or those who trample upon their own liberal heritage. We also want to make it plain that we make a distinction between ex-Communists and even anti-Communists who are conscious tools of McCarthyism, and those like Wechsler who desire to fight McCarthyism, and do fight it in their own way.

The Communist dispute with Wechsler, over and above ideological differences, is that he fails to comprehend how McCarthyism came into being and how it can be defeated so decisively that it never

threatens the nation again. His major difference with McCarthy, despite what he says, is not whether the Communists represent more of a domestic than an external threat. If that were the main difference, we would be compelled to conclude that little indeed separates them. For no one in his right mind, not even those who have been taken in by the lie that Communists believe in or advocate force and violence, really believes that America is in imminent peril of revolution. Yet the fear of Communism has reached such frenzied peaks that countries like France and Italy, with millions of Communists or Communist followers, look upon the anti-Communist hysteria in the United States with amazement.

There is only one explanation for this—the insidious drive to build up the hoax of a Soviet war threat to America. It is precisely this unreasoned fear of an “external threat,” built up by those who profit from it, that has made possible the unreasoned fear of a domestic one. For if America is really menaced by “massive Soviet power” and confronted with the danger of Soviet aggression, then, by McCarthyite logic, every Communist and Communist sympathizer is also dangerous. Thus, by stressing the “external” threat, Wechsler is not fighting but feeding the fires of extreme reaction.

Whatever one may say of McCarthy and the cabal of demagogues associated with him, no one can deny them consistency. For them, “A” cannot be separated from “B,” any more than “B” from “C,” and so on to the end. If it is true that the Soviet Union menaces us, then anything and everything is justified in the nation’s defense. If it is likewise true that the Communists are the agents of this foreign foe, then they, even if relatively small in numbers, are a fifth column and highly dangerous. Moreover, if it is also true that the Communists are diabolical plotters and prepared to employ any and all means toward their end, then it may also be true that even Wechsler’s renunciation of Communism is a fraud, perpetrated in behalf of this conspiracy against America. And if there is the slightest chance of that, then McCarthy is serving his country by challenging Wechsler’s sincerity and that of all self-confessed ex-Communists. Furthermore, if these things be true, McCarthy is also correct in viewing with suspicion every former sympathizer and friend of the Soviet Union no matter how they since recant. Depraved indeed must such persons be to have sympathized with a cause which they now claim to be so ignoble, with a power which they now describe as so devoid of all human decency. It also follows from this that those who oppose McCarthy’s methods, while protesting agreement with his motives,

are totally wrong for they are hedging on doing what is necessary to defend the nation from so deadly a peril. And is it also inconsistent with all this that such people should not be trusted, being open to the suspicion of hidden reservations and sympathies with the Soviet Union?

This is the deadly logic of the Big Lie. Of such is made the Procrustean bed in which all must be stretched out or cut down to size once the original fraudulent premise is accepted. And there is no escape from it. For, in the words of Shakespeare, "in the night, imagining some fear, how easy is a bush supposed to be a bear!"

The change in political climate which began in 1954, and continued through 1955, was made possible only because the unreal fear of Soviet aggression has subsided. With the end of the Korean and Indo-Chinese wars there has taken place a significant reduction in world tension. Were this not true McCarthyism would still be on the ascendant. That is why the continued practice of some liberals to sprinkle liberally every speech, editorial, article or statement with references to the "Soviet threat" is so dangerous. It adds to the war tension and actual danger of war. It thereby contributes to spreading McCarthy's "intolerant version of history."

WORLD TENSION—AN AMERICAN EXPORT

Those who really believe that the Soviet Union is an aggressor power seeking world domination should ask themselves one simple question: Why is it that the United States, which is separated from the Soviet Union by two mighty oceans and five thousand miles, frequently gives the appearance of being distilled almost to jelly with fear, while countries ever so much closer to the Soviet Union are in no such state of nerves? Or, to put the same question another way: Why is it that the anti-Communist hysteria of our time is a product bearing a "Made in USA" label and exported to the four corners of the earth at great cost to the American people? Why is it accepted by other nations rather reluctantly, at best, even though it is handed out free with an extra door prize thrown in for good measure?*

There is something incongruous about this. Is it that the peoples

* Upon a return from Europe in December, 1953, Ernest T. Weir, Chairman of the National Steel Corporation, reported: "Europe generally sees no reason to fear Russian aggression now or in the near future." He found "a widely held opinion that the United States actually wanted a state of tension and fear to continue."

of Europe and Asia are less sensitive to the danger of foreign invasion and conquest? Or, is it that our statesmen and public leaders have a clairvoyance which others do not possess? Certainly this doesn't make sense. The peoples of Europe and Asia should be the very first to react to such peril, if it really exists, and without prodding from us. After all, the colonial and semi-colonial peoples of the world have long borne the terrible burden of imperialist oppression. And the peoples of Europe and Asia still bear deep scars from the warfare and foreign occupation of but a short decade ago. It is gall, indeed, for some Americans to assume that peoples who can count their war dead in the many millions are now so insensitive to their national safety that they have to be reminded of this constantly by the shrill admonitions of John Foster Dulles.

This was noted by Adlai Stevenson upon his return from his world trip, even though he has not drawn the necessary conclusions from it. In *Call to Greatness* he wrote: "And people who have lived for centuries in perpetual insecurity among predatory neighbors don't understand how there can be such insecurity and fear in America, which has never been bombed, let alone occupied by an enemy." He found abroad "suspicion that we are less concerned with helping others than helping ourselves."

When Europe and Asia faced *real* threats to peace and freedom the situation was quite different. It was the common people of the world who then were most fully aroused to the great danger stemming from fascist aggression. It was, however, the statesmen and public leaders of the Western capitalist democracies who closed their eyes to this menace and only saw it in its real light when they themselves were directly periled. Even under the liberal Roosevelt, the United States refused to come to the assistance of the beleaguered Spanish Republic and continued shipping scrap iron to Japan. But today, it is precisely the common people, those who always do the fighting and dying for freedom, who fear Wall Street's intentions the most and the Soviet Union's the least. It is the Western capitalist statesmen today, and first of all America's, who insist upon keeping the cauldron of war tension ever boiling.

WHEN FOREIGN POLICY WAS SUSPECT

There was a time when such evidence would have sufficed to make most liberal-minded people pause before rushing to endorse foreign policy. In fact, there was a time when American liberals

were the very first to be suspicious of a foreign policy emanating from or having the support of Wall Street. That was when the recognition of the real enemy made it easier to see other things more clearly. For it was not always that human nature and "totalitarianism" in the abstract were blamed for war. It was generally understood that no matter what the superficial surface cause of modern war appeared to be, beneath the surface there lurked powerful economic causes.

A whole generation had felt the shock and disillusionment which followed World War I. They well remembered that the man who was reelected as President in 1916 on the slogan, "He kept us out of war," plunged the nation into war a month after inauguration. And burned into their consciousness was Woodrow Wilson's admission in a speech delivered in St. Louis on April 6, 1919, that the war had been fought for far less noble aims than to "Save the world for democracy."

"Why, my fellow citizens," Wilson had asked, "is there any man here or any woman, let me say is there any child here, who does not know that the seed of war in the modern world is industrial and commercial rivalry? The real reason that the war that we have just finished took place was that Germany was afraid her commercial rivals were going to get the better of her, and the reason why some nations went into the war against Germany was that they thought Germany would get the commercial advantage of them. . . . This war, in its inception was a commercial and industrial war. It was not a political war."

When Robert M. LaFollette had made the same charge in 1917, he was called a "traitor," "disloyal" and "foreign agent," in a manner reminiscent of today. In his valiant effort to prevent U. S. entry into the war, George W. Norris, liberal Senator from Nebraska, had protested: "We are going into war upon the command of gold. . . . I know that this war madness has taken possession of the financial and political powers of our country. I know that nothing I can say will stay the blow that is soon to fall. I feel that we are committing a sin against humanity, and against our countrymen. I would like to say to this war god, you shall not coin into gold the lifeblood of my brethren. . . . I feel that we are about to put the dollar sign upon the American flag."

After the war was over the truth of these remarks was confirmed by the disclosure of the confidential cable which Walter H. Page, U.S. Ambassador to Britain and a House of Morgan man, had sent to President Wilson a month before the U.S. declaration of war

against Germany. The cable urged, "Perhaps our going to war is the only way in which our present prominent trade position can be maintained and a panic averted."

Later, in 1934, the Senate Investigation of the Munitions Industry further showed to what extent war and profits went hand in hand. Senator Gerald Nye, chairman of the investigation, told the American people: "In America alone the World War created 22,000 new millionaires. . . . There is altogether too much truth to the assertion that war and preparedness for war are nothing more than games, games for profit."

In the 1930's liberal-minded people also knew why American Marines had been sent to Nicaragua and what the infamous Platt Amendment had meant for Cuba. They knew why the flag followed the dollar and the Marines followed the flag. Here is how Major General Smedley D. Butler, in testimony before a congressional committee, described his role and that of the Marines:

"I spent thirty-three years and four months in active service as a member of our country's most agile military force—the Marine Corps. I served in all commissioned ranks from a second lieutenant to major-general. And during that period I spent most of my time being a high-class muscle man for Big Business, for Wall Street, and for the bankers. In short, I was a racketeer for capitalism. . . .

"Thus I helped make Mexico and especially Tampico safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenues in. . . . I helped purify Nicaragua for the International banking house of Brown Brothers in 1909-1912. I brought light to the Dominican Republic for American sugar interests in 1916. I helped make Honduras 'right' for American fruit companies in 1903. In 1927 I helped see to it that Standard Oil went its way unmolested.

"During these years I had, as the boys in the back room would say, a swell racket. I was rewarded with honors, medals, promotion. Looking back on it, I feel I might have given Al Capone a few hints. The best he could do was to operate his racket in three city districts. We Marines operated on three continents."

THE BIG LIE AND THE CRIME AGAINST GUATEMALA

Today, anything goes so long as it is cloaked in the shabby garments of "defense against the danger of Communism." The democratic government of Guatemala was overthrown in June, 1954, with

hardly a murmur of protest from labor and liberal forces in this country. Responsibility for this armed intervention against a sister republic was cynically acknowledged by John S. Knight, publisher of the *Chicago Daily News*, the *Detroit Free Press*, and a chain of other newspapers. After a visit to Guatemala in the Spring of 1955, Knight wrote an editorial in which he referred to what had happened in that country as a "brilliant diplomatic maneuver" for the U. S. State Department.

This "brilliant diplomatic maneuver" was covered by one of Knight's ace reporters, Ed Lahey, who used even more cynical words to describe what had happened. "Thus ended a revolution," wrote Lahey, "that came about because these squares in Guatemala didn't know that left-wing governments had gone out of fashion in the Western Hemisphere, and that sooner or later they were going to get knocked off by Uncle Sam, directly or indirectly."

But these people whom Lahey saw fit to refer to as "squares" were only trying to win a little bit more food for their families and a greater degree of national independence and freedom. And the real reason they were "knocked off by Uncle Sam" is that this desire for greater food and freedom was not to the liking of Wall Street's financial interests.

A bit of the tragic story of Guatemala can be pieced together from a Foreign Policy Association pamphlet which appeared in August, 1953. Herbert L. Matthews described the situation in Guatemala as follows: "There was a feudal dictatorship under General Jorge Ubico from 1930 to 1944. There were a very few rich people making up the landowning oligarchy, and the rest were poor, ignorant and often diseased. . . . On June 29, 1944, Ubico was driven from power and the following year Juan Jose Arevalo was installed as president. . . . The leaders," continues Matthews, "were not Communists and are not today, but they saw the Reds as natural allies having the same objectives. . . . Since the president and his cabinet are not Communists and since neither the Army nor the police are run by the Communists the appearance [of Communist control or domination] is false." So wrote a man who had little sympathy with the liberal reform government and who by all standards is a dyed-in-the-wool anti-Communist.

In the same pamphlet, in a section written by Lula Thomas Holmes, a bit more of the story is given. We are informed that 60 to 70 percent of the Guatemalan population are Indians and 25 percent of mixed blood. Only 5 percent, the white section of the population, "own most of the land and commercial establishments." The per

capita income of the country is about \$77—not a week nor a month, but a year! And the peons on the coffee and banana plantations earn much less than this average! The writer estimates the illiteracy rate as about 66 percent, although the United Nations give the figure as 72 percent. In 1951, Colonel Jacobo Arbenz Guzman was elected President, “leading a coalition of left-wing and center parties.”

Guatemala has a coffee and banana economy. Expropriations of private lands started in January, 1953. By March, 1953, 283,000 acres, including 215,000 acres of the United Fruit Company land, were taken over by the government, although the Guatemalan Government had offered full compensation for any land it took. The amount it offered to pay was based “on the value set on the landed property for tax purposes by the owner itself.” United Nations’ figures also show that in 1952 American corporations had direct investments in that country totalling \$108 million. These were invested in coffee and banana plantations, utilities, railroads, petroleum and metal mines extraction. The hold that the United Fruit Company has on the economic life of the country can be seen in the fact that even the telephone communication of Guatemala with the rest of the world is provided largely by two U. S. enterprises, one of which is a subsidiary of the United Fruit Company. This company also owns railroads, docking piers, electric utilities, and other enterprises.

When did the Guatemalan Government suddenly become a “Communist” government and a “threat” to the Western Hemisphere and the “free world?” It became such when it adopted a liberal labor code and an agricultural reform law and decided to expropriate lands owned by the United Fruit Company but not under cultivation. The U.S. State Department intervened diplomatically in behalf of United Fruit and in April, 1953, filed a claim of \$16 million against Guatemala for the expropriated properties. When the Guatemalan Government refused to back down it became necessary to teach her a lesson in “democracy!”

Who gained by the armed overthrow of the duly elected Guatemalan Government? Certainly not the people of Guatemala nor the people of the United States. The only ones that gained were the United Fruit Company and the reactionaries and imperialists everywhere. In the *New York Times* of March 20, 1955, and of December 26, 1955, there appeared the sequels to the Guatemala story. The first of these told how the new government was systematically wiping out the last remnants of the agrarian reform measures. Under a new law “all land confiscated would be returned to the original owners and the

peasants would have to give it up." What this policy of expropriating the peasants meant in human terms can be seen by the promise of the government in March, 1955, not to permit mass evictions until January, 1956. Lieutenant Manuel Montenegro, the new chief of the Agrarian Affairs Office, was quoted in the *Times* dispatch as saying he would have allowed mass evictions, as some wanted, but that the impact would have been such that "we would have toppled the Government." He pictured thousands of hungry peasants roaming the roads with nowhere to go. And the story of December 26, 1955, merely told how in the national elections held a week earlier the secret ballot had been replaced by a public ballot for those considered illiterate, even though no opposition parties or candidates were permitted. And the result, according to the *Times* dispatch, was "that most people stayed away from the polls."

Such was the "brilliant diplomatic maneuver!" We can all sleep more soundly tonight. The "Red menace" in the Western Hemisphere has been crushed! Little Guatemala is once again a colony of the United Fruit Company!

THE BIG LIE AND THE QUESTION OF ENDS AND MEANS

Crimes of this kind are defended in the name of anti-Communism by the very same people who dare to accuse the Communists of believing that the end justifies the means. But who is it that really permits the end to justify the means? Who are they that find themselves, always and everywhere, allied with the monied interests against the interests of the common people? Who are they that find themselves everywhere on the side of reaction—the Nazis and anti-Semites in Western Germany, the racists in South Africa, the monarchy in Greece, the fascist regime in Spain, Syngman Rhee in South Korea, Chiang Kai-shek in Formosa and feudal-military dictatorships in Latin America? Who has benefited from the monies shipped abroad from American taxes? Where in the so-called "free world" has there been more than a gesture toward real land reform? Where have our government's policies aided the poor and not the rich?

William Gomberg, in an article in *Labor and the Nation*, pointed out as early as 1951 that Marshall Plan aid had not been going to the common people but to "take care of the top strata." And when Burma's Premier Nu addressed the Overseas Press Club on his visit to the United States in the Summer of 1955, he said, "It is something

of a surprise to those who put their faith in democracy . . . when they see this great country allying itself with, and giving support to, regimes which by no stretch of the imagination can be regarded as 'Governments of the people, for the people, by the people.' To make matters worse, some of the un-democratic, corrupt, and discredited regimes which are being so supported have already been repudiated by the peoples concerned."

Many liberals in this country would agree with these criticisms. They would even say they are fighting the same thing. It is true that Walter Reuther, Justice Douglas, Chester Bowles, Adlai Stevenson, James Wechsler, and others, have pointed out these things. But for them—and this is their great error—these are mere surface blemishes on an otherwise healthy policy. What they fail to understand is that the ailment is far more than skin deep. The policy itself is rotten. Thus the excrescences fought against can no more be separated from the policy than John Foster Dulles from the Chase National Bank. As in the case of Guatemala, reprehensible means are used to further reprehensible ends!

To show how totally devoid of honesty is the accusation against the Communists, let us briefly return to Messrs. Lippmann and Schlesinger. In Lippmann's book, *A Public Philosophy*, he attacks Lenin and the Communists, once again, on the question of means and ends. Yet between the covers of this same book he brazenly admits that to get the masses to agree to the nation's entry into World War I and World War II, they were lied to, drugged with false propaganda, and promised what the ruling class never had any intention of fulfilling. He says that the people had to be "intoxicated" into believing that the enemy was "evil incarnate" and the Germans and Japanese "incurably bad."

"Mass opinion," grumbles Lippmann, "has acquired mounting power in this century. It has shown itself to be a dangerous master of decisions when the stakes are life and death." Therefore, "when the decision is critical and urgent, the public will not be told the whole truth." For "politicians rarely feel they can afford the luxury of telling the whole truth to the people. And since not telling it, though prudent, is uncomfortable, they find it easier if they themselves do not have to hear too often too much of the sour truth."

Let us be clear. Lippmann is not taking the government or the ruling class to task for not telling the whole truth to the people. And he well understands that a half-truth is most frequently a

whole-lie. But according to him this wholesale lying is necessary and inevitable so long as the popular masses are permitted to have influence on decisions, for "a fiction is not necessarily a falsehood."

This is the morality of the new "public philosophy." And if the means of lying to the people is necessary for the end of preparing an anti-Soviet war, who can vouch for the authenticity of what is being told the American people today about the Soviet Union and about America's foreign policy objectives? Moreover, bearing in mind Lippmann's admissions, who now would aver that it was North Korea and not South Korea that started the Korean War?—and after the blood-thirsty octogenarian Syngman Rhee spilled the beans in an interview in the *U.S. News and World Report* of August 13, 1954? In this Rhee admitted: "We started the fight in the first place in the hope that Communism would be destroyed." After all, the decision to start that war was what Lippmann would call "critical and urgent" and therefore the public could not be told the whole "sour truth!"

In Schlesinger's *The Vital Center* the same hoary charge is made against the Communists time and time again. And yet he too provides us with an object lesson in cynicism and hypocrisy. Contemptuously sarcastic of the progressive tradition, he pokes fun at progressives for "sentimentality" and "softness." "Ask a progressive," he tells us, "what he thinks of the Mexican War, or of our national policy toward the Indians, and he will probably say that these outbursts of American imperialism are black marks on our history. Ask him whether he then regrets that California, Texas and the West are today part of the United States. And was there perhaps some way of taking lands from the Indians or from Mexico without violating rights in the process?"

If words mean anything at all, Schlesinger is saying that the "violation" of Indian and Mexican rights has been justified by the historic results. Who is it, therefore, that believes in the end justifying the means? With such logic anything can be justified. That the Negro people are part of the United States, for example, is a good thing. Does that in the slightest justify that they were brought here in chains as slaves? On our part we still hold to the view that these acts "are black marks on our history." Instead of justifying them, we prefer to make the American people more cognizant of these crimes. If they are, they will become more sensitive to how the American ruling class is violating the sacred rights of other peoples today. In altered form, we would like to ask Schlesinger his own question: Is "there perhaps

some other way" of establishing Wall Street world domination "without violating rights in the process?" And the answer would be "No!"

Thus it can be seen how the influence of the Big Lie has led liberals to turn against their own professed beliefs, how the "new radicalism" became the defender of reaction; how cynical oppression and intervention in the affairs of other nations were condoned; and how nefarious means were justified in behalf of even more nefarious ends.

CHAPTER IV

IS AMERICA THREATENED?

*Oh wad some power the giftie gie us
To see ourselves as others see us!
It wad frae monie a blunder free us,
An' foolish notion.*

—Robert Burns

THE SEED OF MODERN WAR

IN DENYING THAT America faces an external threat to its peace or security, we do not deny that there have been times when the opposite was true. The rise of Hitler fascism did bring into being such a threat, even though the ruling class would now like to fight World War II over again—and on the other side!

Those who accuse the Soviet Union of following in the discredited footpath of Nazi Germany and seeking to impose its own domination over the world must answer some questions: What would the Soviet Union have to gain from such a course? Why would she seek or need world domination? These questions must be answered, basically and fundamentally, and not by evasive subterfuge camouflaged by the asinine epithet, “totalitarianism.” What the LaFollette and Norris generation of liberals knew, what the Debs generation of Socialists knew, what Wilson said every child grasped is “that the seed of war in the modern world is industrial and commercial rivalry.” This is still the cause and all the squirming to get away from it changes it not.

Why did Nazi Germany seek to redivide the world and to impose world domination? Was this just because a “madman” named Hitler came to power? How was it possible for a cultured nation such as Germany to permit a “madman” to come to power? Why was so large

a portion of the German nation taken in by the wild dream of world conquest? The answer to these questions cannot be found except in the economic facts of life.

Germany did not achieve national unification until 1872. Her economic development lagged seriously behind other Western European states, particularly Britain and France. By the turn of the century this was changing rapidly. Britain "which in 1880 was producing more than the three leading continental powers together [Germany, France, Belgium-Luxembourg], rapidly lost ground in the following decades, and in 1913 the output of the German steel industry was twice as large as that of the British." (From the United Nations' volume, *Growth and Stagnation in the European Economy*).

With the growth in productive power far outstripping the buying power of her people, Germany, like all other developed capitalist countries, was compelled to compete for more and more of the world market. It was impossible, however, for her to get a share of the world market, of new lucrative investment spheres, and of cheap sources of raw materials, in any way commensurate with her growing productive forces. The earlier capitalist arrivals had gotten there first. It was no longer possible for Germany, as it had been for Britain, France and others, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to stake out fresh claims to the colonial areas of the world. At least it was no longer possible to stake these out and take them over without a fight—not only with the colonial peoples involved, but with other industrial powers. To want these claims badly meant to want them badly enough to go to war over them. Quincy Wright, in his two-volume *A Study of War*, discloses that from 1900 to 1941 there were 24 official wars, although "there have been over 600 [military] campaigns, of which more than 500 were outside of these wars."

World War I was the first world conflagration brought on by the struggle of the monopolists for the lion's share of world markets, investment spheres, sources of raw materials and cheap colonial labor. It was V. I. Lenin, in his analytical work *Imperialism*, who dissected the new stage of world capitalist development. He showed that the rise of the monopolies to dominance in the leading countries had replaced earlier competitive capitalism. Competition was now a struggle between giants, and on a world scale. He showed that the great surpluses of capital being accumulated in the developed countries required new outlets abroad for investment at higher rates of profit. This, in its turn, further accentuated the uneven development of capitalist countries and required periodic redivisions of the terri-

tories of the globe in favor of one or another monopolistic combination. From all this he drew the conclusion that capitalism had reached its last stage of development, imperialism, and that as long as imperialism existed so long would wars be inevitable.

Without recognizing the cause for this, many non-Marxist and even anti-Marxist historians and economists were compelled to note that something fundamental had changed in world relations with the opening of the century. Describing the nineteenth century Victorian Age of British capitalism, the British economist, John Maynard Keynes, in his book *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, written in 1920, referred to it as "extraordinary." Any "inhabitant of London," he said, could have taken "transit to any country or climate without passport or other formality, could dispatch his servant to the neighboring office of a bank for such supply of the precious metals as might seem convenient, and then proceed abroad to foreign quarters without knowledge of their religion, language or customs, bearing coined wealth upon his person, and would consider himself greatly aggrieved and much surprised at the least interference. But, most important of all, he regarded this state of affairs as normal, certain and permanent."

Arnold J. Toynbee, British historian, in his famed massive *Study of History*, also notes that wars "in our Western world" have been "keyed up to an unprecedented degree of ferocity . . . in these latter days where that world has now virtually completed its stupendous feat of incorporating the whole face of the Earth and of the entire living generation of Mankind into its own body material."

But when it comes to explaining the cause for this, Toynbee resorts to the vague general abstraction of blaming the "demonic forces—Democracy and Industrialism." Here, if ever, is an example of how words can be used to conceal, and not to express meaning. What is meant by "demonic forces—Democracy and Industrialism?" Is it not being hammered into us constantly that democracy and so-called "Western Civilization" are one and the same? Thus, when Toynbee speaks of "Democracy" he really means capitalism. The same holds for the word "Industrialism." This too is synonomous with capitalism, and more specifically with monopoly capitalism. The only other industrialism there can be is under socialism, but the "cycle of ferocious Western wars" of which Toynbee speaks began before there was a socialist state, let alone socialist industrialization.

Quincy Wright, in his scholarly study of war, also takes issue with the Marxist materialist explanation for the cause of modern war. But he is compelled to note the vast difference between previous

centuries and this one. He points out that the wars of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, "contributed to the building of the modern states, to their organization in a European system." In other words, they were wars fought mainly for the national unification of peoples.

"In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, however, war was less intense in Europe," Wright informs us, "but the European states by means of war or threats of war extended their dynamic civilizations at the expense of the traditional cultures of America, Africa, and the Pacific and injected the virus of their civilizations into the ancient civilizations of China, Japan, and India." The virus of which Wright speaks is that of colonial oppression. The fact is that the much vaunted democracy of "Western civilization" has been a class democracy for its own people, and, like ancient Greek and Roman civilizations, this has rested on a pyramid of brutal oppression of other peoples, in this case the vast majority of mankind, the colonial and semi-colonial peoples.

Wright admits that with the twentieth century things have changed most radically. The result of these changes, he states, "was a shaking of general confidence in the standards of Western civilization [which] were dealt severe blows by World War I."

The cause for German aggression lay not in the emergence of a "madman," but in the need of German monopoly capitalism to seek a redivision of the world in its favor. It had tried to achieve this in World War I, but had failed. As a consequence its position had become even more unequal. With the loss of the war had come the loss of its African colonies, Alsace-Lorraine, the Saar, and a section of Upper Silesia. And yet, despite these handicaps, German capitalism, basing itself on more modern technical methods of production and on a higher degree of monopoly concentration (three concerns controlled 70 percent of German steel production), continued to expand its productive power. By 1927, British steel production had risen to 117 percent of its pre-war 1913 level; French to 123 percent; and German to 128 percent.

When the world economic crisis broke in 1930, German capitalism was hit the hardest of all. At the depth of the crisis in 1932, American industrial production had sunk to 91 percent of the pre-war 1913 level; British to 82 percent; French to 96 percent, and German to 68 percent. German capitalism had no reserves to fall back upon. The alternative for it became expansion or death—expansion through world war, or death by revolution. This was the situation which brought

Hitler to power. German monopoly needed the destruction of democracy and the imposition of fascism for two reasons: to crush the struggles of the hungry (in 1932, more than 30 percent of the German workers were jobless), and to regiment the nation for world conquest.

The story of Japanese aggression is similar in many respects. Japan was first opened to Western trade and influence in 1853 when Commodore Matthew Perry sailed into Tokyo Bay. It, too, therefore, arrived late on the capitalist scene. Desperately needing foreign markets for its manufactured goods, seeking its own sources of cheap raw materials, Japanese imperialism saw no reason why it should not emulate the example of Western capitalism. If that required coming into collision with other great powers, well, it was the price a capitalist nation had to pay for growing up in an age in which the big thieves had already divided the world between them and refused to permit newcomers to muscle in on their territories. Remembering what Martin Luther had said about little thieves being put in jail while big ones go flaunting in gold and silver, both German and Japanese imperialism determined to be the biggest yet, or go down in the attempt.

Do the same factors which drive capitalism to war operate in respect to the Soviet Union? Does it face a problem of overproduction or unemployment? Does the buying power of its people lag behind its ability to produce? Does it, therefore, need to compete for more and more foreign markets? Does it have accumulated reserves of capital seeking more profitable outlet for investment abroad? Does it fear depression and economic crisis and see in armament production and war the solution to these? Does it have coupon clippers who live off investments in foreign countries? Do any of its nationals own stock in foreign properties or enterprises? Let's face it: The answer to each and every one of these questions is an emphatic, "No!"

The very arguments frequently employed against the Soviet Union emphasize that there is no Soviet economic motive for war and conquest. During the 1955 Soviet discussions on economic policy our own swivel-chair "experts" on that country were determined to prove the existence of a grave commodity shortage. According to them the Soviet economic system was floundering and in the midst of a crisis of "under-production." But if all this is true, let these "experts" at least be consistent—where then is the Soviet economic motivation to grab foreign markets or territories? It just doesn't make sense.

The commodity shortages in the Soviet Union arise from a simple fact—production is organized for use and not for profit. But before

any of our "free enterprise" champions rush forth to shout, "Ah, we told you so, socialism doesn't work!" let them pause and think for a moment. Under socialism there is no gap between production and consumption, for nothing is siphoned off in the form of private profit. The more produced, therefore, the more consumed. That is why, even though Soviet industry produces more than three times as much as in 1940, and this despite the terrible havoc and destruction of the war, there is still a "shortage," in the sense that much, much more could be consumed.

In capitalist countries, "over-production" does not signify that more has been produced than can be consumed; only more than can be bought. Thus, there is frequently "over-production" in a country even as poverty-stricken as India. As for the United States, our surplus of farm products does not signify that every American has all the butter, eggs, grains and meats he needs. It only indicates that not every American has the money to buy as much of these as he would like. The startling fact is that per capita meat consumption in this country is still somewhat below what it was in 1908.

In the Soviet Union there can be no glutted market, no "over-production" or unemployment. Consumption and production rise together. And when socialist production reaches the point at which the needs of all are met fully (Communism), even then there will be no problem of "over-production," for the hours of work and the hours of leisure can be adjusted accordingly.

Whether one agrees with the Soviet economic system or not, or with this brief explanation of it, there can be no disagreement on one score—the Soviet Union has by no means reached the limit of its internal economic development. And China has barely begun the long, arduous climb toward becoming a modern industrial nation. What the Soviet Union and China need, therefore, is peace, not war. War would set them back and disrupt their plans for peaceful economic development. While they do not fear the outcome of war should it be forced upon them, they ardently desire peace.

William Randolph Hearst, Jr., upon his return from his much publicized trip to the Soviet Union, admitted that "the Soviet leaders mean it when they say Russia wants peace." And businessman Marshall MacDuffie, in his book *The Red Carpet*, refers to "a propaganda-stimulated but unquestionably sincere desire for peace on the part of virtually all Soviet citizens. . . . Wherever I went in the Soviet Union," he reports, "the word 'peace' continually assailed my eye and ear."

What a strange way to prepare a people for a war of aggression! Did fascist Germany, Italy and Japan also stimulate propaganda for peace? The opposite is true.

Therefore it can be said that if, as history has shown, the economic motivation of capitalist states is frequently toward aggression and war, the economic motivation of socialist states is toward the maintenance of peace.*

"THE STRICKEN LAND"

What about the charge of Soviet imperialism heard so frequently? Are China and the Eastern European socialist states Soviet colonies or satellites? These questions, too, can be answered only by sticking to facts and fundamentals and discarding falsehoods and fantasies. The imperialist subjugation of other states has one prime objective—the extortion of tribute from the oppressed by the oppressor. Imperialism without tribute is as impossible as fire without flames or a room without walls. And while the form of rule and extent of tribute varies greatly, depending upon given conditions, the essence always remains the same.

Rexford Guy Tugwell, former New Deal administrator and Governor of Puerto Rico, in his book, *The Stricken Land*, compares the status of Puerto Rico in the mid-'thirties with that of the original thirteen American colonies. Economically, he explains, colonialism "consisted in setting up things so that the colony sold its raw products in a cheap market (in the mother country) and bought its food and other finished goods in a dear market (also in the mother country); there was also the matter of foreign products to be carried on American ships. In that sense Puerto Rico," continues Tugwell, "was a colony just as New York and Massachusetts had been colonies. Except for 'relief' of one kind or another, which George III and the others were too foolish to give when it would have been wise, Puerto Rico was just as badly off." And, relates Tugwell, with understanding bitterness, "relief was something which the Congress made Puerto

* In passing, it is humorous to note how anti-Soviet propaganda sometimes gets caught in the web of its own lies. Marshall MacDuffie concludes his book by quoting the answer of a Briton in Moscow to the question: "What do you think of the Soviet Union now that you've been around it?" The reply was: "Better than most Englishmen think it is, but not nearly so good as most Russians think it is." In other words, most Russians apparently think it's quite good!

Rico beg for, hard, filthy hat in hand, exhibiting sores, calling and grimacing in exaggerated humility. And this last was the real crime of America in the Caribbean, making Puerto Ricans something less than the men they were born to be."

Despite the bally-hoo connected with the changes that have taken place in Puerto Rico since World War II the essence of imperialist domination, as described by Tugwell, still remains. Puerto Rico, although under the American flag and Constitution, is unequal in every respect. Like many other colonial and semi-colonial countries, Puerto Rico still has a one-crop economy—cane sugar. This is the most important cheap raw material she produces for the "mother country." Nor is she permitted to refine enough of this for even her own needs. The molasses must first be shipped to the U.S. and then Puerto Rico buys back the refined product. And not withstanding all the talk of diversified agriculture, more acres were allocated to cane sugar growing in 1952 than in 1942—an increase from 338,000 to 423,000 acres.

Furthermore, Puerto Rico still does its buying of finished manufactured articles in the United States at excessively high monopoly prices. What all this means can be seen in some startling and shameful facts. The average gross wage of a Puerto Rican production worker in manufacturing during April, 1955, was \$19 a week. In the same month the same type of worker in the United States was reported as earning a gross weekly wage of \$74. Puerto Rican sugarcane workers—the largest group of workers on the island—were earning even less than manufacturing workers. At the beginning of 1954, five percent of U.S. workers were listed as unemployed as compared with 18 percent of Puerto Rican workers. In 1949, \$49 was spent per U. S. inhabitant for education, but in Puerto Rico only \$17.

A most striking expression of this unequal colonial status of Puerto Rico, and of the huge amounts of tribute exacted from her by American monopoly, can be seen by the very appeal used by American financial interests to entice capital to the island. In full-page advertisements which appeared during 1955, Beardsley Rumml urged American capitalists to invest in Puerto Rico for "Federal taxes do not apply to Puerto Rico, and the Commonwealth also offers full exemption from local taxes," even though investors are "protected by all the guarantees of the U.S. Constitution." Rumml gives examples of what these inducements and "guarantees" mean in cold dollars and cents. Corporate tax exemptions, according to Rumml, would transform what would be a net profit of \$245,000 in the U. S. into \$500,000 in

Puerto Rico. Income tax exemptions would multiply an earning of \$23,000 in the U.S. to \$50,000 in Puerto Rico, and catapult an earning of \$70,000 to \$500,000. This is imperialist tribute with a vengeance.

Nor should anyone conclude that the movement of some run-away sweat shops to Puerto Rico (mainly from the garment trades) is bringing about the island's industrialization. In the first place, there is no growth of basic industry. In April, 1955, there were less than 3,500 workers in all of Puerto Rico engaged in making any kind of metal or electrical products, including machinery. Furthermore, United Nations' statistics indicate that while in 1939, 11.4 percent of Puerto Rico's net domestic product was contributed by manufacturing, in 1951 this had increased to but 11.8 percent. An increase of only four-tenths of one percent in 12 years!

SOVIET IMPERIALISM—FICTION OR FACT?

Let us discuss the charge of imperialism levelled at the Soviet Union against the background of what we have learned about Guatemala and Puerto Rico. We shall start with the peoples living within the borders of the Soviet Union.

It is frequently forgotten that the Soviet Union is not just composed of Russians, but of more than a hundred different peoples in various stages of national development. The McMillan World Almanac gives the following breakdown of population for the Soviet Union: Russian, 58.4 percent; Ukranian, 16.6 percent; Byelorussian, 3.1 percent; Uzbek, 2.9 percent; Tartars, 2.5 percent; Kazakhs, 1.8 percent; Armenian, Azerbaijani, Georgian, each 1.3 percent; and more than 100 others, 10.8 percent.

It is particularly convenient for some to forget this when dealing with the Soviet standard of living. But, on the other hand, when one wishes to make the Soviet Union appear as "a mystery wrapped in an enigma," then all that is needed is to refer, with characteristic imperialist superiority, to the Soviet Union as "Asiatic."

What has been the Soviet policy toward the former "backward" peoples within its borders? Has it aimed to keep these in a state of economic under-development, or has it striven with might and main to industrialize them? Not even the most biased observer can claim the former. The Soviet Union has given equality to these peoples not only in a formal sense. It has made it real. It has recognized that there can be no equality between unequals. Therefore, it has pursued

a course of guaranteeing that the economic and cultural development of the formerly oppressed peoples would be even more rapid than that of the Russian nation, so that in time, they would catch up with it. The wooden plow has been replaced by the iron tractor, the horse and camel by the auto, train and airplane, the candle and kerosene lamp with the electric bulb, and illiteracy and superstition with education and culture.

The Soviet Union has not taken the cream off its production and used it to raise the living standards of the Russian people at the expense of the others. It has spread its butter so that all the peoples within its borders would have a share. This living example has done more to revolutionize the ancient East than anything that has happened in centuries. And no amount of imperialist propaganda can change this. The colonial peoples of the world now have a great example to prove that they need not remain in an inferior status, that they are as capable of building a new way of life as any other people.

What about China and the other Communist-led nations outside the borders of the Soviet Union? Are these being kept in a state of enforced under-development so that they can play the role of agrarian hinterlands to an industrialized Soviet Union? This would be the case if there were any validity to the charge of Soviet imperialism. But facts show the opposite.

That China is industrializing rapidly no one can dispute. Kathryn Lewis, newspaperwoman for the *Chicago Sun-Times*, interviewed a government official in Karachi, Pakistan. "It was shocking," she wrote, "to hear him talk excitedly of the progress made in China under the Red regime. 'There is no unemployment there,' he said." Chester Bowles, in the *New York Times* of April 10, 1955, warns this country's policy-makers that they do not understand the nature of the appeal China is making to Asia's downtrodden peoples. "These peoples," he observes, "see China as a nation which has participated in the common struggle against Western domination and which shares with other Asian nations such basic problems as poverty, illiteracy and lack of industrial development. Throughout Asia there is widespread admiration for the vigor with which Red China is attacking these problems." Grudgingly he is compelled to speak of "Communist China's dynamic rate of development." This is certainly not the picture of a satellite, but of a young, rising and ever more lustrous star!

What about Eastern Europe? Is the picture different there? These

countries, too, with the single exception of Czechoslovakia, were among the most underdeveloped in Europe. United Nations' statistics show, however, that the countries of Eastern Europe—specifically those under Communist leadership working in close cooperation with the Soviet Union—have shown the most rapid industrial development. Manufacturing production in Western Europe rose from 1948 to 1953 by exactly 50 percent. From 1948 to 1952, Czechoslovakia increased her production by 82 percent; Bulgaria by 121 percent; Rumania by 208 percent; and Hungary by 209 percent. Poland's increase from 1948 to 1953 was 167 percent. In contrast, Yugoslavia's increase by 1953 was only 22 percent. Thus it can be seen that the highest rate of industrial growth occurred where there was the very closest cooperation with the Soviet Union.

Further proof of the anti-imperialist character of the Soviet Union is to be found, strangely enough, in the very discussions on economic policy that have taken place over recent years among Soviet leaders. We say strangely enough, for the coterie of professional Soviet-haters has tried its utmost to make it seem as if the renewed Soviet emphasis on the importance of heavy industry has sinister significance and represents a reversal of the pledge to raise constantly the material conditions of the people. But without increasing the capital investments for new plant and machine equipment, year by year, how is it possible, in an industrial society, to bring about a constant increase in total production and a progressively accelerated rise in consumer goods production? Thus the emphasis on the importance of heavy industry is the very guarantee for the most rapid and most effective rise in material living conditions.

There is, however, a second reason for this stress. As a socialist state, the Soviet Union is not concerned with its needs alone. It has an obligation to help weaker, less developed nations, particularly those on the road to socialism, to build up their own economies and to raise their living standards. The *New York Times* of March 4, 1955 quoted an important article on this subject from the leading Soviet theoretical magazine, *The Communist*. This made clear that in the camp of socialism "there can be no question, as sometimes occurs under capitalism, of some countries being merely agrarian and raw material-producing appendages of others and not developing their own industry." The Soviet Union, this article states, "cannot help rendering friendly aid to the countries of peoples' democracy in setting up their heavy industry."

Where in this policy is there even the slightest trace of imperialism? It is as far from imperialism as are the interests of the world's peoples from those of Wall Street!

THE PROMISE OF PEACEFUL COMPETITION

Is not Soviet ideology a stimulant toward expansion and conquest? This question, too, must be answered by standing on the solid ground of facts.

It is true that the Soviet Union and Marxists everywhere believe that capitalism is an outmoded dying social system and will give way inevitably to socialism. This belief is founded in the scientific knowledge that systems of society are not eternal, and, in general, conform to the social relations growing out of the way men make their living. "At a certain stage of their development," wrote Karl Marx, "the material productive forces of society come in conflict with the existing relations of production, or—what is but a legal expression for the same thing—with the property relations. . . . Then begins an epoch of social revolution."

Does the Soviet Union desire the socialist system to triumph throughout the world? It does. Does it seek to attain this end by its own intervention in the internal affairs of other states? It decidedly does not! Does the Soviet Union wish to influence other peoples to follow its example? It does. How? By peaceful competition with the capitalist world to show which social system is superior, which social system can offer the most to its people.

This is the real challenge of socialism. But is this a bad thing, is it something to be alarmed over? Certainly not for the people of the United States or those of the rest of the world. With every stride forward made by the Soviet Union, China and the other lands of socialism, our own monopolists are compelled to take note, are worried lest more people lose faith in capitalism. Under such circumstances it is possible for the common people to make more demands upon the monopolists, to win reforms and concessions unattainable yesterday.

Let us cite a few examples. The fact that the Soviet Union has wiped out racial and national oppression and discrimination within its own borders has put the American ruling class on the spot regarding the treatment of the Negro people in this country. This is the meaning of the many speeches made by labor and liberal leaders

calling for an end to the Jim Crow system in the name of "fighting Communism." So pronounced has this type of appeal become that Thurgood Marshall, chief counsel for the NAACP, speaking at the 1954 convention of the CIO, correctly asked why the Negro people should not be given their freedom in the name of simple justice, and not just because it may suit the needs of foreign policy. But if this type of argument is made at all, is it not a great tribute to the socialist world and to the Communists? Inadvertently and unwittingly, it admits that on this score socialism stands on high moral ground and has already put capitalism to shame.

Or, let us take the question of economic depression and unemployment. Before there was a Soviet Union it was possible to get large numbers of people to believe that economic crises were unavoidable and unexplainable. Hard times had to be taken as just plain hard luck. Depressions were explained by sun-spot theories, as the will of God, or what have you. But these could not stand up when the Soviet Union did away with unemployment and proved its immunity to economic crisis during the 'thirties, at a time when the whole capitalist world was being ravaged by the worst economic crisis in history. After all, if depressions were just the will of heaven, why did the Soviet Union receive favored treatment? Thus, for the first time in American history the majority of the American people began to hold the social system and the government responsible for unemployment and depression. They made it clear that in the future both would be judged on their ability to provide jobs and security. It is this which explains the special concern in top circles over the danger of a major economic depression and why they believe this must be avoided in order to "fight Communism." Once again, a backhanded compliment is paid the Soviet Union—recognition that in this respect, too, it already has proved its superiority.

Or let us take the colonial question. We are told constantly that the colonial countries must be aided, not in order to undo historic crimes again peoples "bowed by the weight of centuries," but because this is necessary to "fight Communism." And here, too, with this argument as well, our official ideologists are only admitting that every charge about "Soviet imperialism" is false, and they know it. If there were such a thing as Soviet imperialism, and as some say, "even worse than Western imperialism," why then all the moaning and groaning that American capitalism is "losing the hearts and minds of men" in the colonial countries to Communism? One thing is

certain. The hearts and minds of the colonial peoples can only be won by living examples of national independence and freedom; never by imperialism! As Horace B. Cayton wrote in his column in the *Pittsburgh Courier*: "The fight for men's minds has been lost to the Soviet Union. We have ringed that country with circles of steel, but within our defense lines we have included millions who doubt and sometimes hate us."

The argument which says, "let's improve things so that we can fight Communism more successfully" is quite revealing. It indicates that such individuals are more concerned with "fighting Communism" than with the people's welfare. Yet we have no objection to that kind of "fighting Communism." Yes, let all those who fear that the American people may take the path of socialism help get complete freedom for the Negro people, help wipe out unemployment, raise living standards, put an end to our school crisis, stop the decline in farm income, preserve the Bill of Rights. In their efforts for these improvements they shall have the cooperation and support of the Communists, despite our disagreement with their ideological motives.

Thus, the rapid industrialization of the socialist lands, the constant rise in their living standards, their permanent solution of such problems as economic crisis, unemployment and racial bigotry, are factors which positively influence the struggles of the people in our own country and in the rest of the world. Such competition is not a threat, therefore, but a promise.*

The socialist world does not fear the peaceful competition of capitalism. That is why it wants peace. It is ready to have each social system judged on how it serves the welfare of its people. That is why there is no contradiction between the Soviet Union's belief that socialism will triumph throughout the world and its intense belief in peace and peaceful coexistence. Given peace, the Soviet Union is convinced that it can raise living standards so high as to put capitalism in the shade. It wants to develop atomic energy for peaceful purposes.

* To what extent the continued progress of socialist countries has reverberations in the U. S. can be seen by three current examples. The fear that the Soviet Union is graduating more scientists and engineers than we was one of the factors behind the huge grant of \$500 million given to universities and colleges by the Ford Foundation. Second, Soviet prowess in Olympic competition has increased the demand in this country for government aid to athletics. And lastly, James C. Petrillo of the Musician's Union has urged government aid to art and music to counter—in the words of the Associated Press—"communist claims that art is neglected in western nations."

Given peace, the Soviet Union will also prove to the most skeptical—so long as eyes remain open to see and minds open to reason—that socialism is not totalitarianism but a new and superior type of democracy.

Apparently some in our land, particularly the monopolists, do fear the peaceful competition of socialism. With all their shouting about the “superiority” of the “American way,” by which they mean the way of monopoly, they apparently are not too confident in their own system. They fear its ability to stand up in fair competition with the new, young, rival socialist system. This, in part, explains the frenzied panic in some ruling class circles.

But the American people have nothing to fear in such competition. They have all to gain from it. If it should turn out, as Communists believe, that the socialist system does prove its superiority, then capitalism will pass from the stage of history as did slavery and feudalism before it. And conversely, if socialism fails to prove its superiority, then it is the system which has no future. The Communists have no fear of such a test.

THE IDEOLOGICAL AND “POWER” STRUGGLES

Ideological differences between the capitalist USA and the socialist USSR need not be the cause of war. This is being understood by more and more people. In fact, contrary to popular belief, ideological differences, in and by themselves, have never been the actual cause of war.

The world has been divided into different social systems since man, by producing a surplus over his most immediate needs, first began to accumulate wealth and thereby to lay the material foundation for class divisions and foreign wars of aggression. But wars of aggression never took place over ideological questions, although frequently cloaked in these. They took place over material things—for loot, plunder, land, slaves, trade routes, raw materials, markets.

With the dawn of capitalist society came the wars of conquest against those parts of the world now considered “backward.” These were fought ostensibly to bring Christianity to pagan peoples. In reality they were fought for the purpose of achieving the most rapid accumulation of capital through the pillage, robbery and enslavement of other peoples—what Quincy Wright referred to so quaintly as the process by which Western capitalist states “injected the virus of their civilizations into the ancient civilizations.” The virus injected into

the colonial lands was like that of crippling poliomyelitis; not the Salk vaccine!

Recently, in order to prejudice religious people against the Soviet Union, Communism has been referred to as a "religion," and the struggle against it compared with the religious crusades of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. But the bitterly fought and bloody wars which have gone down in history as the Crusades, while made possible by whipping up intense religious fervor in Europe, were in reality wars of conquest. They were first begun by the Italian city-states to establish trading posts in the East and to re-open the trade routes that had been closed by the Arabs and Moors. On the part of the feudal lords and the church they were bloody expeditions to grab loot and land.

Professor Toynbee, in a *New York Times Magazine* article, points out that even those who speak of Communism as a religion should remember that different religions have coexisted peacefully and still do. "For instance," he notes, "in the world in which we are living at this moment, Protestants are coexisting with Catholics, and Moslems with Christians. In the seventeenth century there were Protestants and Catholics who believed that existence would be impossible for them if the other party were not eliminated, while, in the age of the Crusades and the jihads, there were Moslems and Christians who believed that the liquidation of the enemy religion was a necessity if they themselves were to survive. Yet centuries have passed; the parties are still coexisting; and they have not, after all, found it impossible to go on living side by side. These precedents are encouraging. I think of them when I hear Western contemporaries of mine saying that coexistence with communism is impossible. In the light of history, I do not take this state of mind tragically."

Thus it can be concluded that even if Communism were a religion—which it is not—this should be no cause for war. In saying this we do not, however, wish to minimize the fact that there does exist today a major, even titanic, ideological struggle, which overshadows any that have preceded it in history.

Recognizing the existence of an ideological struggle and that this need not and should not lead to armed conflict, Adlai Stevenson, in *Call to Greatness*, says that America is confronted with two distinct threats from "world Communism." The first, he says, is the threat of "armed aggression." The second, the threat of ideas. The first, he asserts, has caused what he calls a "power struggle"; the second, an ideological struggle. The "power struggle" he sees is mainly located

in Europe and he believes it is being won by the "West." The struggle over ideas he sees as mainly taking place in Asia and he believes it is being lost by the "West." It is being lost, in his opinion, because the U.S. has not recognized it as a separate struggle and, in effect, sees but one struggle—the military one.

Stevenson is aware that guns and bombs cannot destroy ideas whose day has come. While still speaking of "subversion," he refuses to brand the legitimate aspirations and struggles of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples simply as "Communist plots." Like Justice Douglas, Chester Bowles, and some other liberals, he is at least capable of recognizing that a real revolution is sweeping the earth, particularly the colonial lands. At one point in his book he even admits half-heartedly that the great mass Communist parties of France and Italy are indigenous movements and that the average Italian and French citizen has become so accustomed to these that, "It is hard for them to understand our extreme anxiety about Communists."

Before pursuing the question of ideological struggle farther, it may be worth spending an additional moment on the so-called "power struggle." On what does Stevenson rest his belief that this is being won by the "West?" "Stalin's plan to add the vital industrial centers of Europe to the Communist system failed," he tells us. The Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and all other anti-Soviet military measures, while not "able to establish a preponderance of power in the West," in Stevenson's opinion, have succeeded, however, "in establishing a balance of power." It is this "balance of power" which he sees as the new deterrent to a "revision of the status quo in Europe by threat of force."

There is something that defies logic here. If all these military measures were necessary to prevent Soviet aggression in Western Europe, why, may we ask, did not such aggression take place before these measures went into effect and when, as everyone now admits, the Soviet Union did have the preponderance of military strength? The answer to this riddle is that the Soviet Union never harbored such aggressive intentions.

Stevenson will not admit this. He is a devotee of the anti-Soviet foreign policy. And yet there are moments when it seems that he, too, must realize that the shoe is on the other foot—that it is the Soviet Union which has had cause to fear aggression and not the other way around. It does not entirely escape Stevenson that, "the repeated invasions of the past, the allied intervention after the first world war, Hitler's invasion in the second, the present circle of bomber bases

and the military strength of the Western coalition must contribute to Soviet apprehension."

Of course, Stevenson's conclusion that the "West" was not successful in attaining a "preponderance of strength," and his belief that a "balance of power" has been established, may prove of some importance. From this could flow the logical assumption that there is only one way to ease world tension and reduce the threat of war, and that is by peaceful negotiation. In fact, Stevenson does state: "Compromise is not immoral or treasonable. It is the objective of negotiation and negotiation is the means of resolving conflict peacefully."

The so-called "power struggle" of which Stevenson speaks is not caused by the threat of Soviet aggression, for such a threat is entirely mythical. And those in the know, from the White House down, are well aware of this. They know that Soviet military strength is deployed defensively. They know that no Soviet leaders brandish the atom or hydrogen bomb menacingly over the world. No one in the Soviet Union speaks of or desires "preventive war." No one in the Soviet Union brags of bringing the world to the "brink of war." The Soviet Union does not encircle the U.S. or any other country with a ring of military bases, although the same cannot be said of the United States.*

If there is a "power struggle," therefore, it arises from the determination of American monopoly circles to achieve world mastery even if this means a third world war directed against socialist lands. This is the only explanation for U.S. foreign policy since World War II. Coming out of the war with a great accretion of military and economic strength, Wall Street sought to use this might to grab for itself complete control over world markets and sources of raw materials. It has been driving toward a third world war against the single formidable power that stood in the way—the Soviet Union and the peoples' democracies allied with her. This is the meaning of the "cold war," of the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, the North Atlantic military alliance, the Southeast Asia military alliance, the armament race, and the whole Acheson-Dulles foreign policy.

Nor can this charge directed against the monopolists be discounted with the glib phrase, "Nobody really wants war." Did Major General Robert W. Grow, U.S. Army Attache in Moscow, want war? He

* "The American flag flies today in every continent and over every sea. We have 950 military bases in 63 foreign lands or islands, ranging from lonely arctic outposts to 450 major installations (mostly air bases) in Europe, Africa and the Western Pacific."—From editorial in *Milwaukee Journal*, Feb. 24, 1955. It truly can be said that the sun never sets on American bombers!

wrote in his diary in 1951: "I threw a minor bombshell by reading our paper which definitely estimated action this year or before July 1952 by all forms of warfare including Europe. It was backed up by capabilities and reasons. Amb. accepted our paper as sound and worthy of serious consideration."

The Amb. who thought this was "sound and worthy" was none other than the then accredited U. S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Admiral Kirk! Elsewhere in the same diary, General Grow further confided his "peaceful intentions." He wrote: "Our attack should be directed at enemy weaknesses. Although the military services are primarily concerned with military weapons and methods, we must understand that this war is total war and is fought with all weapons. We must learn that in this war it is fair to hit below the belt."

Were General Grow's political and military superiors shocked by this war mongering? Certainly not. His views were not secret from them. The General was court-martialed, but not for the real crime of advocating an immediate war against the Soviet Union. He was gently slapped on the wrist for indiscretion and carelessness in writing his views in a diary and permitting this to fall into other hands!

When things like this can transpire, it is fortunate for America and for the peace of the world that a "preponderance of power" was not attained by Wall Street and that the plans of those who sought war in 1951 and 1952 were thwarted. We can imagine the heights of hysterical ranting that would have been reached by those demanding immediate war had such a preponderance been achieved!

The most effective answer to those who say, "nobody wants war," was given by Justice Robert H. Jackson in his closing address at the Nuremberg Trial of Nazi war criminals. Jackson in summation said: "The defendants contend, however, that there could be no conspiracy involving aggressive war because: (1) none of the Nazis wanted war; (2) rearmament was only intended to provide the strength to make Germany's voice heard in the family of nations; (3) and the wars were not in fact aggressive wars but were defensive against a 'Bolshevik menace.'

"When we analyze the argument that the Nazis did not want war," he went on to say, "it comes down, in substance, to this: 'the record looks bad indeed—objectively—but when you consider the state of my mind—subjectively, I hated war.' . . . But they wanted things they knew they could not get without war. . . . But again the defendants claim: 'to be sure we were building guns. But not to shoot. They were to give us weight in negotiating.' At its best this argument

amounts to a contention that the military forces were intended for blackmail, not for battle. . . . But some of the defendants argue that the wars were not aggressive and were only intended to protect Germany against some eventual danger from the 'menace of Communism,' which was something of an obsession with many Nazis."

How familiar all this sounds today!

Knowing the cause of the so-called "power struggle" would also provide Stevenson with the real answer as to why the battle over ideas is being lost in Asia. For it is the same objective of world domination which places America's ruling class at loggerheads with the colonial and semi-colonial peoples of the world. As both Stevenson and Douglas recognize, the slogans that move these peoples are those of our own great American revolution for independence. "The idea of self-government," states Douglas, "was the most important force influencing the minds of men on this continent in the eighteenth century. It is that idea which more than any other inflames Asia and Africa today." Douglas even cites examples of how Asian peoples have used the very words of our own Declaration of Independence to proclaim their own.

How is it possible, therefore, that the very words of our own Declaration of Independence are now considered "subversive" by the makers of our nation's foreign policy? It is possible only because there is such a thing as American imperialism, even if Douglas, Stevenson, Bowles, and most liberals and labor leaders prefer to shut their eyes to this distasteful fact. Stevenson admits that the U.S. "experimented with imperialism in Puerto Rico and the Philippines." But for him all this took place in the past, in 1898, and the U.S. Government "promptly salved an uneasy conscience by pouring vast sums into them, not for exploitation but improvement, and then by giving or offering them independence." And Douglas [not Senator Paul Douglas, for he lost his liberalism somewhere in the Pacific and hasn't found it since! but Justice Douglas] writes that the granting of independence to the Philippines, "ended in not more than a generation the first and only American venture in imperialism." And, furthermore, he claims, "our imperialism, short-lived as it was, aimed not to oppress and exploit but to liberate."

How the American ruling class "salved an uneasy conscience," ended "exploitation" and brought "improvement" to Puerto Rico we have had occasion to learn. As for Douglas, his position is completely contradictory. He says that "our imperialism" did not aim to "oppress and exploit but to liberate." This is really something new—a liberating

imperialism! Why then refer favorably to its "short-lived" character? It is like the man who, when accused of beating his wife, retorted, "I don't beat my wife—anyway, I haven't for a long time, and even when I did it was different—it was for her own good!"

Stevenson and Douglas may believe there is no such thing as American imperialism. They could not convince the people of the world of that.

WALL STREET IMPERIALISM AND THE WORLD IN REVOLUTION

Much tortured logic has been used to explain why American prestige is declining and Soviet prestige rising. Stevenson, seriously disturbed, complains that: "Some of the deep seated hostility to Western pretensions and condescensions [why not plain imperialism?] has rubbed off on us [the U.S.] in spite of our liberation of the Philippines and our traditional anti-imperialism. But curiously it does not rub off on the Russians. . . ."

His explanation for this is that the Russians are closer to the Asians, that they "understand the Orientals, their language and how they think [once again that enigmatic "Oriental mind!"] better than we do, who have a tendency everywhere to expect others to think and act as we do. . . ." Really now, we thought it was the Russians who expected others to think as they did! "Finally," continues Stevenson, "it is hard for many peoples, far removed from the struggle in the West, to see any military threat to their independence from a Russia lying beyond the borders of distant Manchuria and the high Himalayas." And so, Russia is close and understands the Oriental mind, but then again she is far away and that is why the Asian peoples cannot understand her! The Himalayas are neither high enough or the Pacific Ocean wide enough to hide imperialism from the colonial peoples! If in one case it "rubs off" and in the other "it does not" there must be good reason for it.

As we have already stated the world is in revolution. The colonial and semi-colonial peoples refuse to continue to live in conditions of bondage. They want political independence. They also want economic independence—to industrialize, and to own and operate their industry. According to the *New York Times*, the whole of Asia has 53.2 percent of the population of the globe and only 17.3 percent of the income. In the Near East, Douglas met men "who own farming land greater in acreage than the entire state of Switzerland." "One man," he tells us, "owned 1,600 villages lock, stock and barrel," and unskilled

labor in that part of the world "gets about 25 cents a day," while skilled labor gets "about one dollar a day." It is also estimated that a majority of the peoples in the colonial countries have a life expectancy of only 27 years!

Is it any wonder that the peoples in these countries are determined to wipe out poverty, disease, illiteracy, and every form of "backwardness?" If Ancient Asia has jumped with both feet into the turbulent twentieth century, ancient Africa is not far behind, already crouching for the leap.

American Big Business (imperialism) has sought to halt these revolutions because they stand in the way of monopoly foreign investments, high profits, and its plans for world domination. This is the only logical and sensible explanation as to why the ruling class in this country has fought these revolutions, even though, as Douglas aptly observes: "With all the wealth of America, with all the military strength of America, those revolutions cannot be stopped."

There is no such thing as imperialism without tribute, as we have shown previously. And in a world in which the colonial peoples are demanding their rights more and more, imperialism less and less dares to espouse open colonialism. This is particularly true of American capitalism, which until the turn of the century had an immense country to develop and felt no need to expand beyond continental limits. Since then, coming to monopoly age in a world already divided, emerging from both world wars in a strong position to undermine the competitive positions of its capitalist rivals, Wall Street has cloaked its imperialism with anti-colonial phrases. It has attempted thereby to undermine the colonial empires of its capitalist rivals and to penetrate their markets.

But the economic subjugation of Latin America, by what is known below the Rio Grande as "Yankee Imperialism," has been all too real. Nor has Wall Street hesitated to use force when necessary to guarantee its control through political puppets. Likewise the Philippines, despite 57 years of "liberation," are still under the economic heel of Wall Street and the political thumb of the State Department, with illiteracy still at the rate of 30 percent. U.S. capital has special privileges in the Islands, and the dollar-peso tie, plus the Philippine Trade Act, has given Wall Street, in the words of economic specialist Shirley Jenkins, "all the advantages of possessing a colonial dependency, both economic and military, without responsibilities for administration or domestic welfare."

Great stress has been placed on the importance of American invest-

ments in the under-developed countries as a means of bringing about their industrialization. But with all the increased investments of foreign capital this has not happened. United Nations' reports show that America in 1953 had a total of over \$16 billion in private direct investments abroad. From 1946 to 1953, new private direct investments averaged about \$623 million a year. Of this amount, only one-sixth was invested in manufacturing enterprises. But more than half of the sum invested in manufacturing enterprises went to Canada and Western Europe. Only 17 percent of American manufacturing investments abroad, or approximately \$17 million a year, went to the under-developed countries. Fifty-three percent of total U.S. direct foreign investments found their way into the extraction of mineral resources.

Thus it can be seen that American investments did not go toward industrialization of under-developed countries. The reason for this is that capital is invested in foreign lands in order to reap a higher rate of profit. According to the same U.N. Report, *Processes and Problems of Industrialization of the Under-Developed Countries*, American investments in Latin American manufacturing enterprises have been bringing a rate of profit only four percent higher than in the United States. This is not considered high enough by Wall Street.

Furthermore, Wall Street does not intend to help establish industries that will compete with American ones. Thus, when foreign companies invest in manufacturing in under-developed countries it is usually "to come within a tariff wall or to avoid the effects of import controls which bar the finished product."

"When," however, says the U.N. Report, "some natural resources are to be exploited, foreign capital is usually prepared to take much greater risks." For example, Standard Oil of New Jersey reaped a 25 percent rate of profit in 1952 on its foreign holdings as compared with a nine percent rate of profit on its domestic investment. It is no accident, therefore, that the Mexican National Chamber for the Transformation of Industry, "composed of several thousand large and small industries," declared, according to a dispatch in the *New York Times*, that "we are not against the United States as such, but against United States investors who come into Mexico to make all the money possible, as quickly as possible and take it all out."

One of the major economic factors in Wall Street's drive to attain domination over the colonial areas of the world is its growing need of strategic raw materials. With the great expansion of U.S. productive capacity since the outbreak of World War II, this country has become less and less self-sufficient in industrial raw materials. Im-

ports of foreign oil to the U.S. have tripled since World War II and it is estimated that this country consumes 60 percent of all the petroleum used by the capitalist world.

In 1951, William S. Paley's report on natural resources showed that American consumption of oil, rubber, manganese, iron ore and zinc exceeded that of the rest of the capitalist world. A large proportion of these was used for military purposes and some even stockpiled for future military use. Furthermore, of 72 strategic and critical materials, the U.S. was completely dependent on other countries for 40, and partly dependent on imports for all the rest. The United States is also using up its domestic reserves faster than any other capitalist nation. "We are thus," observed Prof. K. Davis, of Columbia University, "becoming more dependent on the rest of the world; indeed, we already consume about half of the materials of the free world."

The problem of obtaining raw materials should not prove too difficult, where the buyer is ready to pay a decent price. But monopoly doesn't operate that way. It wants to buy its raw materials cheaply, to get these if possible for nearly nothing, and then to sell the finished products at high monopoly prices. This is the old imperialist shell-game and the colonial peoples refuse to play it any longer. But imperialism, intent as ever on tribute, is determined not to permit any basic change. Wall Street's fears on this score were expressed by Relman Morin, Associated Press feature writer: "As other nations industrialize, will they continue to export raw materials in huge quantities the American system now consumes? If so, how much more will they cost?"

Thus, Wall Street is committed to preventing the industrialization of the colonial lands and continues to unite with the corrupt representatives of the feudal landowning classes in order to keep the colonial masses in chains.

GREASING-THE-CHUTE

Concealed behind all the pious phrases about defending the "free world" is the hard bed-rock of material interest. Sometimes this creeps into the very phraseology used. In a speech delivered in August, 1953, at a time when the U.S. Government was still doing its best to give the Indo-Chinese civil war a turn for the worse, President Eisenhower had this to say: "So when the United States votes \$400 million to help that war, we are not voting a giveaway

program. We are voting for the cheapest way that we can prevent the occurrence of something that would be of a most terrible significance to the United States of America, our security, our power and ability to get certain things we need from the riches of the Indonesian territory and from Southeast Asia."

Note how "our security" is so cozily attached to "our power and ability" to get "riches." This is the real reason the civil war in Indo-China was prolonged. As for the "Indonesian territory" of which Eisenhower speaks, an article in the *New York Times* refers to it as "the region's [Southeast Asia's] great purveyor of raw materials—rubber, oil and tin. These resources make her both an invaluable source of supply to the United States and potentially the richest country in the region."

This potentially "richest country" has an average annual per capita income of \$25! And it is in order to keep the fabulous riches of this region from its people that armed warfare has continued in South Viet-Nam even after the partition—a struggle between the colonial lackeys of U.S. and French capital to determine which shall have the "power" and the "riches."

When we are told about saving Indo-China and Southeast Asia for the "free world," what is really meant is saving them as backward raw-material appendages of imperialism—rubber, jute, tin, copra, kapok, etc. When we were told about saving Korea, when we recall the two year war to capture North Korea, we cannot separate these from the following facts as contained in the *McMillan World Almanac*: "Korea's best mining regions, are in the North. Leading products are coal, gold, silver, copper, tungsten ore, iron ore, graphite, lead, alium stone and pyrite ore." *The Iron Age*, trade journal of the iron and steel industry, in June, 1952, stated: "Even if moral considerations were excluded, presence of good tungsten deposits just south of the 38th parallel is a good reason for U. N. firmness in holding that line." And it was for this immoral consideration that thousands of additional American boys paid with their young lives!

When Eisenhower said that the millions given to the war in Indo-China were not a "giveaway," he was telling the truth. All the vast sums appropriated from tax-payers' money for so-called "foreign aid" have gone to grease-the-chute for Wall Street's economic and political penetration of other countries and for war preparation to achieve world domination. This was true of the Marshall Plan, of the Mutual Security Act, and of "Point Four." William Worthy, in an article in *The Crisis*, of October, 1954, wrote: "If you were an African, you

would know . . . that ECA and MSA loans in Africa have no other purpose than to facilitate the extraction of raw materials for foreign profit and for U.S. war industries.”

Justice Douglas has also shown that technical aid without an anti-feudal agrarian revolution in which land is given to the peasants, means exactly nothing. It only helps the large landlord who receives 95 percent of the returns of the land. And Chester Bowles quotes a Burmese professor who told him, “if you are honest with yourselves you will have to agree that so far the net result [of “Point Four”] has been pitifully small. The military debacle in Indo-China alone has cost you far more money for military equipment than all of your Point Four programs all over the world from the time you started them in 1949.”

Eisenhower’s Foreign Economic Policy Message of January, 1955, made plain a major concern of his Administration to increase the export of capital to other countries. “The whole free world needs capital,” his message stated, and “America is its largest source. In that light, the flow of capital abroad from our country must be stimulated and in such a manner that it results in investment largely by individuals or private enterprises rather than by government.”

What type of investments “private enterprises” are interested in and how these keep the colonial countries in enforced backwardness we have already shown. Even Eisenhower’s “liberal” proposal to bring about a reciprocal lowering of tariff walls is only to the benefit of Wall Street, not to that of the under-developed countries. For every young nation seeking industrial development must protect its budding industries from the competition of the more efficient, monopoly-controlled mass production industries of the developed capitalist countries. No country can industrialize itself without the benefit of a protective tariff, and the United States was no exception to this rule. But the colonial and semi-colonial countries are expected, in the name of “reciprocity,” and in repayment for some “Point Four” bribes, to lower all barriers to the mass influx of American goods.

“The executive branch will continue through our diplomatic representatives abroad to encourage a climate favorable to the private enterprise concept of investment,” Eisenhower’s message states. “We shall continue,” it says further, “to seek other new ways to enlarge the outward flow of capital. It must be recognized, however, that when American private capital moves abroad it properly expects to bring home its fair reward.” It certainly does. But its idea of a “fair reward” is hardly the same as that of the colonial peoples.

From all of the foregoing it has been amply demonstrated that there is such a thing as American imperialism, and that its tentacles hold many peoples in their oppressive grip. It has also been shown that there is no economic motivation for Soviet aggression, that there is no such thing as Soviet imperialism, and that the very nature of the socialist economic system makes a lasting peace its objective.

It has been shown further that the ideological differences that exist between capitalism and socialism are no cause for war and that peaceful competition between them is not a menace to be feared by the American people but a promise to be fulfilled. It has likewise been indicated that the only so-called "power struggle" which exists in the world has been caused by Wall Street's design for world domination and its preparations for a war to attain this end. That is why the Burmese professor quoted by Chester Bowles, and who, he says, "has no love for Communism," could ask him: "Isn't a stable world enough for you? Does it also have to be a world subservient to American ideas and domination? Do we all have to get down on our knees every night and thank America for allowing us to exist?"

CHAPTER V

THE OCTUPUS TODAY

Big Business, sensitive to criticism about its ever-swelling size, has in recent years mobilized a corps of public relations experts, trade associations and "independent" foundations. Research groups in and out of universities are subsidized to study and explain big business. Literature is cascading from the presses to warn the public of the attack on the American way of life, meaning mostly the privileged position of the large corporations.

—Prof. Robert Faulhaber, of De Paul University,
in the *CIO News*

BIG BUSINESS' "NEW LOOK"

THE ATTEMPT TO prove that the peoples' worst foe has now become its best friend takes many shapes. There are some that even go so far as to argue that Big Business has always been much abused mainly because the "poor" thing was destined to be big. Others argue that to judge Big Business on its past crimes is like condemning a respectable family man for the indiscretions of his youth, or a beautiful butterfly for its ugly caterpillar days. Still others, more cautious souls, see monopoly as a dangerous tiger. But, they argue, it is now safely caged and has had its claws clipped. We shall discuss whether Big Business has really undergone a metamorphosis, whether its claws were actually clipped or only manicured.

That the NAM, the Chamber of Commerce, *Fortune*, *Life*, and other Big Business publications should extol the virtues of American monopoly is not surprising. We are convinced that most working men

and women and most liberal and progressive minded people take this propaganda hash not with a grain, but with a barrel of salt. We are more concerned with the so-called liberal and labor purveyors of big business propaganda. For these are not as suspect and what they say, therefore, carries more weight and does greater harm in dimming the view and dulling the instinct and understanding of workers and progressive people generally.

Recently, two formerly prominent New Dealers wrote books glorifying Big Business. The first of these books, *Big Business: A New Era*, was published in 1952. It was written by David E. Lilienthal, former director of the Tennessee Valley Authority under Roosevelt and Truman's Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission. The second, *The 20th Century Capitalist Revolution*, appeared in 1954. It was written by Adolphe A. Berle, Jr., a member of FDR's "brain trust" and his Assistant Secretary of State. Up to very recently Berle was the chairman of the Liberal Party in New York and is currently a Professor of Law at Columbia University.

Both of these former liberals heap lavish praise on Big Business. Both take the point of view that the monopolies are changed institutions and the monopolists changed men. Lilienthal even calls for the abolition of the anti-trust laws for these "are still based largely upon prejudice created by abuses long since corrected, upon an antiquarian's portrait of another America, not the America of the mid-twentieth century." For him the very "idea of 'class war' between employees and owners," which he admits was "a not unconventional idea in many labor circles a generation ago—is dated and outmoded as the livery stable and the 'family entrance.'"

Berle has only one criticism to make of Big Business. It has been, according to him, most inept in its own self-defense. It has replied to its Marxist critics in the language and terms of early capitalism. "No one, it seems," says Berle, "has seriously undertaken to restate the actual practice of American capitalism as it has developed since, let us say, 1930, describing its operations and results, and readjusting theories to conform to fact. In large measure, indeed, the defense has been left to journalists and public relations experts while businessmen stood mute. The real business of American capitalism should have been the staging of a solid counterattack.

"This it has every right to do," asserts Berle. "Its aggregate economic achievement is unsurpassed. Taking all elements (including human freedom) into account, its system of distributing benefits though anything but perfect, has nevertheless left every other system

in recorded history immeasurably far behind. Its rate of progress shows no signs of slackening. Even its instabilities and crises . . . show indications of becoming manageable. . . . All the materials for a crushing counterargument are present."

Nor does Berle hesitate to supply bashful, tongue-tied monopoly capital with this "crushing counterargument." Essentially it is this: The "modern corporation as an institution is entitled to much more respect than it has frequently received." It is not just a "business device" but "a social institution in the context of a revolutionary century." To Berle, it is not socialism, but American capitalism that is, "accomplishing the twentieth-century revolution." Evidence will prove, however, that it is much easier to transform the Berle brand of liberalism into reaction than Wall Street reaction into revolution. In fact, the former is already nearly accomplished. The latter, impossible.

Before discussing the monopoly octopus as it is today, it is worth recalling that this is not the first time that apologists for Big Business could not find laudatory enough adjectives with which to describe it. But they were compelled soon enough to eat their own words.

George Soule, in his book, *A Planned Society*, written in 1932, portrays the fabulous decade of 1920-30. Prosperity, he wrote, "was subject to brief and comparatively slight interruptions in 1924 and 1927, but it was swept on apparently by irresistible force. Late in the decade, statistical measures were applied to it, and, being published, were incorporated as the more substantial part of the prosperity myth, which had by that time captured a large popular faith. . . . Primary production was growing at the rate of two and a half percent a year, manufacturing production at the rate of four percent a year. . . . Profits of all industrial corporations were growing. . . . And the prices of industrial common stocks had been rising at the astounding rate of fourteen percent a year even by 1927, before the final great bull market started."

With such surface indications of prosperity, continues Soule, "no wonder that business was triumphant, and that a popular literature and a popular faith were built up about it. Observers came from other nations to discover how we had done it. They wrote their impressions in flattering terms . . . Toward the end of the period, a full and rounded myth of prosperity had been furnished out to supply the need for an object of faith."

Doesn't much of this have a familiar sound, as if it were a playback of a recording made in our own day? Once again there is

a full-blown prosperity myth. Once again we are being told how much better off we are. Once again profits and stock market prices are rising. But while the Berles and Lilienthals are telling us that this time it is different, the facts are that this time there is even less good cause for losing sight of the enemy. Our present prosperity has even a more hollow ring to it than that of the 1920's.

In Soule's description of that decade he shows that there was the myth that "steady improvement in efficiency and scientific method" would provide benefits "rapidly conveyed to the public in the form of reduced prices and improved products." There was the myth that "installment credit was . . . furnishing a stimulant to production which was assumed to be permanent." There was the myth "of the spreading of ownership and the large profits therefrom throughout the population by means of almost universal acquisitions of securities, and especially common stock." There was the myth "that business, by merger into larger and larger units was rationalizing itself for the production of better services . . . To link the whole together," concludes Soule, "all fears for the future were banished. We were in a 'New Era' wherein not only would poverty be abolished but every one would become rich."*

Is this too different from Berle's boast nearly three decades later: "The face of the country has been changed. Poverty, in the sense it is understood elsewhere in the world, in America is reduced to minimal proportions. Professor Louis Hacker of Columbia not unjustifiably calls it the 'triumph of American capitalism.'"

How the "triumph" heralded by Coolidge and Hoover ended up, Soule also relates. "Thus the popular faith in business and the trust in prosperity lost its morale in a veritable debacle [the 1929 crash!]. The public which had ignored other values was betrayed by the gods it had chosen."

CORPORATIONS WITH "SOULS"

One debacle does not necessarily prove another, so let us take a look at the situation today. In the first place, has the process of

* "We in America today are nearer to the final triumph over poverty than ever before in the history of any land."—Calvin Coolidge, in August, 1928.

"Our American experiment in human welfare has yielded a degree of well-being unparalleled in all the world. It has come nearer to the abolition of poverty . . . than humanity has ever reached before."—Herbert Hoover, in October, 1928.

economic concentration so feared by previous generations been arrested or reversed? Neither Berle nor Lilienthal claim this. Berle concedes growing economic concentration. He quotes Professor M. A. Adelman, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, to the effect that 135 corporations own 45 percent of the industrial assets of the nation. "This represents," Berle notes, "a concentration of economic ownership greater perhaps than any yet recorded in history."

This is not the full story. Berle estimates that in approximately 70 percent of all American industry, "two or three, or at most, five, corporations will have more than half the business, the remainder being divided among a greater or less number of small concerns who must necessarily live within the conditions made for them by the 'Big Two' or 'Big Three' or 'Big Five' as the case may be." Berle further admits that, "The impact of many corporations—for example, General Motors or the great oil companies—goes beyond the confines of their actual ownership." He shows that despite some \$3 billion invested in garages and facilities by the many thousands of automobile dealers, these are only "nominally independent." "Their policies, operations, and, in large measure, their prices, are determined by the motor company whose cars they sell. The same is true of the 'small businessman' who 'owns' a gasoline-filling station."* Thus the dominance of monopoly over the economic life of the nation is by no means denied, even if the word "monopoly" is avoided like the plague and in its place Berle has substituted the more respectable word "concentrates."

Lilienthal neither affirms nor denies the growing process of economic concentration. He says he does not know. Yet he worships "bigness." For him it is the answer to all problems and the very shape of the future. He says that the "old dream" of "the independent man in his own little shop or business" was a "good dream" in its day. Now, however, "there is a new dream: a world of great machines, with man in control devising and making use of these inanimate creatures to build a new kind of independence, a new awareness of beauty, a new spirit of brotherliness."

There is, of course, a measure of truth in this. The old dream,

* T. K. Quinn, former vice-president of the General Electric Corporation, in his autobiographical book, *GIANT BUSINESS: Threat to Democracy*, describes how monopoly holds a virtual life and death grip on small business. "Few people seem to realize it," he wrote, "and I have never seen the frank statement published anywhere, but the hard fact is that any and every small business in the country can exist only so long as the monster corporations choose not to enter the competition, and undersell them."

as we have shown in Chapter II, no longer can be realized in the old form. Large scale production does represent progress. Economic concentration is an inevitable development. No one would want to turn back the clock and undo the revolutionary technological advances of the past century. Nor could it be turned back. But the answer is not a simple switch from idolizing Small Business to idolizing Big Business. The crux of our problem goes deeper than being for or against "bigness." We could even accept Lilienthal's formulation of the "new dream"—with one "slight" correction. When Lilienthal uses the phrase "man in control" he obviously means "monopoly in control," even if he refuses to admit this. On our part, however, "man in control" is impossible without ever-increasing curbs on monopoly power and, in time, the complete public ownership of the monopoly enterprises. This "slight" correction spells a world of difference—the difference between whether we attain the American Dream or a monopoly nightmare.

Lilienthal states that he is no longer worried over economic concentration. How does he explain this about-face from the position he held in New Deal days? He argues that the situation is drastically different. "Today," Lilienthal says, "the degree of actual control and 'absolutism' that remains in the hands of the directors and officers of the largest American corporations has changed almost beyond recognition . . . the meaning and content of 'corporate economic power' has changed completely; it has been so watered down that it is hardly recognizable as 'economic power.'"

How has the meaning and content of economic power changed or been watered down? How is "corporate control . . . now divided and *diffused*," as Lilienthal claims, despite economic concentration? In part, Lilienthal agrees with those who insist that capitalism in the old sense no longer exists and that in America we now have a "people's capitalism" in which all are capitalists to one degree or another. But even the figures thrown at us so frequently about the millions of shareholders prove nothing of the kind. The Brookings Institute made a study in 1952 which showed that only 4.2 percent of the population and only 9.5 percent of American families owned any stock whatsoever. The 73 percent of American households whose earnings fell below \$5,000 a year owned but 7.4 percent of all stock. The 3.4 percent of American households whose earnings were over \$10,000 a year owned 55.1 percent of corporation stock. And control of these corporations is tightly held by a small fistful of finance capitalists.

In the same year, 1952, there were 66 giant corporations with assets of over one billion dollars each. By 1955 the number had grown to 70. In 1952, the billion-dollar corporations made up only one-hundredth of one percent of the more than 600,000 corporations in the United States. And yet, this tiny fraction, these 66 corporations, held 28.3 percent of all assets of all corporations. And through interlocking directorates and other financial tie-ups they controlled over 75 percent of all corporate assets.

Berle, in a 1954 speech before the insurance conference of the Cooperative League of the U.S.A., gave an indication of how tremendously concentrated is financial control. He told the delegates that the insurance companies alone hold assets of \$80 billion. Further, he said: "Now 49 insurance companies control 89 percent of all admitted assets of all companies." This control of the capital market, he pointed out, gives the insurance executives "the power to decide what companies should live, which ones should die." The top insurance and industrial executives run our economy, he concluded, and "the people aren't in this picture."

How this squares with Berle's assertion in his book that the corporations are now "social institutions" and that the corporation executives are much like "public office-holders" who are responsible to the larger community for their actions, he alone will have to explain.

Lilienthal bases his positive estimate of Big Business on changes that have occurred since the 'thirties. He speaks of the "new comprehensive role of government in economic affairs," the new "power and influence of organized labor," the rise of what he chooses to call the "New Competition," and most important of all these, "a change in the social responsibility of Big Business."

It is in this so-called change in "social responsibility" that Lilienthal sees the big difference between the situation today and the "1932 picture of the 'economic autocrats.'" He paints an almost idyllic scene of the new approach by the big corporations to organized labor. Rarely, indeed, he claims, do corporations nowadays seek to "suppress and destroy" labor unions. They do not even use "economic coercion" toward that end, says Lilienthal. While he cites the rise of the labor movement as the original cause for the changed attitude, it seems to him that the corporation heads have now learned their lesson, have had a real change of heart toward organized labor. He repeats that there is no class struggle in America and that in its place there is a growing capital-labor partnership. He approvingly mentions

the "productivity factor" clause in the Auto Workers' Union contract as proving that labor now realizes that it, too, has a stake in capitalist efficiency and increased productivity.

If capital-labor partnership has replaced the class struggle in American life, Lilienthal should explain why there are more strikes in the United States, and more workers involved in them, than in any country in the world? If there is no "economic coercion," and if the giant corporations have had a change of heart, they surely have forgotten to let their workers know about this. The postwar decade has witnessed more strike struggles per year, and more workers involved, than any previous decade in our history. From 1945 through 1953 there were each year an average of 4,500 strikes and three million workers out on strike. Nor was the increase purely the result of the increase in the size of the labor force. In the period from 1945 to 1953 there was almost a three-fold increase in the yearly percentage of employed workers involved in strike stoppages as compared with the decade of 1920 to 1930, and a two-fold increase as compared with the decade from 1930 to 1940. Where then is Lilienthal's disappearance of the class struggle?

It is true that labor has emerged as a new power and that the big corporations realize that it is not as simple as it once was to bring labor to its knees. Moreover, the economic situation in the postwar decade has been one in which the corporations were able to reap the largest profits of their history and did not think it wise to force a showdown with organized labor. But to draw from these facts the conclusion that capital now has a "soul" and "conscience" and that it has given up its desire to destroy the labor movement is certainly far-fetched. What, may we ask Lilienthal, is the meaning of the Taft-Hartley Act which for eight years now has crippled labor's attempt to organize the still many millions of unorganized? Why, may we further ask, have eighteen states recently enacted vicious anti-labor laws? Is there a single person who does not know that these anti-labor laws are the offspring of Big Business? Certainly every worker knows that. And if even more vicious anti-labor laws have not been enacted, it is due to the organized struggles of the workers and their progressive allies, not to the social conscience of the monopolists. The literature of the NAM and the Chamber of Commerce makes this all too clear.

We are fully aware of the tendency in some sections of organized labor leadership to soft-pedal all mention of the class struggle. Some, such as David McDonald, President of the United Steel Workers, have become the spokesmen of Big Business in the labor movement,

and spread the idea of "partnership." But we venture to say that deep in the ranks of the labor movement there is a great and growing fear of how increased unemployment may be utilized by the capitalists to try to break the backbone of organized labor and to drive down labor standards. It is little wonder, therefore, that Gervase N. Love, who reviewed Berle's book for the *CIO News*, was more than a little skeptical about Berle's claim that "corporate management" has "developed a 'conscience,'" and wryly observes that conscience "is not sufficient control for such great power."

THE MONOPOLY MENACE GROWS

What Berle and Lilienthal conveniently overlook is why capitalists are in business and why corporations are established in the first place. This has nothing to do with altruistic motives. The purpose is not to "serve." It is to reap profits. And success is determined by the degree and extent to which this motive is fulfilled. Nor is this a matter of individual taste for greater or lesser profit. Capital flows in the direction of the highest rate of profit. A corporation that cannot match the profit rate of its competitors will soon find itself with a loss of capital reserves and, more than that, will soon be pushed to the wall by its competitors. That is why Robert M. LaFollette, referring to the Rockefellers, Morgans and Harrimans, could say: "They are but types. They but embody an evil. Back of these men is the **THING** which we must destroy if we would preserve our free institutions."

Suppose corporate executive "A" was an "enlightened" capitalist with a "conscience." Suppose he was determined to sell at lower than customary prices and to give his workers higher than the general norm of wages. How long would he remain at the head of that company? And if, perchance, it were a smaller company in which he was the main stockholder, how long would his company be able to compete with the giants? Emerson's statement that the world would make a beaten path to the door of the man who builds a better mousetrap than his neighbor is no longer true. Today, as a general rule, the corporations with the greatest capital reserves, often irrespective of quality of product, will emerge the victors in the battle for supremacy.*

* T. K. Quinn, giving the inside dope of the General Electric Corporation, indicates that GE, even though it "was never an efficient manufacturer of anything to my best knowledge, except lamps or articles produced by outside companies which we purchased," yet was able to maintain its top position

How the big monster corporations, through cartel price-fixing agreements between them, are able to maintain high prices and high profits despite a decline in demand, was shown by the 1955 annual report of the Senate Committee on Small Business. As a result of the 1954 recession, profits for the smaller manufacturing companies "dwindled to 4.1 percent [but] . . . no such blow befell the largest group of corporations. Instead of declining during the first six months of 1954, the profit rate for the giant corporations actually increased from 11.3 percent in 1952 to 12 percent." In addition, states the report, "the small manufacturer's share of total sales has drifted downward from 19 percent in 1947 to 14 percent in 1953, a trend which, if unchecked, can easily assume alarming significance."

But instead of viewing these price-fixing arrangements as an example of monopoly which seeks maximum profits and breeds with it stagnation and decay, Berle, in his fulsome praise of the modern corporation, cites such arrangements as an example of "social conscience." "In blunt fact," he declares, "competition in an industry dominated by two or three large units is not the same as competition between thousands of small units. In a school of herring each herring may compete with the others for the available food supply. But herring do not compete with whales. And competition of whales is more like war than economics."

True. But it does not make anything more of the price-fixing agreements than what they were meant to be—agreements to mulct the public through artificially high prices. Prices are lowered only to drive small competitors to the wall, as is true of the retail grocery chains, or when a big competitor must be forced into line. Thus, what Berle describes as the magnanimous act of "peace-loving" corporations to avoid "warfare" between the "whales," is in reality nothing less than sordid self-interest pitted against the public interest.

Nor do price-fixing arrangements eliminate competition. They only drive it higher, into warfare between the various groupings of finance capital that make up the various tentacles of the monopoly octopus,

because of its tremendous capital reserves. "Experience has proved that it costs a minimum of \$500,000 a year to keep any trade name in the public mind. . . . A manufacturer with a volume of \$100,000,000 a year need spend only 1 percent of that amount to maintain a \$1,000,000 advertising minimum." But, "an advertiser who spent 2 percent of \$1,000,000 sales would have only \$20,000 for the purpose—hardly enough to make an impression on the public nationally."

not only on a national, but on an international scale. When Berle mentions the fact that the big corporations have their own "state departments" that make reports on conditions abroad and on how the U.S. State Department and its Ambassadors are functioning, he is not describing more acts of "social conscience," but the close tie-up that exists between international political relations and the world-wide cartel struggle for dominance.*

Apparently not realizing the full import of what he was saying, Berle admits that the various regional treaty organizations established by the U. S. State Department as part of its aggressive war policies, "like the Organization of American States . . . the North Atlantic Treaty Organization . . . the Pacific Treaty Organization . . . would be shadow pictures or worse if there were not, beneath them, the commercial organizations which produce, transport, and distribute in adequate quantities the oil, iron, copper, bauxite, fibers, foods, rare metals of all kinds, commercial diamonds, rubber, chemicals, and so forth." True enough! If the monopoly organizations were not beneath and behind the current foreign policy, not only would the various regional military set-ups disappear, but with them the shadow of world war!

As the struggle for markets becomes more acute, the struggle between the various groupings of finance capital also becomes sharper. This is the meaning of the new wave of mergers that has hit the country. In the first place, there is a growing surplus of capital which the big monopolists cannot invest fully abroad. Nor do they want to invest all of it in expanded plant capacity at home, for in many industries this already far exceeds present market possibilities. Thus, these monies are invested in purchasing other manufacturing concerns, even where, as the Senate Small Business Committee Report points out, "products or services bear little or no relationship to those of the acquiring company."

Increasing mergers are also taking place of "relatively large and well managed concerns . . . with companies of comparable size,

* "Standard Oil of New Jersey, which is only one of the Standard group . . . sells its products in 140 countries, colonies and dependencies throughout the world. It is an empire of its own, loose in the world, for which the United States is responsible, and it is only one of the giant private corporations. . . . It is the American public who will be called upon to protect the far-flung properties of the giant corporations. We are building a one-hundred-billion-dollar war machine. What a miracle it will be if we can avoid future wars with this combination of conditions."—T. K. Quinn.

prominence, and managerial competence. A common reason for this type of merger is to combat more successfully the crushing competitive pressures exerted by the handful of giant companies which control the industry." The 1954 mergers in the auto industry were examples of this latter type. Thus, the present merger wave is only producing even greater economic concentration and at the same time the prelude for still sharper struggles among the monster corporations and the banking interests behind them.

Discussing this development, the Senate Small Banking Committee stated: "In each of its annual reports since 1951, your committee has stressed its belief that the threat of monopoly . . . has, in fact, assumed more menacing proportions . . . your committee's uneasiness of former years has turned to grave apprehension."

The Senate Committee Investigating Monopoly in the Power Industry also has indicated alarm. In its report issued in early 1955 it warned the country: "Our economy was subjected to its first great merger movement in the two decades 1885-1905. A second significant wave of corporate mergers took place in the latter part of the 1920's. Both of these earlier trends toward bigger business were regarded with considerable alarm by the people and, in turn, by Congress and both were followed by devastating business collapses.

"Since 1950," continued the Report, "the rate of acquisitions and mergers of manufacturing and mining concerns has nearly quadrupled, and recent figures in this respect closely parallel those of the years leading to the 1929 debacle."

The Senate Subcommittee winds up its report recommending a full scale investigation into the growth of monopoly and "its withering effects." It warns: "The danger to the country from monopoly run wild is written in large letters across the recent economic and political history of the Nation. The committee therefore feels that it cannot overstate the imperative necessity for the Congress to deal with this issue immediately."

Thus it can be seen that Senators William Langer (North Dakota), Estes Kefauver (Tennessee), and Harvey M. Kilgore (West Virginia), who signed this report, did not agree with Berle and Lienthal that monopoly no longer constitutes a menace.

It should be noted at this point that the economic decline of 1954, the rise in unemployment, the continuous decline in farm income, the more brazen give-away of the national resources to the monopolies, the vast increase in corporation mergers, and the speculative spree

on the stock exchange, had a sobering effect on many people and alarmed an increasing number to the monopoly peril.

While Lilienthal calls for a repeal of all anti-trust legislation, Justice Douglas, to his credit, holds the opposite view. He does not believe that monopoly is being hamstrung by this legislation. He shows that the total impact of the anti-trust laws has been slight. From the beginning, he observes, these laws have been applied by judges "friendly to the empire builders," and "when one monopolistic device was outlawed, a new one was invented." While placing his main blame upon the judiciary for the tendency to view the trusts as either "good" or "bad" and mainly as "good" he also recognized that the responsibility for this goes beyond the judiciary itself. As a consequence, he notes, "monopolies and trusts have thrived and prospered and grown to an unprecedented extent. Their present strength makes the alarm sounded in 1890 seem feeble indeed."

Douglas' correct appraisal of how the judiciary—but not it alone—by-passed and emasculated anti-trust legislation and in effect served the monopolists, gives the answer in part to Lilienthal's assertion that the new role of government has placed checks and controls over Big Business. While it is possible for government—given the will—to curb the power of the trusts, as we shall discuss in another chapter, the situation today is not that of government control of Wall Street, but Wall Street's control of the government. And when Lilienthal states that the tremendous rise in government expenditures makes the corporations more amenable to public pressure and governmental control, he is hiding the salient fact that most of these expenditures are at the behest of the corporations, in their interests, and under their command.*

Professor Albert Lauterbach, writing in *Labor and the Nation*, observed that what was decisive in determining the character of government economic intervention is what social and political forces are in control. If the government is dominated by Big Business, then economic intervention "really boils down to self-government," he stated, "no matter how heart-breaking may be the outcries against bureaucratic regimentation by the individual businessmen affected."

* The story is told of how Senators Norris (Nebraska), LaFollette (Wisconsin), Lane (Oregon), and Gronna (North Dakota), used to ride to their offices together. One morning Senator Gronna called attention to J. P. Morgan's yacht anchored in the Potomac. Quick as a flash Norris bitingly remarked, "I'm glad to see the Government has moved to Washington at last."

There can be no doubt that the "Cadillac Cabinet" represents big business self-government on the grand scale!

THE MONOPOLIES AND FREEDOM

Berle and Lilienthal, and for that matter Schlesinger as well, deny that reaction and fascism are outgrowths of monopoly capitalism.* Berle even refers to the huge financial grants given by Big Business to "community institutions, now including colleges and schools," as examples of their general philanthropic outlook and their interest in freedom. He recognizes the possibility that such contributions could lead to the imposition of Big Business conformity over the institutions of learning, but he is not disturbed by this. Berle says that there is "a limited capacity to disagree" between the "fellow giants" that rules out this danger. With a perfectly straight face he tells us that there are "men in the corporate world who stand for unpopular doctrine, who insist, for example, on providing scholarships for poets when well-thought-of businessmen only subsidize engineering research." Thus, the fact that some monopolists subsidize poets and some refuse to do so is cited by Berle as an indication of their ability to disagree on important matters. Truly a monumental disagreement!

Without denying the need for giving aid to poets let us ask Mr. Berle what songs are the monopoly subsidized poets paid to sing—the proud, progressive odes to life of a Walt Whitman, or the reactionary rantings and obscurantist odes to death of an Ezra Pound?

* Berle in white-washing American monopolies and cartels does the same for their German brothers-in-crime. "Some thought that the German industrial concerns—many of which had co-operated powerfully with the Nazi government—were responsible for the Nazi movement." That is not true, he contends. "In that idea, I think it is clear now that Russian propaganda played some part; breaking up the old cartels tended to undermine the industrial structure of Western Europe, making conquest by Communism easier." So, according to Berle, it was all a Communist plot!

Let us call upon General Telford Taylor for rebuttal. In Taylor's preliminary address for the prosecution in the Nuremberg trial of I. G. Farben officials in 1947, he stated: "What these men did was done with the utmost deliberation and would, I venture to surmise, be repeated if the opportunity should recur . . .

"These men were the master builders of the Wehrmacht. They knew (as very few others knew) every detail of the intricate, enormous engine of warfare, and they watched its growth with the pride of architects. These are the men who made the war possible and they did it because they wanted to conquer."

Is this, too, Russian propaganda?!

As against these Berle absurdities, Wisconsin editor Evjue's remarks come like a breath of fresh air. In a recent column he wrote: "For months I have been saying that freedom is the great heritage of the American people and that this freedom—freedom for the spoken and printed word, freedom to teach, freedom to assemble and freedom to worship—is being threatened by an American Elite, based on unparalleled concentration of financial and economic power seeking to reduce the American people to a dumb level of conformity and silence."

We fully recognize that Evjue himself, not infrequently, goes in for red-baiting and is by no means free of anti-Communist bias. Whatever our disagreements with him, however, he does recognize the enemy. Evjue does not treat the monopolists as philanthropic. He knows that every dollar paid out is meant to buy something—not only the bricks and mortar in our college and school buildings, but the minds of our professors, teachers and students as well; not only the rotary press of our newspapers, but the minds of our editors and journalists; not only the radio and television networks, but the minds of the men who edit their news and choose their talent.

In 1935, James Wechsler, in his age of wisdom, wrote a book, *Revolt on the Campus*. In this he exposed the role of Big Business in our universities as had Upton Sinclair in his book *The Goose-Step* a decade before. Wechsler wrote: "Trustees are far more than guardians of the treasury; they are the supervisors of the intellectual life of the university—and they do not hesitate to say so. Having seen the social groups which are not represented on the boards—labor, education and their associates—let us see who is. It has been suggested that 'Big Business' is the answer; and, granting sufficient latitude to include big business' spokesmen—corporation lawyers and the like—that is almost universally true."

Eighteen years later, in his *Age of Suspicion*, Wechsler expresses eternal gratitude to Lester Markel of the Sunday *New York Times*. It seems that when Markel accepted an article of his in 1937, this gave Wechsler, "some confidence that I could write for the 'capitalist press' without having my copy dictated in Wall Street." But as Wechsler and every newspaperman well knows, copy does not have to be dictated in Wall Street. It is done with far greater finesse than that. Writers are found who master the skill of writing what their Big Business publishers consider "fit to print."

That monopoly breeds conformity is as plain as the startling fact disclosed by Robert M. Hutchins that 94 percent of American cities

and 18 American states are without competing newspapers. Thus, in the overwhelming majority of American communities there can be no debate between editors. Of course, in the large metropolitan areas in which there are more than one newspaper these also belong to Big Business. It merely indicates how far monopoly has gone in the newspaper field. Ralph Novak, former vice-president of the American Newspaper Guild, estimated that a minimum of eight million dollars is needed to start a daily newspaper and to keep it going for a short period of time. Thus it is strictly a venture for Big Business.

What Big Business domination over the press of the nation has meant was amplified by Hutchins in an address to the American Society of Newspaper Editors. He asked the assembled editors, "Can you say that you have given Americans the material they need to reach a conclusion on the course they should follow, on the choice between co-existence and no existence. . . . And what of freedom in the garrison state? . . . You have filled the air with warnings of the sinister figures of the Left, but have printed almost nothing about the fat cats of the Right. . . . See the blacklist spreading in industry, merging with proposals that American Communists should be starved to death. Listen to the wire-tapping, to the cry of Fifth Amendment Communists, to the kept witnesses roaming the land. The most distressing part of it is not that these things happen, but that the free press of this country appears to regard them as matters of routine."

Hutchins, by all standards a conservative in his economic and political views, at least recognizes the simple truth that for newspapers, "Monopoly cannot be a good thing." Because of that, and because he has espoused civil liberties, the "fat cats" have been out to "get" him.

GROWTH AND STAGNATION

As we have stated earlier in this chapter, there is even less good reason for showering accolades of praise upon American monopoly capitalism today than there was in the 'twenties. This flat assertion may seem, when viewed from the shimmering surface of things, to fly in the face of facts. After all can anyone deny the immensity of America's productive capacity and actual volume of production—so much greater than that of any other country in the world? And is it not said that nothing succeeds like success? Let us therefore look at this "success" a bit more closely.

When Berle spoke before the Cooperative League he made a telling admission. Drawing a picture of the plight in which the banks and insurance companies found themselves in March, 1933, and how the New Deal and its agencies had bailed them out, he then casually went on to say: "The insurance companies and the industries were saved from bankruptcy. But, that was all. The economy never really recovered until the war came."

These words should sink in, deep—"The economy never really recovered until the war came." Berle was speaking of one type of bankruptcy, but this admission of his is indeed an unwitting confession of the greatest bankruptcy of all, the complete inability of American capitalism to prosper without the narcotic stimulant of war. For it is absolutely true that for a full decade, from 1929 to 1939, and despite all efforts of the New Deal to restore prosperity, production continued to sag and mass unemployment and hard times to prevail.

This fact has been referred to by many economists, labor leaders and public spokesmen. Yet few have drawn the necessary conclusions from it. The harsh truth is that much of America's industrial achievement since the turn of the century—a performance which has enabled her to forge far ahead of all other capitalist countries—has been the product of two ghastly world wars and the favorable geographic and economic position of the U.S. in relation to them.

The facts necessary to prove this are contained in a volume written for the United Nations by Professor Ingvar Svennilson of the University of Stockholm. It is called *Growth and Stagnation in the European Economy*. It discusses among other questions the effect of World War I on industrial development. Manufacturing production in the United States by 1923 had reached a level 41 percent above that of 1913. In contrast, European production in 1923 was still 18 percent *below* 1913. By 1929, U.S. industrial output had reached 81 percent above the 1913 level, while European output was still trailing at only 28 percent above that level. But—most important and significant—if Europe's prewar yearly production increase of 3.5 percent had not been interrupted by the war, the 1929 level of European production would have been reached by 1921. Thus, there was an eight year setback as a result of the war.

Such a lag, Svennilson points out, is not easy to make up. It is not possible to regard Europe's economy as "a clock which has been set back a number of hours" and then resumes its movement at the same speed as previously. It is this lag, in Svennilson's opinion, even more than the physical destruction of productive capacity during the war,

which gave American capitalism its great competitive advantage. By the end of the war the United States had taken the lead in a number of new industries such as auto, while European capitalism had "slid back into a weak competitive position." Such competitive disadvantage holds back new industries, and may even become permanent, "unless interrupted by a special effort or by national protection," in the form of a protective tariff. European capitalism's lag was never overcome. When taken together with the loss of manpower, financial assets, productive capacity and contacts with foreign markets, we can see how World War I led to a great strengthening of U.S. capital as against European.

The superiority of the socialist system of production is graphically shown in a comparison of the Soviet and the capitalist production curves. The Soviet Union had suffered an even greater time-lag due to war, for when World War I ended the allied capitalist powers engaged in a three year war of intervention aimed at overthrowing the young socialist state. When it was over, Soviet industry lay prostrate. By 1920, European capitalist industry had attained 77 percent of the 1913 level of production. The Soviet Union's was only 13 percent of the pre-war level! But by 1929 it had overtaken Europe's rate of increase and had caught up with the American. In the next ten years, up to World War II, the Soviet Union left the capitalist powers far behind in its rate of growth. In 1938, European capitalist production was 41 percent above 1913. U.S. production, because of the economic crisis, was only 43 percent above that year. Soviet production, to the amazement of the world, was 757 percent above the 1913 level! Thus it can be seen how socialist economy thrives on peace. (All figures compiled from Sventnilson's book.)

To what extent World War I enabled American capitalism to get the jump on its European capitalist rivals can be seen most graphically in respect to the auto industry. Because the spectacular development of this industry took place in the period of the greatest European lag, the United States took an early commanding lead and has held it despite frantic competition. The growth of the auto industry was a major factor accelerating the growth of all basic industries—steel, non-ferrous metals, rubber, glass, etc.

We do not claim that this was the only factor in the faster development of American industry and in its ability to capture a larger portion of world markets. Yet it is interesting to note that with the advent of the economic crisis of the 'thirties, U.S. capital suffered both an

absolute and relative decline in exports. Only with World War II did U.S. production and exports take another leap forward. Once again its geographic separation from the scenes of war and its role as "arsenal of democracy," led to tremendous industrial expansion and technological advances.

There is no escaping the conclusion that much of American industrial progress in the past forty years arose not from any inherent superiority of American capitalism, but from its ability to take advantage of the two most destructive wars the world has ever known. These wars, as we have shown in Chapter IV, were the result of the uneven economic and political development of capitalist countries. With the territorial limits of the earth long reached, there was only one way by which the imperialist powers could grab complete control over additional markets and sources of raw materials—through seeking a redivision of the earth's territories and wealth by armed might.

But the redivisions did not solve anything basically. Productive capacity continued to grow while capitalist markets continued to shrink relatively. As a consequence of World War I, with the victory of the Russian Revolution, one-sixth of the globe was removed from capitalist exploitation. As a direct consequence of World War II, with the victories of the peoples' revolutions in Eastern Europe and China, important new chunks were lost by imperialism. Thus the over-all crisis of the world capitalist system has become even more aggravated.

To what extent the American monopolists have been dependent upon war and war orders for their prosperity can be seen by the trend since World War II. The peak of wartime industrial production was reached in 1943, scaling heights 119 percent above that of 1939. With the war over, production began to fall rapidly. By 1946 it was 29 percent below the 1943 peak. It did not reach the 1943 level of production again for fully ten years, when as a consequence of a new war—the Korean War—industrial production topped the '43 level by 5.5 percent. In 1954, it lost this gain and once again sank below the 1943 level. In 1955, production rose once again, this time to an all-time high of 9 percent above 1943.

It must also be taken into account that the period after World War II has witnessed gargantuan governmental expenditures for armaments and so-called "national defense." In the fiscal year 1939, the U.S. Government spent some \$1.2 billion for "national security." In the fiscal year 1949, four years after World War II, these expenditures still totalled the huge sum of \$19 billion. But even these were

not enough to maintain production levels. With the Korean War, the proper pretext was created for zooming "defense" expenditures to \$47 billion in 1952 and \$52 billion in 1953.

In striking contrast, socialist production after World War II once again proved its superiority. Despite the terrible Soviet war-time losses—in human life, in industrial capacity, in live stock and raw materials, in millions of burnt homes and in destroyed crops—by 1950, the Soviet Union had already caught up with its prewar level of production. By 1954, it had more than doubled it. In the Soviet Union and the other Peoples' Democracies production in 1954 exceeded the prewar level by well over 200 percent. Thus, while war has been the incentive for American production, peace has been the incentive for socialist production.

Thus can be seen how utterly shallow is the claim of Berle, Lilienthal and the other apologists for the monopolists that American industrial development represents a great progressive and "revolutionary" feat. The lives of tens of millions of people in two world wars have paid for some of the wartime gains of American capitalism. And since World War II, our relative prosperity has been based largely on the advantages won over other capitalist countries as a result of the war, and on swollen expenditures of tens of billions of the peoples' money for armaments and the preparations for a third world war.

DIVIDING THE PRODUCTION PIE

Although postwar industrial production has fluctuated around war-time levels, the same cannot be said of corporation profits. Before World War II, the year 1929 was the peak profit year with corporation profits reaching \$9.8 billion before taxes and \$8.4 billion after taxes. Then followed the lean decade of the 'thirties. Not until the war was the 1929 level of profits reached again. After that has come the jet-like smashing of one record after another.

In 1943, corporation profits before taxes had reached the astounding total of \$25.1 billion, and after taxes the not inconsiderable sum of \$10.6 billion. This does not, of course, include the billions of dollars of government investment in wartime plants, virtually donated to the big industrialists. With the removal of price controls in 1946-47, with the great hunger for consumer goods which followed the period of wartime shortages, and with the subsequent pouring of billions of dollars into armaments and "defense" dumping abroad, corporation

profits shot forward, leaving all past levels far behind. In 1952, even though industrial production was still below the wartime peak of 1943, corporation profits before taxes were \$39.2 billion and after taxes, \$18.6 billion. In 1955, however, profits reached their highest peak, some \$45 billion before taxes and over \$22 billion after taxes.

There has been considerable juggling of figures these past few years aimed at proving that the national production pie is being divided ever more evenly, with the corporations getting a smaller, and the people a larger portion of it. How can this be the case, however, when the production pie since 1943 has remained more or less stationary while profits have grown vastly? Even when one takes into account the rise in prices since 1943 of approximately 54 percent (according to the Department of Labor), real net profits in 1955 were 39 percent higher than in 1943 while production was only 9 percent higher. Thus, miracle of miracles, Big Business has succeeded in raising its volume and proportion of profits without a comparable increase in production.

To Berle and Lillienthal this indeed may seem "revolutionary," but to us, skeptics that we are, it represents the very opposite. It is another visible sign of the tendency toward stagnation and decay inherent in modern monopoly capitalism—for greater profits are no longer dependent upon greater production, but on monopoly control and manipulation of prices. This was exemplified in 1954. In that year production dropped some 7 percent as compared with 1953. Yet profits after taxes showed no such fall; while prices remained about the same. Profits after taxes fell only one-half a billion dollars, or less than 3 percent. But this fall in profits was mainly among the smaller corporations. The giants showed no drop whatsoever, in fact, in most instances showed a net gain.*

This leads us to the last question we intend to discuss in this chapter, the claim that the big corporations, with their newly found (or newly discovered) "consciences" and "souls," are generously spreading the "good life" to all Americans and that once again we are close to ending poverty within our land.

There are many Americans who would readily admit that the

* General Motors, for example, showed a slight drop in sales from 1953 to 1954. Its net income, however, rose in the same period by over \$200 million. General Electric showed a 5 percent drop in sales in 1954 but a 28 percent rise in net earnings. Du Pont showed a 3.5 percent loss in sales and over \$100 million gain in earnings. In contrast with this, wages and salaries for 1954 were \$2.5 billion below those for 1953!

monster corporations are grabbing a larger portion of the production pie. Some of them, however, would not be too disturbed at this. They would reason that so long as the pie itself was getting larger constantly, they too would benefit. In other words, they would be ready to let the big fellows hog more if their own share also grew somewhat year by year. This approach partly stems from the fact that conditions today are better than they were in the 1930's. This, of course, is not saying very much. To compare the present period with the crisis decade is false and misleading. It is like attempting to judge the over-all climate of a country by only one of its seasons, or a country's over-all geography by only the height of its mountain ranges. Every mountain also has its valley. This certainly is true of capitalist production, the history of which is characterized by recurring cyclical economic crises. Although once again we are being assured that this time the "ups" and "downs" of the economic cycle have been flattened out into just a series of "ups."

It also is true that many people have more material good things today than during World War II. The reason for this is obvious. During the war a much larger proportion of national production went for armament and war purposes and many consumer shortages developed, particularly in durable goods such as autos, homes, television sets, washing machines, refrigerators. However—and we wish to stress this fact—the actual income of the producing millions has shown no real increase. Just as production reached a peak in 1943, so did wages in 1944. Average weekly earnings for production workers and non-supervisory employees in manufacturing reached a peak in that year of \$46.08. The Department of Labor estimates that this sum was the equivalent of \$70.35 in 1954 prices, for the cost of living had skyrocketed that much in the postwar period. But in the year 1954 the average weekly wage was \$71.86 or, in buying power, only \$1.51 above that of 1944. Thus, while gross profits during this ten year period had risen sharply, gross wages had barely increased.

As for "take-home" wages, there was no increase whatever, but a slight decline. A worker with three dependents (the average family of husband, wife and two children), suffered a drop of a little less than one percent in real weekly "take-home" wages between 1944 and 1954. Only in the year 1955, at the peak of postwar prosperity, did average weekly "take-home" earnings for production workers in manufacturing rise above that of 1944. The figures of the Department of Labor indicate that this rise was less than four percent. Thus, in the eleven year period between 1944 and 1955, real profits for the

corporations had increased by about 40 percent while real wages for the family-man production worker by less than four percent!

These average weekly wages are for employed workers only. But since the war, unemployment has shown its ugly face again. In March, 1954, it reached the official figure of 3,725,000 or 5.8 percent of the civilian labor force. While it declined in 1955, it still hovered around the three million mark despite the new rise in production. However, actual unemployment is greater than the official figures indicate. Government unemployment figures do not include those temporarily laid off and told to report back to work within 30 days. According to the 1955 *Economic Report of the President*, "By long-standing practice, these persons are not classified as unemployed." Whether classified or not they still bring no wages home for the period without work, thus further reducing their average weekly earnings.

Farm income has shown a steady decline. It reached a wartime peak in 1944. With the removal of price controls and the great world hunger for food products after the war, real net farm income in 1947 rose about five percent above that of 1944. But by 1948 it had dropped below the level of 1944 and a year later to 19 percent below. Since then it has dropped steadily. In 1952, it was 27 percent, and in 1953, 28 percent below 1944. And in 1954 it again dropped about seven percent below the previous year. In 1955, the drop was even more precipitous.

The downward trend is observed also in the figures for per capita income. According to the Department of Commerce, average per capita personal income after taxes had reached a high of \$1,621 in 1944 (at 1954 prices). But in 1954, a decade later, per capita personal income was estimated to be \$1,561, or 4 percent below 1944.

Even these figures do not tell the full story. Bert Seidman, AFL statistician, has said, "There is one thing always to keep in mind about averages—50 percent are below the average." The fact is that when dealing with income there is far more than 50 percent below the average. Suppose, for example, we are told that the average yearly earnings of a particular group of 1,000 individuals, amounted to \$7,000 per person. That would not be bad, would it? But suppose a breakdown of these earnings disclosed that 995 persons earned only \$2,000 a year and the other five persons \$1,000,000 a year each. The average of the group as a whole would still be \$7,000, but how misleading would this "average" be in determining the actual income of the overwhelming majority!

It is when we penetrate beneath the inscrutable "average" that we

uncover the real extent of poverty, and how far we are from ending it, despite all the boasts and ballyhoo of the Berles and Lilienthals. For a number of years the Heller Committee of the University of California has been issuing its own scientific estimate of what it would take to maintain a city wage-worker's family of four at a modest standard of living. In 1954, the Heller budget called for a yearly income of \$5,335 a year or \$102 a week. To show its modest nature, it allocated in its breakdown only \$624 a year for rent. Yet few families of four can find decent city housing at \$52 a month.

Assuming, however, that the Heller budget is fully adequate in all respects, how many American wage-earning families come anywhere near it? In 1952, according to Department of Commerce estimates, 67 percent of American families had incomes of less than \$5,000 a year, with 33 percent receiving less than \$3,000 a year. As for Negro families, 90 percent received less than \$5,000 a year and 67 percent received less than \$3,000. The average weekly wage of manufacturing workers in September, 1954, the same month in which the Heller Committee made its study, was \$71. This means that the average manufacturing worker earned \$30 a week less than what the Heller budget considered adequate for a family of four.

The Heller budget can be met only by a highly skilled worker who is steadily employed, or, by a family in which there is more than one bread-winner. Generally speaking, the one-worker family has had a tough time making ends meet. That is why some 28 percent of American wives also work for a living, and when this percentage is applied to working class wives it is considerably higher. But where they do work, the Heller budget must be boosted upward, for an additional bread-winner also means additional costs of transportation and clothing, while many former household chores can no longer be done in the home.

What then explains the general feeling of prosperity and the actual fact that the majority of people do possess more material goods today than either in the 'thirties or during the war? In the first place, there is the significant fact that most workers have been employed and that unemployment, even if considerable, is not comparable with what it was in the prewar decade. In the second place, it must be borne in mind that income during the war could not all be spent because of consumer goods shortages. A large percentage of it, therefore, went into savings. The opposite is now true. The majority of people are not only spending all they earn, they are actually eating into their limited savings of past years plus spending some of tomorrow's as yet unearned

income. John F. Liebenderfer, of the University of Oklahoma, estimated that by 1950 fully 32 percent of American families already were operating in the red. By 1952, according to him, 54 percent of non-farm families owned their own homes, but half of these were heavily mortgaged. "What we have," Liebenderfer believes, "is not a rosy picture of a nation of prosperous capitalists, but the spectacle of a nation of harassed debtors whose principal assets consist of mortgaged homes and life insurance claims."

There is truth in this observation. In 1945, mortgage debt on one-to-four family houses was \$18.5 billion; in 1951, \$52 billion; in 1954, \$75 billion; and in the summer of 1955, it was \$85 billion. When this is pyramided on top of the huge installment debt, particularly in automobile purchases, one can see to what extent Americans have mortgaged their tomorrow in order to obtain the illusion of prosperity today. But the more of tomorrow's wages that are spent today, the less can be spent tomorrow, and still less the day after tomorrow. Like a house built of cards, everything seems just dandy until one more card topples the entire pack.

Thus we have seen that the monopoly octopus today has by no means become a gentle domesticated pet. It could not be even if it wanted to. We have seen how America's recent industrial progress has been largely the product of war and war preparations. We also have seen that a peak in production was reached during World War II and that for a full decade since then there has been relatively little advance. We likewise have seen that wages, farm income and per capita personal income have not, on the average, gone beyond wartime peaks and for a number of postwar years have been below them, while profits have leaped to new heights. And finally, we have seen that the majority of families live beneath an acceptable standard of living and that the illusion of prosperity is greatly dependent upon the ability to buy beyond one's immediate income by mortgaging one's future income. Where all this leads the generation of the 'thirties can well bear witness.

CHAPTER VI

THE TOTEMS GO UP AGAIN

Many a totem has been thrown down . . . and many a fetish held up to ridicule, and plutocracy in America would not recover its peace of mind until at great cost the totems would be set up again and the fetishes re-anointed with the oil of sanctity.

—V. L. Parrington, *Main Currents in American Thought*

THE ROOSEVELT ERA

THESE WORDS WERE used by Parrington to contrast what he called the period of “muckraking liberalism” (1900-10) and “growing radicalism” (1910-17), with the period which followed of smug complacent reaction (1920’s). In the New Deal period, too, ancient totems were hurled irreverently to the ground. But again, at even greater cost to the nation the old totems are today resurrected and the old fetishes re-anointed.

There are some people who think of history as a clock’s pendulum which swings with routine regularity from side to side—right to left, left to right, and back again endlessly. For such people both extremes are equally necessary and inevitable, if the hands on the face of history are to move. But the movement of a clock is mechanical. Its wheels and springs feel no pangs of hunger, have no thoughts, emotions, passions. They are moved by impulses not from within but by an external force, the hand that winds the springs. When the spring unwinds, mechanical movement ceases and inertia sets in. And each second ticked away is exactly like its predecessor and successor—not time itself, only the monotonous measurement of time without content, of time standing still.

Humanity's movement is different. There is no hand of an external prime-mover to wind its springs. Man makes his own history. Under capitalism this is not yet made with a common will and under a collective plan. History is still the product of the clash of interests and class struggles of the tens of millions. In order to wrest a living from nature, these millions must enter into certain relations with each other, both cooperative and antagonistic. The sum-total of such inter-relations determines the character of each period, for no two moments of history are identical—each has its own specific content.

The swing from the 'thirties to the 'fifties was not inevitable in the mechanical sense in which the pendulum theorists believe, nor for that matter is a mechanical opposite oscillation inevitable now. The swing was unavoidable, however, once its causes are understood.

We believe that more has been written about the Roosevelt Era, in the relatively short decade that separates us from it, than of any recent period of our history. This is not surprising. The great influence of that period can be seen by the ferocity with which its meaning still is being debated by historians and political figures alike. It can be seen in the fears it continues to arouse among the plutocrats, who can never fully recover their peace of mind so long as the memory of the struggles of the New Deal period continues.

To drown these memories in a sea of rhetoric many books have been written—some learned, some not-so-learned, all reactionary. The latest one to appear in the learned class is the result of a special \$25,000 trust fund established to appraise the Roosevelt influence on the nation "without fear, favor or prejudice." The result—*The Roosevelt Leadership 1933-45*, written by Edgar Eugene Robinson, Professor of American History at Stanford University.

Robinson does not deny the gravity of the crisis confronting the nation when Franklin Roosevelt took office. In his judgment the nation from its inception has faced only one other comparable crisis, the Civil War. But he has little praise for the way in which this crisis was met. It is the reactionary Herbert Hoover who prances through the pages of this book with the agility of a romantic hero in a dime novel (now 35¢). It is he who was getting things under control when Roosevelt appeared on the scene and spoiled it all. The scholastic objectivity with which the "unprejudiced" professor treats his subject is typified by his statement, "Roosevelt exercised the powers of a dictator." He asserts that during the twelve years of the Roosevelt leadership there developed in the nation "a distrust of basic democracy." Nor are we spared the sad tale of the two twins, "means" and

"ends," that never seem to meet. For "in the final analysis," Roosevelt's "failure" was one of "intellectual grasp" and "moral discrimination . . . his unsuccessful attempt to justify the means or establish the ends he had in view."

Roosevelt, Robinson avers, "had an important part in destroying dictators representing the entrenched totalitarianism of the few, only to leave his nation exposed at home and abroad to a totalitarianism of the masses more terrible than any foe yet faced by a free people."

This indeed is a remarkable formulation, "totalitarianism of the masses!" The dictionary defines the word "masses" as: "the common people." Thus the professor's formulation could have read, "totalitarianism of the common people." But that would give the game away. What kind of "totalitarianism" is the complete rule of the common people? Robinson is wrong in believing it existed under Roosevelt. He is right in inferring it exists under socialism. Why a "free people" need fear their own rule, Robinson likewise fails to explain.

This strange use of the word "totalitarianism" is in keeping with the current cynical attempt to make the word "democracy" synonymous with "capitalism." Parrington, in contrast, understood that there was no such thing as abstract democracy. The word democracy, he noted, "has changed service with each master." For the "coonskin Jacksonians it meant political equalitarianism," for the "slave economy it meant a Greek democracy," and for "the industrial economy it meant the right of exploitation." It is the "rarest bit of irony in American history," Parrington wrote, to see the modern capitalist class take "custodianship of democracy . . . while outlawing all political theories but their own, [and] denounce all class consciousness as unpatriotic and all agrarian and proletarian programs as undemocratic." What would Parrington have said about Robinson's "totalitarianism of the masses?"

PART OF OUR TIME

Another book dealing with the Roosevelt Era which also appeared in early 1955 takes an opposite tack. In *Part of Our Time*, Murray Kempton of the *New York Post* attempts to defend that period in American life, particularly the 1930's, from its defamers. For him "that was in some ways the best of times . . . It was a time when men in factories raised their heads and fought for a conception of their freedom and took a great part of it. It was a time when the Negro began to fight for all his rights as a citizen. It was a time

when this nation decided that man has a duty to the lowest of his brothers." Kempton is proud of the America of that period, "prouder than I am now"—for America then was "not afraid of itself."

It is a good thing that liberals like Kempton should reaffirm their pride in some of the accomplishments of the 'thirties. Kempton represents that grouping of liberals in the *New York Post* and ADA which has learned to realize that the red-baiting anti-Communist spree of recent years is of extreme danger to the nation, and, not least of all, to themselves. For a number of years they had resembled the Kansas farmer who prayed that the approaching tornado would go around his barn. They now know better. They are beginning to comprehend that so long as they just drift with the reactionary current and do not challenge it more basically and more militantly, a real change cannot occur.

These liberals also sense that a new progressive surge forward is in the making and that, when it occurs it will not start new-born. It will rest upon past experience and borrow heavily from the progressive slogans and traditions of yesterday. This was true of the New Deal, which borrowed heavily from the Populist and Progressive tradition. A new democratic upsurge likewise will take its bearing from the struggles and traditions of the New Deal period. Karl Marx, the founder of scientific socialism, observed that human nature tended "to find loopholes for breaking through tradition within tradition itself, wherever a direct interest provided a sufficient motive."

Thus, it is of great importance to understand the New Deal period and to defend its achievements from the reactionary attempt to obliterate these from the peoples' memory. In doing so it is also necessary to puncture the lies of the reactionaries to the effect that the New Deal was "communistic," or, in the words of Robinson, included many of the "objectives of communism."

On the other hand, it is equally incorrect and harmful to distort the history of that period in an opposite direction. This is what Kempton has done. He wrote his book with one purpose in mind, to prove that the Communists had no influence on the events of the 'thirties and were no real part of that time. The belief that they were, says Kempton, is one of the strange myths of our own time. According to him, the Communists did not "belong" then and they do not "belong" now. They were, Kempton declares, the "sick" in a nation of healthy people.

But if the Communists were "sick," why is it that every progressive advance of that period is associated with their activity? To

call them "sick" is to cast doubt, therefore, on the healthy character of the struggles themselves and on the New Deal as such. It is to refuse to defend the popular progressive unity which then existed, inclusive of the Communists, and without which the period as such would not have been possible. What, therefore, is to be gained from this line of argument? Does Kempton really believe that this is the way present day liberals can defend the New Deal while protecting themselves from the charge of "softness" toward the Communists? If so, he is badly mistaken. He is only giving ground to the anti-Communism of our own day and trying to find some reconciliation between it and the period of the New Deal. But such reconciliation is impossible. All attempts in that direction only strengthen reaction.

Because the lessons of the New Deal period are so vital for the present day, we shall undertake to set the record straight. The great peoples' struggles of the time had their origin in the economic crisis which ravaged the land. In September, 1929, the stock market was at an all-time high. A month later three successive stock market plunges indicated that something had gone awry. But the official spokesmen of the day knew not what it was. President Hoover saw no cause for alarm. "The fundamental business of the country," he told the people, "is on a sound and prosperous basis." Five months later, in March, 1930, he was still exuding optimism, promising the nation recovery within sixty days. He was not alone in this belief. Prof. Robinson admits that the "shocking downward trend in the national economy" was not anticipated "either in business or governmental circles." For that matter neither "did William Green, spokesman for American trade unions, foresee any such dismal destiny for the months ahead." There was one political group, however, that did understand the nature of the crisis. This was the Communist Party. It alone pointed to the stock market crash as the beginning of a major cyclical economic crisis of devastating proportions.* Thus the Communists alone understood the nature and gravity of the economic collapse. It was they, therefore, who were best prepared to offer a program to meet it.

Kempton does not speak much of the economic crisis. In fact,

* In October, 1929, just prior to the big crash, the national leadership of the Communist Party declared that the existing situation showed "the clear features of an oncoming economic crisis." And in January, 1930, it said: "we are dealing with the most far-reaching economic crisis in the history of capitalism, involving the whole world."—Quoted by William Z. Foster in his *History of the Communist Party of the U.S.*

for him the whole period has an air of unreality. And the movements in which the Left participated, and the struggles it led—at least from his jaundiced eyes of today—appear to be more play-acting than the real thing. In one section of his book he speaks of the youth movement of which he was a member as just one of those “myths.” In his opinion, with the exception of those young people who went to fight in Spain, “the fact of experience was not in us.” He added: “And, hard as I try, I cannot muster up the reality of experience . . .”

All we can say, in rejoinder, is that Kempton has either pushed out of mind or never felt the terrible impact of the economic crisis which shook America for a full decade. He apparently was not really a part of the young generation which overnight found itself “unwanted,” without prospect of job or profession and ever more seriously threatened by war. But those who have experienced the empty, sinking sensation of joblessness, the horror of being a part of a family without visible means of support or the dread uncertainty of what tomorrow will bring, can testify that the “reality of experience” is in them. The young generation of the 1930’s was fashioned by just such experience, and the youth movement of that day was its articulate expression. It is apparent that Kempton has permitted his own shallow experience to lead him to shallow conclusions.

The influence of the Communists and Left radicals upon the struggles of the students and young people was by no means the most important of their total influence in that period. Basing themselves on a sound analysis of the economic crisis and its probable consequences, the Communists were the very first political group to make the slogan of unemployment insurance a mass, fighting issue in American life. On March 6, 1930, at the same time that Hoover was promising that prosperity was “just around the corner,” the Communist Party organized one of the greatest nationwide demonstrations of the jobless ever seen in this country or any country. On that day, 1,250,000 workers demonstrated from one end of the country to the other. These demonstrations stirred the nation.

How important was this heroic pioneering activity of the Communists, in which more than one Communist was murdered by police bullets, is underlined by the fact that the labor movement of that day was opposed to any form of unemployment insurance, calling it a “dole” unworthy of the American worker. This seems strange today, when everyone accepts unemployment insurance as a fact. But simple decency should compel admission that it was the Communists who played no small part in helping to win this reform. The March 6,

1930, demonstrations were followed with Communist efforts to organize a network of militant unemployment councils. It was these militant activities which won relief in scores of cities, checked evictions and stoked the fires for unemployment insurance.

To Kempton all these struggles may represent nothing but myths. Yet to this day there is hardly a working class community in which he could not find many who remember that it was the Communists who helped them feed their children and keep the roof over their heads.

It is true, as Kempton points out, that the Communists remained a relatively small minority and that the great mass did not accept their socialist beliefs. It is utterly false, however, to claim that the Communists were not a vital part of the struggles of the crisis decade and that the contribution they made was not lasting and positive. Kempton surely must know this. He did enter the Communist movement for a short while. Instead of excusing himself for this on the ground that it was only "a part of my life" and "there are things in it for which I must apologize," he should be proud of it. For there was a day in his life when he too saw a vision and had a dream and was impelled thereby to help pull down the totems in the minds of men. But now he abjectly bows before them, wearing ashes and sackcloth for the "guilt" of a short part of his life.

Kempton devotes a sizable portion of his book to the story of the Reuther brothers. They, too, held socialist beliefs in the 1930's. After working in the Soviet Union for some sixteen months they came back to America more convinced than ever that socialism worked. But now that they have seen the "light," they are cited as shining examples of why it is wrong to judge all those who shared in the "guilt" of the 'thirties in too harsh a way.

In speaking of the struggles to organize the unorganized, Kempton tailored his facts to fit his conclusion and not the other way around. Here, too, decency should have compelled him to pay tribute to the pioneering efforts of the Communists to organize the unorganized. At a time when the official labor movement believed that the unskilled workers could not and should not be organized and stood opposed to industrial unionism, it was the Communists who pioneered in the field of propagating this need and endeavoring to prove it possible. Scores of strikes were led by the Communists and, when the Committee for Industrial Organization was set up by John L. Lewis, it was not accidental that the organized trade union groups which Communists had built in a number of industries, including auto, became

the nuclei around which new C.I.O. industrial unions took shape. Certainly it is impossible to tell the story of the great forward movement of American labor in the 'thirties without admitting that the Communists were an important part of this activity.

Most shameful of all is Kempton's cynical treatment of the Communist role in the struggle for Negro equality. He is unable to deny the role of the Communists in the famous Scottsboro case, in which nine Negro youths were framed on a rape charge in 1931 and given the death sentence. Attempting to discredit this role, Kempton sinks to the level of a McCarthy in falsely charging that the Communists raised huge funds for this case but used it for other purposes. What a distortion of facts is this! When the Communists heard of this frame-up, they were alone in the attempt to arouse the nation against it. At first it was quite impossible to elicit support from organized labor, from the American Civil Liberties Union, or even from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. All had been intimidated into silence by the frame-up charge of rape. It was only later when the Communists had helped arouse a considerable mass movement that labor and liberal support was obtained. The Communists then helped form a united defense committee including the NAACP, the ACLU, the Methodist Federation for Social Service, and others.

These are hard facts. No honest person can deny that the Communists have helped arouse the conscience of white America to the shameful oppression of Negro America. As for the funds raised in behalf of the Scottsboro Boys, certainly most of these did not go toward legal expense. The reason is obvious. And it is not that a single cent went for any other purpose than their freedom. The fight to save the lives of the Scottsboro Boys and then to win their freedom was not going to be won in a Jim Crow, Negro-hating Alabama Court until it was first won in the great court of American public opinion. It was to this court that the Communists brought the truth about this frame-up. Because they were successful in so doing, the Alabama Court was forced subsequently to reverse itself.

Thus, without giving a bill of particulars on the role of the Communists in all the struggles of the decade, we have shown that Kempton has distorted the past to serve his present. That he left the ranks of the Communists after a short sojourn is his own affair. He had a right to change his mind. But this did not require that he befoul his own past. Can it be that he is still trying to convince himself that he did the right thing? Like the elderly spinster who

had but one brief moment of love and fled it forever, some ex-Communists find it necessary to invent fine and noble reasons for their flight, and to embellish the event with a myth of their own creation.

THE BIRTH OF THE NEW DEAL

The myth cultivated by the reactionaries that the New Deal was "communistic" has its liberal counterpart in the legend that the New Deal was fashioned by the will of just one man, Franklin Roosevelt. But history is not mere clay moulded by the deeds of great men. It is in the first place the history of the struggles of the people. Great men are products of their times. They become great only to the extent that they correctly interpret them and place themselves in harmony with and in the forefront of the strivings of the masses. Only to the extent that Roosevelt played this role was he great.*

Roosevelt was the elected spokesman of the New Deal progressive coalition which took shape in the 1930's. This coalition could not have taken place, however, were it not for the gigantic struggles of the masses which preceded its formation and continued throughout its existence. Had the country during the three years of economic crisis under Hoover not been swept by a mighty storm of mass action, the very election of Roosevelt would have been impossible. Before the 1932 Presidential election the Democratic Party had been the minority party. Four times since the Civil War it had held the presidency—1884, 1892, 1912 and 1916. Each time it won by a plurality and not a majority of the popular vote. In 1928 the Democrats received only 41 per cent of the total vote; in 1932, 57 per cent.

Even the choice of candidate was influenced by the masses. As early as 1928, while campaigning for Governor of the State of New York, Roosevelt had clashed with the extreme reactionary philosophy of Herbert Hoover. In a booklet on *American Individualism*, Hoover contemptuously treated the role of the masses. "Acts and ideas that lead to progress," he had written, "are born out of the womb of the

* Karl Marx, in one of his *Letters to Kugelmann*, keenly observed: "World history would be a very mystical nature if 'accidents' played no role. The accidents fall quite naturally into the general course of development and are compensated by other accidents. But acceleration and retardation are very much dependent upon such accidents which include such an 'accident' as the character of the people who first stand at the head of the movement." Marx was referring to the working class movement, but this is true of all movements.

individual mind, not out of the mind of the crowd. The crowd is credulous, it destroys, it consumes, it hates, and it dreams—but it never builds.”

Roosevelt took issue with Hoover and called his views “characteristic of the man.” Roosevelt declared it was “another way of saying . . . that there exists at the top of the social system in this country a very limited group of highly able, highly educated people, through whom all progress in this land must originate. Furthermore, that this small group, after doing all the thinking and all the originating, is fully responsible for all progress in civilization and Government.”

In the summer of 1930, during his campaign for re-election as Governor, Roosevelt was one of the first public figures to take cognizance of the desperate plight of the hungry and homeless and to advocate some form of unemployment insurance. He was re-elected with the immense plurality of 725,000 votes.

Thus Roosevelt possessed a quality necessary to appeal to the discontented millions of 1932. These had witnessed the small group of monopolists leading the nation to catastrophic crisis. They wanted no more of it. Roosevelt’s ability to gauge the mood of the common man, to promise him a “New Deal,” was what the Democratic Party most needed to win millions of former Republican voters as well as the support of the large numbers who were swiftly becoming independent in their political thinking.

The bitter struggles of the unemployed and the farmers and the growing ferment in the ranks of small business and professional people led to the convening of an important national conference of liberal and progressive forces in the spring of 1931. The “Conference for Progressive Legislation” was made up of about 175 prominent individuals who had answered the call of five Senators to convene in Washington. These Senators were: George W. Norris (Neb.), Robert M. LaFollette, Jr. (Wis.), Edward P. Costigan (Colo.), Bronson W. Cutting (N.M.), and Burton K. Wheeler (Mont.). The conference included labor leaders such as William Green of the AFL, Sidney Hillman of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, and David Robertson of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Engineers. It included such prominent liberals as Fiorello H. LaGuardia, Harold L. Ickes, Charles A. Beard, and Frank W. Murphy.

The conference issued a statement addressed to the public in which it declared: “In the midst of the depression, the Nation is without effective political or economic leadership . . . Months of misery in the industrial centers and on the farms have disclosed lack

of any proposals for the solution of one of the greatest economic crises ever confronting the Nation." The signers of the statement disclaimed any intent to form a new party. They called themselves a "non-partisan" movement, "devoted to the exchange of ideas looking solely to the formulation of a sound legislative program to be advanced at the next session of Congress."

The Republican high command ridiculed the conference. The Democratic leadership took note. It recognized that new political currents were flowing; and that, despite the disclaimer, a third party could take shape if the widespread sentiment for progressive change was not taken into account. The decision to nominate Roosevelt was calculated to win the independent and progressive voters for the Democratic ticket.

THE "FIRST NEW DEAL"

With the election of Roosevelt the New Deal began. But what it started out to be and what it ultimately became are two different things. The progressive features for which the New Deal has become known were not the outstanding characteristic of its early period. This has been noted by historians and political figures alike. Professor Richard Hofstadter, in his book *The American Political Tradition*, divides the New Deal into two distinct periods which he names the first and second New Deals. Basil Rauch, in his book *The History of the New Deal—1933-1938*, also makes the same division.

The first New Deal roughly covers the period from the Roosevelt inauguration in March, 1933, to the spring of 1935. In this stage the New Deal represented no clearly defined character. It appeared to be all things to all men. Essentially, it based itself on policies which aimed to bring about recovery through induced scarcity, that is, by placing a ceiling over production and by raising prices. The two main measures symptomatic of this approach were the National Recovery Act (NRA) and the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA). General Hugh Johnson, first NRA Administrator, declared to a press conference: "We are going to plead very earnestly . . . not to use any further labor-saving devices or anything further to increase production for the present."

How fundamentally different were the first and second New Deals can be seen by the quite opposite approaches to government spending and to organized labor. Although Roosevelt in later years—during

the second New Deal—became associated in the public mind with increased government spending and was bitterly accused by Big Business of “boondoggling,” he started out actually advocating greater government economy. During the 1932 election campaign he characterized the Hoover Administration as “the greatest spending Administration in peace time in all our history . . . Let us have the courage,” he argued, “to stop borrowing to meet continuing deficits.” He meant this. One of the very first measures he asked Congress to enact was a so-called “Economy Bill” giving him the power to cut the budget.

Another legend is that Roosevelt had at all times been friendly toward organized labor. Hofstadter cites contrary evidence. “At the beginning of his administration Roosevelt was an acquaintance, not a friend, of organized labor. Although he was eager to do something about the poorest-paid workers through the NRA codes, his attitude toward unions themselves was not over-cordial. The NRA itself had been rushed into shape partly to head off the strong pro-labor provisions of the Black-Connery Bill.” When disputes arose under Section 7 (a), General Hugh Johnson and Donald Richberg handed down interpretations that the Brooking Institute economists said, “had the practical effect of placing the NRA on the side of the anti-union employers in the struggle against the trade unions.” “By early 1935,” writes Hofstadter, “when there were few in the ranks of organized labor who had any expectation of help from the White House, workers were calling the NRA the ‘National Run Around.’”

In the *New York Times* of February 3, 1935, there appeared an article under the heading, “LABOR UNIONS BREAK WITH THE NEW DEAL.” This article reported that labor leaders were “almost in despair of making headway toward union recognition in face of powerful industrial interests and an unsympathetic administration.”

How the capitalists reacted to Roosevelt’s Administration during the first period of its existence also is well known. Many of them feared his references to the “Forgotten Man,” and his promise of a “New Deal,” lest these arouse great expectations among the people and lead to even sharper struggles. On the whole, however, they rallied around him. Professor Robinson, who, as we noted previously, attacks Roosevelt as too radical, admits that, “the financial and industrial groups were actually the first to be rescued by the New Deal.” He points out that in the first months of the New Deal there took place “a swing of a large number of conservatives to the Roosevelt standard.” Many of the legislative proposals were drawn up “in the

light of the experience and opinion of men who work in the financial districts of the great cities," to use the words of Arthur Krock in the *New York Times* of April 15, 1933.

Roosevelt estimated that in May, 1933, the "overwhelming majority of businessmen" had been willing to "go along." Ernest K. Lindley, one of Roosevelt's early "brain-trusters," in his book *The Roosevelt Revolution*, also confirms that "during this period [1933] Roosevelt was the hero of the conservatives, particularly in the East." And Basil Rauch wrote: "The first New Deal was chiefly beneficial to big business and large farmers."

William Z. Foster in his *History of the Communist Party*, wrote: "Roosevelt himself was a liberal who had taken office as the representative of what was virtually a national front including most of big business. He vacillated under these two heavy pressures, striving to reconcile the irreconcilable."

As Roosevelt increased government spending for relief and jobs, as the workers began to organize and strike on a large scale, as corporation profits began to rise, so also grew the Big Business pressure and criticism of the New Deal.

Such was the first New Deal. The reason for its widespread popularity was explained by one economist of the time in these words, "regardless of whether one's leanings are conservative, liberal, or radical, he can find something that he likes."

THE "SECOND NEW DEAL"

The second New Deal roughly covers the period from the spring of 1935 to the beginning of the war in 1939. It was brought on, in the first place, by the economic plight in the country which had not been greatly ameliorated despite all the efforts of the Roosevelt Administration. Industrial production for the year 1934 was still only 68 per cent of that for 1929. While this represented sizable recovery over 1932 and 1933, it still was no higher than what it had been in 1931, the second crisis year. As for unemployment, official figures indicated that 11,340,000 were jobless in 1934 as compared with 1,550,000 in 1929. This, too, represented some improvement over 1932 and 1933, when official unemployment figures topped the 12 million mark. But as compared with the crisis year 1931, it indicated a rise in unemployment by over three million. Thus, labor-saving machinery and increased speed-up had enabled production

in 1934 to reach the same level as that of 1931, but with a considerably smaller number of employed workers. In 1935, unemployment figures still stood at 10,600,000.

The Roosevelt Administration thus faced a crisis. The Supreme Court had erased some of its main legislative measures from the statute books, including the NRA. On top of this, labor was dissatisfied and recovery was not yet in sight. These were some of the factors leading to the second New Deal.

In June, 1935, two progressive measures were added to Roosevelt's legislative program. The first was the Wagner Labor Act; the second, a new income tax. Hofstadter points out that by the end of 1935 the original New Deal was "scarcely recognizable." "In place of the NRA codes . . . there was now a Labor Relations Board with a firm commitment to collective bargaining . . . a stringent wealth tax stood on the books . . . In the WPA a new relief program had been organized, with larger expenditures and a better wage scale. A Social Security Act had been passed."

At the close of the year Raymond Moley, who was then a part of the Roosevelt "brain trust," was told by FDR that he was planning a "fighting speech" for his annual message to Congress because "he was concerned about keeping his left-wing supporters satisfied." Whether Moley's recollection of what Roosevelt told him is entirely accurate is not too important. What is important, however, and indubitable is that Roosevelt not only made fighting speeches but did actually move to the Left.

That Roosevelt did so is to his great credit. He was confronted with one of two alternatives: either to surrender to the pressure of Big Business for an anti-labor administration of extreme reaction, or to respond to the pressure of the masses for more effective measures to combat the depression. He chose the latter course. He also realized that to break with labor and to go to the Right meant to invite political defeat in the 1936 elections.

The Wagner Labor Act which became "the heart of the second New Deal" had been kicked about in Congress for more than a year without winning a nod of recognition from Roosevelt. Frances Perkins, Secretary of Labor in Roosevelt's cabinet, indicates that he took no part in developing the Wagner Act, "was hardly consulted about it," and that "it did not particularly appeal to him when it was described to him." Yet, as Hofstadter notes, the labor unions "gave the second New Deal its dynamic force."

A policy of liberal reform could not be carried through without a break-up of the former heterogeneous alliance in support of Roosevelt. It was not long before Moley left the "brain trust" as a bitter foe of Roosevelt and the New Deal. Other changes in the composition of Roosevelt's advisers and in his relations with forces within his own party reflected the same shift in policy. On the part of Big Business, at least its main sections, the critical pressure of 1934 gave way to a wild shriek of alarm. Reaction turned upon Roosevelt with the ferocity of an enraged beast. He became "that man" and a "traitor" to his class. At the end of 1934 the American Liberty League had been formed as the political expression of the extreme Right. It exerted pressure upon the 1934 Congressional election but did not really unleash its full assault upon Roosevelt until 1935, when it became obvious that the Administration had chosen a course "a little Left of Center" as against a lot Right of Center.

The Liberty League was by no means to be underestimated. It represented the most powerful groupings of finance-capital in the country. A survey by the United Press at that time stated, "the group in control of the American Liberty League represented industrial and financial organizations possessing assets of more than thirty-seven billion dollars . . . Among the corporations supporting the Liberty League were U. S. Steel, General Motors, Standard Oil, Chase National Bank . . . the American Telephone and Telegraph, and so on. As a matter of fact, the list in its entirety covered most all the great corporations in the United States."

This by no means indicates that Roosevelt had ceased to be a representative of American capitalism. In many ways, he remained its most intelligent representative. In August, 1935, speaking to the Young Democrats, Roosevelt confessed that many years before he had not known "of the lack of opportunity, the lack of education, the lack of many of the essential needs of civilization which existed among millions of our people." At the same time he declared: "I do not believe in abandoning the system of individual enterprise."

As William Z. Foster points out in his previously quoted book, Roosevelt was finally compelled to "take a more definite stand" against the most extreme reactionary sections of finance capital and to favor "a policy of mild reform."

Thus, in referring to Roosevelt as going to the "Left," this term is only used relative to the status of political forces in the United States, and not in any absolute sense. Certainly, it did not mean "Left" in the sense of being anti-capitalist and favoring socialism.

What then explains the vehemence with which the dominant groupings of his own class fought Roosevelt?

When Roosevelt first took office, there was a general recognition that some measure of concession and reform was inevitable to hold the masses in check. Hoover's policy of brutal ruling class violence, typified by the shooting down of the war veterans' bonus marchers in Washington, had not succeeded in quelling the upsurge. On the contrary, it had only fed the fires of popular revolt. A "softer" policy, one of reform, was required. However, it soon became apparent that the economic crisis of the 1930's was not like previous ones. As Robinson states, "In each previous economic crisis, recovery had come without much if any intervention by the federal government." As mass unemployment and bad times persisted, the demand for more radical measures of reform, for greater economic concessions to the masses, became more pronounced. The monopolists became alarmed. They saw in the emerging New Deal something quite sinister and dangerous, particularly when the Wagner Labor Act became law, when government spending for jobs increased, when unemployment and old age insurance were enacted, and when higher taxes were imposed upon the rich. The dominant monopolists feared that under the existing conditions a policy of reform would not solve anything. It would not placate the masses, and could tend to feed the demand for larger and more basic concessions. The main sections of monopoly began to turn to extreme reaction and fascism, the rule of the mailed fist, as their answer to the crisis confronting the nation.

While these monopoly groupings favored a course of extreme reaction, this was not true of all sections of the capitalist class. Small business, especially those sections depending almost exclusively on mass purchasing power, tended to support Roosevelt. Important non-monopoly groupings of capital likewise supported him, although many also opposed him. Furthermore, some circles of Big Business, while not actively supporting Roosevelt, did not actively oppose him, and here and there, individual big capitalists favored him. These recognized that American capitalism still had ample reserves with which to weather the storm. It was not in the same desperate straits as was German capitalism. Profits were beginning to rise again. This grouping of capitalists did not believe, therefore, that revolution was imminent. It was convinced that by granting a limited number of reforms and concessions to the American workers, they would continue to accept the capitalist system. Despite the differences that this grouping of capitalists had with Roosevelt on one or another specific issue, it

believed that his more flexible course had helped prevent a break-up of the two-party system and the emergence of a great anti-capitalist and pro-socialist movement.

This division within capitalist ranks was greatly influenced by the international situation and the rise of fascism to power in Germany. Hitler's open preparations for world war, his constant aggressions, his challenge to America's grip on Latin American markets and sources of raw material, all constituted a vital threat to the world position of Wall Street imperialism. As indicated previously, in Chapter V, America's share of world trade dropped during the 1930's while Germany's rose. Japan's increase was even greater.

The capitalist groupings which favored Roosevelt's domestic policies, or at least did not actively oppose them, generally were more fearful of German imperialism and desirous of a firm stand against it. They even looked with favor upon an anti-fascist movement both here and abroad so long as it was directed against German imperialism. At the same time those who most vehemently opposed Roosevelt on domestic policy, as a general rule, also were more inclined to appease Hitler by offering him the right to conquer foreign territory at the expense of the Soviet Union.

The division between these two monopoly groupings was not hard and fast, as was shown by the vacillations of Roosevelt's foreign policy. The Roosevelt Administration had refused to come to the aid of democratic Spain. It had continued shipment of scrap iron to Japan, even after China was invaded. It had approved the Chamberlain-Deladier Munich policy of appeasement. The dominant monopolist groupings feared a powerful anti-fascist movement, for they feared the rising democratic movement of the people both at home and abroad.

Thus the second New Deal represented a loose broad coalition of democratic and progressive forces. Its main enemy was the most reactionary circles of Big Business; its main dynamic force, the growing labor movement. Its objectives: security, democracy, peace. But even the measures undertaken in this "a little Left of Center" period did not restore prosperity. In 1937 industrial production reached the 1929 level for the first time, surpassing it by three per cent. But official unemployment still totalled 7,700,000. Thus there was recovery but not prosperity. Even the recovery was shortlived, however. In 1938, production fell 21 per cent below that of 1937, marking a new economic crisis. Unemployment leaped up again to 10,000,000. This, too, marked a new crisis for the New Deal.

In early 1938, when production was dropping alarmingly, Roosevelt acted to offset the decline by increasing government expenditures. It was in this period that he became doubly convinced that capitalist economy could no longer guarantee high production levels and relative full employment without large-scale government spending. The actual increase was one-and-a-half billion dollars, an amount considerable for the time, but puny compared with today's enormous government budget. Nor did the increase go toward armaments and the military. It went nearly exclusively toward social security expenditures in the form of public works.

The New Deal had not checked the growing process of economic concentration. The monopolies were more powerful and arrogant than ever. Roosevelt took cognizance of this in his April message to Congress. In this he warned that private power was becoming "stronger than the democratic state itself," and, "the power of the few to manage the economic life of the Nation must be diffused among the many or be transferred to the public and its democratically responsible government."

How this was to be attained was never indicated. Production began to rise gradually. Full recovery, however, did not take place until the war broke out. Hofstadter asks an interesting question: "What would have happened to the political fortunes of Franklin D. Roosevelt if the war had not created a new theater for his leadership?"

This question has its place. Even more to the point: What would have happened to the second New Deal had the war not intervened? The New Deal could not have stood still. It would have been compelled, under mass pressure, to move farther to the Left, or it would have been driven back to the Right. The economic situation was still appalling. After nearly ten years of hard times and nearly seven years of New Deal remedial measures, there were still 9.5 million listed as jobless in 1939. Thus, far more radical measures were needed, measures, on the whole, aimed at reducing the profits and curbing the power of the monopolies.

That Roosevelt sensed this new need is shown by his April, 1938, anti-monopoly broadside. Whether such a more radical development could have taken place during the Roosevelt Administration is a debatable question. One thing is evident. To move in this direction required an even more drastic realignment than that which had occurred when the first New Deal gave way to the second. Certainly the monopolists would not have stood idly by while their "freedom" to exploit to the maximum was being curbed. For a number of years

they had been financing extreme reactionary movements such as the Liberty League and those led by Father Coughlin, Gerald L. K. Smith, and others. Within the Democratic Party the struggle also was sharpening. This was expressed in a deep cleavage within the very top command, with men such as James A. Farley, John Nance Garner, Carter Glass and others moving more and more into open collision with Roosevelt and the New Deal.

The development of the New Deal movement in the direction of a more conscious and advanced anti-monopoly program required, above all, that organized labor play a far more independent and leading role. Up to that time the trade union movement had supported the Roosevelt Administration, in fact, had become its most important mass base. Yet it received no representation or recognition within top New Deal councils. Despite the charge of the reactionaries that Roosevelt was "pro-labor," not a single labor representative sat in his Cabinet. Labor was the "dynamic force" of the second New Deal, but it still came hat in hand asking for favors and never was accorded a status of equality within the coalition leadership. On the part of the labor movement this could not continue indefinitely.

While it is impossible to determine exactly what would have been the course of development, it is safe to assume that the lash of mass unemployment and continued hard times would have driven the labor movement toward greater political independence and toward a more advanced and more radical programmatic position. If the New Deal, under such circumstances, had continued to move to the Left its basic components would have held together more firmly than ever. If, however, it had given way to reactionary pressures, it would have fallen apart. In either case the stage was being set for a sharpening of the struggle. The time was becoming ripe for a recasting of the play. The organized working class movement, like its counterpart elsewhere in the world, was beginning to demand an end to its secondary supporting role. It is this which was the objective basis for the increasing friction that developed during this period between John L. Lewis and Roosevelt. Labor was looking toward a more important leading role on the nation's political stage. All this was interrupted by the war.

HOW THE ENEMY WAS FORGOTTEN

With the outbreak of the war the situation changed rapidly. Full recovery was at last attained. As production rose, as more millions of men were drafted into the armed services, the army of unemployed

steadily declined. By 1943, at the peak of wartime production, it was only one million.

The war radically altered class relations. A division between Eastern and mid-west capital over how dangerous the Hitler threat was to America continued to exist. The capitalist class, as a whole, however, began to enjoy wartime prosperity and united in taking full advantage of the war to bolster its own world position as against its imperialist rivals. No longer was it fearful of pressure for domestic reform. Still preferring someone "more reliable" in the White House, the choice of Wendell Willkie by the Republican Party in 1940 indicated that the dominant monopolists were primarily concerned with a continuation of the same foreign policy. Dorothy Thompson, who formerly opposed Roosevelt, now even proposed a single Roosevelt-Willkie ticket.

It was in this developing situation that the domestic enemy was gradually forgotten. The American ruling class donned anti-fascist garb. It did not tell the people the truth as to why the Soviet Union had been compelled to sign the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact in August, 1939. It shamefully hid the fact that the Western capitalist powers had refused to enter into iron-clad collective security agreements with the Soviet Union. Thus the Soviet-German Pact was cleverly exploited to make it appear that the Communists, the most consistent anti-fascists in the world, had now become the friends of fascism; while the American monopolists, who bred fascism at home and built it abroad, were its sworn foes. In spreading this illusion, in joining the lynch-pee against the Soviet Union and the Communists, most labor and liberal leaders needed no encouragement. They now could be both "anti-fascist" and at the same time in the same company of the monopolists. What more could be asked for?

This period was short-lived. In June, 1941, Germany attacked the Soviet Union, proving what the Communists had said all along, that the non-aggression pact was not an alliance and that such an alliance was impossible. In December of the same year, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. The war thereby became truly worldwide in scope with the Nazi objective complete world subjugation. In this situation a common world and home front for winning the war, one including the sections of American capital desirous of victory, became necessary.

Because American capitalism was participating on the progressive side of the war, progressive masses began to forget about Wall Street's imperialist character and motives. They forgot what they had learned previously about the origin and cause of war. American capitalism

began to be looked upon as "different," as intrinsically "progressive." Its anti-fascist and anti-imperialist phrases were taken at their face value, as was its promise of peace and prosperity for the future. Big Business, thus, was taken out of the "dog house" to which it had been relegated for over a decade. How deeply these illusions began to become ingrained can be seen in the fact that the Communists, in the latter part of the war, were influenced by them too. This was the meaning of Browderism.

This particular error of the Communists was not the only one made during the Roosevelt period. In the early period of the New Deal the Communists had not foreseen the possibility of influencing the character of the New Deal in a more liberal direction. While vitally contributing to this by the struggles for the immediate needs of the people in which they participated and frequently led, the Communists mistakenly believed that the economic crisis was leading directly to a political crisis in which the issue of socialism would be paramount.

When the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact was signed, the Communists were a thousand times right in placing the responsibility for this on the perfidy of the Western capitalist democracies which had refused to put teeth into collective security. During the early months of the war—the so-called "phony war" phase—when both sides sat astride the Maginot Line engaging in no military action whatsoever, the Communists warned that an attempt was being made to switch the "wrong war" into the "right war," the war against the Soviet Union. However, when the imperialist war began in earnest, when France was toppled in May and June of 1940, the anti-fascist, liberating element of peoples' struggles for independence assumed a new weight and significance. It was then that the war began to change. These changes were not understood in their full import by American Communists, even if in France and in other occupied countries the Communists were in the forefront of the struggle against Nazi enslavement.

In referring to these errors Communists do so with one purpose, to make perfectly plain that, in speaking of mistakes, they always are painfully aware that they have made their own share of them.

When the war was over, Big Business continued to bask in the sunshine of the victory over fascism. Unlike France, Italy, and other countries where Big Business had betrayed the country to the Nazi invaders, American capitalism was given the credit for defending the nation. With mass unemployment "solved" by the war and postwar

booms, a new generation was growing up not knowing the lesson of the 'thirties—even if the older generation still shuddered when the word depression was mentioned.

After the war, the ruling class was given credit for the apparent prosperity. What conveniently was forgotten was the basis for this prosperity; its limestone foundation. With the defeat of Germany and Japan, with the new authority and strength of the Soviet Union and the successful peoples' revolutions in a number of countries, the American ruling class made the Soviet Union its enemy. The fact that a foreign foe, Nazi Germany, had actually been the main enemy for a number of years had made it easier for the ruling class to convince large masses that a new foreign foe threatened.

Furthermore, the postwar prosperity enabled Big Business to display even greater economic favoritism toward certain groups of middle class intellectuals, labor leaders, professionals, and highly skilled workers. Thus, while average real income did not rise for workers as a whole, or for the population as such, as we have shown in Chapter V, the share which these more favored groups received did rise. This was the economic underpinning for the new theories which began to sprout—many of them not so new—to conceal the face of the traditional foe. It is in this framework that the enemy was forgotten.

In this way the old fetishes were re-anointed with the oil of sanctity once again.

CHAPTER VII

NEW DANGERS AHEAD

... *Oh! not yet*
Mayst thou unbrace thy corslet, nor lay by
Thy sword; not yet, O Freedom! Close thy lids
In slumber; for thine enemy never sleeps, . . .

—William Cullen Bryant,
The Antiquity of Freedom

How bitter knowledge is that comes too late.

—Frederick Douglass

THE UNSOLVED PROBLEM OF BOOM AND BUST

WHEN WORLD WAR II ended, the fear of economic depression was widespread. This pessimistic mood reflected the general recognition that the nation's economic recovery had come only as a consequence of war production. Thus the pall cast by the deepest economic crisis and longest depression in the nation's history continued into the postwar. As each postwar year passed without a major economic crisis optimism grew, and with it new theories blossomed forth to prove that at last the economic cycle was under control. When the 1954 decline was followed by an upturn in 1955, the myth of perpetual prosperity reached a new height.

Of course, while the great majority of workers are strongly influenced by this myth, they still have their fingers crossed. They certainly hope that the prosperity prophets are proven correct. But they are taking no chances and betting no money on this outcome. On the contrary, the 1954 downturn in production awakened bitter memories and aroused old fears. This explains the widespread move-

ment which has swept organized labor's ranks for what has become known as the GAW, the guaranteed annual wage. If the workers really were convinced that capitalism had mastered the old illness of boom and bust, the popularity of this demand could not be explained. It must be understood, therefore, as an indirect criticism of the economic system, a vote of no confidence in the ability of the capitalists to provide steady employment and income. It is an endeavor to erect new safeguards against the worst ravages of the system within the system itself, assuming that is possible.

Those who believe that the problem of cyclical economic crisis has been solved take refuge in the fact that a full decade has passed since the end of the war without a severe depression. But let us ask: Was there not an eleven year span which also separated the end of World War I from the great depression? It is true that the decline in 1920-21 was much sharper than either those of 1948-49 or 1953-54. But then again, while manufacturing production in 1919 had fallen 14 per cent below the World War I peak, in 1946, it had fallen 29 per cent below the World War II peak. Furthermore, since World War II we have been involved in another war, in Korea.

If a new major economic collapse is no longer to be feared, this must be shown in an objective comparison between the conditions which led up to the 1929 crash and those of today. Allen Nevins and Henry Steele Commager, in their joint book, *The Pocket History of the United States*, stress that "there were certain factors that led, clearly enough, to the collapse" in 1929. "In the first place, the productive capacity of the nation was greater than its capacity to consume." This, they note, "was largely because too large a part of national income was going to a small percentage of the population who promptly turned it back into savings or investments, and not enough of the income to the labor, farmer, and white-collar classes upon whose continued ability to buy the whole business system rested. In the second place, the tariff and war-debt policies of the government had pretty effectually cut down the foreign market for American goods, and with the world-wide depression of the early thirties that market collapsed. In the third place, easy credit policies had led to an inordinate expansion of credit, a vast extension of installment buying and unrestrained speculation. Government and private debts totalled between one hundred and one hundred and fifty billion dollars, and speculation had pushed stock and property beyond their true value. Finally, the persistent agricultural depression, the contin-

uous industrial unemployment, and the uninterrupted tendency toward concentration of wealth and power in a few giant corporations produced a national economy fundamentally unhealthy."

If these factors taken together produced a situation in 1929 "fundamentally unhealthy," it also must hold that the same combination of factors if found to operate in 1955-6 should lead to a similar diagnosis.

The first cause cited by Nevins and Commager is that productive capacity outstripped buying power. This, in the last analysis, is the basic cause of all economic crises. Production under capitalism is for profit. Those who work for a living get back only a portion of the added value which they create. The surplus, in the form of profits, goes to the small parasitic class which owns the means of production. Thus it is inevitable that the market should become glutted periodically with so-called "over-production."

So long as that portion of profits which cannot be consumed by the employing class is reinvested in productive capacity, that is, is turned back into production for purposes of expansion, providing such reinvestment is deemed profitable, a crisis of "over-production" is avoided. But this very expansion of productive power further widens the gap between production and consumption and only increases more rapidly that portion of commodities for which no market can be found. Thus it solves nothing basically. It only postpones the day of reckoning, guaranteeing that when the day comes it does so with a bang, in the form of a crisis.

That the productive power of the nation is greater than mass purchasing power is indicated in many ways. It is seen in the vastly swollen volume of corporation profits and in the relative stationary position of mass earning power since the war, as we have shown in Chapter V.

Nevins and Commager list as a separate factor the "easy credit policies" which led to an "inordinate expansion of credit" and to "a vast extension of installment buying." This is really another manifestation of the same basic problem, the lack of mass buying power and the need to stimulate this artificially. But if the adjectives "inordinate" and "vast" could be used for 1929, what adjectives are we to use to describe what is currently happening?

It is interesting to note that in the early period of capitalism, when the central objective was the rapid accumulation of capital and when the problem of markets was not so vexing, in fact, they seemed limitless, the emphasis was opposite of what it is today.

Skimping, saving, and being parsimonious to the excess were then the bourgeois ideal. Today, however, frugality is frowned upon. The new ideal has become spending to excess and far above one's means. Franklin, in his *Poor Richard's Almanac*, wrote: "He who goes a borrowing goes a sorrowing." Poor Richard! How America has changed! At the beginning of 1956 the most popular song hit of the nation went: "You load sixteen tons and what do you get? Another day older and deeper in debt."

The total national income in 1955, as measured in dollars, was about 3.5 times what it was in 1929. But consumer credit was 4.5 times and installment credit nearly 9 times that of 1929. Nor did this include home mortgages. In 1955, mortgage loans on one-to-four family non-farm homes reached \$85 billion, more than 4 times over that of 1929, and it was still climbing like mad. Only farm mortgages were below 1929. But these are rising once again since the fall in farm income, while the non-mortgage farm debt is much higher than in 1929 due to the vast increase in the use of farm implements purchased on credit. The over-all farm debt in January, 1955, was 55 percent above 1950 and totaled \$18.5 billion.

It is possible to go through each of the other causes of the 1929 crash as cited by Nevins and Commager to discern the same trend at work today. U.S. exports in 1955, as measured in dollars, were more than three times greater than in 1928. But approximately one-fourth of these exports was in the form of "military goods and services" paid for in the main by American tax-payers. At the same time the "cold war" foreign policies have effectively blocked more than one-third of the world—the Socialist-led countries—from American trade. Thus, on this score, too, the situation is by no means better, and in some respects worse, than in 1929.

As for Nevins' and Commager's reference to the "agricultural depression" of the 1920's and to "continuous industrial unemployment," these, too, are factors which hold for today. U.S. farm income fell another 11 percent in the first three quarters of 1955, to 27 percent below that of 1951. Thus a farm depression has been developing. This became even more aggravated in 1955 despite the new rise in industrial production.

Unemployment is also growing. In 1929, the unemployed were officially listed as 3.2 percent of the total labor force. In 1954, they were 5 percent, and in 1955, when production reached a new postwar peak, unemployment figures were still more than 4 percent of the total labor force. Moreover while in 1929 there were only 225,000

men and women in the armed forces, in 1955 there were over three million. With the growing process of automation in industry, unemployment is bound to rise more rapidly in the period ahead.

THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES

What is the basis, therefore, for the official confidence that a new economic crisis can be averted? Essentially it is this—the tremendous increase that has occurred in government expenditures. In 1929, federal government expenditures totaled \$3.3 billion. In 1954, it was \$67.8 billion, a sum more than twenty times greater! This represented government purchases of goods and services comprising approximately one-seventh of the gross national product.

It is commonly held that these huge government expenditures have put a floor under the nation's economy, thereby preventing a collapse in which the bottom falls out. It is also believed that when a decline takes place, or when an economic crisis seems imminent, the government, through increasing expenditures, tax manipulations and "built-in stabilizers" such as unemployment insurance, can control events and turn the tide toward recovery again.

Government expenditures can and do affect economic development. Much can be done by the government to increase mass purchasing power and to cushion the impact and alleviate the affects of cyclical economic crises. But if government expenditures are to combat depression, they should be directed toward reducing the volume of profits of the monopolists. It is in the exorbitant profits of this class in which the largest portion of the unconsumed surplus of national production is to be found. Thus had the twenty-fold rise in government expenditures been coupled with a corresponding drastic reduction in big business profits, then, truly, it could be claimed that deterrents were being set up against another '29. But as we have shown previously, that is not the case. Net profits, after taxes, have not declined. They are today at the highest peak in the nation's history. Nor do present day government expenditures have as their objective a redistribution of income in favor of the lower income groups at the expense of the financial oligarchy. They have an opposite motivation. The greatest increase in government expenditures has been for armaments. In 1929, \$800 million was spent for the military; in 1953, it was \$47 billion, an increase of nearly 600 times! It is the very largest billion dollar corporations that get the lion's share of these armament contracts.

The favored position of the financial oligarchy, the main enemy of the people today, is also to be seen in a study of tax returns. Out of some \$69 billion which the federal government collected in taxes in 1953, only \$21 billion came from taxes on corporation income and profits. And this before the excess profits tax was abolished in 1954.

In 1929, a married person with two dependents earning \$5,000 a year net, paid only three dollars as income tax. Those earning less than \$5,000 paid no income tax whatsoever. In 1953, however, a married person with two dependents earning but \$3,000 a year net, paid \$133 in income tax. If his net earnings reached \$5,000, his tax was \$577. Quite a difference—three dollars in 1929, \$577 in 1953! And this is in federal income taxes only. It does not take into account the vast rise since 1929 in all forms of direct and indirect taxation—the numerous sales and excise taxes—on cigarettes, alcohol, gasoline, autos, leather goods, cosmetics, electricity, telephone service, radio and television sets, refrigerators, phonograph records, and other items. Nor does it estimate the amount of mass purchasing power taken away by increased state and local taxes, including sales taxes on food and clothing.

Even that portion of the federal budget which is paid out in the form of interest on the national debt ends up largely in the coffers of the large banks, corporations and insurance companies who are the owners of the overwhelming bulk of government bonds and securities. In 1929, the federal government spent \$678 million as interest on the national debt; in 1955, close to \$7 billion.

What about deficit spending, that is, government spending based on constantly increasing the national debt? It is this type of spending which was advocated by the British economist John Maynard Keynes as an antidote to depression. It has since become the new-found panacea of both liberals and conservatives alike. The magazine *Business Week*, sums up Keynes' views as follows: "When times are bad, spend, don't save; when government revenue shrinks increase expenditures and run deficits; forget the balanced budget, don't be afraid of inflation."

The fact is that the federal government has been running a deficit not only "when times are bad," but also when times were relatively "good." The federal deficit for the 1954 fiscal year was \$3 billion; for 1955, \$4 billion. Only for 1956 has Eisenhower indicated the probability of a balanced budget.

How the national debt has grown can be seen by a comparison with 1929. In that year the federal debt was \$17 billion; at the end

of 1955, it reached \$280 billion. What are the affects of this huge national debt? First, it has brought a considerable degree of inflation. Second, with the national debt continuing to grow during prosperous times, what will be the situation when a serious decline sets in? This will require a vast increase in government expenditures, just at the time when the drastic decline in national income will tend to dry up the flow of government revenue. Economist Sumner H. Slichter observes that the extent to which the national debt constitutes a burden is determined by the ratio of interest on this debt to net national product. In other words, if national production and income rise faster than the yearly interest on the national debt it is not too burdensome a problem. But if national production and income fall and the sum paid out in interest continues to rise due to the continued rise in the national debt, there is trouble ahead. Under such circumstances the credit of the government itself becomes seriously impaired and this becomes a factor which merges economic crisis with financial crisis. And the answer of even wilder inflation only makes matters worse.

All remedies for economic crisis, therefore, which see the ailment as stemming from the lack of currency and credit, only treat the affects of the disease and not its basic cause. This cause lies in the capitalist system of production itself, for this system rests upon the exploitation of the workers and upon the constant siphoning off of exorbitant profits. The inevitable concomitant is anarchy of production and periodic crises of over-production. There is no way by which economic crisis can be fought except by measures which go in the direction of combatting exploitation and reducing monopoly profits.

Thus, the threat of depression has not been eliminated. It is a real danger and is growing ever closer.

APPROACHING DEPRESSION AND THE DANGER OF WAR

The "Summit" meeting of the "Big Four" powers at Geneva pointed up the immense and growing possibilities which exist for world peace. Every step that has been taken in this direction, no matter how hesitant or minute, has evoked the most universal and enthusiastic acclaim from the American people and the people of the entire world. In fact, it was the insistent demand of the world's peoples for peace that brought into being a reduction in world tension.

That the "cold war" can be ended is becoming clearer to people from every walk of life. Even General Douglas MacArthur now

stresses that both sides of the "cold war" must learn to coexist in peace. In his Los Angeles speech of January, 1955, he scornfully derided those who believe "we must go on indefinitely" with present day "cold war" tensions—"some say even 50 years or more." MacArthur recognized the folly of the "negotiate from strength" strategy. The "feverish activity in developing new and deadlier weapons," he said, does not increase the chances of peace or of victory in case of war, for U.S. military strength is being matched by the Soviet Union and, in his opinion, will continue to be.

MacArthur understands that a new world war would be a "disaster" even for the "winner." "If you lose, you are annihilated. If you win," he has said, "you stand to lose." Thus he concludes that peace is in the "self-interest" of both the United States and the Soviet Union, "and there is no influence so potent and powerful as self-interest."

It is too bad that a reactionary such as MacArthur sees things more clearly than some liberals, at least on this score. He has challenged the basic premise of the "cold war," namely, that the Soviet Union threatens this country. Liberals such as Stevenson, however, while they have begun to urge negotiation, have not yet challenged the "cold war" as such. And some liberals in Congress are even criticizing the Eisenhower Administration for not spending more on military items.

The failure of America's "cold war" foreign policy is becoming daily more evident, even to sections of finance capital who previously were oriented on preparations for an early war. MacArthur is right when he states that no one has anything to gain from a new world war. Such a war, with the new atomic means of mass destruction, would be as different from World War I and II as was the Korean War different from the Spanish-American War. Nor could such a war be won by the United States. It would mean an end to liberty and to the American standard of living. It would bring wholesale death and destruction to American homes. It would set mankind back for decades, for the losses in human life and productive forces would be colossal.

The immediate threat of world war is receding. This is a fact of greatest importance. What must be aimed at, however, is the achievement of a lasting peace. This is not in the bag by any means. In fact, the outbreak of a deep economic depression may once again open up an opposite line of development. We have seen to what extent war and war preparations have played a role in the development of

American capitalism this past half century. We also have seen to what extent armaments and the preparations for war have been used to prop up the economy in the postwar period. If the dominant monopoly groupings have seen large scale armaments and war preparations as the means by which to prevent economic depression and to keep profits exceedingly high, what will be their outlook once a new economic plunge becomes a reality? When that occurs there will be a growing danger that the monopolists will see their "solution" in another war. That is why putting an end to the "cold war" completely and bringing about a drastic reduction in armaments is so important.

A significant reduction in armaments is not going to be easy to attain. The most powerful monopoly interests are wedded to armaments. They see in huge military expenditures the type of government spending most profitable for them. Even sections of organized labor have been led to believe that high military expenditures are the only means by which employment can be kept high. Those monopoly interests who favor some reduction in armaments are motivated mainly by the desire to see a balanced government budget. They certainly are not thinking of a drastic reduction.

But the continuation of high military expenditures will keep alive a constant threat of war. Especially under deteriorating economic conditions, in the midst of economic depression, the most reactionary monopoly interests would seek to use these armaments for purposes of war. A new war would not necessarily be one against the Soviet Union and the lands of socialism. It could be one among the capitalist powers themselves. The decision to rearm Western Germany could very well boomerang and once again confront the world with a German military threat. It has happened twice in one generation. It could happen again. But if Western Germany is being permitted to rearm as against being kept neutral, it is because there are powerful men in Wall Street and Washington who still dream of using a militarized Germany against the Soviet Union. Thus, the key to preventing a future hotbed of war from arising is to be found only in the complete ending of the "cold war" and in an all-around drastic reduction in arms.

If the people of the United States and the world are successful in bringing about an end to the present "cold war" and to the stockpiling of munitions and atomic weapons, this will strengthen greatly their resolve and ability to overcome future international crises as

well. The determination of the people of the world to achieve a lasting peace has become a mighty, a formidable and an almost irresistible force.

THE CRISIS IN CONSTITUTIONAL LIBERTIES

With the recent reduction in world tension there also has taken place within the country the first beginnings of a change in political climate. Everywhere there are signs that the people are becoming weary of the witchhunt and the anti-Communist hysteria. There are even expressions, here and there, of shame and remorse at the spectacle which American reaction has made of itself before the world.

In light of these recent developments there are some who believe that McCarthyism as a menace is dead and that "all is well that ends well." But things are not quite so simple. McCarthyism is an outgrowth, of course, of the current war hysteria. Without that it could not have made much headway. But it is also something more than that. It is a reflection, at the same time, of the inherent long-range tendency of monopoly to undermine democracy and to impose its own unchallenged rule over the nation.

This does not mean that the dominant monopoly groupings want McCarthyism, as a form of American fascism, in power at this time. They do not, for without the prospect of early war it would make no sense whatsoever. It would only weaken their international position, and any attempt in that direction within the country would unleash the most violent class struggle at a time when capitalist rule and profits are not being seriously threatened. But the monopolists do want the labor, progressive and liberal forces kept in their place. They want the New Deal tradition buried and forgotten. And given the advent of economic crisis, they want to be able to renew the drive toward extreme reaction and war.

It is on this background that the grave inroads which McCarthyism has made upon American life must be seen. These incursions cannot be reversed simply by censuring McCarthy as an individual or decrying and even damning the methods of the witchhunt. It is necessary to undo the great harm that has been done, to alter the dangerous pattern set these past ten years. That will not be easy.

This is recognized by some liberals. James E. Doyle, former Wisconsin State Democratic Party Chairman and former National Co-Chairman of the ADA, cautioned that "there will not be a perfect

correlation between the decline of McCarthy and the decline of McCarthyism. The evil will not be interred with McCarthy's political bones. The corrosive effects . . . will be felt in our national life for years to come." The same thought was expressed by Senator Herbert H. Lehman in March, 1955. Speaking before the American Jewish Congress, he said: "In recent months we have indeed scored some few victories for civil liberties, but these have come after such a succession of defeats that we have far, far to go before we can even say that we are back at the point from which we started. . . . And make no mistake about it, the safeguards of our liberties have been greatly weakened. The areas of true liberty—of the right to practice the freedoms guaranteed us by the Constitution—have greatly shrunk."

One Amendment in the Bill of Rights after another has been called into question openly or has been undermined surreptitiously. This is true of the First Amendment in particular—the legal pillar of our democratic liberties—the right of free speech, of free press, of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the Government. The First Amendment has been seriously undermined by the Smith Act trials and convictions in which men and women have been convicted of no crime but that of holding "unpopular" political views. The insidious affects of this undermining are to be seen far and wide. It is seen in the intimidation of liberal and progressive opinion, in the branding of individuals and organizations as subversive, and in the fear of many to sign their names to petitions or to join organizations. It is seen likewise in the blacklisting of industrial workers, scientists, teachers, actors, writers and journalists, and in the iron curtain of fear that has spread over American intellectual life.

The Fourth Amendment likewise has been under attack but in a completely deceptive manner. This Amendment guarantees: "The right of the people to be secure in their houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures." Explaining the reason for this constitutional guarantee, Justice Douglas has said: "The right of privacy was deemed too precious to entrust to the discretion of those whose job is the detection of crime and the arrest of criminals." FBI and local police telephone-tapping and listening-in devices are destroying this right of the people to privacy in their own homes and lives. This is taking place to such an extent that it is hard to realize that Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes called wiretapping a "dirty business" and "the most oppressive intrusion into the right of privacy that man has yet invented."

The Fifth Amendment, too, has been under steady reactionary

fire. At a time when Communists are being sent to jail, when the word of stoolpigeons is accepted by the courts as the gospel truth, and when the doctrine of "guilt by association" has been given official sanction, it is not surprising that many should seek protection under the provision against possible self-incrimination. Edwin N. Griswold, Dean of Harvard Law School, in his recent book *The 5th Amendment Today*, writes: "The significance of the privilege over the years has perhaps been greatest in connection with resistance to persecution for such offenses as heresy or political crimes. In these areas the privilege against self-incrimination has been a protection for freedom of thought and a hindrance to any government which might wish to prosecute for thoughts and opinions alone." It is a sad commentary on present-day political morality that the use of this fundamental right under our constitution should be stigmatized. The recent decision of the Supreme Court upholding the Fifth Amendment is a victory of considerable importance. But it has not halted Herbert Brownell's efforts to destroy this Amendment. Nor has it stopped employers from firing, and witchhunters from attempting to ostracize and even send to jail, those who make use of this Amendment's provisions.

The Sixth Amendment guaranteeing persons accused of crime the right to a jury trial before an impartial jury of their peers, and the Eighth Amendment guaranteeing accused persons against excessive bail, are rights equally honored more in the breach than in the observance. The federal blue-ribbon jury system and the national atmosphere of intimidation have made a fair trial for those accused of "unpopular" political doctrine almost impossible. No matter what the nature of the evidence, no matter how perjured the testimony of the Department of Justice's paid and trained stoolpigeons, the juries go right ahead grinding out verdicts of guilty. In some instances jurors have admitted afterward that they wanted to find the defendant innocent. They dared not for fear of social ostracism and loss of livelihood. It has become so bad that a question has arisen as to whether a jury trial is not even less fair than one before a single judge. Taking note of this state of affairs, Mrs. Roosevelt wrote in her newspaper column: "I begin to wonder whether it is possible in the present mood of the country to get a fair trial for anyone." It is not the mood of the country which is involved but the atmosphere of repression. If Mrs. Roosevelt could draw this conclusion, it only indicates the extent to which the Sixth Amendment has been undermined.

As for the Eighth Amendment, the practice of asking \$30,000 and \$40,000 as bail in political cases, and from working people with few

means of their own, is not the application of the spirit of the Eighth Amendment but its cynical rejection.

The right to travel abroad, which a recent Court of Appeals decision has correctly characterized as a constitutional right, has also been turned into a privilege handed down by the State Department to those persons it considers "politically safe." And yet, historically, a passport was never intended to be used as a permit for travel abroad. It was meant as a form of identity for the American traveler on his return to American shores. But now for five years the great American singer, Paul Robeson, has been denied the right to fulfill professional engagements in Europe, Latin America and Asia, because the State Department has disagreed with his political views.

The immigration laws also have been tampered with in order to deny Americans of foreign birth protection under the Bill of Rights. Men and women, many of whom came to this country as infants in their parents' arms, who lived and worked in this land for decades, and contributed to its riches, have been cruelly and ruthlessly pulled up by their roots, torn apart from families and loved ones, and deported.

Furthermore, at the time this is being written the U.S. Supreme Court has not yet acted upon the registration provisions of the McCarran Internal Security Act, which, if upheld, would automatically legalize the Communist Party. Communists are not ashamed of their membership or desirous of secrecy. But they cannot and will not register as "foreign agents" for they are not. Nor is it possible for all Communists to make known their membership for fear of loss of employment. How the Supreme Court acts on this question as well as on the Claude Lightfoot Case, in which for the first time a Communist was convicted for belonging to a political party, will help determine whether the period ahead will be one in which the Bill of Rights is upheld or torn further into shreds. From all this it is amply clear that America has already gone a considerable distance toward a police state and that the legal framework for a complete destruction of democracy is quite far advanced. The halting of the drive to further emasculate the Bill of Rights would represent an important victory for democracy. But more than this will be required if the Bill of Rights is to be restored to its former position and if democracy is to be given a new lease on life and its horizons broadened.

To fail to reverse completely the reactionary trend of the postwar years will confront America with a grave hazard under conditions

of economic depression. Just as a failure to put a complete end to the "cold war" and the arms race will increase the ultimate danger of war, so the failure to wipe the slate clean of every vestige of the witchhunt and McCarthyism, of every fascist-type law on the statute books, will confront the nation tomorrow with an even greater and more menacing threat to its freedom.

Let us take, as an example, the anti-labor laws that have been passed during the past decade—the Taft-Hartley Law and the Butler Bill provisions of the so-called Communist Control Act of 1954. The Taft-Hartley Law has not yet been used to break the main labor unions, but it has been used quite effectively to keep labor from organizing the unorganized. It also has enabled 18 states to adopt vicious anti-labor laws, falsely labeled as "right to work laws." Under deteriorating economic conditions it is inevitable that the employers will use the Taft-Hartley Law and the existence of mass unemployment to try to force wages and working conditions down and to weaken and where possible to destroy trade unions. Eisenhower, when campaigning for the Presidency in 1952, admitted that the Taft-Hartley Law "might be used to break trade unions." As for the Communist Control Act, it can be used, any time the reactionaries deem it wise, to brand trade unions as "subversive." Thus, the reactionary laws adopted during the current hysteria will become even more onerous and even more reactionary under different economic conditions.

This is the greater and longer range significance of the fight for civil liberties today. To the degree that traditional American rights are preserved, and those rights which have been trampled upon restored to their previous position, to that extent will it be possible also for the people to thwart future attempts to destroy their freedom. It will enable them to meet such threats with a powerful counter-movement for an extension of democratic liberties.

It is evident, therefore, that the danger of a new economic crisis is grave. It is equally evident that such a crisis would bring with it renewed threats to living standards and to peace and democracy. How the American people put an end to the "cold war" today, how they wipe the slate clean of all McCarthyite vestiges, and how swiftly they learn to fight the main enemy, the financial oligarchy, will determine in no small way their ability to meet the new challenges when they come.

CHAPTER VIII

ARMS AND THE LIBERAL DILEMMA

We often give the enemy the means of our own destruction.

—Aesop

WARFARE OR WELFARE

PUTTING AN END to the “cold war,” rapidly and completely, is the key with which to open the door to a new course for the nation. Only this will return the perspective destroyed by the blind hysteria and fear of recent years. Only this will enable the nation to view its problems more objectively and to return to the great tradition of struggle against the real enemy, the powerful forces of incorporated wealth. Ending the “cold war” will help focus attention on many unsolved problems that relate to the people’s welfare. These include the growing encroachments of monopoly, the threat of economic depression, the Jim Crow discrimination under which one-tenth of the nation continues to live, the deplorable state of civil liberties, the steadily falling farm income, the crisis in our school system, the great need for slum clearance and adequate housing, the sub-standard hospital and health facilities, a national system of flood control, the continued existence of regional inequalities, and many other similar problems.

The outlook for ending the “cold war” places before the nation the immediate task of bringing about a drastic reduction in armaments. But a sharp reduction in such expenditures will be opposed by many. It is self-evident that it will be opposed by those who have a vested interest in such spending—the corporations with the biggest government armament contracts, particularly the aircraft interests.

Large cuts in armaments will also be opposed by those who think that huge military expenditures are a necessary prop to prevent economic collapse. Unfortunately, many liberal and labor leaders are to be found in this second category. These people are ever ready prey, therefore, for those monopolists whose interests lie in exaggerating every international incident and transforming every misunderstanding into a threat of war. Thus, the economic motivation for high military expenditures is a major obstacle in the way of completely ending the "cold war." In turn the continued "cold war" atmosphere remains a major obstacle to a world agreement on substantial arms reduction.

To what extent some liberals base their economic thinking on swollen military expenditures is best illustrated by the views of two leading liberal economists, Leon H. Keyserling and Robert H. Nathan. Writing in the election campaign handbook of the ADA, *Politics 1954*, Keyserling sets forth a seven plank program for "Full Employment," the very first of which declares: "We may well need more expenditures for national defense." This, mind you, at a time when the nation was spending some \$44 billion a year for such purposes!

Robert Nathan, writing on taxes, criticizes the Eisenhower Administration for its 1954 tax cuts. He characterizes these cuts as benefiting the corporations and higher income individuals almost exclusively and failing to strengthen mass purchasing power. Had he limited himself to these criticisms we would have no quarrel with him. But he did not. He took exception to tax reduction as such. His number one criticism, and he actually listed it in that order, was that "the decision to reduce taxes was allowed to outweigh the essential need of the Federal budget, and particularly, the need for national defense and national security."

In the same book, Chet Holifield, California Congressman and member of the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy, also took issue with the \$5 billion cut in armaments and taxes. He wrote: "The question is, in view of the new and growing threats to world peace, whether a saving of five billion dollars a year is worth it." What new and growing threats to world peace Holifield was imagining we do not know. We do know, however, that this erstwhile liberal was avidly thumping the drums for bigger and better armaments, especially atomic weapons. Referring to the policy of stockpiling atomic and hydrogen bombs, he urged: "We must go ahead with it, whatever it may cost. This means the development of atomic and hydrogen bombs, strategic air force, guided missiles, both short range and international radar defense, continued air defense, civil

defense, industrial dispersion, and all the rest of it." In short—the works.

The Congressman did not fail to note the contradiction between plunking for armaments and the American liberal tradition. He admitted: "From Jefferson to Roosevelt the favorite target of any true liberal was the size of the armed forces." There was a good reason for this liberal tradition. It was not determined solely by the consideration that large armaments led to war. There was also another consideration. One of the important factors which made possible a traditionally higher standard of living in this country was that the American people in past generations, unlike those of Europe, were never weighed down in peacetime by huge armament burdens. America feared no invasion from abroad. It possessed no far-flung colonial empire requiring large armed forces to keep it subdued. This found its reflection in low taxes, a faster national accumulation of wealth and in a higher standard of living. Thus, the American tradition, on the whole, has been anti-militarist.

Congressman Holifield's departure from liberal tradition did not disturb him. He explains this with the assertion, "there has been a complete revolution in public thinking about national defense." There can be no doubt that there has been a complete revolution in the thinking of those liberals who have replaced the traditional foe with a fictitious one. But whether these liberals have remained true to their professed liberalism is open to the gravest doubt.

The tendency of some liberals to shout the loudest for military expenditures and of many labor leaders and other liberals to go along with them has been the Achilles heel of the liberal and labor movements. With the end of the war the people expected a great expansion in all areas of public welfare. They were promised these things. They were led to believe that when spending for victory in the war ceased it would become financially possible to put through many sorely needed reforms. Harry Truman, recognizing this expectation of the people, demagogically promised a continuation of the New Deal and promulgated the Fair Deal. But even the Fair Deal never got to first base. Nor could it. The bulk of government funds continued to go for warfare. Welfare got only a pittance.

Wealthy as is our land, it is still impossible to spend tens of billions of dollars for armaments year after year and, at the same time, to spend increasing sums for the people's welfare. It has to be one or the other. And since the end of the war welfare has continued to lose out to warfare.

This has been the dilemma confronting most liberals. On the one hand, they have favored increased expenditures for social security, for public works, for low rent housing, for schools, hospitals and public health facilities, for cheap electricity and rural road building. On the other hand, however, they have been tied to the "cold war" and, therefore, committed in favor of monstrous military expenditures. Thus, despite repeated heroic declarations against reaction, when it came to the practical showdown their differences with the reactionaries frequently proved to be quite trivial.

It is impossible to arouse the enthusiasm of the nation for new vistas of social progress, for great new reforms, when it is admitted at the outset that "the first task" is to spend, and spend, and spend for so-called "national defense." It is this which explains the impotence of the liberal bloc in the present 84th Congress. Unable, or to put it more precisely, unwilling, to challenge the Eisenhower Big Business Administration and the whole arms program fundamentally, they are completely incapable of any sustained effort in a consistent progressive direction. They talk big, propose little and do less. Even the CIO, the ADA and the *New York Post* have been compelled to take caustic note of this. Such a sorry state of affairs will continue unless and until public pressure compels them to begin to lead the fight for disarmament instead of heading up the parade for the military brass.

The betrayal of the liberal tradition on the question of armaments has cost the nation dearly, not only in the sense that it has blurred the lines which separate liberals and progressive from conservatives and reactionaries. It has cost the nation dearly in terms of its standard of living.

What a shameful squandering of the nation's material and human resources has been the armament program. It has meant an average expenditure of approximately \$40 billion a year for military purposes and to produce weapons of mass destruction instead of the things people need for abundant, healthful and happy lives. Instead of adding to the material wealth and strength of the nation, it has wantonly wasted immense quantities of raw materials, finished products and human skill. Steel, when used to build much needed schools and hospitals, adds to the material wealth of the nation and to its culture and health as well. But steel, when used to produce tanks, guns and bombing planes, only drains the wealth of the nation, enriches the war profiteers and increases the danger of war. This is even more true of atomic energy. When harnessed for peaceful purposes, it can

become the greatest boon ever invented by the genius of man. When, however, used for the stockpiling of hydrogen bombs, it is a terrible sword of Damocles dangling over the head of mankind.

ARMS VERSUS HOUSING

To see how the huge arms budget has eaten into the standard of living, the culture and health of the entire nation, let us consider what could be the affects if the \$35 billion a year now being spent for military purposes were to be spent for socially useful purposes. It would radically increase the well-being of the nation without spending a single dollar more than is being spent by the treasury today, or asking for a cent more in taxes. Suppose the \$35 billion were to be spent on new housing *for just one year*. It could build some seven million new low-cost homes and dwellings. This would literally revolutionize the housing situation. It would immediately put a halt to the fleecing which new home owners are getting at the hands of the banks and realty sharks. It would compel a lowering of all rents. With one blow it would do more to wipe out the slums of our cities than has been done in the past decade. In one short year's time one-fifth of American families could be housed in new low-cost single-family homes or in new multiple dwelling units. Such a program would constitute an investment in America—in its people and in its future. It would release mass purchasing power now being taken away by the exorbitant rentals forced on city dwellers by the big landlord banks. It would stimulate small business through the growth of new communities and the rejuvenation of old ones. It would stimulate production in the basic industries through the purchase of steel, concrete, aluminum, plumbing and other materials. It would increase the mass demand for automobiles and new household furnishings and appliances. Furthermore, the cost of the homes, while borne initially by the government, could be met by the people through rentals or through low-interest or no-interest monthly installments. In this way the funds expended by the government would return to it in time, to be spent on additional projects of social usefulness.

There may be many who think that the housing problem the nation faces needs no government intervention or large-scale expenditure. They may point to the building boom to prove that "private industry" has been doing the job. But they are wrong. The building boom has helped somewhat to reduce the housing shortage. But in

the main it has provided better homes for those in the middle-income group who can afford to buy them. It has barely touched the problem of our city slums or of our rural shanties.

In 1955, the Twentieth Century Fund of which Adolph A. Berle, Jr. is chairman, published an extensive "New Survey" of *America's Needs and Resources*. This survey is quite revealing in its description of housing conditions in the country. "Much of our housing," it finds, "is inadequate. A large amount ought to be torn down and replaced, while a substantial proportion ought to be rehabilitated." According to this survey, more than 33 percent of all homes nationally were either "dilapidated or lacking flush toilet or private bath." In the South, more than 51 percent of all homes and 87 percent of farm homes were in this condition. Only one-half of American homes and only one-fifth of Southern homes had central heating. Twenty-five percent of the Nation's homes and 41 percent of those in the South had no gas or electric cooking facilities, presumably using coal, wood, or kerosene. Eight million city homes, three million small town homes, and two million farm homes were considered seriously deficient or substandard.

Comparing housing conditions in the United States with those in Europe, the survey makes the shocking revelation that while more American homes have electricity and modern conveniences, "our proportion of unhealthful and unsafe dwelling units would be 21 percent, considerably above the percentage for most European countries." Even a country as poverty-stricken as Italy made a better showing than we, with 12 percent of its dwellings "unhealthful and unsafe." Of the selected countries listed, only Greece showed a higher percentage of unhealthful and unsafe homes, 23 percent. Thus we can see that the higher American standard of living and the immense wealth which this country possesses has not led to decent housing conditions, even in comparison with countries by all standards poorer than we.

The Survey estimates that it would cost some \$67 billion to meet the nation's housing needs. Obviously this sum is not going to come from private investments—not when the banking and real estate interests can compel the people to pay just as high rents for old dilapidated dwellings as for new ones. We must remember that we live under capitalism. Investment is made for profit and for no other purpose. Either the government undertakes to meet this need over a period of time, or America will continue to see hundreds of its children burned alive each winter in city slums and rural shanties.

OUR SCHOOL CRISIS

We chose housing as an example to indicate what could be done to raise the living standards of the people in just one year, if present expenditures for warfare were transformed into expenditures for welfare. We are aware, of course, that the needs of the nation are great and that government aid would have to go in more than the single direction of housing. The housing situation is not the only one crying for remedy.

In many respects our school crisis is even more appalling. We refer not only to the stifling effects of the "cold war" atmosphere upon intellectual life and education. We refer more specifically at this point to the tremendous and growing shortage of school facilities, classrooms and teachers alike.

The school population of the nation has been increasing by about one million a year. The building of additional schools and classrooms has by no means kept pace with this growth. President Eisenhower has admitted a shortage of some 300,000 classrooms. New school construction is advancing at only some 60,000 classrooms a year. At this rate it would take five years to make up for the present classroom shortage. But it is estimated that by 1960, 720,000 *additional* classrooms will be needed to meet the continuing increase in school population. Thus, the classroom deficit has not only been mounting year by year, it threatens to climb considerably higher in the next few years unless something drastic is done about it.

What this shortage of classrooms has meant can be seen by the *New York Times* estimate that 700,000 children are in schools operating double and triple shifts; 800,000 are in sub-standard quarters, many of them firetraps; 300,000 are in barrack-type "temporary" buildings, and 400,000 are in rented garages, halls and churches. Adlai Stevenson has stated that in 1955 six million children went to school in "firetraps." The Twentieth Century Fund, in its volume *America's Needs and Resources*, estimates that in 526 urban communities fully one-third of the children were in overcrowded classrooms. As for rural schools, of 128,000 elementary public rural schools, 60,000 were still of the one-room, one-teacher variety with one million children enrolled in these.

In 1955, the National Education Association estimated that there was a shortage of 215,000 teachers in the nation's elementary and high schools. This shortage cannot be separated from how the nation

values the education of its children and the men and women who teach them. Emerson urged his fellow-townsmen to excel in producing school teachers and to make them the very best in the world. This was in harmony with Emerson's belief that the most important of the nation's products was its young generation and that it deserved the best of the best. But how far we have strayed from Emerson's views can be seen in the pitifully low salaries paid to the vast majority of the nation's school teachers. This ranged from an average \$1,416 in some states to an average \$4,268 in others. The national average was \$3,725. All too many teachers received far below this average. In five Southern states the average salary for teachers was below \$2,000 a year, that is, below \$40 a week. In Mississippi it was \$1,884 a year for white teachers and \$760 a year for Negro teachers. And the amounts spent on education per child varied from a low of \$83 a year in Mississippi to a high of \$328 a year in New York.

What would Emerson have said about the nation spending nearly four times as much on its military budget than it spends on education? And yet that is exactly the state of affairs today. Over \$35 billion are spent currently for so-called national defense and only \$10 billion on education—and this includes not merely all money spent by federal, state and local governments, but that spent by all private institutions and individuals as well. Nor is this for schools alone. It is the total sum spent for *every* category of education, public and private, elementary and high schools, colleges and universities, vocational and adult education courses, libraries and museums, and even that spent by the people on educational reading matter.

In 1955, President Eisenhower was compelled to take note of this shameful situation. But all he proposed was that the federal government spend the picayune sum of \$66 million a year for the next three years. This would amount to one-fifth of one percent of that being spent currently on armaments. In other words, for every \$500 of federal funds to go for military purposes, one dollar was proposed to go for education!

An adequate educational program, according to the most recent survey contained in *America's Needs and Resources*, requires a minimum of \$6 to \$7 billion a year *over* what is now being spent. This indeed is a small sum when compared with the great benefits to be derived. It is especially small when compared with the billions squandered on a war threat which is non-existent.

Although Eisenhower still expected the state and local governments to solve the school crisis, Adlai Stevenson was a little more

realistic. He proposed a federal grant of \$800 million a year. While correctly rebuking Eisenhower for proposing to spend \$45 on highways for every dollar on schools, he, too, failed to contrast what the government spends on armaments with what it spends for schools. And yet, it is only in this direction, in the cutting of the military program drastically, that the nation's schools can get anywhere near what they need from the federal government. Until Stevenson and other Democratic leaders begin to tackle the problem in this earnest and realistic fashion, they will be open to the charge that they are merely exploiting the school crisis for partisan political considerations and have no practical alternative program of their own.

AMERICA'S HEALTH

In speaking of urgent public needs a word must also be said about the status of medical care. The President's Commission on the Health Needs of the Nation estimated in 1955 that about 900,000 additional hospital beds of all types were needed to provide adequate care for the sick. This report also found, to quote President Eisenhower, that "the shortage of doctors, dentists, nurses, and sanitary personnel remains critical. The President's Commission has estimated that the Nation can now expect to have at least 22,000 fewer doctors, 17,000 fewer dentists, and 50,000 fewer nurses by 1960 than it will need."

America's Needs and Resources, in its chapter on "Health and Medical Care," informs us that the average family requires about \$190 worth of medical care a year. Two-thirds of the nation's families are not getting this. Lack of ability to pay is the prime reason. The poorest 8 percent of the nation's families accounted for less than 2.5 percent of all medical expenditures. The richest 8 percent accounted for more than 20 percent of medical expenditures. A sample study in Michigan showed that 38 percent of urban families with incomes below \$5,000 a year had some kind of untreated health problem in comparison with only 9 percent of those with incomes above \$5,000 a year.

Medical science has made astounding progress in the past two decades. The discovery of great "new wonder drugs" indicates that man may be at the threshold of even greater discoveries to conquer disease and increase life-span. And yet, side by side with these developments, the incidence of mental disorders has increased alarmingly. Dr. Leonard A. Scheele, Surgeon General of the United States Public Health Service, has stated that mental illness constitutes the nation's

number one public health enemy. Mental patients occupy more than 700,000 hospital beds. Heart disease and cancer are the nation's greatest killers and with the growth in the older-age population the incidence of these diseases has been rising steadily. Medical science, with all its progress, has yet to conquer the lowly common cold. Thus, much still has to be done in the field of medical research.

The federal government has been spending only \$75 million a year for such research, leaving the bulk of the financial burden to private institutions and public subscription. It should be noted that this sum spent by the federal government includes the money spent for medical research by the Army, Navy, Air Corps and Veterans' Administration. Contrast this with the \$1.5 billion being spent for military research. This means that for every dollar spent by the federal government on research to cure or prevent disease, it spends \$20 on research for more efficient ways of mass slaughter.

The Twentieth Century Fund estimates that the cost of health and medical services needed by the civilian population in 1950 was \$13 billion above what was actually spent that year. It further estimates that the deficit in such spending will be some \$15 billion by 1960.

Housing, schools and medical care are not the only urgent needs. It is a crime, for example, that a nation as rich as ours should still permit its mighty rivers to run rampant each spring, inundating whole regions of the country and bringing suffering, devastation and ruin to millions. *America's Needs and Resources* estimates that the annual damage caused by these floods is some \$500 million. It also estimates that for half this amount, for some \$250 million a year invested in a nationwide flood control program, the nation's rivers can be brought and kept under control.

Only the federal government can begin to bridge these gaps between what is needed and what is spent. But it cannot and will never be done if the people continue to permit their main enemy, the financial oligarchy, to dictate the course of government and to place warfare before welfare.

CHAPTER IX

THE CRISIS OF LEADERSHIP

*"You are old, Father William," the young man said,
"And your hair has become very white;
And yet you incessantly stand on your head—
Do you think, at your age, it is right?"*

—Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*

RUNNING TO KEEP IN THE SAME PLACE

IN OUTLINING THESE urgent needs of the people we are not discovering or even stating anything new. They are all well known. There is hardly a labor union or liberal organization which does not take note of them at convention time and does not adopt resolutions regarding them. In most cases, however, there is an obvious and important fact overlooked: the "cold war" and its arms program stand in the way of effective remedy. This fact is by-passed with the glib assertion that an expanding economy can meet all needs, that America can spend even more on armaments and at the same time more on social welfare. And when asked to make a choice as to which comes first, armaments or social welfare, too many liberals and labor leaders have tended to choose armaments.

In choosing armaments as against social welfare and higher living standards, most liberals and labor leaders have found themselves in a growing contradiction between words and deeds. Labor and the ADA have begun recently to criticize the do-nothing, go-along policy of the Democratic-liberal bloc in Congress. But they still fail to recognize the source of this impotence.

The contradiction between words and deeds is reflected not merely in questions of government spending. It finds expression on every

question and most glaringly on questions of democracy. This is graphically illustrated by the actions of the Eighth Annual Convention of the ADA, held in March, 1955.

In many respects this convention marked an important step forward. It indicated a much greater awareness of what was happening to civil liberties and a much greater determination to develop a fighting crusade for them. Like the CIO Convention, it called for a counter-attack on the civil liberties front. The ADA, it declared in its Political Policy Statement, "must reassert the traditional American faith in freedom of expression, conscience and political opposition. . . . We pledge ourselves," it said further, "to uncompromising defense of the inalienable rights of every American—freedom of speech, of thought, of inquiry and of dissent." Strong words, these. The convention resolution on "Democracy and Freedom" spelled this out: "We propose repealing statutory provisions which limit the right of free speech, free association, and free political expression, such as are contained in the Smith Act and the Communist Control Act of 1954."

Very good. This is a forthright statement. It upholds the right to dissent. It upholds the right of free political expression and association. It demands the repeal of the two Acts which limit and destroy these rights. From this it would seem obvious that the ADA stands for freedom of speech not only in general but for the Communists as well. And yet, elsewhere in the same resolution are tucked away words saying the opposite. "We believe," it states, "that the most immediate Communist threat to our internal security lies in espionage and sabotage, and that the Communist Party is a conspiracy toward that end. We wholeheartedly support energetic enforcement of the laws against espionage and sabotage."

This is double-talk with a vengeance. Of course some may say: "Ah, this refers only to espionage and sabotage, the ADA still believes in free speech." But the hypocrisy involved is quite transparent. As every child knows, the Communist leaders were never indicted nor convicted, not even accused in court, of espionage or sabotage. But the liberal ADA does not hesitate to repeat this McCarthyite rubbish. Where it really stands on free speech was made painfully clear before the convention adjourned. A fight took place on the floor of the convention over whether the phrase "including Communist ideas" should appear immediately following the statement, "We oppose limiting the right to advocate unpopular political proposals." The phrase was kept out by a vote of 90 to 60. In this way the

convention placed itself in the ludicrous position of damning the Smith Act because it has been used to limit the freedom of speech and association of Communists and, at the same time, of being opposed to declaring itself in favor of freedom of speech for Communists! To which a bewildered delegate could have been heard to say, quoting the Queen in *Alice in Wonderland*, "Now, here, you see, it takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place."

A similar incongruous situation arose over the question of academic freedom. On the one hand, the resolution declared itself against "legislative interference with academic freedom." On the other hand, it expressed its confidence in the ability of educational authorities to "exclude from teaching positions all persons who have surrendered their own freedom of thought to Communist or fascist control." In other words, the ADA was only opposed to academic witchhunts when conducted under the aegis of legislators. When conducted by Boards of Education and by Boards of Trustees, it was apparently o.k. This subterfuge, this evasion of principle in the name of liberalism, was too much for many delegates to swallow. An amendment was proposed adding a phrase stating "membership in any organization" should not be automatic grounds to disqualify a teacher. It was defeated by 131 to 117 after what was described by the press as a "hot fight."

It is significant that on the question of freedom of speech for Communists, and on the question of the right of Communists to teach, that 40 to 43 percent of the vote was east for putting an end to the policy of shameful compromise with professed liberal principles. This indicates that a considerable number of ADA members, including a section of its leaders, are becoming tired of meally-mouthed double-talk. They want to move in a new direction—not to the left, mind you, but to the former liberal positions so ignominiously abandoned when the "cold war" ice age set in.

It is to be hoped that ere long the ADA will become at least as liberal on questions of democracy as the conservative Robert M. Hutchins, who makes neither professions nor pretensions at liberalism. Dr. Hutchins has had the courage to state what everyone knows but few admit, that a political party—the Communist Party—and not some conspiracy, has had its rights taken away "by methods that drastically departed from those which have characterized Anglo-American jurisprudence." He had previously referred to the attempt to starve Communists into submission by the blacklist in industry

and the professions. He also defended the right of schools and universities to employ Communist teachers and pointed to prominent professors holding Communist beliefs teaching in Western European universities. Thus he has publicly acknowledged what every thinking person and every liberal and labor leader well knows—that Communism is not and cannot be treated as a conspiracy, for it represents a mass political-ideological trend in all civilized countries of the world. It has been in existence for over a hundred years. It represents a powerful intellectual force that has gripped the imagination and won the allegiance of hundreds of millions of people. One may disagree with or oppose the principles of Communism. One may disagree with or oppose one or all the policies of the Communist Party. But one cannot, without admitting intellectual bankruptcy, attempt to answer these principles or policies with the charge of “conspiracy,” or “foreign agent.” This was once known by liberals. It was forgotten when the main enemy was forgotten.

That the enemy remains largely forgotten is to be seen by the ADA Political Policy Statement adopted at the convention. It states: “We reject Communism as the servant of tyranny, and reaction as the retreat from responsibility.” This is the old Schlesinger formula which makes of Communism the tyrannical enemy and of Big Business reaction only a weak, spineless force with a Freudian “death urge.”

Where this leads to was highlighted by one incident, which like a flash of lightning illuminated and made visible what had been hidden from view previously. The ADA invited none other than the liberal Senator Hubert H. Humphrey of Minnesota to be the honored toastmaster at the convention banquet. Thus, the very same convention which had denounced the Communist Control Act of 1954, went out of its way to pay special tribute to the Senator, who, more than any other, had engineered this shameful and hysterical orgy against the Bill of Rights. The same delegates who voted for strong anti-discrimination legislation and who demanded a fight to abolish Senate Rule 22—the rule which enables Southern Dixiecrats to filibuster against such legislation to their heart’s content—were asked to applaud the very Senator who had just knifed this fight in the back. When Senator Herbert H. Lehman of New York, at the opening of the 84th Congress, had urged a determined battle against the rule on cloture, it was none other than this liberal Humphrey who led the opposition. He asked the assembled Democrats, “Why should we do

this just to please these civil liberties groups? . . . We have to remember," he argued, "that we were united on many issues in the last session, Southern and Northern Democrats alike."

This was the man honored by the ADA! And yet the Political Policy Statement adopted also declared, as if in answer to Humphrey: "The Democratic Party, in opposition, has too often handicapped itself by sacrificing principle to a mythical party 'unity.'" How true!—and of the ADA as well! But what can one expect, when reaction is viewed as just a "retreat from responsibility?"

It is to the credit of Dorothy Schiff, publisher of the *New York Post*, that in disgust, and as a measure of protest, she refused an invitation to be a platform guest at the banquet. Correctly she characterized Humphrey as a "humbug" and "liberal demagogue." In her column she quoted Humphrey's opening remarks: "You have lived through a time when you have seen the heights of irresponsibility (applause), of expediency, of political appeasement. . . . The present Secretary of State has outlived his usefulness in the position he now occupies!" Mrs. Schiff adds: "Hmph, Mr. Humphrey! How about the Junior Senator from Minnesota?"

We agree with Mrs. Schiff as far as she goes. But she does not go far enough. She does not say anything about those who invited Humphrey. Nor does she explain how Humphrey can get away with being a "liberal demagogue." To answer these questions requires going deeper. It requires recognizing that the Humphrey phenomenon is not accidental. It is only a reflection of the failure to recognize the real enemy, of the current liberal preoccupation with the struggle against a fictitious one.

NEARLY SUCCUMBING TO THE WITCHHUNT

The attempt to go in two directions at the same time has not characterized the policies and actions of the ADA alone. It has found its reflection, to one degree or another, in all liberal organizations. Even the American Civil Liberties Union, which once had a proud record of struggle for civil liberties, has given ground to the witch-hunt and, at one point, nearly succumbed completely to it. The shameful lengths to which this tendency to knuckle under had gone can be seen by what happened in the ACLU during the early part of 1954. At that time, at the height of the insolent McCarthyite offensive, the National Board of the ACLU decided to come to terms

with the witchhunters. It submitted three policy statements to the organization. These, beneath their camouflaged verbiage, represented a betrayal of the cause of civil liberties. They approved guilt by association while denying they did so. They favored a security purge of UN employees, so long as it was conducted by the UN itself. And lastly, they justified the firing of government employees, teachers and professors who used the Fifth Amendment before Congressional inquisitions, thereby giving sanction to these inquisitions themselves. This erosion of professed liberal principles went so far that the *ACLU Weekly Bulletin* of January 18, 1954, actually gave its tacit support to the Attorney General's list of "subversive organizations."

A storm of protest broke forth in liberal ranks and within the ACLU. The liberal magazine *The Nation*, which, on the whole, commendably kept its head when most liberals were losing theirs, strongly condemned this betrayal of civil liberties principles. "In our view," it declared, "there can be no compromise in dealing with the issues involved. . . . The Civil Liberties Union throughout its history has taken the position that the Bill of Rights applies to all people. In these new statements the National Board abandons this position." And further it went on to say: "It is impossible to accept McCarthy's premise that Communists should be excluded from the protection of the Bill of Rights and at the same time defend the principle of civil liberty. What is needed is not compromise with McCarthy's position but leadership in the attack against it. There is evidence that an increasing number of people in this country are looking for such leadership."

The Nation was right. This was shown by what happened in the ACLU itself. Despite great pressure from the National Board a referendum of the ACLU rejected the change in policy. The National Board then over-ruled the referendum. The issue was finally determined at a national conference composed of the National Board, the National Committee, and representatives of the ACLU's eighteen local affiliates. The National Board was "convinced" to withdraw its three new policy statements. In their stead a resolution was adopted expressing "grave concern" over the growing attacks on civil liberties. Thus the ACLU crisis was mitigated. With the new climate which has been developing since that time there has been a change for the better also in the ACLU. But the basic contradiction was not resolved and still affects all policy—the attempt to go in two directions at the same time.

THE CRISIS OF LABOR LEADERSHIP

We have referred to labor leaders as showing the same evasion of principle which has so characterized middle class intellectual liberal leadership. In many respects the responsibility of the labor leadership for what has happened is much greater. In the first place, organized labor constitutes a great movement of the working class formed to fight against the real enemy. No matter how the Meanys, McDonalds, Reuthers and Dubinskys may squirm in their denial of the existence of a class struggle, one thing is quite certain—were there no constant struggle between labor and capital there would be no permanent trade union movement in the country today. In the second place, the organized labor movement represents so massive and decisive a force that a clear-cut progressive position taken by it could influence the course of middle class liberal opinion in a likewise principled and progressive direction. The failure of labor to play this role, therefore, constitutes more than a mere failure of the labor movement. It represents a failure of the nation itself.

We shall not discuss the main aspects of this problem until our chapter on the labor movement. At this point, however, we would like to indicate how the labor movement is caught in the same dilemma as that of the liberal movement. The Seventh Constitutional Convention of the United Steel Workers, CIO, provides as good an example as any. This convention, held in September, 1954, took note of the growing danger to civil liberties. It condemned McCarthy and McCarthyism. It called upon Congress "to revise existing security laws to avoid prosecution of individuals merely on the basis of speech and advocacy of unpopular views." It urged "repeal of McCarran-Walter Immigration laws." It recorded "the union's opposition to any laws which tend to limit freedom of thought, press, assembly or association."

These planks on civil liberties speak plainly. It would be difficult to misconstrue their meaning, if words mean what they say. And yet, like Humpty Dumpty, in Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass*, the steel union's leadership believes that the words it utters mean only what it chooses them to mean, neither more nor less. What these leaders chose their words to mean was indicated before the convention adjourned. A constitutional amendment was introduced by the leadership barring from membership any worker "who is a member, consistent supporter, or who actively participates in the activities

of the Communist Party, Ku Klux Klan, or of any fascist, totalitarian, or other subversive organization." Needless to say, the insertion of reference to "Ku Klux Klan" and "fascist" was meant as window-dressing. Immediately following the convention the steel union's paper carried a blazing red-ink headline across its two inside pages, reading: "CONVENTION CHANGES CONSTITUTION TO BAR REDS FROM MEMBERSHIP IN UNION."

Thus the steel union convention also went in two directions at the same time. First, it tipped its hat to the growing anti-McCarthy sentiment among the workers and in the country. It took a stand favoring the right of freedom of thought, press, assembly or association. Then it went into reverse gear and denied these rights to its own members inside the union.

It may be argued that the union has a right to determine who can or cannot be a member. This is true. But it is also true that a trade union is not a political organization. It may endorse candidates or even a political party. It cannot, however, without sacrificing the fundamental democratic character of a trade union, dictate the political views or affiliations of its members. Every worker, regardless of political and religious views or affiliations, regardless of national origin or of color of skin, should have a right to union membership. To deny him this right frequently means the denial of the right to work. The steel union convention, therefore, took the incongruous position of defending the rights of Communists to free speech and association, while denying them this right plus the right to earn a livelihood, in the steel industry.

Behind this anti-Communist amendment, as is usually the case, there lurks something even more sinister. It is an attempt of the leadership to intimidate dissident elements and to establish a constitutional proviso through which it can hit out against all militants if there be need for it. The very wording of the amendment shows it to be that kind of blunderbuss. Who, after all, is to determine the yardstick by which to measure whether a militant member is or is not a "consistent supporter" of Communist policies, or "actively participated" in Communist "activities," or what such "activities" constitute in the first place?

The reactionary tendency on the part of labor officialdom to insert anti-Communist clauses into union constitutions is of quite recent fashion. It is, in the main, another reprehensible by-product of the "cold war" and of the tendency to fight the fictitious enemy. In the mid-'twenties, when the real enemy was also largely forgotten, the

labor movement was also swept by an anti-Communist purge. This, however, did not take the form of anti-Communist clauses in union constitutions. When the great labor upsurge of the mid-'thirties was at its peak, only two international unions were known to have specific clauses which made Communists ineligible for union membership. Today, however, to the great shame of the labor movement, such clauses have become established practice. The *Monthly Labor Review* of the U.S. Department of Labor, in its October, 1954 issue, reports that 59 union constitutions, representing a total union membership of nearly ten million, bar Communists from holding office. Of these, forty unions, claiming nearly six million members, go so far as to bar Communists from membership.

While the United Auto Workers, CIO, prides itself on a broader inner-union democracy than many other unions, and while the Reuther brothers tour the globe singing hosannas of praise to so-called "free trade unions," the UAW is by no means free enough to permit the membership to decide for themselves, local by local, who ought to be their leaders. It specifically forbids the members from electing Communists, or those whom the leadership considers to be "following the Communist line," to any office or post of responsibility within the union. When the leadership considers that an attempt has been made to evade this provision the crime is punishable by expulsion.

THE COST OF ANTI-COMMUNISM

Where this policy has led labor we shall not discuss at any length in this chapter. We shall limit ourselves to giving a few examples of how forgetting the enemy led to a betrayal of basic democratic principles and has cost the labor movement dearly. Let us take the Taft-Hartley Act. Labor opposed this law from the beginning. But labor never would have been confronted with an anti-labor law of this kind had there not been a postwar offensive by Big Business.

The Taft-Hartley Law was only a part of the general reactionary pattern. And most labor leaders contributed toward this design by their failure to recognize, and to keep their guns trained on, the real enemy, Big Business. When labor finally was aroused to the danger, it did not fight in a united and determined fashion. It did not place its major reliance on a mass mustering of its own strength and that of its allies. Instead it placed its main hope on a Truman veto, and on his ability to bring the Democrats into line.

Even after the Taft-Hartley Act became law, its harmful effects could have been nullified and the Act itself, in time, turned into a dead letter, if the organized labor leadership had pursued a militant, consistent course of opposition. The Taft-Hartley Law specified that no union could avail itself of the services of the National Labor Relations Board, or qualify for a place on the ballot in an NLRB election, unless its officers conformed with Section 9H of the Act requiring the signing of an anti-Communist oath. Had the principle and yet simple expedient been adopted of refusing to comply with this clause—a course recommended by the Left-led unions, the Mine Workers, the Typographical Union and some others—the Taft-Hartley Law would have fallen of its own weight. If the unions, at least the major ones, had refused to comply with the Taft-Hartley provisions for the use of the NLRB mediation and election machinery, the ensuing snarl over unsettled labor-capital disputes would have compelled even sections of the employers to call for the basic revision or complete nullification of this Act.

But this was not the course pursued. Many labor leaders rushed to comply with the obnoxious clause. They did so for two reasons. In the first place, they did not want to appear hesitant in declaring their anti-Communism, even if it meant cutting off their noses to spite their faces. In the second place, some of them believed that this ill-wind could be made to blow them some good. Vulture-like, they saw the possibility of raiding unions which were slow in complying and the opportunity of destroying the Left-led unions. Some of these leaders also were not averse to using the Taft-Hartley Law to cleanse their own unions of militant and progressive-minded officials who could not or would not sign the anti-Communist oath. By thus breaking the labor front of opposition to the Taft-Hartley Act, nearly all unions in time were compelled to comply with the 9H clause.

This unprincipled use of a reactionary labor law to police the labor movement against Left influence and leadership has caused the labor movement great and lasting damage. By accommodating itself to the Taft-Hartley Act, the labor movement gave the corporations a sharp axe to be used against it. Whatever some unions may have gained organizationally by raiding and destroying other unions, particularly Left-led ones, they more than lost by the paralysis which set in. Since the Act went into effect the labor movement has virtually ceased to grow. Under the Taft-Hartley Law the NLRB has been able to shunt more and more labor disputes over to the states. A new impetus has been given to "states rights" legislation directed against

labor. Eighteen states have adopted so-called "right to work" laws which are actually vicious anti-labor laws. Furthermore, since the Taft-Hartley Act the labor unions have a lower batting average in NLRB elections, and one which has been declining year by year. In 1953-54 the unions lost 34 percent of NLRB elections, a seven year record. Only 4,591 union representation elections were held, a drop of 25 percent in a single year. And the worst features of the Taft-Hartley Law are still to be applied.

The same shameful betrayal of principle was shown by labor leadership in connection with the Communist Control Act of 1954. Suddenly, in the last days of the 83rd Session of Congress, a number of liberal Senators, particularly Humphrey and Wayne Morse, thought up a "smart" move to out-manuever McCarthy. They decided to go him one better, to raise the ante in anti-Communist hysteria. They introduced what became known as the Communist Control Act of 1954. And lo and behold, before long, buried inside this measure were to be found the worst features of the anti-labor Butler Bill.

The official labor leadership agreed with the "maneuver." In fact, George Meany, in a special interview in the pro-McCarthy *U.S. News and World Report*, had actually called for the outlawing of the Communist Party. Here was a bill that said exactly that. How could he oppose it, even if it did contain the anti-labor provisions of the Butler Bill?

Thus the labor leadership found itself once again hoist on its own anti-Communist petard. It faintly murmured its disapproval, but made sure its voice would not be heard. Had it spoken out loudly and plainly in opposition to this measure, there is no doubt that a number of liberals in the Senate and House would have caught hold of themselves in time to block the measure from adoption. But this did not happen. With no determined opposition shown by the labor movement, the liberals, unchecked, proceeded to write one of the most shameful pages in American legislative history.

A few months later, when the orgy was followed by a sobering hangover, the CIO convention characterized the Communist Control Act of 1954 as "a dangerous first step toward state control of all unions." But it didn't explain how this "dangerous first step" was taken—and it is more than a first step. It didn't explain how it came about that the "pro-labor" liberals had sponsored this measure. It didn't explain its own failure to arouse the labor movement and nation against it, and its own great share of responsibility.

"THE PEOPLE ARE HUNGRY FOR LEADERSHIP"

In January, 1955, on the occasion of the Roosevelt birthday commemoration, Adlai Stevenson called upon liberals "to renew their dedication to the memory of Franklin D. Roosevelt and to the principles of freedom, justice and opportunity. . . . As long as the memory of Franklin Roosevelt endures I am confident that we can reconstruct his coalition and see it triumph once again in our time."

These are brave words. It is good that Stevenson recognizes the need for a new popular coalition and has confidence in its ability to triumph again. But words are not enough. Nor is abstract confidence. These, if they are to be of significance, must base themselves on more than mere wishful thinking. They must base themselves, in the first place, on clear thinking, on full comprehension as to why the old coalition fell apart and what is needed to reconstruct it along new lines corresponding to new needs. Of what use is the mere hope for a reconstruction of the popular coalition when liberal and labor policies have been responsible for the break-up of the old majority coalition and when these policies, in the main, still continue in force?

It has been our contention throughout this book, and we wish to repeat it once again, that as long as the labor and liberal movements are diverted into seeing Communism—and not Big Business—as the main enemy they must fight, so long will they remain on the defensive. They will remain incapable of mounting the kind of all-out offensive that could rout reaction and return America to the progressive tradition and path of the New Deal.

The crisis of labor and liberal leadership is caused, in the first place, by the anti-Communist obsession. It is the acceptance of the monopoly ruse of a "Communist threat" which has scattered, dispersed and demoralized the great popular majority of New Deal days. As we have noted previously, the popular democratic forces are much more powerful than those of reactionary Big Business. But these popular forces are impotent so long as they remain caught in the vicious dilemma of trying to go in opposite directions at the same time.

There is only one way by which to overcome the crisis in the ranks of liberal and labor leadership. This is by beginning to challenge the whole fraudulent premise upon which the reactionary drive of the postwar years has been based. Only to the extent that this is done

can the situation be changed. Only then will new goals beckon once again, will a new spirit and enthusiasm assert itself, and a new majority arise capable of ousting the real enemy, reaction, and returning the nation to a progressive path.

In affirming and reaffirming that the real foe to be fought is the traditional one of entrenched power and wealth, the modern monster corporations, we are not asking anyone to give up either real or fancied disagreement with or opposition to Communism. We would ask those who oppose Communism, however, to first make sure that they are fighting the real thing instead of a clumsy caricature. But even if one accepts some of the lies peddled against the Soviet Union, this does not require seeing in its existence a military threat to the United States. Even if one disagrees completely with the principles and policies of the Communist Party of the United States, this does not require seeing it as some kind of sinister conspiracy for espionage or violent revolution. In other words, one may disagree with or even oppose Communism and still be rational about it. To be rational about Communism!—that is a first necessary step if the labor and liberal forces are to reevaluate their policies and determine their course ahead. It is the first important step toward ending the crisis of leadership and finding the path to a new popular majority coalition.

Many times, spokesmen for labor, farm, Negro and liberal organizations have been heard to say that the best way to fight Communism is by improving democracy and extending the freedom and well-being of the great majority. As we stated in Chapter IV, even if we reject the premise upon which this assertion is based, we are ready to go along with that kind of "fighting Communism." In fact Communists urge the broadest unity of all forces who want to preserve and extend democracy and who want to raise living standards. In the fight for these objectives the enemy will not be Communism. For it is not the Communists who extort exorbitant profits and keep wages low. It is not the Communists who give away the nation's natural resources to the monopolists, or who profit from armaments and war. It is not the Communists who undermine, or seek to undermine, the Bill of Rights. It is not the Communists who conspire to prevent desegregation in Southern schools, who discriminate against Negroes, and who refuse to give the Negro people the full rights which are theirs. Nor is it the Communists who join hands with the Dixiecrats in order to maintain a fictitious unity in the Democratic Party. No, in the fight of the people for their vital needs the Communists stand at their side. On the other side, fighting against them, stand the forces

of incorporated wealth and their hirelings. This is how it has been. This is how it will continue to be.

The fact is, and no amount of denial can change it, that the Marxist current has been a force in American life for over a hundred years. It has always been on the side of progress and the people. And until recently it was generally recognized that those who believed in socialism, whether Socialists or Communists, were a part of the American progressive tradition and made contributions to it.

Daniel Aaron, in his book *Men of Good Hope—A Story of American Progressives*, writes: "The progressive tradition thus provides the foundations for an indigenous radicalism peculiarly tuned to the American historical experience. It under cuts the contentions of the super-patriots with their curious and erroneous notions of 'Americanism' and 'un-Americanism,' by showing that a stand against privilege and monopoly has been characteristically American and that forms of Socialism are not incompatible with democracy. Progressivism is pre-eminently the philosophy of social experimentation. . . . It is neither for nor against the government: it is against faction, special interest, monopoly, and privilege. Instead of pretending that class bitterness is some kind of foreign poison and that it is indecent even to suggest the possibility of one class or group exploiting another, progressivism proposes to eliminate the conditions that aggravate this tendency and to re-establish a classless or open society." Thus, American progressivism has included American radicalism, and American radicalism has included those who believed in socialism.

When the reactionaries brand every liberal or progressive proposal as "socialistic" or "communistic," the reason is readily understood. They hope to use the general lack of knowledge of what socialism and communism are to frighten the people away from liberal and progressive proposals. It is malicious nonsense, of course, to make it appear that bourgeois liberalism and socialism are identical. Liberalism desires reform, but it sees this as an end in itself. It believes capitalism is the best of all possible systems and that with a few patches here and there can be made to last forever. The Communists also desire reform. They support reform measures and lead the struggle for many of them. But they do not see these as ends in themselves. They recognize that the capitalist system can never be reformed or transformed into anything other than it is, a system based upon exploitation and oppression. Thus there is a basic difference between bourgeois liberalism and Communism.

And yet, there is also a certain kinship. Some time ago, Mrs.

Roosevelt wrote a column, "A Defense of Liberals." This was when Aubrey Williams and Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Durr were falsely accused of Communism and Mrs. Roosevelt went to their defense. She wrote: "I am beginning to think, however, that if you have been a liberal, some people consider you a Communist." And further: "It is equally important that they [the American people] understand that those who hold liberal views which may go a little further than some of their more conservative neighbors are still not Communists."

We agree with Mrs. Roosevelt in these observations. It is true that some people consider liberals to be Communists. It is also true that "those who hold liberal views which may go a little further" are still not Communists. But if Mrs. Roosevelt can even raise this question, does it not give cause for deeper thought? If Communists are "totalitarians," if Communism is akin to fascism as so many liberals claim, pray then, why is it that liberals, and not McCarthyites or Dixiecrats, are confused with Communists? And why is it that precisely those whose liberal views "may go a little further" are accused of Communism?

The answer is relatively simple. There is something in common between Communists and all other democratic forces, as much as some liberals may disclaim this. The Communists are not opponents of democracy. On the contrary, they seek to extend democracy as far as it can go under the capitalist system. But they also recognize that the system of monopoly ownership—and modern-day American capitalism is monopoly capitalism and cannot be otherwise—stands in direct contradiction to democracy, as a barrier to its further extension and a threat to its very existence. The Communists, therefore, believe that the consistent long-range struggle for democracy must, in time, bring the nation up to the question of ultimate revolutionary change.

But the present state of struggle in the United States is not one in which democracy will be taken beyond its capitalist limits. The goal for this period is the preservation and extension of democratic liberties under capitalism. In the first place, this requires the restoration of democratic rights already impaired or destroyed. In this struggle the Communists stand together with all those who favor democracy. We do not expect bourgeois liberals to accept the Communist position that the end goal of democracy is socialism. But we do expect them to remain loyal to their own professed principles and to bourgeois democratic tradition.

There are numerous indications that the nation is more than sick of the "cold war" and of the anti-Communist rampage. The time is

swiftly approaching for a new upsurge of the popular democratic forces. Monopoly reaction will be checked, stated Eugene Dennis, General Secretary of the Communist Party, "when the multiplying trends and sentiments of the American people against McCarthyism and against the trusts are better organized and crystallized into a mighty democratic coalition, led by the healthiest labor forces."

But what is holding this back is the continuing tendency of labor and liberal leadership to be preoccupied with the non-existent Communist danger and thus to continue to sow doubt, confusion and division in the ranks of the people. The victories which reaction won during the postwar years were undeserved. They were won by default, by the failure of the labor and liberal forces to keep their eyes on the real enemy and to keep from becoming ensnared in the "cold war" trap.

Certainly, if the labor and progressive forces enter the 1956 elections with no better line of policy than that pursued by them in 1952 they cannot hope to win and reaction will gain another victory by default.

In a Congressional debate on foreign policy initiated by a number of "young-Turk" Democrats in March, 1955, Congressman Henry Reuss of Wisconsin, in his plea for a new look at foreign policy, ended his remarks with the words: "The people are hungry for dynamic leadership." Yes they are! They want leadership that can arouse and inspire them to march forward toward new goals. Only if they get that kind of leadership can the progressive coalition envisioned by Stevenson be reconstructed and brought to triumph once again.

CHAPTER X

CURBING MONOPOLY

There is no moderation on the part of the syndicates and plutocrats. A policy of "moderation" proposes to fight the devil without fire. When moderately cold ice and moderately hot boiling water, moderately pious Christs and moderately honest "Old Abes" count for anything, the policy of moderation in fighting the immoderate aggressors will deserve more success than it can possibly have now.

—Henry Demarest Lloyd, 1897

THE PAST IS PROLOGUE

IF A NEW popular coalition is to be constructed, strong enough to alter the course of the nation in a progressive direction, it must aim its main blows at the monstrous power of monopoly and have as its central objective the curbing of that power. There is no other way forward for America. There is no other way by which to assure peace, defend and extend democratic liberty, combat economic depression, and raise the living standards of the people.

This, however, is not the present outlook of most liberal and labor spokesmen. Enamored of the tinsel glitter of a temporary and artificial prosperity, they still worship at the shrine of Big Business. Let us take, for example, the most prominent of the liberal spokesmen, the titular head of the Democratic Party, Adlai Stevenson. As we have noted, Mr. Stevenson is one of those who favors a New Deal type of popular coalition. And yet, he is completely oblivious

to what made the coalition of the mid-'thirties possible. He takes issue with the very feature which gave it its great mass appeal.

In an article in the October, 1955, issue of *Fortune* magazine, Stevenson discusses the future of American capitalism. At the very outset he promises "disappointment" for those who expect him to be "antagonistic and critical" toward Big Business. He even deplors the attacks levelled at Big Business during the 1930's. He says that the phrase, "economic royalists," made famous by Roosevelt, "was an unfair and unfortunate epithet." For him it is a sign of the "adolescence" of that period.

Why was it unfair? No one can deny that there does exist a small class of banker-industrialist tycoons who hold in their hands power over the lives of their fellowmen incomparably greater than that of the Bourbons of old. The term, "economic royalists," therefore, is more than apt.

Why does Stevenson consider the phrase to be unfortunate? Does he really believe that the bitter strife of the 'thirties was caused by an intemperate use of bitter words? It would seem so. He says that we "too rarely realize how very great and needless a strain" is created "just by the verbal violence indulged in." This is the incredible theory of semantics which believes that the truth simply consists in finding the right name for the right object and that the failure to do so leads to misunderstanding and conflict. But if Roosevelt had never used the words "economic royalists," would the mass struggle of that period have been any different? Or had Big Business desisted from labelling the TVA and rural electrification as "Communism" and "Socialism," something Stevenson also deplors, would its opposition to these liberal measures have been any less determined? The violence of language flowed from the violence of conflict, not the other way around.

There is a logical relationship between the honeyed words used by Stevenson and his attitude toward Big Business. He concludes his article with the words of Shakespeare: "What is past is prologue." Prologue to what? Stevenson believes that the past conflicts with Big Business are prologue to a new era of sweetness and light. He agrees with Berle that the corporations are emerging "as an instrument of social leadership and responsibility" and that in this new concept is the "direction of our progress."

Communists profoundly disagree. Yes, the great anti-monopoly movements of the past are prologue, but to an even wider and deeper

awakening ahead. The mighty stirring of the 1930's is not something that belongs to the dead past. It is in Shakespeare's words, "the baby figure of the giant mass of things to come."

Stevenson states that the great goal for the next twenty-five years is "to stop the talk of basic antagonism between American business and government." He notes that great progress has been made in this direction in recent years. But what kind of basic antagonism can there be between Big Business and a government owned lock, stock and barrel by Big Business? There is no quarrel between a puppet and its master.

There has never existed an antagonism between Big Business and government, *per se*. So long as Big Business ran the government, how could there be? The monopolists, of course, do not and cannot see eye to eye on all questions among themselves. Their strivings for ever greater profits frequently pit them in conflict with one another. No government, therefore, no matter how subservient to Big Business it may be, can satisfy the varied and sometimes contradictory demands of all sections of big capital. But sharp antagonism between the dominant monopoly groupings and the government arises only at times when the great stirrings of the workers, farmers and the people generally, compel the government to make certain concessions to this pressure and to place some limitations on the most brazen forms of Big Business exploitation and piracy. Thus the present-day love-feast between Big Business and government is not a sign of progress. It is only a reflection of how powerful is Wall Street's control in Washington.

Given a new mass upsurge and the bringing into office of a government more responsive to the pressure and needs of the people, Big Business will yelp and yowl against "government intervention" and "creeping Socialism" louder than ever. And given the election of a more radical government, a labor-farmer government, the violence of Wall Street's opposition will know no bounds. Its attitude toward the liberal Roosevelt Administration will appear mild and reasonable in contrast.

Thus, what Stevenson sees as "the direction of our progress" for the next quarter of a century represents the opposite of progress. The only progress possible for America lies in the direction of curbing monopoly and wresting more and more power from it. If this means the antagonism of Big Business to the government, it is but an inevitable concomitant of the struggle to have the government belong to the people and not to the trusts.

THE MOOD OF THE PEOPLE

Commenting on the Stevenson article and on the prospects for the 1956 Presidential election, the once-liberal *Chicago Sun-Times* praises Stevenson as one who does not believe in "returning to the business-baiting tactics of the '30's." While giving him its blessing as a Democratic candidate, it observes that, "such middle-of-the-roading will be necessary for both parties as long as the present conservative mood of the people exists." Thus the *Sun-Times* takes its own and Stevenson's attitude toward Big Business as being representative of that of the people. But this conclusion is entirely unwarranted.

The *Sun-Times* cites the popularity enjoyed by President Eisenhower as proof for its assertion. But the popularity of Eisenhower has not been the same at all times. It has risen and fallen on the political barometer. When his administration indulged in blatant war-mongering, when it talked of unleashing Chiang Kai-shek against the Chinese People's Republic, when Nixon spoke of American armed intervention in Viet-Nam, or when Eisenhower asked Congress for a blank check for war over the Formosa straits, the people were not merely cool, but downright hostile. When Eisenhower's administration was friendly toward McCarthy and dared not take issue with him, the popular feeling toward the administration was one of contempt. At the time of the Dixon-Yates "give-away" the opposition was also articulate and strong. When, however, the Eisenhower administration was compelled to take measures to ease world tension, when Eisenhower identified himself with the peace hopes of the people and with their anti-McCarthy sentiments, his popularity grew once again.

There is also another side to this question. The people have not been presented with a progressive alternative. If Eisenhower has appeared to them as being less reactionary than the GOP, and particularly its McCarthy wing, the Trumans, Stevensons and Harrimans of the Democratic Party have appeared as far less than liberal. This has been true in respect to armaments and foreign policy. It has been true on the question of taxation and on most other questions as well.

What the mood of the nation really is and how the people would respond if given a clear-cut lead in a liberal and progressive direction can be seen by the results of a recent Gallup Poll. In August, 1955, the magazine *Newsweek* reported that the following question had been

asked a cross-section of the American electorate. This read: "If Franklin D. Roosevelt were alive today and running for a second term against Dwight D. Eisenhower, which candidate would you like to see win—Roosevelt or Eisenhower? The answer was revealing: 52 percent chose Roosevelt and 43 percent, Eisenhower. Only 5 percent were undecided. Thus an absolute majority of those polled preferred Roosevelt. And this after his voice has been stilled for more than ten years and his memory shamefully calumniated. Nor can it be overlooked that a whole new generation has grown to maturity since the 'thirties. Ninety-six million Americans are too young to remember the "Great Depression."

That the younger generation has not fallen for all the big business propaganda can be seen by the results of two other polls. In the spring of 1955 two independent surveys were taken of the economic views held by 5,000 high school seniors. About 60 percent of the seniors believed that the owners of a company get too much and the workers too little. Some 75 percent believed that the installation of new and more modern machinery was mainly beneficial to the employers and not the workers.

"Most disturbing," wrote publisher John S. Knight in his *Chicago Daily News*, "was the belief held by 56 percent of high school seniors that we can best improve our standards of living, not by producing more but merely by giving workers more of the profits of business."

"Only 40 percent," according to Knight, "thought our economic system would curl up and die if the profit motive were removed." In other words, 60 percent thought it would not! No wonder the staid *New York Times* commented bitterly that "the results of the two surveys can conservatively be called appalling."

What, therefore, is the mood of the country? Is it really as conservative as the *Sun-Times* believes? If the foregoing polls are to be taken as an indication—and no one can accuse the public opinion polls, particularly the Gallup Poll, of slanting its evidence in favor of the more liberal point of view—the people are by no means as blind to the menace of monopoly as are many of those who would lead them.

Former Governor Ellis Arnall of Georgia, in his book *What the People Want*, written in 1947, notes: "Wherever Americans talk, they talk about the menace of monopoly. They fear it instinctively. . . ." What the people want, therefore, is not an amorous billing and cooing with Big Business. They seek leadership to combat it, to curb its frightful powers. And this instinctive desire will, before long, become

an ever more urgent demand, as the bogeyman of a fictitious foe fades away and the bubble of an artificially induced prosperity reaches bursting point.

HISTORICAL FACTORS AND SECTIONAL DIFFERENCES

Those who believe that the tradition of anti-monopoly struggle is past, mere prologue to an era of universal "partnership" between the tycoons and the people, are badly mistaken. In the first place they have given insufficient thought as to why this tradition has stubbornly persisted since the 'seventies of the last century. They forget that each time it was pronounced dead it soon rose again, to mock and shock its would-be pall bearers with a vigor and vitality greater than ever. In the second place, they have become so blinded by the shimmering gleam of present day prosperity that they completely misread the character of the times and what the not too distant future holds in store.

Let us start by discussing the first of these. Why has the anti-monopoly tradition reasserted itself repeatedly despite all attempts to bury it? The first factor is historical. It has to do with background, with the way in which this nation was formed and how it developed over a vast area of the continent. America, historically, has been the most bourgeois of all countries. Frederick Engels, who studied American developments very closely, described it in one of his *Letters to Americans*, as "a country rich, vast, expanding, with purely bourgeois institutions unleavened by feudal remnants of monarchical traditions, and without a permanent and hereditary proletariat. Here every one could become, if not a capitalist, at all events an independent man, producing or trading, with his own means, for his own account."

The rapid concentration of capital which led to the process of trustification in the latter decades of the nineteenth century and coincided with the end of the frontier challenged this bourgeois ideal. Thus, the collision between the people and the trusts was an expression of the collision between the dreams of a petty-bourgeois paradise and the nightmare of growing monopoly domination. Lacking "a permanent and hereditary proletariat" and hence a working class with mass class consciousness, the first form of awakening frequently took the shape of mass opposition to that specific development which was driving more and more people into the ranks of the working class and thus compelling the development of both an hereditary working class and more fixed class divisions. In fact, it can be said

that in America anti-monopoly sentiment and consciousness has been and continues to be an historically inevitable introduction and transition to mass class consciousness.

A second historical factor has to do with the vastness of the country's territorial expanse and its uneven economic development. Even when the frontier had reached its geographic limits, this did not mean that disparity between regions had disappeared. In fact, these have not disappeared to this very day.

V. O. Key, Jr., in his book *Politics, Parties and Pressure Groups*, writes: "Among great nations of modern times the U.S. has been unique in possessing a special type of sectional conflict growing out of the gradual spread of population over a continent. . . . The areas settled first along the Atlantic seaboard furnished capital for the development of the wilderness and thereby created a relationship of creditor and debtor between geographically differentiated groups." In turn, "the dominance of the East in all matters was threatened by the development of the West."

The Eastern monopolies therefore sought to hold back the fullest industrial development of the West, and of the South as well. They drew tribute from them by exacting higher prices for manufactured goods and by charging discriminatory freight rates for the products shipped out of these regions. Ellis Arnall states that "throughout the South, the Southwest, the Mountain States and the Pacific Coast areas," he heard the people "talk of colonialism" with great frequency. Giving evidence of continuing discrimination against these regions, he cites the fact that the Wall Street-dominated railroad monopolies charged approximately 39 percent more "to move Southern goods to market than is charged for hauling manufactures of the favored imperial area."

This explains the vehemence with which the early anti-monopoly movements attacked the railroads and government connivance with them. It also explains why these movements frequently took on the coloration of sectional conflicts directed against the East. Nor have these sectional feelings and conflicts disappeared, even if the past two decades has witnessed a more rapid industrialization of the South and particularly of the Southwest and the Far West.

We must bear in mind that even if the frontier has long disappeared, the movement of large numbers of people from older to newer regions and from rural to urban areas has by no means come to an end. The widespread extent of in-migration, that is, movement from one area to another, is quite astounding. During the single

year from April, 1953, to April, 1954, 10 million Americans moved from one county to another and five million from one state to another. And the population movement for that year was by no means exceptional.

From 1940 to 1950, more people migrated to the Far West than in any similar period of the nation's history. In this ten-year period the country's population grew by 14.5 percent. But the increase for the Far West, in contrast, was 49 percent.

• Thus, the trek westward continues. And with it comes, in the first place, a growth of the working class population of these areas. But there also occurs a growth in the number of small business people who seek to take advantage of the rapid expansion of new local markets. The process of industrialization, therefore, leads to a more rapid concentration of capital in these areas, to the formation of new capitalist groupings, and to the growth of both the working class and the middle class.

These developments have a double impact. They tend to soften some regional differences and to make regional solidarity less easy to attain as class differences emerge to the fore. This is true, for example, of the Middle West, where powerful monopoly groupings strive to utilize sectional feelings and differences in order to win mass support for their own war against the dominance of Eastern capital. The shrill outcry of the *Chicago Tribune* is an example of this. It incessantly inveighs against "Wall Street" and "Eastern banking interests," but represents not the anti-monopoly interests of the people of that region, but the special reactionary interests of mid-west monopolies.

It is also seen in the South. The Dixiecrats use sectionalism as a means by which to continue to oppress the Negro people and to keep the white masses divided. The recent industrialization of that region, limited as it is, is helping to break up this reactionary Dixiecrat sectionalism and to sharpen class differences and struggles within the South.

The other side of the uneven economic development of the various regions is the continuation of regional disparities and differences. Some of these even become more aggravated, for the more the growth of the outlying regions, the more the appetite for further growth. An example of how conscious are these regions of the menace of Wall Street domination can be seen by the intense controversy stirred up over the Dixon-Yates TVA power deal.

This contract had a dual purpose. It aimed to destroy the public-

and cooperative-owned power which developed since the 1930's and which, by competing with monopoly-owned power, brought about the faster rate of rural electrification of this past decade. The second purpose of the Dixon-Yates deal was to help reestablish, through a series of holding companies, complete Wall Street domination over the electrical power industry.

In this lay the greater significance of the Dixon-Yates contract, and it explains the aroused furor which swept the country from the Tennessee Valley in the Southeast, to the Columbia River basin in the Northwest. And it is to the credit of this movement, which had the support of organized labor, that the Eisenhower administration was finally compelled to drop the Dixon-Yates deal as a political potato too hot to handle.

A regional struggle also takes place over such questions as who shall control and who shall share in the exploitation of atomic energy and the natural resources, as well as over the allocation of government contracts. And while the interests of various monopoly groupings are involved in one or the other of these conflicts, there is also a stake that the people have in entering these struggles in opposition to monopoly domination as such.

THE COLLISION OF INTERESTS

The third and most basic reason for the perseverance of the anti-monopoly tradition is that monopoly capital, by its very nature, comes into greater and greater collision with the vital interests of the overwhelming majority of the people. When times are relatively good, this is not so apparent. At such times, it is easier to make a living. Petty-bourgeois illusions sprout forth anew. But when conditions take a turn for the worse, the basic antagonism between Monopoly and the People stands out in bold relief. It is at such times that the anti-monopoly movement revives with renewed momentum.

Most workers understand instinctively that the interests of monopoly stand counter to those of the working class. This is attested to repeatedly by the great militancy of the workers in battling the giant corporations over questions of wages, hours and working conditions. It is shown by the tremendous growth in union organization in the monopoly-owned mass production industries. This reflects a recognition on the part of the workers that the great power of the monopolies can only be met successfully by their own collective organized strength. This recognition has not yet been carried over into fuller

political consciousness, and even less into solid class consciousness. It does represent, however, labor's great fear of monopoly and its organized opposition to it.

This is a basic factor of American life and bound to grow still more, because a constantly larger and larger percentage of Americans are compelled, if they wish to earn a living, to work for one or another of the monster corporations.

That the interests of monopoly also clash fundamentally with those of the farming millions is also hardly debatable. The very concept of price-parity has arisen in American life only as a consequence of the ever widening gap between what the farmer gets for his crops and what he has to pay for manufactured goods. By virtue of monopolistic price-fixing practices, the industrialists are enabled to keep the price of manufactured goods above its actual value, while the farmers, who are at the mercy of the large food processing and distributing monopolists, are compelled to sell their products constantly below their value. Thus the farmer is in a permanent two-way squeeze. And the beneficiaries of this are not the city consumers, but the manufacturing, processing, and wholesale and retail trade monopolies.

The process of concentration of capital is also at work in agriculture. In 1949, 41 percent of the farm land of the country was owned by only 3 percent of all farmowners. By 1949, according to Farm Research, Inc., 9 percent of all farms realized more income for their crops than the remaining 91 percent. This is because increased capital investment and mechanization has made small-scale farming more and more unprofitable. It is estimated that the average capital investment per farm worker is now \$14,000, and in the large commercial farms it ranges from \$20,000 to \$24,000 per farm worker. The small family-sized farm, the tenant farmer and sharecropper, can afford no such investments. They are thus being pushed to the wall, and the percentage figures of the drop in farm income of the past years, estimated in 1955 to be some 34 percent below 1947, in no wise show how much relatively worse off is the plight of the small family-sized farm. More than two million "uneconomical" farm families are considered by Big Business as surplus farm population to be driven from the land. From 1950 to 1954, there was a drop of 600,000 in the number of farms. Most of the loss occurred in small farms of 10 to 100 acres in size. In contrast to this, the banks and insurance companies more and more are becoming the actual owners and operators of large commercial farms. Already by 1949, the Metro-

politan Life Insurance Company alone owned and operated over 7,000 farms in 25 states.

From these few facts it is quite evident that the traditional opposition of the farm population to the monopolies has by no means disappeared. Nor can it disappear. The crisis in agriculture is once again chronic, as it has been throughout the 'twenties and 'thirties. The great majority of independent farmers, therefore, must intensify their opposition to the monopoly power in the very interest of self-preservation.

Monopoly also comes into conflict with the democratic aspirations of the Negro people for full equality. This has been so ever since the days of Southern Reconstruction. In fact, the whole network of Jim Crow oppression of the Negro people cannot be understood without bearing in mind the so-called compromise of 1877, in which the Northern industrialists came to terms with the Southern former slaveowners at the expense of Negro freedom. Jim Crow specifically dates from the great Populist upsurge of the 1890's and the agrarian unity of Negro and white Southerners against both the plantation system and the Northern monopolists. It was the fear of this growing unity which brought about the second act in the betrayal, the adoption of a whole series of Jim Crow state laws and practices aimed at holding the Negro people in greater subjection by denying them their rights. These, likewise, were aimed at keeping the white and Negro people divided by further inculcating in the minds of backward white masses the insidious ideology of white supremacy.

This explains why discrimination and segregation is by no means limited to the South. It exists in the North as well. Negro workers are kept out of better paid, more skilled jobs, and Negro intellectuals are discriminated against as professionals. The Negro people are crowded into ghetto areas, forced to live where the housing is generally poorest and the rents highest, to the profitable advantage of the huge banks and insurance companies who own most of the slums.

An example of where the big corporations stand on the vital issue of desegregation in the South can be seen by a story which appeared in the *Pittsburgh Courier* of September 17, 1955, written by one of its staff writers, A. M. Rivera, Jr. After showing how public officials in South Carolina are engaged in a reign of terror against all Negroes who sign petitions demanding desegregation, Mr. Rivera writes: "Enlisted in the campaign to subvert the U.S. Supreme Court's anti-bias decision are representatives of the New York Life Insurance Company, Standard Oil, Coca Cola, Shell Oil Company and Ford

Motors." The "full role of these internationally known combines in the struggle to nullify the U.S. Supreme Court's mandate," he says, is "shadowy," and in "partial eclipse," but "their iron fists in velvet gloves tactics is unquestionably being exerted on Negro businesses," on Negro workers, and on the Negro people generally.

It is plain, therefore, that the Negro people, whether as workers, farmers, businessmen or professionals, find their vital interests opposed to those of the monopolists. Even if this is not always fully understood, it is the meaning of the growing alliance of the Negro peoples' movement with that of organized labor.

What about small business and the large middle class sections of our population? Have these lost their traditional fear of monopoly and given up their struggle against it? By no means. Because of its economic position in society, sandwiched between the workers on one side and the big capitalists on the other, this grouping tends to hold on to its illusions longer and to vacillate the most in its allegiances. This is particularly true when times are relatively good and when Big Business permits a few extra crumbs to fall in their direction. But in the long run they face a constant unremitting pressure from the monopolists who systematically penetrate and take over more and more fields of economic activity.

Fewer and fewer opportunities are left for the small manufacturer and independent merchant. While the total number of these has not declined and has even increased somewhat since the war, in order to stay in business more of them have been compelled to become jobbers, subcontractors or selling agents for the big corporations or retail chains. Thus the monopolists use them to their own advantage. When hard times come, they are the first sections of business to be counted as casualties. How precarious is their position can be seen by the yearly discontinuance of some 370,000 business firms, or close to 10 percent of the total. In the year 1952, as an example, 70 percent of all business failures had liabilities under \$25,000, and 93 percent, under \$100,000. Only two-tenths of one percent of the failures had liabilities of \$1,000,000 or over. It is the little fish, therefore, that are devoured.

The position of the nation's white collar employees, its government workers, its scientists, intellectuals, artists and professionals, is not identical with that of small business. Their stake, however, is also on the side of the people and not the trusts. Many of them are directly dependent upon the people for their livelihood. The intellectual and white collar workers benefit in direct ratio to the material

and cultural level of the people generally. A climate free of repression and conducive to the flourishing of science and culture is needed if the professional is to fulfill his calling.

Thus, the overwhelming majority of the American people—the workers, farmers, Negro people, small business, professionals and intellectuals—have interests antagonistic to those of Big Business. The sharp outlines of this antagonism, however, still remain blurred for many. But the haze of illusions will be dispelled by the events of life itself. The basic antagonism between monopoly and the people cannot be removed. Anti-monopoly tradition, therefore, will not perish. Its future still lies before it.

THE INEVITABLE RE-AWAKENING

Those who believe that the anti-monopoly tradition is dead and gone, err in another respect. They misread the signs of the time. They think they are still living in the days of the rise of the world capitalist system instead of at its ebb tide. One third of the world already has taken the path toward socialist development. More will follow. The colonial peoples are also far advanced in their struggle for complete independence from imperialist subjugation. Thus the world, from the point of view of imperialist financial penetration and exploitation, is steadily shrinking.

This situation confronts the American people with altogether new problems. In the past, when the capitalist world was still expanding, the monopolists solved their market problems, temporarily at least, by the increased export of capital, by investments abroad. Wall Street's foreign investments have increased greatly since the war. But with the capitalist world shrinking and with other major capitalist countries also seeking similar outlets for excess capital, the American monopolists cannot solve the problem of over-production in this fashion to the extent that they did in the past.

That is why Wall Street, ever since World War II, has been oriented on the preparation of a new war to grab complete world domination. This was the ultimate objective of the "cold war" to which the Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan, Korean War, and arms race were stepping stones. The monopolists wanted the "cold war" because it meant great armaments profits for them. It also helped them to intimidate weaker capitalist states into doing Wall Street's bidding against their own best interests. And it was necessary to prepare the way for a "hot war" against the socialist states.

A new world war, however, is no longer anything more than a suicidal solution for the monopolists, even if some of them may be insane enough to want to try it again. The world is no longer what it was prior to World War I or World War II. The common people of the world are coming into their own. They are now the major force in deciding the issue of war or peace. They are determined that a world war shall never come again. And in that resolution they are joined by the American people who realize that a new world war would be quite different from any America fought in the past. It would be an atomic war. It would be fought on every continent including the American. It would be a war in which America could not emerge the victor.

The approaching economic crisis, therefore, means that a great new wave of anti-monopoly struggle is bound to come. And when it does, it will have to go beyond any of the past. It will have to move more firmly and, in time, more radically, toward placing effective curbs on the power and profits of monopoly. If it does not do this, it will be crushed by monopoly reaction, and with it will topple democracy, peace and the American standard of living. Thus there is no other way in which the people's movement can go forward except by proudly holding aloft the traditional flag of anti-monopoly struggle.

CAN MONOPOLY BE CURBED?

Monopoly curbs have been tried a number of times. Yet Big Business is more powerful and arrogant today than ever. What reason is there to believe that things would be different this time?

Of course, there can be no automatic guarantee of success. It all depends on how the struggle is conducted—by what forces, with what degree of unity, with what understanding and determination. It is worth repeating that the struggles of the past, even if they did not achieve the objective of curbing the power of the beast, were not without positive results. The American standard of living as we know it, the right of labor to organize and strike, the recognition that government has a responsibility to provide jobs and a degree of security for workers and price-parity for farmers, the system of social insurance, the victories won against Jim Crow—these, one and all, are products of this struggle. Without it, they would not be. They were won by the people, even if today the monopolists claim the credit for them.

Can monopoly power actually be curbed? It all depends on what

is meant by the word "curb." If by this we mean putting an end to monopoly, then, of course, this cannot be accomplished short of a revolution in property relations, in which the trusts are taken over as public property and operated for public welfare instead of private enrichment. Furthermore, if by this term we mean "trust-busting," as it was understood by the early Populists, that, too, cannot be attained. The clock cannot be turned back to small-scale production. Nor would we wish to do so if we could. The big concentrates are here to stay. This is the monopoly stage of capitalism. The stage following will be that of socialism. There are no in-between rungs on this ladder of social evolution.

Recognizing that monopolies are here to stay as long as we have capitalism, does not mean that nothing can be done to impose restrictions and curbs on their power. Without sharing in the illusion that the menace of monopoly can be eradicated under capitalism, the Communists believe, nevertheless, that important and necessary restrictions can be imposed, even without a basic change in property relations.

Of course, this would constitute no lasting or fundamental solution. As long as the basic industries remain the property of the few, operated for the enrichment of the few, so long will our social ills remain chronic, indeed, tend to become more pronounced. But many things can be done to protect the interests of the people from some of the worst ravages of the system.

It is possible, for example, to prevent a new world war by the alert and vigilant intervention of the people on questions of foreign policy. The arms race, too, can be ended.

Numerous are the measures that could be taken to curb monopoly profits and to raise mass purchasing power. A general rise in workers' wages also can be attained, if the labor movement is united and militant, if it organizes the South, and if it is strong enough to win new pro-labor federal legislation. It is likewise possible to lift the minimum-wage floor and to reduce the work week through the enactment of new legislation. Social Security legislation could be extended and expanded to provide the aged with adequate retirement pensions and to establish a system of federal health insurance. Payments to the unemployed could be increased and the Full Employment Act of 1946 implemented to include the principle of the guaranteed annual wage.

The tax laws need basic revisions. Such revisions would aim to place an ever larger burden of taxation on the rich and, in the first

place, on the monopolists and the giant corporations. Mass pressure upon Congress could bring about the adoption of a radical inheritance tax prohibiting the shift of large fortunes to family-controlled trust funds and foundations. It is also possible to check the widespread tax evasions practiced today by all large corporations and wealthy individuals. This can be done by rigid enforcement of all tax laws and by severe penalties for those attempting to evade full payment.

The vital interests of the small and medium-sized farmer could be protected and the erosion of farm income prevented. In addition to guaranteeing full parity payments it is possible and necessary to introduce the concept of production payments, especially for non-perishable produce. An end could be put to the restriction of farm production and to the storing of vast surpluses in government warehouses. This could be accomplished by raising the standard of living of the people so that they could afford to buy more and better quality food, and by government subsidies aimed at reducing the cost of food for the consumers and particularly for those families unable to afford an adequate diet.

The small farmer need not be wiped off the land. It is possible to help him remain on the land and to compete with the mechanized commercial-type farms by encouraging farm cooperatives, extending government loans and credit, providing farm machinery for cooperative use, and similar measures. Agricultural reform could be brought into being by purchasing the lands of banks, railroads, insurance companies and other absentee landlords and turning these over to sharecroppers and tenant farmers as means of enabling them to become independent producers on their own soil.

All of these measures would tend to curb the profits of the trusts to the advantage of the people and their living standards. Monopoly's grip upon the national economy and the political life of the nation can likewise be weakened. It is possible, for example, to get laws adopted and enforced prohibiting the cartel practice of price-fixing. This would tend to reduce prices on monopoly produced goods to the benefit of the consumers and smaller businessmen. The present anti-trust laws could be vigorously enforced and radically strengthened.

Ellis Arnall, in his book referred to previously, observes that "the public may not be aware of every instance of the growth of monopoly, but the average American appreciates the menace deeply enough to demand tough and effective enforcement of the anti-trust and conspiracy laws." He ridicules the practice of levelling insignificant fines

upon trusts whose guilt is so flagrant that it cannot be concealed. This practice acts as an inducement and not a deterrent to further violations. Arnall cites the case of the fertilizer trust which was fined a mere \$35,000 for a conspiracy directed against the farmers of the nation. He believes that such fines "constitute an affront to every American's sense of proportion. Thirty million American farmers can not produce without fertilizer, yet those who conspire against thirty million people are assessed roughly one mill for each person against whose welfare they plotted."

While there are far less than thirty million farmers on the land, Arnall's indignation is just as much to the point. He advocates stringent penalties against restraint of trade, proposing that a corporation which twice violates the anti-trust laws be liquidated.

It is likewise possible to attain a revision of the patent laws, reducing the number of years before a patent enters the public domain, as well as prohibiting monopolies from holding on to patent rights which are not being put into production. The buying up of new inventions in order to prevent them from being manufactured, where such may compete with an established line of products, is one of the common practices of the monopolists.

Stopping the "give-away" of the nation's natural resources is also possible of attainment. It is particularly necessary to take atomic power out of the hands of the monopolies, to harness the nation's great waterways in the interests of cheaper and more abundant electricity, and to repudiate or renegotiate many of the fraudulent deals of the past in which the monopolies robbed the people of the rich bounties which nature bestowed upon them in common. This is likewise applicable to the many large industrial plants which were built with government funds. It is also possible to establish public ownership of the atomic power, aircraft and munitions industries. In cases where the monopolies shut down production to intimidate the nation, or where plants are closed because of industrial depression, the government should be able to take the steps necessary to put these plants back into operation.

All of the above measures would be beneficial to the nation, would help combat depression and would also help protect small and medium-sized business from the tentacles of monopoly. In addition, the establishment of firm government control over banking and credit, and the extension of government credit to smaller businesses could help prevent their being dictated to or taken over by the banks. In its

allocation of contracts the government could also favor the smaller, non-monopoly controlled enterprise wherever possible—the opposite of government policy today.

Instead of a foreign policy based on opposition to the national aspirations of other peoples and in support of Wall Street's foreign investments and domination, it is possible to bring into being an opposite foreign policy. This would aim to extend world trade to the benefit of all peoples, and seek for American industry and farm the many markets available in other parts of the world, particularly in the lands building socialism and in the industrially underdeveloped countries. A non-imperialist and pro-peace foreign policy could also carry with it the extension of large-scale, long-term loans and credits to the underdeveloped countries as a means of providing additional markets for American goods. These loans and credits would have no strings attached to them and would aim to strengthen not the monopolists, but the general welfare of all peoples and world peace.

To weaken monopoly's reactionary political power would require a general strengthening of democracy. This could be attained by extension of all democratic liberties and the strictest enforcement of the Bill of Rights and the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the Constitution. It is possible, through federal action, to wipe out all Jim Crow practices, to give the Negro people their full rights in every state of the union, and to make it a crime to engage in any form of racial bigotry against Negroes, Jews, Indians, Mexicans, Asians, or any other people.

It is possible and necessary to bring about a number of electoral reform measures aimed at strengthening the democratic processes. These would aim at reforming our electoral college system of electing presidents, at combatting political corruption, at ending the present under-representation for urban areas, at extending the franchise to begin at eighteen years of age, and toward greater proportional representation and a more responsible party system, generally.

Furthermore, as part of the general strengthening of democracy, it is possible to bring the courts closer to the people by ending life tenure on the bench and blue-ribbon juries, and by having judges subject to short terms and popular election. In order to make the elected representatives of the people their servants, all public officials should be subject to recall by their constituents.

In addition, federal action could be taken to break monopoly control over the production and distribution of newsprint, to prohibit

the existence of powerful newspaper chains, and TV and radio networks, or other measures to curb the present monopoly stranglehold on all media of mass information.

These by no means encompass all the measures that could be taken to begin imposing curbs over the power and profits of the monopolies. Nor would all these be undertaken at once, or any of them be achieved easily. We merely wish to indicate the direction that these would have to take, given a situation in which it becomes possible to bring about their fulfillment.

For such a favorable development, two things are necessary: First, the multiple economic and social groups whose best interests and very salvation lie in muzzling the monopoly beast, and who constitute the vast majority of the people, must be prepared to act in unison toward that end. This requires above all else a recognition of who is the main enemy and a subordination of all other considerations and all differences to the common end of mastering this enemy.

Second, it requires a people's coalition so strong that it can exert increasingly greater influence on governmental policies and, in time, attain the necessary political strength to elect a different type of administration and Congress—one pledged to protect the common interests of the people as against the vested interests of the trusts.

CHAPTER XI

THE PROCESS OF POLITICAL REALIGNMENT

I have been trying to read the papers and see just what it is in this election that one Party wants that the other one don't. To save my soul I can't find a difference. The only thing that I can see where they differ is that the Democrats want the Republicans to get out and let them in, and the Republicans don't want to get out.

—Will Rogers, 1924

BIG POLITICS AND BIG BUSINESS

POLITICS, IT HAS been said, is the art of the possible. And the possible in politics is the art of coalition. As Sidney Hillman once put it, "Politics is the science of how who gets what, when and why." And "who gets what, when and why" is greatly determined by who has influence and control over government. Toward this end political parties are formed and political alliances constructed.

This is true of American politics; it is true of all politics, even if the nature and form of coalition differ vastly. The dominant economic class—in the United States today, the monopolists—erects those political forms and alliances through which it best can perpetuate this dominance. The economic classes occupying an inferior status—which in the United States today include the workers, small farmers, and urban middle classes—seek to erect those political forms and alliances through which they best can protect their class interests. Whether this has as its goal the winning of minor concessions, the imposition of major curbs, or a complete showdown with the ruling

oligarchy, depends on many factors. It depends on the intensity of the class struggle at the given time, on the past experience accumulated by the masses, on the character of their leadership and on the degree of political consciousness arising from these.

In the American two-party system as it has developed over the years, each party contains a network of built-in alliances. Each party is in essence a huge vote-getting machine which combines, for the purpose of election, diverse and conflicting economic and social groups. Professor V. O. Key, Jr., in his book *Politics, Parties and Pressure Groups*, observes: "The party machine has an interest of its own to advance but it gains power only to the extent that it can organize in its support sectors of society with objectives quite independent of those of the political machine."

He also points out that, "instead of dividing society vertically into parties of farmers, laborers and businessmen, the party system has been so constructed that each party contains farmers, laborers, and businessmen." It is this which gives the two-party system its great elasticity. As Key indicates, "the necessity for gaining support among a variety of classes also gives the party a degree of independence from the demands of the extremist groups." In other words, by balancing the demands of one group against another within each party, this guarantees that both of them can be kept from upsetting the applecart of monopoly rule.

The popular mass base of each party is not identical, of course, and has undergone considerable change in recent years. This difference in composition does compel certain differences in program and in party response to various issues. But these differences, while not unimportant, as we shall have occasion to discuss latter, must be seen within the framework of the similarities between both parties. It is this framework which sets certain limits on the area and scope of conflict between the parties and, therefore, also sets certain limitations on how far afield each may stray. The differences between the two parties also play another role. They lend credence to the claim that each party is different and that the people have a real choice in selecting one as against another.

This political set-up has great advantages for the ruling class. Neither party has a clearly defined set of principles, except to defend the economic system as it is. Party platform means nothing and party discipline is impossible in a potpourri of conflicting interests, in which corruption and irresponsibility are rife. In this way it is easy for monopoly to control each party, not merely programmatically, but

by what Professor Charles E. Merriam called "the alliance of the 'Underworld' and the 'Upperworld'." The division of the spoils is relatively simple: the machine gets the patronage, the monopolists the power.

The alliance of Big Politics and Big Business is a well known fact. P. H. Odegard, in his book *Political Parties and Group Pressures*, states it this way: "The major interests are content to leave minor spoils, such as jobs in the public service, to the party agents as long as these agents direct the affairs of state in a manner to promote the interests of the powerful oligarchies which control the economic and social destinies of the community."

Key, in his book previously quoted, also takes note of this same phenomenon. "The political organization," he writes, "has, of course, its own reason for existence, but one must add to this the interests of those elements in the community that believe they profit from stability and certainty. In every state and city where strong and well-nurtured party organizations exist they will be found to have as their allies substantial interests in the community, interests that have something to defend. These elements in the community pay premiums to the organization just as they pay insurance premiums." It is a fact that "the funds for the maintenance of party organizations come from the elements of the community attached to the status quo."

This has led to a brand of political morality which can be best summed up in the remark made by a political boss many years ago. "An honest politician," he said, "is one who when he is bought, will stay bought." To this can be added the humorous yet telling jest of Will Rogers: "Politics has got so expensive that it takes lots of money to even get beat with."

WINNER-TAKE-ALL

The anti-monopoly movements of the past were all political in character. As such they sought to topple the corrupt and reactionary two-party system and to bring into being a basic and lasting political realignment. They endeavored to establish a meaningful division in American politics between those class groups that, for one reason or another, were basically hostile toward monopoly, and those that, for others reasons, were essentially its friends.

In this attempt they failed. As years passed the two-party system became even more entrenched and bureaucratically encrusted. Even the great upsurge of the 1930's, which brought into being a liberal

administration in Washington and won a number of victories against monopoly reaction, did not, however, alter the basic character of the two-party system. There were, of course, some important political changes inaugurated in that period and also the first beginnings of political realignment. But these, as important as they were then and continue to be to this day, have not basically altered the pattern of American politics.

What explains the two-party system? Why has it been so difficult to bring into being a political realignment and a coalition party representative of the people's interests? There are a number of reasons for this.

The first has to do with the peculiarities of the American electoral system. In most European countries, for example, the national administration (premier and cabinet) are chosen by a vote in parliament and depend for their existence on the continued support of a parliamentary majority. When this is lacking, the government falls. If a new cabinet cannot be formed, that is, cannot obtain the necessary support from parliament, a national election must take place. This occurs, therefore, when some issue of dispute is "hot" and the people are called upon to decide it.

In the United States, however, the President and Vice-President are elected directly by popular vote. They remain in office for a period of four full years, regardless of whether they have the support of Congress and the nation or not. Will Rogers humorously remarked: "We are the only nation in the world that has to keep a government four years, no matter what it does!" And each national election takes place on a designated day, as determined by calendar, and has nothing to do with whether or not the country is aroused over some vital issue.

Furthermore, a majority vote of the national electorate is not what decides a Presidential election. It is decided by a majority vote of the Electors. This is by no means identical with the popular vote, for each state casts all of its electoral college votes as a solid bloc for the Presidential candidate having received the highest popular vote in that state. Thus, three times in American history, in 1824, 1876 and 1888, Presidents were elected with smaller total popular votes than that received by their opponents. Discussing this problem in his recent book, *Politics in America*, D. W. Brogan says that it could even happen that a President might be elected with a large popular majority against him. This could occur if the victor squeezed through with a narrow majority of electoral college votes "against

a candidate with very large majorities in states casting just half the electoral votes."

If more than two Presidential candidates are in the field and none receives a majority of the electoral college votes, the election is thrown for decision into the House of Representatives. In the House a President must be chosen from the three highest runners-up. "But in choosing the President," says the 12th Amendment to the Constitution, "the votes shall be taken by states, the representation from each state having one vote . . . and a majority of all the states shall be necessary to a choice." This means that regardless of population, regardless of the fact that New York with fifteen million people has 75 times the population of Nevada with only 200,000 inhabitants, each state gets only one vote.

How close we have come in recent times to having the Presidential election thrown to the House was shown in 1948. A shift of only 3,554 popular votes in Ohio and 8,993 votes in California would have been sufficient to leave the Presidential candidates without a majority of electoral college votes.

Thus, the American method of electing a President has been one of the deterrents to the formation of new and third parties. It has tended to place a special premium on the formation of two large catch-all parties, which aim to bring together the most weird assortment of diverse elements with one sole objective in mind—obtaining a majority capable of electing the President. For the Presidency is the most important of all political plums. The President wields great power. He appoints his own Cabinet. He has a veto over much legislation. He remains in office for four years. And, last but not least, the Administration is the dispenser of a great largess of federal patronage.

In countries where the premier and cabinet are chosen by parliament, the main form of coalition tends to take place *after* the election. Each important class grouping seeks to form its own independent political party and to win as large a bloc of parliamentary seats as possible. If no single party has a majority with which to form a government, political agreements and deals are then consummated between various factions within parliament. In a situation such as this even small parties, at times, get a chance to tip the scales. And these agreements must be honored to a certain extent at least, for supporting votes can be withdrawn and the administration ousted.

In the United States, however, with the Presidency of prime importance, there is a compulsion toward forming coalitions and

making deals *before* the elections. This includes the need to form sectional combinations that are considered "safe," so that main attention can be concentrated on the doubtful states. The very choice of Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates is made with this object in view. Regional blocs are also important should the election be thrown to the House, for then a count of states becomes decisive.

Since no more than two parties can compete for a majority of the votes with any hope of success, new parties, unless they replace one or another of the major parties, have little bargaining power. This "winner-take-all" system of elections also operates in the selection of U.S. Senators and Representatives. These offices require only a plurality of popular votes for election. But because the election takes place in "single-member districts," that is, in designated areas where only one candidate is to be elected, the race tends to narrow down to the two machine candidates who have a chance. Of course, in large areas of the Democratic South, as well as in certain rock-ribbed Republican areas of the North, even the second party's candidate has no chance.

This method of election is also different from that customarily used in countries with multi-party systems. In such countries the system of proportional representation is frequently employed. This gives all parties a more equitable share of representation commensurate with their actual popular strength. How unrepresentative is the "winner-take-all" method, can be seen in one example cited by Key. The State of Kansas has six Congressional Districts. In 1948, the Republicans polled 57.5 percent of the popular vote of these districts, and the Democrats 42.5 percent. But the Republicans received 100 percent of the state's Congressional seats, while the Democrats received none.

This election method is devastating in its affects upon third or minor parties. Louis H. Bean, in his book *How to Predict Elections*, points out that the "Bull Moose" Progressive Party of 1912 polled 27 percent of the national popular vote, but the major parties took 96 percent of the representation in the House. When one also considers that the Socialist Party, in that year, obtained 6 percent of the vote, the situation is even more scandalous—33 percent of the national vote for minor parties but only 4 percent of the House seats. The same thing occurred in 1924. The La Follette third party received 17 percent of the total vote but won only one percent of the House.

There is still one other important difference between the American election system and that of many other countries. In France, for

example, where candidates run in "single-member districts" a plurality is insufficient for election. If no candidate receives a majority vote on the first ballot, a second run-off election takes place between the two candidates with the highest votes. This has the following advantage. Those who vote for candidates who do not fare so well on the first ballot lose nothing thereby. They still can make a choice between one of the two candidates left in the running. Thus, there is no fear of a "lost vote." In fact, supporters of minority parties even gain something by this procedure. First they register their own independent strength. Secondly, they use this strength for bargaining purposes, for forming a coalition behind one or the other of the two candidates in the final election.

It should be noted, at this point, that since the turn of the century a second ballot arrangement has also been introduced into American elections. The primary ballot, fought for so vigorously by the Populist and Progressive third party upheavals, is now a fact. It was meant to take the power of nominating candidates out of the hands of the monopoly-controlled big party bosses. It has not accomplished this. The machine, in most instances, still controls the selection of candidates and the primary vote. In contrast with Europe, therefore, the two ballot arrangement has not strengthened the role of the weaker and smaller parties. It has only further enhanced the dominance of the two major parties. The first ballot is a primary *within* the existing two-party system, and the final ballot is between the nominees of these parties.

Discussing some of the reasons why Socialist and progressive third party movements have found it so difficult to gain firm footholds in American politics, Professor Brogan, in his book *Politics in America*, makes a number of important observations. "Party success," he shows, "is measured by the successful election of a President, of a Governor, of a Mayor. The fact that these offices cannot be divided makes concentration of effort, and the effective means to that concentration, the two-party system, especially strong in America. . . . It requires a great deal of tenacity to hold on while a party slowly builds up enough support to win the offices that make it more than a mere body of organized protest. Most voters do not have that tenacity, most politicians do not have it either.

"Then the law, in most states, is weighted against third parties. In some, a party cannot easily get on the ballot unless it has polled a certain proportion of the votes at a previous election, an application of Cornford's law of academic politics: 'nothing should ever be done

for the first time!' In other states, a very large number of signatures is needed to effect a nomination and they must be collected all over the state. Neither major party has an interest in making things easy for a third party and neither party tries to make it easy. The American voter, used to traditional voting . . . is hard to convert to the view that he should postpone immediate gains for a long-term political transformation."

It is quite evident, therefore, that the American electoral system has been no minor obstacle on the path of political realignment. And the course of this steeplechase has been strewn with more than this one thorny hedge. Other hurdles have been even higher and more difficult to leap.

SECTIONAL AND CLASS OBSTACLES

A second major obstacle to realignment has been the influence of sectional interests on American politics. While these have included class interests, they have also tended to cut across these and to blur them.

The vastness of the country, the unevenness of its economic development, the differences of climate, geography, natural resources, and population have frequently made the bond of region appear stronger than the bond of economic class interest. The white workers of the South, for example, frequently were made to feel a stronger kinship with the white supremacist rulers than with their Southern Negro brothers, or with the workers of the rest of the nation. The dirt farmers of the corn and wheat belt, for example, have frequently felt a closer tie with the big capitalist farmers of their own particular region or crop than with the small poultry, produce, tobacco, or cotton farmers, whether tenant, sharecropper, or owner.

Thus, although sectional interests have contributed to the anti-monopoly movements, as we have shown in the previous chapter, they have also contributed their share to the maintenance of the two-party system as one of regional alliances.

An even greater obstacle has been the fact that the wage-earners, the largest class in American life constituting more than half of the people, were nearly completely unorganized until the 1930's. They were sharply divided between skilled and unskilled, Negro and white, and native and foreign-born. Only in the 'thirties did the labor movement begin to become a majority movement of the industrial

workers. It also first began to organize its own independent and permanent political machinery.

Up to that time the city political machines, corrupt and rotten as they were and still are, held a virtual monopoly of political influence in working class communities. This was especially true among the lowest paid workers—the European immigrants and later the Negro migrants from the South. To these the city political machines appealed as “friends.” They did small favors for the poor in exchange for the promise of support. They gave the immigrant and Negro workers a feeling that in a strange and hostile world they could at least go to their precinct captain for some small favor, especially when in “trouble” with the omnipotent power of “the Law.” And while much of this has changed since the growth of trade unions, it would be a mistake to overlook the influence of the machine to this very day.

Middle class reformers generally have not understood this. With their moralizing, their tendency to talk down to the workers or over their heads, and their utter indifference to the real problems that the poor and downtrodden face, the city reform movements generally failed to attract any considerable working class support. The workers supported such movements only when these were associated with concrete objectives that had something to do with improving their own lot. They would not and could not become aroused over the issue of corruption in city government, when all about them they witnessed Big Business robbery and corruption being cynically passed off as examples of “free enterprise” and the “American way.”

By making the issue that of honesty in the abstract, and by refusing to face up to the Big Business class character of corruption, the reformers only beclouded the real issues. Professor Key is one of the contemporary historians keen enough to recognize this. He points out that by making the principle question that of “honesty,” attention was distracted from vital economic and social issues and “the sharpness of social cleavages” was kept down. The “moral tone of campaigns,” concludes Key, “minimizes public discussion and recognition of the very real differences that may occur on questions of public policy between equally ‘honest’ men.” Thus, the question of honesty in politics really boils down to this: honesty toward whom?—the bankers and industrialists? the political machines? or the people?

If the big party machines had considerable influence over the workers’ votes, it was because the workers as workers had not yet

found their way forward toward class understanding and solidarity. They were not yet awake to the great potential power which was theirs—but theirs on only one condition, that they act together, in unison. Without an increasing workers' unity and political awareness, it was impossible to move seriously toward a basic and lasting political realignment.

The popular anti-monopoly movements of the past were largely agrarian in origin and middle class in leadership. But different from the early period of the Republic, the dirt farmers no longer could provide the stable mass base needed for successful struggle against the plutocracy. The farmers no longer constituted the majority of the population. The majority class had become the class of wage-earners. Under the impact of rapid industrialization the agricultural share of national production had dwindled. Mechanization in farming had accelerated further the tendency toward a declining farm population.

Furthermore, while the farm and city middle class groups had interests inimical to those of Big Business, the workers' interests alone were diametrically opposed to those of big capital. For the source of capitalist profit was, and is, the sweat and toil of labor. And the nature of this toil is not individualistic as is that of the small farmer. It is highly cooperative, bringing together thousands and tens of thousands of workers into single enterprises. In time, these workers inevitably learn to recognize their common interests and band together to defend them.

Such are the reasons, under conditions of modern industrial capitalism, why it was no longer possible for the agrarian masses to play the same role they had when the country was still primarily agricultural. The working class and its labor movement was the only force which could provide the new hub for the wheel of a popular coalition. The fact that organized labor has not yet understood or fulfilled this responsibility has proved to be a major obstacle toward political realignment.

The most formidable of all road-blocks in this direction, however, the decisive factor which determined the slow and zig-zag course of the struggle for an anti-monopoly realignment, has to do with objective conditions. This is not in contradiction to the stress placed in the previous chapter on the fact that objective conditions have been and continue to be at the bottom of an anti-monopoly movement. Just as the interaction between the gravitational pulls of the earth,

the moon and the sun is the cause for both the flow and the ebb of ocean tides, so are objective conditions, particularly economic trends, the cause for the rise and fall of anti-monopoly tidal waves.

Up to now, periods of deep economic crisis were followed by what appeared to be periods of even greater prosperity. Thus the monopolists were able to break up the massed opposition to them before this jelled into permanent political form. Even the tailspin of the 1930's, the longest and most terrifying in American history, was brought to an end with the outbreak of the war. The great mass movement of that period, which was just on the eve of a more basic regrouping of class and political forces, was aborted. The break-up of the monopoly dominated two-party system did not take place.

THE INDEPENDENT VOTER

Ocean tides and peoples' movements are not the same. The ebb and flow of waters takes place daily. It follows a rhythmic pattern that can be charted with chronological exactitude according to the time of the month and the season of the year. And each year's movement is very much like the next.

Not so with the "tide in the affairs of men." Each forward movement, each retreat, leaves some permanent change. These may not be perceptible at once, but over the years they gather, develop, and mature, until one day a major change is ushered in suddenly and abruptly, as if from nowhere.

It would be false to believe, therefore, that the two-party system remains exactly the same as it was and that nothing of consequence has altered in American politics. Quite the contrary is the case. Beneath the surface of static sameness there is at work a process of dynamic change. The cumulative affects of this are not yet obvious, but the line of development is plain and clear. It is toward a break-up of the present two-party system; toward a welding together of those class and social groups whose common interests dictate common struggle against the common foe.

Some of the changes that have occurred in recent times are of exceedingly great importance. In the first place, a constantly growing portion of the voters are now classified as "independent." It is no longer possible for either party to win a national election without taking into account the existence of this independent vote. Quincy Howe estimates that "from twenty to forty percent of our voters

(depending on the region and the year) constantly shift their party allegiances." He calls this a "unique" American development and estimates that party lines in other countries are far more tightly drawn and that in England there is no more than a ten percent shift of voters.

This uniqueness is due, in no small way, of course, to the basic similarity of both parties.* But if the category of independent voters is growing, it also indicates something else—that an individual's politics is no longer, to the same degree as in the past, a matter of inheritance. In collision with sentimental family and traditional party and sectional loyalties has come the more vital influence of class tie and class interest. And this expresses itself in the increasing mutual attraction of masses according to their similar class positions and incomes.

Great importance also must be attached to the growing organizational forms of this "independence." The American electoral system has always favored, in fact, made necessary, the formation of special pressure groups operating within the framework of the two-party system. What is new in all this is the mass character of today's independent political action movements. In other countries, with different election laws and with multi-party traditions, these would have taken the form of separate class parties. In this country, however, they have taken the form of political action or political pressure groups. Thus, in other countries, the CIO's Political Action Committee and the AFL's Labor's Political Educational League, could have taken the form of a labor party. Nor would this have required a Left-wing labor leadership. Under circumstances in which multiparties exist or are favored, each separate class has to find its own separate party forms or be counted out as a political force. In such situations, even though Right-wing labor leaders do not intend to challenge monopoly rule, and even less so to use their political strength to achieve socialism, they still favor class parties, because the masses demand this, and

* It is this which explains, more than anything else, what President Truman, in 1952, chose to call the "laziness and indifference" of the U.S. electorate. According to Truman, the percentage of eligible Americans who voted dropped from 78 percent in 1880 to 51 percent in 1948. This compares with a 90 percent turnout in Belgium, 89 percent in Italy, 83 percent in England, 80 percent in Sweden, 75 percent in Canada, 75 percent in France, 72 percent in Israel, and 71 percent in Japan. It is no accident that the "laziness and indifference" grew in direct proportion to the growth of monopoly domination over the two-party system.

because it corresponds to political reality and their own political ambitions.

Independent political stirring also has characterized the situation among middle class liberals. The ADA is one of its main organizational expressions. This particular movement, too, in a multi-party country, could have taken the form of a distinct party organization—a cross between a middle class liberal and a social-democratic type of party. The ADA is an outgrowth of middle class restlessness with a party system in which middle class interests are subordinated. Thus, objectively, it is anti-monopoly in orientation, even if many of its leaders, such as Arthur Schlesinger, would hotly contest this view. They would insist that they are merely out to save monopoly from its own indiscretions, and thus, the world from Communism. Be that as it may, the ADA is still one of the new important mediums of independent political action.

The significance of these independent political movements is considerable. And we say this despite the fact that, temporarily at least, these movements tend to bolster mass illusions in what is possible of attainment through the two-party system. But every positive development carries with it certain negative features. These must not be overlooked, but neither should they obscure that which is new. This is particularly so of labor's independent political machinery, which, with all its weaknesses, helps to heighten the political consciousness of the workers. It helps them to realize, more than heretofore, that the economic struggle is also a political one, and that working class organization and solidarity must be extended from the shop to the political precinct. As labor's political weight grows, as the workers begin to feel their oats politically, the pressure will grow upon labor leadership to more clearly enunciate its program for the nation, and to enter into conscious alliance with other likeminded sections of the population. In time, as the struggle over issues and program sharpens, there also will grow an awareness that the collision of interests between monopoly and the people requires a break-up of the present two-party system and the emergence of a labor-led people's party.

THE SWITCH FROM THE REPUBLICANS

The growth in the proportion of independent voters is coupled with still another development, a shift in the mass base of the two major parties. This has taken on the character of a pronounced switch of the lower income groups to the Democratic Party. While

this has not altered the character of either party, it has changed the relationship of forces between them, and has sharpened the class and social cleavages within them.

Until the 1930's, the Republican Party was generally conceded to be the majority party. Today, it is recognized as a minority party, able to win a national election only when it attracts to itself large numbers of independent voters. The Democratic Party has emerged nationally as the stronger in vote-getting ability. But it, too, cannot command an absolute majority and is dependent upon alliances with independent groups.

Two factors explain the shift from the Republican to the Democratic Party. First, the swift movement of population from rural to urban areas tended to strengthen the Democratic Party, for outside of the South the Democratic Party had organization and strength mainly in the big industrial centers. But there is a second and even more important reason. The crisis of the 1930's swept the most hard-hit sections of the population—the workers, the Negro people, the dirt farmers, and considerable numbers of small business and white collar groups—toward the alternative party, the Democratic Party. The New Deal then consolidated this hold, crystallizing an alliance between these groups and the Democratic Party.

How decisive an influence this was can be seen by the Negro vote which traditionally had gone to the Republican Party. The Negro people viewed the Democratic Party as their enemy historically, and in the South, recognized it as the political instrument of their continued oppression. And yet they shifted overwhelmingly toward the Democratic Party and have remained with it for more than two decades. Apparently they felt that their alliance with labor and with other liberal groups could offset the influence of the Dixiecrats within that party.

This greater support of the Negro people to the Democratic Party must not be considered as blind allegiance. The Negro people are more determined to win their full rights, more conscious of their mounting political strength, and better organized along independent political lines than ever before. They are not only a growing force within the labor movement, but in the NAACP they have established a mass movement which coordinates the struggle for Negro rights on many fronts. The political role of the NAACP was stressed by Alexander Heard, in his book *A Two-Party South?* "The NAACP, as an organization," he noted, "remains officially non-partisan, but

it exerts profound influence on when Negroes vote, why they vote, and also on how they vote."

The shift of lower income groups away from the Republican Party is by no means over. Among the farmers, with the exception of the South, the Republicans have traditionally had a near monopoly of political strength. In the 'thirties the first break occurred. The poorer farmers—the tenant and small farmers—deserted the standard of the Republican Party and voted in considerable numbers for the Democratic Party. Many of these never returned to the Republican fold, at least not in the same way as in the past. They have occupied a more independent political position since then.

We are now witnessing another steady trickle of farmers away from the Republican Party. Under the impact of the current farm crisis, these are going through a regrouping which may, in a short time, turn the trickle into a torrent. While the Farmers Union, representing mainly the family-size farm, has been in alliance with organized labor and has tended to be anti-Republican for a long time, the present farm crisis is shaking up the other more conservative farm organizations as well. Even such conservative and reactionary-led organizations as the Farm Bureau and the National Grange are now feeling the first gusts of the approaching storm. This has reflected itself in Congress, where the traditional reactionary farm bloc is showing signs of cracking. One section, representing the alliance of the big capitalist farmers and Big Business, holds on to traditional policies and backs the Republican Administration's farm program. Another, influenced by the mass of small and middle-class farmers, is in sharp collision with Administration policy and more and more relies on support from labor.

This was seen in the 1955 session of Congress. Only 20 percent of the rural Republicans broke party ranks and voted for 90 percent parity supports and against the Administration's "flexible supports." But 79 percent of the labor-backed city Democrats voted for 90 percent parity payments. Thus the farmers, who have been pressing for firm farm supports, have had to rely heavily on votes from metropolitan area congressmen.

FARMER-LABOR UNITY

This development is of considerable significance. It underlies the possibility of a new type of farmer-labor coalition. A new type in

this sense, that previously such coalitions were based mainly on agrarian strength with a sprinkling of labor support, but this one would base itself, in the first place, on the strength of organized labor. It would tend to be, therefore, more of a labor-farmer than a farmer-labor alliance.

Sharpening class divisions among the farmers will also, in time, help to drive a wedge within the Dixiecrat base of support among Southern white farmers. These farmers, more than any other, confront a growing contradiction between their blind regional loyalty and the need for an alliance with organized labor and the Negro people against both Wall Street and the Dixiecrats. Increased diversification of Southern agriculture is another objective factor which will encourage such a development.

What is happening in the countryside is important for still another reason. The political weight of the farm community is far greater than its population percentage. This has been true since the inception of the Republic, but it is more so today than ever. Even the most democratic of the Founding Fathers feared the metropolitan masses. They viewed the countryside as the custodian of the small enterprise system and of agrarian democracy. The banking and mercantile interests feared the western agrarians, but they feared the city mechanics and laborers even more. For them, these constituted propertyless "rabble."

Politically this has expressed itself in a gross under-representation of urban centers in government to the advantage of rural areas. This is to be seen in the Senate, where each state has two votes, regardless of size or population. And while there is historic justification for this system in the Senate, for the Federal Union started out as a union of states, there is no justification for it in state legislatures. But in these state bodies under-representation of city populations is worst of all. And because state legislatures apportion congressional districts, this situation reflects itself in the House of Representatives as well. How unrepresentative are most state legislatures can be seen by a few examples cited by V. O. Key. In New Jersey, each county is entitled to elect but one State Senator. Urban Essex County with a population of 833,513, and rural Sussex County, with a population of but 27,830 have the same Senate representation. This means that State Senators coming from counties containing but 15 percent of New Jersey's population can make up a majority of the State Senate.

The city of Baltimore with about one-half of the population of the State of Maryland is limited to six of the 29 State Senators. In

Pennsylvania, no city or county is permitted to elect more than one-sixth of the Senators. This provision was originally adopted to limit the influence of Philadelphia. In 1949, the U.S. Conference of Mayors found that the urban 59 percent of the population elected only 25 percent of the state legislators. And not to be forgotten is the shameful county unit system of election in such states as Georgia.

More representative reapportionment could put an end to such gerrymandering. But such reapportionment cannot be made without the action of the state legislatures. Even where such can be initiated through popular referendum, it is the state legislature which apportions the districts. Thus, what is required for this is a considerable degree of unity between rural and urban legislators. This can occur only where the artificial barriers which separate the workers from the majority of farmers are replaced with a growing unity serving common interests. And the fact that industry has spread into farm communities and that a large number of farmers are half-time factory workers, or have their sons or daughters working in industry, tends to establish another living link through which such understanding can be built.

Whether reapportionment is won is not so important as the fact that the city vote, in and by itself, without a sizable support from the countryside, cannot hold a majority of seats in either Congress or the state legislatures. Thus the mounting signs of unity between organized labor and sections of the farm population are of the very greatest importance.

THE NEW IN THE OLD

From the foregoing it can be seen that there already exist the rudimentary outlines of a loose, amorphous alliance between the labor movement, the Negro people, a section of the farming population, and liberal circles of the small business and professional middle class. This is to be seen in the relationship between important organizations of the labor movement and the ADA, the NAACP, and the Farmers' Union. What could be termed a form of "inter-locking directorate" exists between these organizations. Labor, Negro, and farm opinion is represented within the ADA leadership. Labor, middle class, and farm groups are represented in the leadership of the NAACP. And many of these leaders have helped form what has become known as the Committee for An Effective Congress.

This alliance-in-the-rough manifests itself in a similarity of position

on many questions and in multiplying examples of mutual assistance. It has not yet taken distinct organizational form. It does not speak with one powerful voice on crucial questions. It is confused and divided on issues of foreign policy, which, as we have shown, leads to vicious contradictions and to paralysis on many decisive questions. But in this as yet roughly hewn form it does exist. It is a fact.

One of the peculiarities of this development is that it is taking place within the framework of the two-party system. More specifically, the gathering alliance, while politically "independent," operates largely through the medium of one of these parties—the Democratic Party. And the key forces of this nebulous coalition have one other thing in common: most of them share the illusion that the Democratic Party represents something basically different from the Republican Party and can be transformed into a truly people's party.

These forces reject the idea of a third party, not in principle, but as impractical. In affect, they still agree with the position enunciated by Samuel Gompers in 1906. He said then that the formation of a new party would require waiting until it is strong enough to elect "a majority of the legislature and then a governor and then a President of the United States," and that this means waiting a long time. "Trade unionists," he concluded, "don't propose to wait so long to secure material improvement in their conditions." But while Gompers tended to oppose all labor political action, that is not the position of present-day labor leaders.

Even George Meany, the most reactionary of the present-day labor leadership, does not close the door to a labor-led party should that become necessary. Writing in the November, 1955, issue of *Fortune* about labor and the future, Meany asserts that labor will remain in politics. "The fact that we do so does not mean that the A.F. of L. will be tied to any political party. Nor does it close off any particular road in politics. I do not think the membership of the A.F. of L. is thinking now in terms of a national political party sponsored by labor. Yet if the action of the two major parties leaves us no alternative in our efforts to safeguard and raise the living standards of the workers, labor will go as far as it must down that political road."

Thus the question comes down to this: Can labor "safeguard and raise the living standards of the workers" through the medium of the present two-party system? Few if any in the ranks of labor would venture to claim that this could be attained through the means of the Republican Party. It is generally recognized by the workers that the Republican Party is the preferred party of Big Business. But what

about the Democratic Party? Here, labor has considerable influence. In some highly industrial localities it even shares control of the Democratic political organization. The influence that labor exerts within this party can be seen by the action of the Democratic Party of Wisconsin, which in its 1955 convention took a forthright stand in support of the bitter, long drawn-out strike of the Kohler workers. When a Democratic state organization will take a stand of this kind, how can anyone declare that there is no difference between the two major parties? Certainly for the embattled Kohler workers of Sheboygan, Wisconsin, there is a difference. And for many others as well.

It is necessary, however, to bear in mind the character of the two-party system, that each party contains conflicting class forces which tend to negate each other's influence to the advantage of the ruling powers. Having given the example of Wisconsin and the Kohler strikers, let us now turn to some others.

It is a well recognized fact that the big problem that has confronted the labor movement in the postwar period has been how to complete the organization of the unorganized. Without accomplishing this task it was impossible to raise wage and living standards substantially. But the main barrier to this was labor's failure to break through the South. In penetrating the South the labor movement confronts a number of grave difficulties. In the first place, the corporations are determined to prevent this last citadel of anti-unionism from crumbling. Secondly, in this determination the industrialists have the full cooperation of most of the Southern states. In many of these states "right to work" laws, which are really barbaric anti-labor laws, are on the statute books. The governments of these states, for a number of years now, have been wooing Northern capital to come South, offering it such inducements as taxfree properties and cheap labor. These state and local governments are Democratic. So are the Southern Congressmen who, by virtue of the seniority system, occupy the leading Congressional committee posts, and influence Democratic policies in the Senate and the House far beyond their numerical or electoral significance.

Or let us touch on the question of Negro rights. The brutal murder of the 14-year-old boy, Emmet Till in Mississippi shocked and aroused national and world opinion. When this was followed by the cynical freeing of the murderers, the depraved character of Mississippi and Southern white-supremacist justice was exposed once again in all its ugly nakedness. Congressman Charles Diggs of Michigan declared his intention to fight to unseat the Mississippi delegation in the House

as long as the Negro people of that state are denied their constitutional rights. Congressman Diggs is a Democrat. So are those whom he would bar. How long, therefore, is it possible for Diggs and Eastland to operate through the same party? Only so long as those who believe in Negro equality continue to give way to the Eastlands in the interests of so-called "party unity." And this is not alone the problem of Congressman Diggs. It is the problem of all who oppose Dixiecratism, whether Negro or white.

The Dixiecrats are not the sole obstacles to the transformation of the Democratic Party. In the big city political machines we find the unholy alliance of Big Money and Big Politics. Selling political plums has itself become a big business. Each of the major parties has become a huge multi-million dollar syndicate. With the federal government spending over seventy billions of dollars a year, and the state and city governments many billions more, political power has become a much coveted and lush prize. To have an "in" with Washington is the surest and easiest way to become a new millionaire overnight. We are not referring to "sordid graft," which comes from an alliance of the underworld and the upperworld. We refer to what is cynically designated as "honest graft," that is, the ability of government officials "in the know" to make small fortunes for themselves or to help men with big fortunes to make still bigger ones. A most obnoxious form of this "honest graft" is to be seen in the number of generals who retire into lucrative posts at the head of big corporations. These men have no knowledge of industry, all they sell are their "ins" in respect to armament contracts. And this is another reason why the military brass is so united in its opposition to any form of disarmament.

Discussing the 1952 Presidential election campaign, *U.S. News and World Report* casually referred to it as an \$85-million campaign. "The stake is control of a Government that spends 79 billion dollars in a year and holds the power to grant or withhold favors of immense value. An investment of 85 million dollars in that fight for control is regarded as moderate." Of course, much more than this amount was actually spent, most of it in the form of "free money." By "free money" politicians mean money that does not have to be accounted for.

Thus the election business has become a big business in the literal sense of that term. To think that labor and its allies can cleanse the two-party Augean stables is to underestimate the strength of the golden chain which binds the political machines to the powers that be. Nor can labor be indifferent to the big business corruption of

politics. For often the very men elected to office by labor votes are secretly beholden to the big corporations for huge financial contributions. Senator Wayne Morse has expressed the opinion that the main reason the U.S. Senate votes "wrong" so frequently is not that the individual Senators do not know better but because they are not free to vote otherwise.

"What keeps them from being free?" he was asked. Morse replied: "Because too often they are committed . . . The party bosses dictate to them. I'll tell you the thing that controls them more than anything else, and when you get to the bottom of it you'll get to the bottom of the major cause of corruption in American politics—campaign contributions."

The labor movement cannot remain indifferent to the big business corruption of politics without being sucked into this cesspool itself. He who lives in a sewer must absorb some of the stench. And in those communities where labor leaders entered into too close a tie-up with the political machine, the machine has altered them more than they the machine.

We are by no means advocating political abstention. We merely point out that the labor movement cannot close its eyes to political corruption and must combat it vigorously. Only then will this struggle have a chance of success, for it will point to the class roots of corruption and tie in with all the other basic needs of the people.

The sum total of all the above presents a rather anomalous situation. On the one hand, the class and social forces capable of bringing about a basic political regrouping are growing in numbers and unity. What they lack in depth, as compared with past movements, they make up in greater breadth. And the intensity will come as the struggle sharpens. Different also from the past is the fact that the labor movement now occupies the pivot position in this line-up. On the other hand, these forces are still the captives of the monopoly dominated two-party system. The new is still imprisoned in the shell of the old.

INNER PARTY STRIFE AND ITS LOGICAL OUTCOME

How long can this state of affairs continue? How long can the labor movement, for example, put aside the decision to enter the battle for the South, without weakening its position nationally? And when that struggle finally shapes up it will prove to be a battle royal with no holds barred, for the stakes will be great on both sides. Or the Negro people? Can they, will they, settle for anything less

than what is rightfully theirs, in the South no less than in the North? This issue is already joined and the Southern white-supremacists are resorting to the most bestial forms of violence, including lynchings, to maintain their rule. And what do these things mean for the struggle within the Democratic Party?

In the past, the conflicting interests in the Democratic Party were kept together with the glue of conciliation, compromise and concession. This is still the objective of the Democratic leadership. This is its plan for the 1956 elections. But the more the basic issues are evaded, the less chance does the Democratic Party have of maintaining its alliance with those independent forces that came its way in the past two decades. This is its quandary.

If it fails to give recognition to the growing popular forces and to the demands of the people, it cannot win, even should the leaders of the trade unions, the ADA, and the others, continue to support them. This was shown in 1952, when the disgust with Truman's policies and with the war in Korea shifted enough independent voters to give Eisenhower and the Republicans a majority. Thus, while these voters tend to follow the lead of their mass organization leaders, they by no means do so blindly. Many of them exercise independent judgment.

If, however, the Democratic Party does give the popular forces more recognition, and does heed the pressure of the people for more progressive policies, it runs into collision with the Southern reactionaries and with those Northern political bosses who are indebted to and controlled by Big Business. One aspect of this was seen in 1948. In order to offset the popularity of the Henry Wallace candidacy, Harry Truman went out of his way to demagogically promise the labor movement, the Negro people, and the poor farmers his full support for their demands. The result was a political upset, the election of Truman, even though the Dixiecrats did not support the Democratic national ticket that year.

There is an important lesson in this. Contrary to popular opinion the Southern electoral votes are not decisive in a Presidential election. Only four times since 1880 have these votes been large enough to affect the outcome. This happened in 1884, when the Democrats won by only 37 electoral votes; in 1892, when they won by 111 votes; in 1916, when they won by 23 votes, and in 1948, when they won by 75 votes. But in 1948 the Dixiecrats could deliver only 39 of the 88 Southern electoral votes and thus were unable to defeat Truman. In 1932, 1936, 1940, 1944, and in 1952, the Southern electoral votes did not affect the outcome whatsoever. They were not needed for

the four-time election of Roosevelt, and Eisenhower would have won in 1952 even had all the Southern votes gone to Stevenson. Thus, the fear that a break with the Dixiecrats leads to political defeat is entirely erroneous.

In 1952, despite all the efforts of the Stevenson forces to pacify the Southern reactionaries, the Shivers-Byrnes gang supported Eisenhower. And this year, 1956, the Dixiecrats are trying to win concessions for themselves within the Democratic Party with the promise not to bolt. They are not, however, interested in a Democratic Presidential victory. What they would like to see is a Republican Presidential and a Democratic Congressional victory. This would guarantee that the White House was in hands "safe" from labor and popular pressure and that all key Congress posts remained in their hands.

Thus the cleavage inside the Democratic Party is basic and cannot be patched up indefinitely. At a certain point its components must fly apart under the centrifugal forces of accelerated class tensions.

Two factors will hasten this development and make it inevitable. First, the struggle against monopoly is bound to become intensified in the period ahead. Everything points in that direction—the present farm crisis, the record-breaking immensity of big corporation profits, the approaching economic crisis. Even the dominance over capitalist world markets which Wall Street won as a result of World War II is now being challenged more and more by other capitalist powers. Western Europe's rise in production since the war has been greater than American and less subject to wild oscillations. In 1948, Western Europe's share of world exports was 30 percent; in 1954, it was nearly 40 percent. In this same period, according to *Fortune* magazine, the U.S. command over world shipping declined from 33 percent to 28 percent. This, on the background of the general crisis of the world capitalist system, precludes easy solutions at the expense of other capitalist states, or by attempts to carve out a colonial empire at the expense of the socialist-led countries and the colonial peoples.

If the first factor that will hasten a basic realignment has to do with objective conditions, with whether it will be possible in the period ahead for the ruling class to conciliate differences to the same degree as in the past, the second has to do with the level of understanding reached by the popular forces making up the coalition. Before these masses will be prepared to move "on their own" so to speak, they must become convinced of two things. First, that they have nothing to lose by so doing, that whatever concessions still are

to be squeezed out of the old alignment can no longer meet their needs, in fact, that the longer they hold off from bringing the issues to climax the more they will be endangering the gains of yesterday. Secondly, that they do not have to fear political isolation, that they have the potential strength to make their own bid for political power with a good chance of success.

Not until these two conditions are met will the mass break occur. And it will be a break in both major parties. For in the Republican Party, too, a struggle is taking place and is bound to become sharper. While the ultra-reactionary wing has temporarily been subdued, McCarthyism is by no means dead. It must be remembered that Hitler made his first bid in 1923-24. He failed in this attempt, even landed in jail. But in 1930, when the economic crisis broke, the most powerful German industrial magnates shifted their support to him and his Nazi hordes. Within three years Hitler held state power.

It would be a mistake mechanically to compare the United States with prewar Germany. But one comparison can be made. Given a mighty rise of the popular forces, the most reactionary groupings of monopoly will seek to impose a form of McCarthyism upon the country. In this way they will hope to suppress the mass movement and to propel the nation into military adventures and a new world war.

It would also be wrong to think that all the popular forces are concentrated in the Democratic Party. Millions of farmers, small business people, professionals, white collar workers, and even industrial workers, still support the Republican Party. The coming regrouping, therefore, will also shake up the Republican Party.

What exact course the political realignment will take depends on many as yet unknown factors. Cortez Ewing, in his book *Congressional Elections—1896-1944*, a study of sectional influences on American politics, concludes with the following summation: "At present there are strong evidences that the Democratic liberal party may not be long able to maintain its official integrity in the face of the decided contradictions which exist within its fold. If the conservative Southern Democratic congressmen continue to battle against policies which are 'musts' with liberal Democratic leaders from the other sections, the Roosevelt party may well disintegrate. Therefore, we would find ourselves with three strong parties, each of which would be sectional in its strength. Under such circumstances, our national administration would inevitably become a coalition of at least two parties." Thus Cortez Ewing foresees a possible breakup of the two-party system and its replacement with a three-party system in which

no single party could muster a majority of electoral college votes and federal power is decided, therefore, by a coalition of two parties.

Such a development is by no means out of the question. The logic of events could lead to a number of parties, in which the main form of coalition occurred after an election. It could lead also to another two-party arrangement in which one party was composed of anti-monopoly forces and the other remained monopoly dominated. We would, however, question Ewing's stress on the sectional character of the break-up. It seems to us that the line of development is toward a greater stratification of the country along vertical class lines as against horizontal sectional lines. Not that sectionalism and its influences would play no part, but these would be subordinate to the main class influences.

Whatever exact path the regrouping takes, one thing is quite certain: the present monopoly dominated two-party system must give way, in time, to a more meaningful division, and one of the parties will be labor-led.

THE 1956 ELECTIONS

Although a break-up of the present two-party arrangement is inevitable, it will not take place overnight or immediately. The objective conditions are not yet fully ripe for this. As Engels accurately foresaw back in the 1890's, the task of toppling the American two-party system would not be easy. It would require "unusually powerful incentives." These are in the making—they are not yet here.

Bearing this in mind, the progressive approach to the 1956 elections should aim to find the best ways, under the difficult circumstances of a monopoly dominated two-party system, to strengthen the forces of the people and to prevent the victory of the most extreme reactionary forces, those whose orientation is toward war abroad and in an anti-labor, pro-fascist direction at home. A number of things can be done toward this end. First, it is important to defeat the most reactionary candidates of both major parties and to elect as large a number of candidates as possible who favor an end to the cold war and the arms race, and who are pledged to uphold civil liberties, civil rights, and progressive social legislation. This would strengthen the voice of the people and be understood as a popular mandate for more liberal and progressive policies. Second, it is important to oust the Republican Big Business Administration and to remove Congress from the paralyzing grip of the GOP-Dixiecrat

alliance. This could bring into being an administration and Congress more amenable to mass pressure. This is the policy of the Communist Party, which in the words of Eugene Dennis, calls for the organization of a mass movement, "powerful enough to elect an Administration and a Congress in '56 . . . more responsive to the will and needs of the people than were their immediate predecessors."

Such an outcome of the election could be brought about only by greater political independence, unity, and initiative on the part of labor and its allies. In turn, it would increase their political weight and give them greater confidence in their own strength. It would therefore operate as a factor encouraging a further development of independent political action after the election.

An election victory, if followed up with determined united action in behalf of the people's needs, could compel many concessions from a new administration and Congress. With the danger of an economic crisis growing ever more acute, an administration more amenable to mass pressure would also be less likely to orient in a fascist and war direction. Given a great mass upsurge, it could be pressed forward as was the Roosevelt New Deal. Whether it were or not, under conditions of crisis, the contradictions within the Democratic Party and in the two-party system as such would greatly intensify. If the administration moved in a popular direction, it would be under fire from the reactionaries. If it gave way to these, it would run into collision with its own mass base. If it attempted to straddle the issues, as is most likely the case, it would find that neither wing of the party could take this for long. Thus the process of political realignment would become greatly accelerated.

We do not say that this is the only path toward political regrouping. We believe it is the best path, for it sets as its aim the winning for the people as much as can be won at each stage of the struggle, while blocking the path to extreme reaction and war. Whether this is the path forward depends upon many factors. In the first place it depends on the outcome of the 1956 elections. As this is being written, there is no guarantee that the 1956 elections will bring about such a strengthening of the labor-liberal forces and a weakening of the most reactionary monopoly groupings. On the contrary, there is a grave danger that this may not happen. In the first place, the top Democratic leaders are operating on the assumption that the labor, Negro, and liberal votes are "in the bag," and that their efforts must now go in the direction of placating the Dixiecrats and in putting a conservative foot forward nationally in order to win the

so-called "moderate" vote. As part of this tendency, the main Democratic spokesmen have not taken the lead in the fight for peace and for a relaxation of world tensions. Some of them are still beating the "cold war" tom-toms. They are repeating, therefore, the same errors as in 1952.

It must be plain that the mere election of a Democratic candidate over that of a Republican, in and by itself, does not lead to a strengthening of the labor and liberal forces. It depends on what that candidate stands for; what he is committed to; what class forces he speaks for. To support all Democratic candidates irrespective of where they stand on issues is not to strengthen, but to weaken, the influence of labor and its allies. In the first place, it leads to a demoralization of many voters. These stay away from the polls in droves because they see no difference between one set of candidates and another. In the second place, even should a victory be won by such candidates, nothing is gained thereby; in fact, those who gave them a blank check, who did nothing to seek better candidates in advance of the election, are themselves greatly compromised. Instead of increased confidence in their own strength and increased conviction as to the need for greater independent political action, such practices only sow disillusionment and cynicism toward all political activity in the ranks of the labor and liberal forces.

The main reason for this state of affairs is that the leadership of the labor movement, despite its assertions to the contrary, has given in effect a blank check to the Democratic Party. It has not taken the next logical step forward in independent political action, the convening of a national gathering of all independent political groups to establish a common program and approach to the 1956 elections. It is not speaking in a firm progressive voice on questions of policy, and many of its spokesmen, such as Meany, speak on foreign policy questions in a voice not far different from that of a McCarthy or a Knowland. The labor leadership is not making clear its refusal to go along with hand-picked boss controlled nominees and its determination to contest these in the primaries, or if necessary, with independent candidates in the final elections. It is not demanding greater representation for labor and the Negro people in the halls of Congress and in all branches of government. Thus, by tailing after the Democratic politicians the labor leadership is endangering the possibilities of an election victory in 1956. If the labor movement is to change this situation it must begin to train its sights on the real enemy, Big Business, and its representatives and policies in both major parties.

CHAPTER XII

WHERE IS LABOR GOING?

The struggle of the laborers against capital . . . does exist, whatever the apologists of capital may say to the contrary. . . . The very existence of Trade Unions is proof sufficient of the fact: if they are not made to fight against the encroachments of capital, what are they made for? There is no mincing matters. No milksop words can hide the ugly fact that present society is mainly divided into two great antagonistic classes—into capitalists . . . and workingmen.

—Frederick Engels, in the *British Labour Standard*, 1886

Unarmed as we are . . . we have decided to stay in the plants. We have no illusions about the sacrifice which this decision will entail. We fully expect that if a violent effort to oust us is made many of us will be killed, and we take this means of making it known to our wives, our children, to the people of the state of Michigan and the country that if this results from the attempt to eject us, you are the ones who must be held responsible for our deaths.

—From open letter of Flint, Chevy Plant #4 sitdown strikers to Gov. Frank Murphy, February, 1937

A LESSON IN THE ABCs

GEORGE MEANY HAS said recently, "there is no such thing as a proletariat in America." Other labor leaders have said the same thing. In 1948, Philip Murray, then president of the CIO, wrote,

"we have no classes in America." What Murray recognized as a social class and Meany by the word "proletariat" we do not know. But if we are to abide by the accepted definition of the word "class," as a group of people with common economic characteristics, and of the word "proletariat," as the class of modern wage-earners, then there certainly does exist such an economic class and all the denials cannot change this fact.

When Murray amplified his statement by adding: "We are all workers here," he succeeded only in further confusing matters. This remark made as much sense as the statement by Big Business that, "we are all capitalists here." Doing some chore does not make one a worker anymore than the ownership of a car or a home (with or without a mortgage) makes one a capitalist. A worker is a person who, in order to provide a livelihood for himself and his family, is compelled to sell his work-ability to someone else for wages. This someone else is a capitalist. What makes him a capitalist is not that he may own a great deal of personal property—estates, cars, yachts, airplanes, etc.—but that he is the owner of capital, that is, of money invested in productive enterprise, in means of production such as a factory and machines.

The capitalist can make his money multiply itself only by getting human energy and skill applied to his machinery and raw materials. Toward that end he hires workers. The worker, in turn, having no means of production of his own, is compelled to go to the capitalist for a job. Thus, a rich man's son who goes slumming into one of his old man's factories, to see how the "other half live" and to "work his way up to the top," is not a worker by any stretch of the imagination even if he does earn wages. He does not have to sell his labor power in order to eat. The worker, on the other hand, must continue to work for wages lest he lose the little personal property that is his and livelihood as well. Will Rogers, after comparing the lavish way in which J. P. Morgan lived with that of ordinary folk, once dryly remarked: "Then you will hear some Bonehead say we have no classes in America like they have in England."

It seems silly to have to explain this to men who hold positions of trust and leadership in the ranks of labor and who by no means can be classified as "boneheads." The fact is they know better. Otherwise, if they really believed there were no classes in America and that we were all just one big happy family, workers being capitalists and capitalists being workers, why then a trade union movement? The existence of such is proof enough, as Engels pointed out, that the

workers do have common characteristics and interests, separate, apart, and antagonistic to those of the capitalists. For; if trade unions "are not made to fight against the encroachments of capital, what are they made for?"

MEANY, McDONALD, REUTHER—AND MARX

The very existence of a permanent labor movement is testimonial to the permanency of the conflict which exists between labor and capital. It also indicates that the mass of trade unionists, even though not fully aware of the significance of this conflict, are not oblivious to it. How, otherwise, are we to explain the readiness of workers to pay union dues month after month and year after year? If they thought there was no conflict, or that it was purely temporary in character, they would not do so. Similarly, if they thought that their position as wage workers was a temporary sojourn and that before long they would become independent small producers or even capitalists, they would not see the need for a permanent trade union movement. That is one reason why the trade unions of earlier years came and went, for the workers did have such illusions. But the illusions of today, misleading as are all illusions, do not base themselves on the erroneous belief that the majority of wage-earners will cease to be wage-earners.

Those trade union leaders who argue that there are no classes or class struggle in America, seek proof in the large number of contract and wage settlements that take place without recourse to strike action. For them, "collective bargaining" represents the very opposite of class struggle. David McDonald even calls it by the fancy name "mutual trusteeship." But this is ridiculous on the face of it. If there were no conflict, there would be no need for "bargaining" in the first place. The mere fact that both sides sit down and "bargain" is proof of the existence of conflicting interests and that both sides recognize this.

Nor is it true, as many labor leaders tend to stress *after* a management-labor agreement is arrived at, that this was made possible because both sides were "reasonable" and "amiable." Before the company's representatives become "reasonable" they first assess their position and the respective strength of the contesting forces. Is the time ripe for a show down? Is the terrain favorable for such an action? How long can the union hold out? How determined is its rank and file? How militant or compliant its leadership? How much is

the union asking? What would the company have to give for a settlement? How much would it actually cost in terms of profits? All these factors enter into determining whether the company's representatives are "reasonable" or "unreasonable."

Labor, too, estimates the actual strength of the opposing sides before sitting down to "bargain." This determines the nature and scope of its demands, what it really expects to win, whether it believes a strike unavoidable, etc. And both in advance of the "bargaining" and simultaneous with it, the union leadership, if it means business and is worth its salt, is constantly building up the militancy and determination of the rank and file as its ace in the hole when the chips are down. If an actual strike is averted, this is because both sides believe that nothing substantial can be gained by a pitched battle at the given time and place.

But a state of war exists nevertheless. Just as an army at war gives open battle only when it believes it advantageous to do so, or when it cannot avoid such battle, the same is true of the armies of capital and labor. Let us take the 1955 auto settlement as an example. Walter Reuther hailed the agreement signed with the Ford Corporation, the first to be negotiated, as giving "the lie to the Communists . . . because it proves in a very practical way that free labor and free management can get together, can find the common denominator for working out their common problems." He went out of his way to congratulate the Ford Company for its "sincerity" and said it "is entitled to a great deal of credit" for "courage" and "wisdom" in accepting the principle "upon which we are going to build the guaranteed annual wage."

The same Walter Reuther, reporting to the annual convention of the Auto Union in March, 1955, *before* negotiations had begun, sang a little different tune. Here he stressed that while "super-human effort" would be made to "avert the need for strike action, we must, nevertheless, be determined to fight . . . if management resists our justifiable demands. . . . Nearly every major advance our Union has made in the past," he told the assembled delegates, "has been possible because the workers of one or another of the big corporations have had the courage and the determination to make a sacrifice. . . ." Reminding the union of the spirit of the 1937 sit-down strikers, "whose militance and fortitude established our Union," Reuther called for complete strike preparedness and for a huge strike fund of twenty-five million dollars "if we want the corporations to know that we really mean business."

Whatever concessions the corporations did make, therefore, were not due to "sincerity." They were due to far more tangible factors: a recognition that the union did mean business, that the supplementary unemployment compensation agreed to was not really a guaranteed annual wage and would not cut into profits, and that market conditions plus increased competition would make a strike at that time too costly.

What, however, if conditions had been somewhat different? What if the supply of new cars had so greatly exceeded the demand that the corporations felt they could risk a strike without endangering their market positions? Moreover, what if on top of this, there had been mass unemployment and the corporations believed they could use a strike to their own advantage, to reduce inventory and to intimidate the workers? Under those circumstances what course of action would the corporations' "sincerity," "courage" and "wisdom" dictate? The more than two-year old Kohler strike in Wisconsin, and the Perfect Circle strike in Indiana, broken by National Guard bayonets, are only two of the most recent examples of what the corporations would like to do to the unions if given half the chance.

Not all labor leaders are blind to this truth. In 1946, a poll was taken of a select group of labor leaders. One of the questions asked these leaders was worded: "Do you believe that, on the whole, the larger businesses in the United States: (a) Accept the principle of collective bargaining and deal with the unions in good faith . . . (b) They tolerate unions and deal with them as far as they have to but no further . . . (c) They are trying to 'break' the unions?" The answers as reported by C. Wright Mills in his book *The New Men of Power* showed that only 14 percent of AFL leaders and 6 percent of CIO leaders believed that Big Business accepts unionism and bargains in good faith. Fifty-seven percent of AFL leaders and 53 percent of CIO leaders believed that the companies merely tolerate unions, while 29 percent of AFL leaders and 41 percent of CIO leaders were of the opinion that Big Business wants to break unions. Thus, the overwhelming majority of labor leaders, according to this poll, had no confidence in the "sincerity" of the big corporations and apparently did recognize the existence of some kind of class struggle.

Mills breaks down the above figures for nation, state, and city labor leaders. Interestingly enough he found on the lower rungs of labor leadership those most skeptical of Big Business intentions. While only 21 percent of AFL and 27 percent of CIO national officers believed that Big Business was out to break unions, 37 percent of

AFL and 48 percent of CIO city officers were so convinced. Mills notes: "The city leaders are in closest contact with the rank and file, who in turn are close to the sharp edge of any unpleasantness between business and labor. The city leaders of labor are also in immediate and continual contact with the workday representatives of business." Had Mills gone even lower, to the plant and local union level, he would have found even more well grounded fear and suspicion of Big Business.

Even when an agreement is negotiated without recourse to strike action, this by no means settles matters, not even for the duration of the contract. The struggle between the workers and a given company continues every day and in a hundred different ways. The paper on which the contract is written is worth only as much as the workers make it worth. They must be on their guard constantly. Let the Ford workers, for example, relax even for a single day, let their grievance machinery become rusty or run down, and they will feel the lash of increased exploitation faster than they can say Walter Reuther.

A century ago Marx referred to the economic trade union struggle as the most direct expression of the class struggle and as an unceasing "veritable civil war." Engels compared it to "guerrilla warfare" and even went so far as to say that often a worker requires more courage for a strike than for an insurrection. Most present-day leaders would throw up their hands in horror at such comparisons. Yet the fact that the class struggle does exist and that Marx and Engels were right, is unwittingly confirmed by the very existence of the trade union movement and by the constant unremitting tug-of-war which takes place between the workers and the capitalists in every shop, mill, mine, or plant of every industry of the land.

THE POLITICS OF IT

Whether most labor leaders recognize it or not, the trade union movement must "fight against the encroachments of capital." It may not do so consciously or well. It may pull its punches. It may be misled. But it must conduct this struggle or perish. And in the course of this combat it must seek to impose its own encroachments upon what have been considered the traditional rights of capitalist property. Many students of the labor movement recognize this. Matthew Josephson, in his biography of Sidney Hillman, writes: "All effective trade unions, including those of limited aims, may be considered

'revolutionary' inasmuch as they seek, through control of the job, to interfere with the assumed right of capitalists 'to manage their own affairs,' to control their property, and to hire and fire."

C. Wright Mills makes the same point. He says that the labor leader, whether he knows it or not, "is fighting the power conferred on other types of entrepreneurs by the rights of property and the laws guaranteeing those rights. If he is for the closed shop, he must be against freedom of contract. If he is for an improvement of shop conditions and for a change in the ways of managing the shop, he is, in fact, encroaching upon the received prerogatives of the managers of property."

It is this that explains the bitterness with which the owners of industry fought against the recognition of the trade union movement. Even when such recognition cost them little in terms of dollars and cents, they frequently preferred a costly strike in its stead. Only when there was no alternative before them did they finally condescend to recognize the legitimacy of trade unions. But they still fear the labor movement. Nor can the bootlicking indulged in by most top labor leaders allay this. The employing class recognizes in the very existence of the labor movement a challenge to its "rights" of undisputed industrial lordship.

Seeking to impose certain curbs and restrictions on "property rights" requires, in turn, the establishment of certain "labor rights." This struggle is not only economic; it also is political. Marx, in *Letters to Americans*, showed how every economic movement becomes transferred at a certain point into a political one. "For instance," he wrote, "the attempt in a particular factory, or even a particular trade, to force a shorter working day out of the individual capitalists by strikes, etc., is a purely economic movement. The movement to force through an eight-hour *law*, etc., however, is a *political* movement. And in this way, out of the separate economic movements of the workers there grows up everywhere a *political movement*, that is to say a movement of the class, with the objective of achieving its interests in general form, in a form possessing general, socially coercive force. Though these movements presuppose a certain degree of previous organization, they are in turn equally a means of developing this organization."

Labor's political struggle starts out over questions of social legislation—the right to organize and strike, the length of the work-day and week, minimum wages, health and work safeguards, compensation for industrial accidents, laws pertaining to women and child labor,

unemployment and old age insurance, etc. How closely allied is the economic to the political struggle today, can be seen by the 1955 Ford agreement. This stipulates that the supplementary unemployment compensation to be paid out by the company shall go into effect when states covering two-thirds of Ford employees will allow such payments. If this does not take place within a specified time, the contract is to be renegotiated. Here, therefore, we see an economic agreement strictly dependent upon certain political conditions—the ability of labor and its allies to get state laws interpreted or amended to permit such supplementary payments to state unemployment benefits.

As politically backward as the labor movement still is, it has been compelled, nevertheless, to recognize the importance of the political struggle. In an article, "Political Education is an A.F. of L. Tradition," which appeared in the labor press during February, 1954, George Meany stated that with the formation of Labor's League for Political Education, the AFL had "now returned to the policy of Gompers." This by no means is the case. It is true that the AFL has never departed from Gompers' opposition to the idea of a new, labor-led party. Further, it must be noted that there were times when Gompers stood for different things politically. At the outset of his career he was influenced by Marxist thought. The *Communist Manifesto* of Marx and Engels had given him "an interpretation of much that before had been only inarticulate feeling." He once asked Engels to arbitrate certain differences between the American Federation of Labor and the Socialist Labor Party. Engels respectfully declined the honor. In 1924, when both major parties insolently rejected labor's legislative measures, Gompers even said, "It looks as if we are forced to turn to La Follette." But Gompersism, as a historic tendency in the labor movement, represents something else entirely. It represents the complete economic and political subordination of the workers to the capitalists and the denial of the importance of the political struggle.

Gompers agreed to political action only when labor was under the sharpest attack, and then, only reluctantly, because there was nothing else he could do. Most of the time he expounded what was known as "voluntarism" and "pure and simple" trade unionism. This based itself on the belief that labor unions had nothing to gain from the political struggle. It advocated that they stick strictly to their own trade union knitting and do nothing to obtain essential social legislation. Improvements, it held, could best be attained by pure

and simple economic struggle, that is, through "voluntary" agreements between the unions and the companies.

This "voluntarism" was so deeply ingrained in AFL theory and practice that even when the economic crisis broke out in 1930 the AFL leadership still stood adamantly opposed to a government system of unemployment insurance. As Meany has since admitted in his article in the November, 1955, issue of the rich man's magazine, *Fortune*, "the depression of the 1930's changed our thinking." He still believes that "Collective bargaining, not government, must ultimately provide the necessary protection against the deficiencies of the economic system." But after making this bow to the departed ghost of Samuel Gompers, Meany goes on to make clear that "the AFL has turned to the political arena," and that this time "we shall remain in politics." On this question, therefore, Meany resembles an oarsman—he moves forward backwards.

But even a rower, facing the opposite direction in which he is going, must have some destination in mind. He must know where he is going and periodically turn around to check his course. Otherwise he can paddle furiously, yet get nowhere, or hit a snag, and then blame his boat instead of his own lack of vision.

It is not enough, therefore, that Meany and the official labor leadership have become bold enough to venture forth on the tipsy vessel of politics. Nor is it sufficient to say, as does Meany in his *Fortune* article, that no political course is closed off and that labor will go "as far as it must," even to the haven of a new labor-sponsored party, if it has no alternative before it. What is needed is the clear-minded vision to see that this is exactly where labor must head.

That port may not be possible to reach today or all at once. It may be necessary to tarry until headwinds turn to tailwinds. It may be necessary to settle for less distant goals temporarily, until the occupants of the craft have confidence in its durability and in their own navigational skill. But this is the direction in which labor must go as certainly as adolescence develops into manhood.

Just as the economic struggle led directly to the political, so the struggle for legislation leads inescapably to increased labor political action and, in time, to an independent political party—independent, that is, of Big Business control or entanglements. This is true for two reasons. First, in order to get progressive legislation adopted it is necessary to have legislative votes, in other words, progressive legislators. Then, it is necessary to influence the administration of govern-

ment, for the best laws mean little if federal, state, county, and city governments are in the hands of enemies of labor and the people. The 14th and 15th Amendments to the Constitution are striking examples of this. Adopted in 1868 and 1870, respectively, these gave the Negro people the full rights of citizenship, including the right to vote. Ninety years later, they are still totally ignored or brazenly violated in the South.

To get legislators and administrations that are friendly to labor, not to speak of men and women who may directly represent labor, it is necessary to enter the combat for political power. In this fray labor and its allies run into the formidable obstacle that both major parties are discordant class combinations in which symphonic harmony is impossible and jarring dissonance more and more the rule. Big Business, which wields the batons in both parties, expects labor and its allies to continue to play dithyrambs in its honor. And while most present-day labor leaders are all too willing to play the part of sycophants, this, obviously, cannot last indefinitely. It can last only so long as the rank and file of labor permits it. The rank and file will go along only until it becomes clear that its interests are not being served.

Even if one were to agree that the political moment is not yet ripe for launching a new party of labor and its allies, it is short-sighted stupidity, if not worse, not to openly and frankly orient labor in that direction. Why? Because this is the best way by which to squeeze the most that can be gotten out of the present two-party arrangement. So long as the Democratic politicians know that the labor movement is pledged to remain within the two-party system, so long are they free to ignore it as a major political factor. The labor leaders may threaten to support the Republican Party and, here and there, actually give support to individual Republicans, but practically speaking, and politicians are practical, things have gone beyond the day when labor will jump from one party to another. There is only one common path labor can take as against remaining within the confines of the Democratic Party, and that is toward a new party. Thus, the sooner it makes clear that this is where it is heading, the greater will be its bargaining power today, for without the support of the labor movement the Democratic Party cannot hope to win.

If the labor leadership were to understand this, they would be playing an entirely different role in 1956. They would be taking measures to bring together the representatives of the unions, the farm

organizations, the Negro people's movement, the cooperatives, the liberal middle class organizations, to work out one common program and policy. They would endeavor to set up one national center to coordinate the political policies and activities of these people's organizations.

Such a united center could speak to the politicians in a language they would understand. It could become a factor influencing the selection of candidates and compelling the political machines to give support to progressive candidates and to a far larger number from the ranks of labor and the Negro people. And most important of all, such a development would electrify the ranks of the labor movement and the liberal-progressive forces generally, giving them new confidence in their own united strength and new courage for the political battles ahead.

This would not be a new party. It would unite forces still divided on that question. In fact, such a move could be undertaken even before labor itself decided on its ultimate course. Certainly it would help answer the question whether or not labor can win its fight in the Democratic Party, for it would greatly strengthen the unity and common action of all those who favor progressive policies and candidates.

If this next stage of independent political coalition has not yet been reached, it is because most present-day top labor leaders move forward only when they are shoved. What else can one expect from men who still question the existence of the very class whose spokesmen they are, and who think that their most important mission in life is to sing hosannas to "free enterprise," when that "pore critter" is deader than the nineteenth century?

EXTERNAL PRESSURE AND INTERNAL STRUGGLE

Most top labor leaders of our day have to be shoved forward or be shoved out of the way for any considerable progress to be made. This is not always easy, but it has happened, is happening, and will happen to a far greater extent in the period ahead.

With all its weaknesses, the American labor movement is not dormant. As Engels described it in *Letters to Americans*, it is "constantly in full process of development and revolution; a heaving, fermenting mass of plastic material seeking the shape and form appropriate to its inherent nature." In our own lifetime organized labor has taken great strides forward. The "pure and simple" trade

unionism of Gompers' day has given way to labor's political action movement of today. The old craft union straitjacket, in which labor was bound for so many decades, was finally burst open and powerful new industrial unions have emerged. More recently, the split between the AFL and the CIO, caused by the craft versus industrial union conflict, has been mended and a unified labor federation established. One could point to other examples of growth and development.

Every important step forward has been the consequence of the pressure of external events and internal struggle. Both of these factors periodically combined to compel old-line reactionary leaders either to move with the times or move out of the times. The most striking example of this was the period of the 1930's. In those turbulent years, some labor leaders were obliged to modify or change their policies; others were by-passed or crushed by the steamroller of mass upsurge, and scores of new young leaders rose from the ranks.

John L. Lewis, more than any other man, has been identified in the public mind with the great sweep forward of unionization in the mid-'thirties. Yet as Abe Lincoln was honest enough to admit about himself, events shaped Lewis more than Lewis shaped events. This is not to deny the credit due him.

Before the upsurge of those years, Lewis was one of the most conservative of an ultra-conservative, we should say reactionary, AFL leadership. Then, as now, Lewis believed in capitalism and in Big Business capitalism at that. Traditionally a Republican, he refused to go along with the AFL endorsement of LaFollette in 1924. This was too radical for him. He preferred to "remain cool with Coolidge," as the election slogan went. In 1932, he was one of the few labor leaders publicly to campaign for the re-election of Herbert Hoover. Thus, when McDonald of the steel union recently sang his siren song of "mutual trusteeship" between capital and labor, he really was imitating, and not nearly as well, the tune Lewis himself sang on many occasions. As late as 1947, when one would expect that Lewis had learned something with the years, he replied to a Congressional Committee query as to whether he favored government operation of the mines: "No, perish the thought. . . . I favor free enterprise." At the same hearing he compared trade unions with "business organizations," just as in the 'twenties he had compared them with corporations.

How differently did Lewis speak in the mid-1930's! Typical of that period were the fiery words he uttered at a mass meeting of Akron rubber workers during the historic 1937 organizing drive.

"What," he asked rhetorically, "have Goodyear workers gotten out of the growth of this company?" Pausing to let his question sink in and changing his tone of voice, he replied sneeringly: "*Partnership!* Well, labor and capital may be partners in theory but they are enemies in fact."

Recognizing the enemy and deciding to fight it helped make other things clearer, too. In 1936, Lewis supported Roosevelt for re-election. In that same year he and Hillman were greatly instrumental in establishing Labor's Non-Partisan League. It should be noted that although the specific immediate purpose of this political action organization was to help re-elect Roosevelt, neither the Roosevelt Administration nor the Democratic political bosses were happy about this development. They preferred to see labor without its own separate independent political-election machinery. Matthew Josephson, in his biography of Hillman, quotes from the remarks of the latter at a meeting of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, Executive Board, in April, 1936. Hillman told the Board, "Not a single person in the Administration knew about the formation of the League until it was announced. . . . The Administration was not notified because some of us believed that pressure would be used to stop it." Later, however, Roosevelt had reason to thank labor for taking this forward step politically.

At that time, Lewis also showed some comprehension of the danger of fascism inherent in the monopoly system. Pleading the cause of industrial unionism at the 1935 AFL Convention, Lewis declared: "There are forces at work in this country that would wipe out, if they could, the labor movement of America, just as it was wiped out in Germany or just as it was wiped out in Italy." He saw a more powerful and militant labor movement as the "best security against that menace," and urged the doors of the Federation be opened so that "those millions of workers who are clamoring for admission into our councils might be made welcome."

Hence the fear of reaction plus the new militant mood in the ranks of the workers, "clamoring" in their millions for organization, helped produce the "new" Lewis. This "clamoring" had already resulted in tens of thousands of miners flocking into the United Mine Workers. Overnight, that union became transformed from the emaciated skeleton it had been, into a muscular, brawny image of the men who penetrate the interior recesses of the earth for a living.

Remembering their previous disorganized plight, the miners and Lewis recognized that the union again could be reduced to a pitiful

state unless fortified with powerful new reserves. In the first place this meant organizing the steel workers. Coal mining and steel production are closely allied industries. Furthermore, the important "captive mines" owned by the steel barons, could not be unionized without also organizing the steel workers. This required that all workers in trustified industry win the right to organize.

There was one other thing needed: proof that it could be won. This, too, existed. The Left-wing forces had been spreading the gospel of industrial unionism for years. They had pioneered, up and down the land, giving leadership to those workers whom the AFL bureaucracy rejected as a lower caste of "untouchables"—the unskilled and semi-skilled. During World War I, and immediately following it, William Z. Foster and a number of other courageous labor leaders set out to organize the unorganized. They did the "impossible." They organized the stockyard workers and, in 1919, they formed a union of steel workers and led 365,000 steel workers in the first great nationwide strike in that industry. Had their efforts not been sabotaged by the reactionary Gompers' craft-union leadership, this strike could have been won and with it the battle to organize the mass production industries. Summarizing these experiences in a book, *The Great Steel Strike and Its Lessons*, Foster wrote: "The National Committee [for Organizing Iron and Steel Workers, of which Foster was Secretary] proved beyond the peradventure of a doubt that the steel industry could be organized in spite of all the Steel Trust could do to prevent it." Elsewhere in his book Foster insisted: "In view of its great wealth and latent power . . . there isn't an industry in the country which the trade union movement cannot organize any time it sees fit." Eighteen years later this, too, was proved "beyond the peradventure of a doubt."

In a recent book *Six Upon the World*, Paul F. Douglass (not to be confused with the Senator) discusses Foster as one of six men who were shaped by and are leaving a lasting imprint on American experience. In his chapter devoted to Foster, the author points out that even before there was a CIO, "within the trade unions the activities of the Communist Party pressed along theoretical and practical lines for the advancement of the industrial unions." In the section dealing with the life of Walter Reuther, another of the "Six," Douglass describes how the Communists courageously pioneered the way for the Auto Workers Union. "Within the Ford Plant," he relates, "a small group of militant Communists had organized the Auto, Aircraft, and Vehicle Workers of America. As

an underground operation among Ford employees, it was closely related to William Z. Foster, the militant advocate of industrial unionism. The *Ford Worker*, a spicy little one-penny sheet issued by this group, was first distributed at the Ford plant gate and then found its way by subterranean channels to the rank and file." Needless to say the "underground operation" and "subterranean channels" were made necessary because Ford, like the other industrial monarchs of that day, fired any worker who dared espouse the cause of unionism. Albert Maltz in his novel *Underground Stream* tells the story of that valiant struggle against Ford, his company police, and the Klan-like Black Legion.

In his interesting and useful study, *American Labor Leaders—Personalities and Forces in the Labor Movement*, Charles A. Madison also makes note of the special qualities which the Left-wing trade unionists imparted to the early CIO movement. "These radical unionists were on the whole exceptionally devoted and energetic workers and contributed largely to the early success of a number of CIO unions. Not a few later became important officials, having gained the confidence and respect of both the CIO leaders and the mass membership."

It can be seen, therefore, that the Communists and the Left-minded workers played an important part in helping instill the conviction that the task of organizing the unorganized could be accomplished. Lewis, at the time, told Powers Hapgood and John Brophy, both of whom had cooperated with the Communists in the late 1920's in an effort to move the Mine Workers in a progressive direction: "You and Brophy had a lot of ideas, but they were premature. A general who gets ahead of his army is no use to anybody. But now I'm ready to take up some of these ideas."

In this conversation Lewis was less than honest with himself. He was blaming the rank and file for the reactionary policies of the leadership. This is not meant to deny that there have been times when progressives generally, and Communists specifically, have insufficiently taken into account how far and how fast the "army" was ready to go. Engels sharply criticized American Marxists on this score. Nor have Left forces been immune from such errors since, even in recent times. They have been most frequently correct in their general over-all understanding of the main line of development, the long time trend. They have not always been accurate in their specific, concrete estimates. This is true within the labor movement as well.

But Lewis' remark was an attempt to justify what could not be justified.

A general should not permit himself to get too far ahead of his men. That is true. It is also true, however, that generals should know whom they are fighting and why, and should have a plan for victory of a given campaign and of the entire war. Where was that kind of generalship? Where is it today? If Lewis and those AFL leaders who supported him in 1935 had been only biding their time, waiting for the lagging army to catch up with them, they certainly showed this in strange ways—by expelling militants, by doing all in their power to hold back the more rapid forward advance of their own men. No, we are afraid the truth lies elsewhere. These leaders have not led most of the time, they have been compelled to move forward only when they feared their armies would leave them far behind.

It is said that advanced ideas must await their day. We have no quarrel with this. But that day can be either hastened or retarded. True leadership requires an ability to grasp new ideas and to prepare the way for them. This necessitates concrete "know-how" and tact, of course, but these are the very opposite of denying the validity of and opposing such ideas. If Lewis had to admit, as he did, that the Communists made "superb organizers," this could not be separated from the fact that they were moved by advanced ideas and did understand the general trend and line of march of history. Lewis was referring to such men as Gus Hall, presently imprisoned National Secretary of the Communist Party, who pioneered in organizing the steel workers of Ohio.

A GLANCE AT LABOR HISTORY

Agreeing that advanced ideas are critically important does not determine what such ideas constitute. Some labor leaders argue that the very ideas Marxists believe to be advanced are now old fashioned, out of date, and have already had their day which is now past. McDonald called Marxism "antediluvian." Reuther has said that Karl Marx "had no conception of private enterprise as it has developed in our time." In effect, these argue that even though the labor movement in the rest of the world may accept the existence of a class struggle and go in for political parties of their own, that America is different, that things have changed here, and that we hold out a "new path" for labor, that of "partnership."

America certainly is different from other countries. So is each human being different from his fellow man, some more, some less. And yet there is a human family which does bear common features which distinguish it from other species. The same is true of countries, nations, stages of social development, capitalism, and labor movements. These each have their own common characteristics. "A man's a man for a' that the world o'er," sang Robert Burns. So is the labor movement.

With all its special distinctiveness, the general outline of development of the American trade union movement corresponds to that of the labor movement of the other highly developed capitalist countries. In all of these, the trade unions started out with considerable class consciousness and were revolutionary in their outlook. This was true of the early American unions as well. Most of these acknowledged the existence of "two distinct classes, the rich and the poor; the oppressor and the oppressed," long before Karl Marx had even heard of a schoolroom class. Marx himself, more than once, disclaimed credit "for discovering either the existence of classes in modern society or the struggle between them." Not only had workingmen discovered this by their own experiences, but historians and economists had recognized the existence of this struggle and had traced its development.

The reason for the revolutionary character of the early trade union movement is quite obvious. The worker started out with no rights whatsoever, except the right to sell his labor power and the right to starve if such a sale was not consummated. His attempt to band together with his fellow workers was considered a "conspiracy" directed against the rights of property. His struggle for elementary trade union rights rapidly became transformed into a political struggle and expressed itself in independent workingmen's parties and tickets.

This stage of unionism was one of exceedingly bitter conflict. The capitalists, intent on the most rapid accumulation of capital necessary for the building of large-scale enterprises and for competition against capitalist competitors, were brutal in their treatment of the workers, rejecting methods of reform and concession. This period continued until large-scale industry finally won out. At times great masses were drawn into battle, but generally speaking the trade unions were on the defensive, fighting for their lives, unions came and unions went, and organized labor remained a minority class movement.

In time, this phase grew over into another. The industrialists

sought to divide the workers, treating the skilled as a more favored grouping to which it was prepared to make some concessions. But it maintained a bitter intransigence toward the great majority of unskilled and semi-skilled factory hands. The more favored treatment of the skilled arose from the following. In the first place, they were in a stronger bargaining position than were the unskilled. The great majority of factory jobs had become purely menial and routine and the unskilled, therefore, were at the mercy of the bosses. Then, the industrialists, because they had become dominant in the home market and because of their ability to draw added tribute from investments and sales in colonial and less developed countries, were in a position to bribe a section of workers as a means of insuring "class peace." And in that heyday of capitalist development "class peace" suited their interests.

This second stage was one in which the craft unions predominated and the labor movement was made up of the "aristocracy" of labor. Satisfied with the special concessions given it, its eyes tightly closed to the worsened position of the majority of workers, the trade unions gave up their former militancy and their political struggle and adopted the line of "voluntarism" and "pure and simple" trade unionism. In the United States this period broadly dates from the rise of the American Federation of Labor. It was symbolized by the persons of Samuel Gompers and Matthew Woll sitting together with the large industrialists in the National Civic Federation. This period lasted until the mid-'thirties and the rise of industrial unionism.

A third stage, generally known as the "New Unionism," arose when economic conditions began to undermine the favored position of the more skilled workers, and at the same time drew into struggle the great majority of the unskilled. In England this period arrived in the 1880's and 1890's, when U.S. and German capital began to undermine the monopoly of British capital on world markets. This began to create new conditions for British labor. Lois MacDonald, in the book *Labor Problems in America*, a compilation edited by Emanuel Stein and Jerome Davis, describes this period in Britain. "With unemployment and falling wages, resulting from the setback in the monopoly of their employers, pressing on the workers' movements, the new generation questioned the whole basis of the capitalist system." This was the period of the "rise of the unskilled."

In the United States, the "New Unionism" had attempted to break through for many years. It finally did in the mid-'thirties and began to change the composition and character of the labor movement.

In this third stage of development the labor movement *begins* to become a majority class movement for the first time and a new rank and file militancy asserts itself again. The political struggle is also recognized once again as twin brother to the economic. Of course, these stages are not "pure," they overlap. Many of the features of the second stage continue into the third. Nor are these stages identical for all countries. In less developed countries, particularly colonial ones, the stages are quite different from those in the imperialist countries. In fact, in the less developed countries there is no comparable second stage. The native bourgeoisie does not have the same means with which to bribe the more skilled workers, and the imperialist-owned enterprises do not face the same compulsion to do so. Thus, the workers in most of these countries do not form a labor "aristocracy" and tend to maintain their revolutionary outlook throughout. This was true both of old Russia and old China.

Also, each specific stage varies in different countries. The stage of mass unionism in France is quite different, for example, from that in Britain. A major explanation for this is that French capitalism has been on a steady decline since World War I and is no longer a first rank power, while Britain, although she has lost her former dominant position and is also slipping, is nonetheless far stronger than France. It is even more different in the United States, where capitalism did emerge from the past two world wars in a relatively stronger position compared to its imperialist rivals. American capitalism's inherent tendencies toward decay and decline, part of the decline of the whole world capitalist system, have been less noticeable, therefore, and have only shown themselves in sharp form during the "great depression." It is this which explains, in the main, why the first great breakthrough of the "New Unionism" in the 1930's, while leaving its indelible mark on the whole labor movement, has not gone further, and in some respects, has even gone backward. The dominant position of American capitalism in world capitalist markets and the general postwar prosperity built on armament orders and installment buying have included certain concessions which the industrialists have made to the bulk of organized workers. It is this which is at the bottom of the new illusions which have cropped up in recent years.

These illusions may not be overcome with one fell swoop, but neither will they linger on indefinitely. When the next advance takes place it will start from far more advanced positions and go much farther than any in the past. Due to history, tradition, and different

economic position today, the American workers have not reached the same level of development as have their brothers in other countries. But the general line of development is essentially the same.

THE BRITISH LABOR PARTY

Those who hold that American trade unionism follows a pattern different than that of labor in other countries could do well to study the history of the British labor movement. They would then better understand what is happening in America. This is particularly true in respect to the way in which British labor finally took the path to an independent labor-led party.

British development particularly holds important lessons for American labor for a number of reasons. In the first place British capitalism once held a monopolistic position in the world market, a position American capitalism is striving to attain but cannot achieve to anywhere near the same degree. Second, the electoral system in England also gives preference to a two-party arrangement. This, however, is not as hidebound as in the U.S., because the national administration is not elected by popular vote but chosen by a parliamentary majority. Third, in England, too, for some four decades, from the end of the Chartist movement in 1848 all the way to the 1890's, the British labor movement was dominated by "pure and simple" trade unionism under the slogan, "no politics in the union." Fourth, for a long period of time the trade union movement also operated through one of the capitalist parties, the Liberal Party, in what was known as "Lib-Lab"—Liberal-Labor cooperation.

In 1893, with the break-up of the British world trade monopoly, and under pressure from the Socialist workers in the labor movement, the British Trades Union Congress finally adopted a resolution favoring the establishment of a special "Parliamentary Fund." But little was done to implement this resolution with practical action. However, in 1899, pressure grew so great that a resolution was adopted calling for the convening of a special conference of trade unions, cooperative societies and Socialist organizations, to consider means by which to increase labor representation. This conference was held in February, 1900, and represented trade unions with about 500,000 members. It was decided to establish a separate organization, called the "Labor Representation Committee."

In 1901, a high court injunction was issued against a strike on the Taff-Vale railroad lines in South Wales. This was upheld by the

House of Lords. "The effect of the decision," writes Allen Hutt, in his book *British Trade Unionism*, "was to destroy, by what has been called 'judicial coup d'etat,' the entire legal rights of trade unions as established by the Acts of 1871-6, and to make strikes 'for all practical purposes absolutely illegal.'" Overnight the labor movement became aroused and alerted to independent political action. Within a year the affiliations to the Labor Representation Committee nearly doubled.

"Labor by-election successes," Hutt continues, "now began to point the way to big developments ahead, as it became clear that the existing Tory Government had no intentions of remedying the unions' new legal disabilities." The General Election in 1906 was "the biggest Liberal landslide of all times." Fifty labor candidates were put up and 29 were elected. In many cases Liberals had withdrawn and thrown their support to the labor men, enabling them to win in straight fights against the Tories.

While legal redress was given the unions by the Trades Dispute Act of 1906, the labor movement, however, became more and more disillusioned with the do-nothing policy of the Liberal Government. This was particularly unsatisfactory in the face of worsening economic conditions, growing mass unemployment and a whole series of bitter strike struggles. In 1909, a new legal attack was launched on the rights of the labor movement. This time a court injunction (the Osborne Decision) was issued forbidding unions from using their funds for political purposes. This injunction was followed by still others. The Liberal Government, however, displayed no hurry to remedy the situation. The result was a new revival of interest and support for the Labour Party, as it was now called, among the trade unions. From 1910 to 1914, there was a great surge forward by British labor, politically and economically, which took the form of a militant "shop stewards" movement and a rapid growth in class consciousness. This was interrupted by the war. But labor, even under Right-wing leadership, never again returned to the Liberal Party. In fact, it was not long before the Liberal Party dwindled into a faint shadow of its former self and the Labor Party took its place as the electoral challenger of the Tory Conservative Party.

There is much that can be learned in this for American labor. It indicates that even after the greatest election victory the Liberal Party ever won, in 1906, and even though it rescinded the Taff-Vale decision, conditions soon arose which brought the basic ruling class character of that party into collision with the interests of the workers who had been supporting it.

Developments in the United States, of course, will not mechanically repeat those in Britain or any other country. In the first place, new government administrations are not brought into being by congressional votes. The probability, therefore, is that when the break comes, it will be even more rapid and sweeping. For this reason, and also because of the great tradition of populist opposition to monopoly rule, a new party formation in this country, regardless of what name it takes, will represent a definite coalition of class and social groupings, in which the farmers and the Negro people play roles only second to that of labor itself.

UNITY OF DIVERSITY

The unification of the AFL and the CIO into one labor federation is good news. It may spell the beginning of the end of fratricidal struggle inside the labor movement. It may lead, in time, toward a single labor center uniting all unions.

Already the formation of a united federation of AFL and CIO unions has had a salutary affect. There is greater confidence and a growing feeling of strength in the ranks of the workers. These expect positive gains from unification. In the first place, they expect a serious, determined and all-out drive to organize the South. On the part of both friend and foe alike, there also is recognition of what labor unity could mean politically. Reactionary forces are shouting anew about the danger of "big labor" and of "labor monopoly." One thing is certain: Big Business will do all in its power to strangle labor's political influence in its infancy.

It would be a mistake, however, to believe that the formation of the united labor federation will in and by itself spell progress. This depends on many factors. Above all, at this time, it depends on one: the recognition that unity includes diversity, and that the right to disagreement, of both unions and individuals, is a basic right without which real unity is impossible. It has been said humorously, that orthodoxy is "my doxy" and heterodoxy "the other fellow's." Well, in the labor movement there must be room for the other fellow's "doxy" or there can be no unity. The mere fact that labor unity does not occur automatically, but must be fought for, indicates the existence of certain differences within the trade union movement arising from differences in occupations, trades and industries. These must be taken into account for they lead frequently to diverse concepts of what labor's interests are and how they should be fought for.

Lenin, in an article on "Differences in the European Labor Move-

ment," explained the economic, material foundation for these. He showed that the very growth of the working class and its labor movement brings into the unions a steady stream of new workers, many of whom are recent migrants from the land. These lack experience as workers and reintroduce into the labor movement many obsolete ideas.

Moreover, the very process of social development, Lenin pointed out, proceeding as it does in contradictions, creates the basis for a certain one-sidedness in outlook and tactics. Under capitalism there is a constant repetition of periods of boom with periods of economic crisis and depression. These periods of relative calm and periods of relative storm, give rise on the part of some individuals or groups to one-sided exaggerations and theories based on one or the other of these features of capitalist development. The Right-wing leaders base their sole outlook and tactics on the tendency of capitalism toward continued forward movement, while the ultra-Leftists make the mistake of seeing only the tendency of decay at work and the periods of storm.

A third factor influencing and causing differences has to do with the changes in tactics employed by the capitalists. "If the tactics of the bourgeoisie," wrote Lenin, "were always uniform, or at least homogeneous, the working class would rapidly learn to reply to them by tactics also uniform or homogeneous." But the ruling class shifts from tactics of repression to tactics of concession, most frequently employing a combination of both. These shifts are not matters of individual taste but due to the contradictory economic developments at work. Marxism, Lenin stressed, must include in its tactical calculations all these contradictory phenomena. It must help the labor movement build "big, powerful and properly functioning organizations, capable of functioning properly under *all* circumstances," while at the same time seeing clearly that the line of development is toward ever sharper class struggles.

Most labor leaders, unfortunately, do not agree with Lenin. But they must agree, nonetheless, that differences in outlook and tactics do exist. Unity must take this into account, must enable these differences to coexist, or it can become a mocking perversion of itself.

Why is this so important? Because the top officialdom tends to think that unity requires conformity and orthodoxy. They fear full trade union democracy and the free and open debate of conflicting opinions. Their concept of unity is that of the quiet and peace of a graveyard in which not even the ghost of difference appears. Edward

Berman, in *Labor Problems in America*, notes: "The record of the Federation conventions before 1935 is remarkable for the absence of conflict." Yes, and for the absence of life. But that was only on the surface. Beneath it there was a smouldering volcano. In the 1935 convention it erupted in all its violence. The transparency of the former "unity" thus stood exposed as the Federation split into two separate warring centers.

The problems which will confront organized labor in the period ahead will be even more difficult to solve than were those of 1935. Automation is already casting its shadow before it, and a giant genie it is, for good or evil. Present day prosperity is rapidly reaching the end of its tether. Where is labor going? This is going to become more and more a question. The answer will decide not only labor's destiny but the nation's as well. Under such circumstances differences are bound to mount. Nor can they be crushed without fatal injury to the labor movement itself. They must be given free play so that the workers, on the basis of testing the various views in the cauldron of their own experience, can find their own sure-footed path forward. And in the course of this development, despite ideological and tactical differences, the unions can and must stand together around a common agreed-upon program of action.

The labor movement needs unity and solidarity in action. It also needs the coexistence of different tendencies and rank and file democracy to choose between them.

Unless this is the understanding of unity the very coming together of the AFL and CIO unions could lead to retrogression instead of progress. It could even lead to new splits. In the new AFL-CIO the old-line and more reactionary labor officials wield great power. They command a majority compared to those from the CIO unions. The latter, despite their reactionary drift in recent years are still more democratic and potentially more progressive than the older craft unions.

A majority of the new AFL-CIO's board is composed of that current in labor characterized as the "business unionists." These men, typified by the Meanys, Becks, Wolls, Hutchesons, and McDonalds, have no basic outlook other than that of their capitalist cronies. Charles A. Madison refers to this breed as "brokers intent on selling the labor power of their members." These leaders conceive of the union movement as a "business" and they strive to make it a "big business." They live like capitalists, think like capitalists, act like capitalists—and many of them are; some, like Beck, are even million-

aires. These men resemble Professor Pangloss in Voltaire's *Candide*. For them things could not be otherwise in this best of all capitalist worlds. Just as Pangloss believed that noses were made for spectacles, legs for stockings, stones to build castles, and pigs to be eaten, so these labor leaders believe that unions were made so that they could profit from them.

The most dangerous of this lot, by virtue of the position he occupies as the head of the new Federation, is George Meany. Depending for his position and power on the good graces of the other top labor bosses, having no roots of his own in the ranks of the workers, and feeling no direct pressure from them, Meany is a perfect example of what a labor leader should not be. Often, in his blind hatred of Communism and the Soviet Union, and in his dislike of all liberal and progressive views, he even goes McCarthy one better. What a strange sight he must make in the eyes of European workers. This was illustrated recently by a passing remark of the English historian, Arnold Toynbee. Reflecting on a comment of Meany that he was not a "liberal leftist," Toynbee noted amazedly, "In Europe, no anti-Communist labor leaders would dare make such a statement."

This grouping of "business unionists" is by no means united on all questions. Often individual leaders jump in one direction or another depending upon the pressures that exist and the nature of their own personal ambitions. Thus, Lewis, who basically belongs to this mold, did play an objectively progressive role in the mid-'thirties. The fact that he represented an industrial union and not a craft union made a great deal of difference, as his punch to the nose of Hutcheson, another "business unionist" and Republican, painfully indicated.

The second major grouping of labor leaders can be classified under the general head of the "social theorists." These men are not like Professor Pangloss. They admit that everything is not of the best in this not of the best worlds. They do not close their eyes to the seamy side of life. But they believe that things are getting better and better. They put their faith in the "enlightened" capitalists as against the "greedy" ones. They believe that by encouraging this former type, every wrong can be corrected and capitalism itself reformed into a capitalist socialism. These are the conscious "reform" elements. They correspond to the grouping of Social-Democratic labor leaders in Europe. David Dubinsky typifies this group in the AFL and Walter Reuther in the CIO.

Reuther, in particular, is the "man with a plan." He believes that

the ills of capitalism arise not from exploitation but from faulty distribution. He is determined to break down the "disparity between the B-29 technology and the huffing and puffing Model T distributive system." He considers his "productivity factor clause" in auto contracts as the "revolutionary" answer to this question. Little does he comprehend that by increasing labor's wages by the yearly 2.5 percent increase in productivity, he is by no means approaching a solution to the problem of overproduction; in fact, he is accentuating it by encouraging ever greater and greater speed-up. If his plan were really eating away at surplus production, this would show itself in a drop in the profits of the corporations. And yet, in the five years since this plan went into effect, the auto magnates' volume of profit has zoomed through all previous sound barriers. In 1955 alone, GM cleared more than a billion dollars in profits, nearly the same amount it paid out in wages and salaries.

The general grouping of "social theorists" is by no means homogeneous. It has an extreme Right-wing, typified by Dubinsky, a center wing, typified by Reuther, and then men who on one or another question tend to take a more liberal or progressive position. Some of these are the Potofskys, the Quills, the Gormans, the Helsteins. A great deal depends on the type of union these men represent, its history, the strength of the progressive forces within it, the degree of inner union democracy it permits.

Between these various groupings and shadings in the top leadership a collision over policy is inevitable. In fact, even if the new Federation appears at the outset to be in complete harmony on most questions, as time goes on there must occur a regrouping in its ranks in which a more reactionary and a more progressive alignment will come to the fore. This will not, at first, be a Right-wing or a Left-wing in the traditional sense. It will represent a more loose grouping of the extreme Right-wing forces on the one side and of the more liberal-minded and progressive on the other.

Of course, there is still another force within the labor movement upon which a great deal depends. This is the real Left-wing current, composed of those who accept the existence of the class struggle as a fact and base their policies upon it. This includes Communists, but is mainly composed of conscious progressive workers who believe in militant and democratic trade unionism and in labor's future. At this time the Left-wing grouping is composed mainly of rank and file workers and of active and leading trade unionists in lower rungs of

responsibility. It exists within the unions of the AFL-CIO as well as in the independent unions. The most prominent spokesman for this grouping is Harry Bridges of the West Coast Longshoremen.

The Left-wing forces in the trade union movement fought courageously against the shameful hysteria which swept labor's ranks with the advent of the "cold war." For this they suffered grievous losses. They also committed errors in their relation with other forces which tended to increase these losses. But as the struggle unfolds, as the Left-wing forces learn to work with others, and as the bulk of the workers learn to recognize the real enemy and to understand how they had been misled into fighting a fictitious one, the influence and strength of the Left-wing will more than make up for previous setbacks.

At the time of the expulsions of the progressive-led unions from the CIO, Harry Bridges wrote the following to his members: "It's a sad day for American labor, when the workers themselves fall for the bosses' time-honored trick of red-baiting. . . . We believe and assert that any member of our union or any other union . . . has the right to be a Communist, Republican, Democrat, Progressive, Socialist, or to adhere to any other political persuasion that is without union-busting purpose, and that the true test of his trade union loyalty is not his political belief but his conduct in the union."

This concept of trade union unity and democracy must still be attained if the new AFL-CIO is to fulfill the great promise that it holds forth. And it is the rank and file of labor, and those of its leaders who honestly desire to see labor march forward at the head of the nation's progressive majority, that have it in their power to make such unity a reality.

The historian V. O. Key, Jr., in *Politics, Parties and Pressure Groups*, wrote: "In the battle for power in the state the worker has proved to be, a least potentially, the strongest force loosed by the process of industrialization. . . . He who would understand politics in the large may ponder well the status of labor; a numerically great force in a society adhering to the doctrine of the rule of numbers yet without proportionate durable political power as a class."

Karl Marx did ponder well this enigma and gave an answer. Numbers, he said, are one element of success, "but numbers weigh only in the balance if united by combination and led by knowledge."

Labor's numbers have multiplied greatly. Labor also is becoming more "united by combination." It still has to be "led by knowledge." This is where labor is going.

CHAPTER XIII

FREEDOM FOR THE FREED

*My hands!
My dark hands!
Break through the wall!
Find my dream!
Help me to shatter this darkness,
To smash this night,
To break this shadow
Into a thousand lights of sun
Into a thousand whirling dreams
Of sun!*

—Langston Hughes, from *As I Grew Older*

They sometimes tell us that America is a white man's country. The statement is understandable in the light of the fact that the white race constitutes nine-tenths of the population and exerts the controlling influence over the various forms of material and substantial wealth and power. But this land belongs to the Negro as much as to any other, not only because he has helped to redeem it from the wilderness by the energy of his arm, but also because he has bathed it in his blood, watered it with his tears, and hallowed it with the yearnings of his soul.

—Kelly Miller, in *An Appeal to Conscience*

THE PROMISED LAND

THE DARKNESS OF which Langston Hughes sang so movingly has not yet been shattered, the dream not yet found. Nonetheless, heavy

blows have been rained upon the wall of Negro oppression, and important cracks have begun to appear in it. So much so that the NAACP has set January 1, 1963, the 100th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, as the target date by which this wall is to be leveled and the freed Negro made really free.

Walter White, in *How Close the Promised Land?*, written just before his untimely death, expressed the fervent hope and belief that it was close indeed, and that "the year 1963 will witness abolition of the major forms of racial prejudice." Dr. Ralph J. Bunche, in his foreword to White's book, also states confidently that the promised land "cannot be far," although he correctly notes that "the emphasis today properly belongs on the urgency of fulfillment," and that "the pace of progress must be quickened."

Others have written in a like optimistic vein. Professor Rayford W. Logan of Howard University, in his recent book, *The Negro in American Life and Thought*, traces how changed is the national climate toward the Negro today as compared with that at the turn of the century. It is his opinion that an answer is being given to the query posed by Frederick Douglass in 1889, twenty-five years after emancipation. Douglass, who had risen out of slavery to become the greatest leader and spokesman of his people, had asked whether "American justice, American liberty, American civilization, American law, and American Christianity could be made to include and protect alike and forever all American citizens in the rights which have been guaranteed to them by the organic and fundamental laws of the land." Logan acknowledges that this question is still pertinent today, but believes that it is being answered in the affirmative.

The recent gains in Negro equality have been compared with the period immediately following the Civil War. C. Vann Woodward, in *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*, considers the period which began with the 1930's and still continues today as one of "New Reconstruction." He describes this in the following words:

"The New Reconstruction addressed itself to all the aspects of racial relations that the first one attacked and even some that the First Reconstruction avoided or neglected. These included political, economic, and civil rights. Few sections of the segregation code have escaped attack. . . . Most recently the attack has been carried into two areas in which the First Reconstruction radicals made no serious effort: segregation in the armed services and in the public schools."

Woodward is correct in pointing up the wholesale character of the attack being launched on the entire Jim Crow system. We do not,

however, go as far as he does in characterizing recent gains as representing a "New Reconstruction." Of course, much depends on what is meant by the term "Reconstruction." If one uses it merely to indicate a trend toward greater Negro equality, as compared with the opposite trend which came into being with the betrayal of 1877 and continued for more than half a century, then the period since then undoubtedly has been such. But the post-Civil War Reconstruction period was more than that, much more. It represented a period of revolutionary change. State power was taken out of the hands of the defeated Bourbon slaveowning class of the South and turned over to the majority of the people of that region, white and Negro. Reconstruction governments were established and for the first and only time in American history, Negroes in the South enjoyed full voting rights, and were elected to high office—as Governors, state legislators, and U.S. Senators and Representatives. Furthermore, here and there attempts were made to break up the plantation system and to give land to the newly emancipated Negroes.

Recent gains—we refer specifically to those in the South—cannot compare in their significance with those of the Reconstruction period. It must not be forgotten that there is one salient difference between both periods. In Reconstruction, the white supremacists were removed from political power. Today, however, they still hold such power, and the larger the Negro proportion of population in the South the more ruthlessly and arrogantly clenched is this power. During Reconstruction there also was organized terror directed against the Negro people and their white allies. But in that period it was not a violence sanctioned, condoned, and perpetrated by state and local governments. Today, however, it is precisely this kind of violence that rages in the deep South. Imposing gains notwithstanding, Langston Hughes must still compose much of his verse in compassion and anger, as he did in his anguished cry *Mississippi—1955*, dedicated to the memory of Emmett Louis Till:

*Oh! What sorrow!
Oh what pity!
Oh, what pain
That tears and blood
Should mix like rain
In Mississippi!
And terror, fetid hot,
Yet clammy cold,
Remain.*

In taking exception to Woodward's characterization of the scope and depth of recent gains, we do not wish to minimize either the magnitude or importance of these. Neither do we wish to detract in the slightest from the contribution which his book makes toward a fuller understanding of the history of Jim Crow.

Let us make perfectly plain that Communists, too, are optimistic about the real progress that has been made in the cause of Negro freedom and the opportunities for even greater progress ahead. But at a time when many seem to think that the promised land is all but here, we would like to temper optimism with realism, and to underscore how much still remains to be done to bring into being a "New Reconstruction." For it is toward such a "New Reconstruction," although in many respects quite different than the first; that we must strive. The great gains attained thus far can become the prelude toward that goal.

Even if one were to believe that the "New Reconstruction" is already here, it is still necessary to remember that the "First Reconstruction" was followed by the nightmare of a terrible reversal, by a wave of blackest reaction directed against the Negro people. We must guarantee that this never occurs again.

Both Walter White and Rayford Logan wrote their books to impress world opinion with the headway being made, with how things have improved in the treatment of Negroes in the United States. Logan candidly tells us so in his Preface. He believes that some of the foreign criticism is based "in large part upon ignorance of greater inequalities during earlier periods of our history." White also stated that it was the embarrassing questions put to him abroad that first induced him to write a book pointing up "the one-sidedness of the story as it is known and to let the rest of the world know . . . the facts as they really are." It is hardly surprising, therefore, that both of these books should emphasize the bright side of the story.

Marxists too are for noting "the facts as they really are." But contrary to Mr. Logan and Mr. White, we do not believe that these facts will reduce the horror and indignation of world opinion at the treatment of Negroes in this country. Nor do we want this wrath to be reduced, not as long as a single act of discrimination can still be perpetrated against a Negro, not as long as a single Negro child must grow up feeling that this land is any less his than anyone else's. Why should any Negro spokesman want to reduce this justified world anger directed at those who continue to hold the Negro people in subjection? The pressure of world opinion is a great positive force,

prodding the ruling class, shaming American white public opinion, contributing greatly thereby to the Negro people's heroic struggle for their full rights.

WORLD CHANGES AND NEGRO FREEDOM

We have said that Communists are optimistic about the current trend toward greater Negro equality. One of the main reasons for this has to do with the profound revolutionary changes that have occurred in the world. We are living at a time in world history when the shackles of bondage are being cast off by oppressed peoples everywhere. The struggle of the Negro people is both a part of this world-wide development and at the same time greatly stimulated and accelerated by it.

The present period is strikingly different from that existing in 1877, when Reconstruction was replaced by intense white supremacist reaction. It is even more different from the period of the 1890's, when the Jim Crow system was imposed following the Populist upheaval of 1892. This difference can be seen by quoting from two speeches. In September, 1895, Booker T. Washington, under the whip lash of terror directed against the Negro people, bowed his head in submission and delivered the "Atlanta Compromise" speech. This urged the Negro people to "cast down your buckets where you are," and to accept the status of segregation and second class citizenship. He promised the Southern Bourbons that the Negro people would be the "most patient, faithful, law-abiding and unresentful people that the world has seen," and said that "the agitation of questions of social equality is the extremist folly."

But in September, 1955, sixty years later, and also in the face of terror, the new mood of the Negro people of the South was eloquently expressed by Dr. Theodore R. Howard of Mound Bayou, Mississippi. Speaking before a mass rally in Baltimore, Maryland, protesting the brutal lynching of Emmett Till, Dr. Howard declared: "The reason there is so much disturbance in Mississippi today is that the colored people in Mississippi have decided that we don't want to wait until we get to Heaven to walk where we please. We want to do it right here in this present world."

The intimate relationship which exists between imperialism's subjection of colonial peoples in the rest of the world and the status of the Negro people in the United States has long been noted by both Marxists and non-Marxists. The first to show and emphasize

this kinship was Dr. W. E. B. DuBois who first among Negro leaders challenged and repudiated the gospel of Booker T. Washington. In 1905, he organized the first Negro nationwide protest movement, the famous "Niagara Movement," predecessor to the NAACP. But not all who have noted the relationship between colonialism and Negro oppression have drawn adequate conclusions from it.

Rayford Logan mentions that, "During the crucial period of Reconstruction the government and people were not prodded by effective foreign criticism." Thus, he inadvertently is compelled to admit that present-day foreign prodding is a good thing. Nor does he fail to note that if such prodding did not take place in earlier periods it was because imperialism was still extending its tentacles across the globe. Logan describes the situation in the last quarter of the nineteenth century: "Belgium, Britain and France, soon followed by Germany and Italy, carried the 'blessings' of white civilization to Africa. They were not likely at the same time to condemn the restoration of white supremacy in the South."

Woodward, discussing the shameful "acquiescence of Northern liberalism" to the betrayal of 1877, shows how closely interwoven was this with the prevalent ideas of imperialist superiority toward all colonial and colored peoples. It is no accident, he indicates, that the infamous Supreme Court *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision of 1896, which laid down the "separate but equal" rule approving segregation, and the equally onerous *Williams v. Mississippi* decision of 1898, which approved the Mississippi plan for the disfranchisement of Negroes, took place at the same time that America, in 1898, "plunged into imperialistic adventures." "These adventures in the Pacific and the Caribbean," notes Woodward, "suddenly brought under the jurisdiction of the United States some eight million people of the colored races, 'a varied assortment of inferior races,' as the *Nation* described them, 'which of course, could not be allowed to vote.'"

Thus, as America "shouldered the White Man's Burden she took up at the same time many Southern attitudes on the subject of race." The editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*, expressed this succinctly. "If the stronger and the cleverer race," he asked, "is free to impose its will upon 'new-caught, sullen peoples' on the other side of the globe, why not in South Carolina and Mississippi?" The ideas of Anglo-Saxon superiority which justified and rationalized American imperialism in the Philippines, Hawaii, and Cuba, are shown by Woodward to have differed in no essentials from the race theories by which white supremacy was justified in the South.

Opinion in the North soon recognized this. The *New York Times* of May 10, 1900, stated editorially that "Northern men . . . no longer denounce the suppression of the Negro vote [in the South] as it used to be denounced in the reconstruction days. The necessity of it under the supreme law of self-preservation is candidly recognized."

Southern leaders of the white-supremacist movement, Woodward observes, were not slow in grasping and expounding "the implications of the new imperialism for their domestic policies." "No Republican leader," declared Senator Benjamin R. Tillman of South Carolina, one of the most rabid white-supremacists of his day, "not even Governor [Theodore] Roosevelt, will now dare to wave the bloody shirt and preach a crusade against the South's treatment of the Negro. The North has a bloody shirt of its own. Many thousands of them have been made into shrouds for murdered Filipinos, done to death because they were fighting for liberty."

World War I gave new hope to the Negro people. It was fought under demagogic slogans and promised for the peoples of the world the right to self-determination. The Negro expected that this would result in some democratic gain for him too. Over 360,000 Negroes entered the armed forces. This was also the period of the first mass trek of Negroes to Northern industrial centers. But the hopes encouraged during the war were short-lived. As Woodward relates, the war was followed by a wave of violence directed against Negroes "probably unprecedented." Twenty-five race riots occurred in American cities in the last six months of 1919. These were not limited to the South. Some of the worst took place in the industrial cities of the North. "During the first year following the war more than seventy Negroes were lynched, several of them veterans still in uniform."

Racist bigotry and violence continued to spread through the 1920's. It was in this period that the Ku Klux Klan reached its peak in membership, reported to have been five million. And for the first time, the largest Klan following was not in the South, but in the North. This was the situation in these United States more than sixty years after the immortal Lincoln had signed the Emancipation Proclamation. Deep indeed had the poisonous virus of white supremacy penetrated into the blood stream of the nation.

How vast the change in the thinking of the American people since then! Today, Jim Crow is on the defensive; the Negro freedom cause on the offensive. Many factors helped bring this about. At this point we still wish to pursue the significance of the international factor. Why is there such a great worldwide prodding of America

today on the Negro question? Why does the barbaric treatment of Negroes in the United States make headlines in countries thousands of miles away? The main reason is that the system of world imperialism is no longer on the ascendancy but on the decline. Two factors brought this about—the rise of Communism as a world force and the rise of a powerful colonial liberation movement involving the vast majority of mankind. And both of these factors are closely interdependent, each acting as a spur upon the other.

Those who say that Communism represents a new type of imperialism, a new form of enslavement of peoples, must explain how this, if it were true, could act as a prod toward greater Negro freedom in the United States. Obviously, there is some contradiction here. We have seen that when imperialism was on the march, enslaving weaker peoples, the international climate exerted a negative influence on the American scene. If apologists for the American ruling class, whether white or Negro, must now plead for a more rapid granting of equality to the Negro people on the ground that this is necessary to offset the influence of Communism in the world, then this is a great, although unconscious tribute paid to Communism as the mighty anti-imperialist force that it is. And conversely, if the main plea for an end to the humiliating and brutal treatment of one-tenth of our population is made, not on the grounds of humanity and justice, but because this looks bad in foreign eyes, this too, is a testimonial, also unconscious, to the callous, reactionary state of mind of America's ruling class.

From this it follows that the growth in the strength and influence of the Communist-led countries is not a bad, but a very good thing for the cause of Negro freedom. When the U.S. Attorney General filed his brief with the Supreme Court in support of school desegregation, he asked for a favorable decision because, "racial discrimination furnishes grist for the Communist propaganda mills," and "other peoples cannot understand how such a practice can exist in a country which professes to be a staunch supporter of freedom, justice, and democracy." One could logically ask therefore: What if there were not this international propaganda against racial discrimination? What, under such circumstances, would the positions of the Attorney General and the Supreme Court have been on this vital democratic issue? We do know what these were when there was no such "propaganda."

In face of these facts, it is certainly ridiculous to claim, as do some, that the desegregation decision of the Supreme Court constituted "a defeat for international Communism." No, gentlemen, we

are sorry to have to spoil this little game. Victories won for Negro equality are not defeats for Communism. In fact, these could be considered as victories for it, because the Communists by their activities, by their examples, helped to bring them about. Of course, these gains, in the first place, are victories for the Negro people and for all those who believe in racial and national freedom. But if some prefer to call a victory a "defeat"—well, we shall not bother to quarrel over words. We are more than anxious to lend our hand to help bring about more such pyrrhic "defeats," until every last vestige of racial bigotry and national oppression is completely and utterly destroyed.

The habit of standing things on their head has become so persistent with some that even the "cold war" is seen as a blessing in disguise for the Negro people. These individuals reason that it is this which has compelled the ruling class to make concessions to the Negro people. But here, too, there is something wrong with the logic. The objective of the "cold war" has been to counter the mounting revolutionary forces at work in the world and to prepare the way for a third world war to destroy these forces and to impose Wall Street domination over the earth. But it is the very existence of these revolutionary forces that has aided the cause of Negro freedom in this country. The stronger they are, the stronger are the Negro people. To organize "cold" or "hot" war against them, therefore, is to work to undermine the most powerful world ally the Negro people possess. It is also to strike a blow against the aspirations of other oppressed peoples. Why? Because it is in the name of "cold war" strategy that the U.S. Government has tried to explain, and its apologists excuse, the cynical support being given to colonialism in every part of the world, which we dealt with more fully in Chapter IV.

There is one additional extremely important reason why the "cold war" has hurt, and hurt badly, the cause of Negro freedom. While world public opinion can help the Negro people in their struggle for their rights, this fight cannot be won abroad, it must be won at home. And it can be won at home only when reaction is really put on the run, when a powerful popular alliance arises, creating the conditions for a new forward advance of all democratic and progressive forces. This, too, has not escaped the attention of those not mentally frozen by the "cold war" ice age. V. O. Key, Jr., in an article which appeared in the Spring, 1955, issue of *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, made some interesting observations on this score. Recognizing that a basic change must be made within the South itself, he notes that the "long continuation of crisis in foreign affairs and the correlative prosperity

sustained by pump-priming from the Pentagon could only serve to delay class-based political adjustments. Indeed, the maintenance of the Republic as a garrison could only operate to narrow the range of internal political conflict tolerated on all sorts of issues." It is his opinion that the present anomalous situation in the South, in which the liberal and progressive forces are contained within the same Democratic Party dominated by the Dixiecrats, "probably could not survive another New Deal."

In 1947, when the "cold war" was barely in its infancy, Oliver C. Cox, in his book *Caste, Class and Race*, also noted that "the creation of an artificial panic about Russia's intent to attack the United States . . . may also be intended to put at rest militant democracy at home." He discerned that in the creation of this artificial enemy the ruling class is given an opportunity to silence opposition and to muster overwhelming "support of the status quo."

This certainly is the way in which the "cold war" has been used at home. It has derailed the popular mass movement and diverted it from a struggle against the real foe, Big Business, into a fight against a fictitious foe. In this way it has held back the gathering forces of political realignment and has strengthened domestic reaction. The "cold war," therefore, has prevented the fullest exploitation of the extremely favorable conditions for scoring *decisive* victories for Negro freedom.

A "cold war" is not necessary for world public opinion to exert an influence in this country. In fact, that influence can be all the greater and more positive in an atmosphere of peaceful co-existence and competition and when no "artificial panic" exists to hold back a full-fledged offensive of the progressive and democratic forces of the American people.

IN CONTRAST TO SOUTH AFRICA

World public opinion by no means has been the only positive development operating in favor of increased Negro equality. There have been important domestic ones. In fact, without these domestic developments the factor of world prodding could have been cancelled out. This largely explains the difference between the current trend in the United States and that in the Union of South Africa. There we witness a great awakening of the native peoples, but the trend is still toward an ever more intense and more vile oppression, known

as *apartheid*. What are some of the differences between the situation in the United States and that in the Union of South Africa?

Unlike the Union of South Africa, the ruling class of the United States is compelled to give greater heed to world public opinion. As the leading capitalist class in the world it is sensitive to the growing criticism of its system. Constantly impelled toward achieving greater domination over world markets, investment spheres, and sources of raw materials, it also seeks "allies" that will bow to its will, grant it more military bases, and support it in case of war. All these things are what Wall Street thinks of when it speaks of "U.S. world leadership."

But these no longer can be attained by mere force of arms. Today, in the face of the growing power of the world's common people, it is necessary to influence democratic opinion everywhere. The ruling class, therefore, is very concerned with what is said about it in other lands. It is particularly sensitive to foreign criticism on the question of racial bigotry, not only because it is most vulnerable on this issue, but also because the great majority of mankind—the peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America—are so-called "colored" peoples.

Moreover, the granting of a greater measure of equality for the Negro people in this country does not directly endanger the class rule of Wall Street, even though it would greatly weaken its power. It does threaten directly the class rule of the Southern Bourbons, but these, while allied with monopoly, are not completely identical with it. In other words, while the subjection of the Negro in the deep South is the very foundation upon which rests the continued domination of the class of Southern Bourbons, this is not true for the rule of monopoly in the country at large.

Of even greater importance, for it is the decisive factor in determining the outcome of the struggle for Negro rights, is the great and heartening growth that has taken place over recent years in Negro-white unity. At this point we wish merely to indicate that this trend has brought into being a two-pronged pressure upon the ruling class for Negro equality, internal and external, each feeding and nourishing the other. The greater grows the movement in this country for Negro rights, the more aware and aroused becomes world opinion at the continued existence of racial bigotry here, and, in turn, the stronger and more determined becomes the domestic movement for Negro freedom.

The situation in the Union of South Africa is quite different. The

white Europeans constitute only 21 percent of the population. The very foundation of their rule rests upon the continued oppression and subjection of the native Bantu peoples. It is as if the situation in the areas of Negro majority in the South of this country were transposed over the entire United States. In these areas of the deep South every demand of the Negro people for their rights is viewed by the Dixiecrats as a challenge to their white-supremacist rule. So in South Africa, every demand of the Bantu peoples for their rights is seen as a threat to the power and rule of the white ruling clique.

Furthermore, with manufacturing still largely underdeveloped, and with the native peoples supplying the labor power for agriculture and for mining gold, diamond, uranium and coal—the rich natural resources upon which South Africa's economy is based—there have not been the same conditions for white-Negro unity as in this country. In fact, it has been easier for the ruling class to poison the white masses with racist white-supremacist ideas. Thus, while the Bantu peoples are valiantly determined to win their freedom and to exercise their prerogatives as a majority in their own land, and while the more progressive white South Africans realize that equality must come, the trend up to now has been toward an even more shameful subjection and oppression. This, of course, cannot and will not continue indefinitely. Imperialism is doomed. The African peoples, no less than others, shall come into their own.

DOMESTIC CHANGES

In the United States, as we have already mentioned, the trend has been toward a greater white-Negro unity. What are some of the domestic factors which have helped bring this about? First, it is necessary to single out for emphasis the importance of the change that has occurred in the composition of the American working class. Up to World War I, industry was manned almost exclusively by white workers. The Negro people were predominantly a rural people engaged in agriculture. Even those who did reside in cities were employed mainly in household work and in menial service occupations. World War I and the cessation of European mass immigration to the United States began the process of change. Since then the Negro people have been a main source of additional labor supply for industry. In 1920, only 34 percent of the Negro people were urban; in 1950, some 62 percent. Even as late as March, 1940, some 42 percent of employed Negro men were engaged in agriculture. By April,

1952, it was estimated that only some 19 percent were so engaged. This trend still continues.

At first this met with resistance from the white workers who viewed the Negro in industry as an unwelcome competitor. However, as the trend continued, and as the working class became more and more white *and* Negro, with the Negro workers growing both in numbers and proportion, this hostility gradually gave way to an increased recognition that the fate of the white workers was inextricably tied to that of the Negro workers. This did not come easily or all at once. As in everything else, it called for innovators, for pioneers to show the way. To the Communists fell this role, as even their most bitter opponents are compelled to admit.

The first important break-through occurred in the 'thirties. No longer would the great mass of unskilled workers remain powerless before the might of trustified capital. Surging forward toward industrial unionism, the white and Negro workers learned their first lessons in solidarity. They began to learn that neither could advance alone, just as one leg cannot walk without the other. This understanding has grown steadily since. It is not yet all it should, could and will be. Prejudice is still widespread. But the trend is toward greater unity. Today there are more than two-and-a-half million Negro members of trade unions.

Negro leadership has understood the great importance of this development. Walter White discussed it in his book. He wrote: "It is both safe and just to say that in the fight for civil rights and human equality, the organized labor movement has moved faster and farther during the past twenty years than any other segment of the American population.

"It took seven decades," he noted, "for the labor movement to shake off its prejudices and to realize that as long as Negro labor was denied its rights white labor could never be free." Or in the words of Karl Marx: "Labor in the white skin can never be free as long as labor in the black skin remains branded."

A corollary of the change in class composition of the Negro people and of the white-Negro composition of the working class has been the shift in geographic distribution of the Negro population. To get into industry required going to the cities, and in most instances to Northern cities. At first, this too led to increased anti-Negro hostility in the North. But in time, and largely as a consequence of changes in the labor movement, it also has become a factor which has strengthened white-Negro unity.

Today, more than one-third of the Negro population of some sixteen million resides in the North. This has had important political consequences. It not only has given the vote to Negroes formerly disfranchised in the South, but has placed them in key strategic political positions in the most populated industrial states with the largest electoral college votes. This has had a two-fold effect. It has imparted to the Negro people a feeling of political strength such as they never possessed before. They know that under certain circumstances they can exercise the critical balance of power in a national election. In city after city, and in the key industrial states, moreover, they can become a balance of power in nearly every city-wide and state-wide election. This has greatly added to their militancy and determination to press on to final victory. On the part of the liberal and progressive white voters, there is also dawning a fuller realization that they need the votes of the Negro people just as the Negro people need their votes. Politically, therefore, it is becoming ever more evident that not a single step forward can be made without a strengthening of white-Negro unity.

CHANGES IN THE SOUTH

A third development of prime importance relates to changes that are transpiring within the South. This region is feeling the affects of world and nationwide pressures and of internal ones as well. The "old solid South" is no longer either as old or as solid as it used to be. New currents make for a corrosion and erosion of Southern regionalism. This is summed up in a brief aphorism quite popular in the South today: "Cotton is going West, cattle coming East, Negroes are moving North, and industry moving South." And as some wits add, "all the South is going to town." There is much exaggeration in this, obviously. Yet it contains enough particles of truth to give it currency.

More accurately, the changes in the South were listed in capsule form by Alexander Heard, in his book *A Two-Party South?*: "The old, relatively homogeneous agricultural South is giving way to a South of diversity. The diversification of agriculture, the growth of industry, the change in agricultural methods, population shifts, the rise of cities and decline of ruralism, the growth of union labor, the political organization of labor and of Negroes, and all the rest, create divisive influences within the South that sharpen differences over economic and social policies and cut into the traditional political domination of the region by the black belts."

The changes in the South find their common denominator in the process of urbanization. From 1930 to 1950, Southern cities with populations of 50,000 or more increased at three times the rate for the nation as a whole. In the single decade from 1940 to 1950 the Southern farm population declined by more than one-fourth. The ultimate meaning of these developments, believes Heard, is that they tend to create classes within the South more nearly approximating those in the North. V. O. Key, Jr., takes a similar view. He states that the growth in the urban working class and middle classes is "creating the foundation for a durable alteration in the politics of the South," and that "differences in the ways in which people make a living can confidently be expected to continue to have an important bearing on their political orientation."

Industrial development in the South is estimated to be growing at the rate of more than a million dollars of new capital investments a day. This is giving birth to sharp antagonisms in the South, manifested within the Southern ruling class itself. The bitter conflict over the issue of school desegregation is an example of this. Normal capitalist development, Lenin showed in his article on "Differences in the European Labor Movement," requires the enjoyment of certain political and cultural rights by the population. "This demand for a certain minimum of culture is created by the conditions of the capitalist mode of production itself, with its high technique, complexity," etc.

Many of the new industrial plants in the South are of the most modern type, particularly in the atomic and chemical fields. Thus the process of industrialization has brought with it a demand for a higher proportion of scientific workers and of better educated skilled and semi-skilled workers. These needs are antagonistic to the old forms of Negro oppression and, in the first place, of the segregated school system. The Southern states spend less on education than any in the country. When these pitifully small amounts have to be divided in two directions, even if the proportion spent for Negro schools is considerably smaller than that for white schools, the net result is a lower level of culture and education for the white masses as well.

Here is an example of how the *forms* of Negro oppression maintained by the semi-feudal plantation system, collide with the interests of industrialization. Even prejudiced white masses, including those who still refuse admittance of Negroes to the new industries in the South, are compelled, therefore, to *begin* to take issue with the system of segregation because this keeps them down, too. Were this development not taking place the Supreme Court decision for school desegregation would not have been possible.

More important than anything else, is how these changes—in the South, in the North, and worldwide—have contributed to heighten the militancy of the long oppressed Negro people of the South. Recognizing that they now possess powerful new allies, that important changes are transpiring within the South itself, that the plantation economy is declining and that old King Cotton has been dethroned from his former seat of economic dominance, the Southern Negro people are struggling with a valor borne out of a determination to “walk where we please”—not at some indefinite future time, but “right here in this present world,” and NOW. This great militancy is finding expression not only in the cities, but on the land as well. It is to be seen in the areas of the deep South where the Negro people for generations have been a majority and, for that very reason, the subject of the most brutal and barbaric oppression and terror.

The Negro people of the black belt areas have always been conscious of their oppression and have always fought valiantly against it. Their struggle was always more difficult and complicated than that of colonial peoples separated geographically from the seat of the oppressive power. In a colony, liberation can be achieved by throwing the oppressor out. But this was not possible in the areas of Negro majority, even where the Negro people had resided for more than two hundred years of slavery and this being the only homeland they knew. For the black belt regions were surrounded by the rest of the United States, and behind the power of the ruling minority in these areas stood the might and power of the state and federal governments. Even during slavery, despite the most heroic uprisings and struggles of the Negro people, they could not achieve emancipation by their own efforts alone. They had to win a majority of the whole American people to their side. This finally came when the federal government entered into the struggle as the only means by which to preserve the Union itself.

Later, during Reconstruction, the Negro people were able to make great headway toward full equality because the power of the nation stood behind them and in opposition to their oppressors. The sell-out of 1877 once again produced a situation in which federal power sided with the white-supremacists. Once again, therefore, the Negro people were shackled and enslaved by the plantation system and kept in submission by the knout and the noose.

It is the brew of this bitter experience, tasted repeatedly generation after generation, which has imparted to the Negro people such eminent practical-mindedness in the struggle. They are always mindful

that they are a minority within the United States, and that without powerful allies, without the support of a large segment of the white population, they cannot break and shatter the last chains that bind them.

But this does not mean that the Negro people of the South expect to be "given" their rights. On the contrary, as has been pointed out by Walter White, by Harry S. Ashmore, and by others, the Negro people are not relying upon the aid of "sympathetic whites." Recent gains have been won by the Negro fighting "under his own banner and in his own right," and under his own leadership. In the words of White, "He [the Negro] has gained strength through having won the rights he has achieved instead of having them given to him."

This feeling of strength arises from the secure and growing knowledge that present-day allies are not mere fair-weather friends. The Negro people, recognizing their own new status in the labor movement, their increasing political influence and strength, and that no decisive change can be brought about without them even in the South, are cognizant of the mutuality of their alliances. It is upon this that the durability of these rest.

COUNTER FORCES AT WORK

After enumerating the main factors operating in favor of greater Negro freedom, let us now look at the other side of the ledger. And there is another side, even if some would prefer to forget, or do not like to face it.

In a recent issue of *Pocket Book Magazine*, there appeared an article written by Thurgood Marshall, talented chief counsel for the NAACP, under whose able direction the legal assault against segregation and discrimination has been conducted. This article, *The High Cost of Discrimination*, effectively shows how costly is discrimination to the entire American people. But in the course of his persuasive presentation, the author somewhat over-simplifies the problem. According to him, no one gains from discrimination and everyone loses thereby. It would appear, therefore, that the entire monstrous structure of Jim Crow segregation and discrimination has no material foundation whatever, corresponds to the economic interests of no one.

This, of course, is not the case. It is like saying that "crime does not pay," which is true enough in general and in particular for the petty thieves who get caught and pay a great price. But it certainly is not true for the big thieves behind the great crime syndicates. For

these, crime pays and pays handsomely. The same is true of the crime of discrimination. The average prejudiced white person who practices it, gains nothing and loses heavily by it. But this is not true of the men who stand behind the *system* of Negro oppression and discrimination. They profit by it and profit handsomely.

To say otherwise is not only inaccurate; it is downright harmful. It is an over-simplification which conceals the class roots of Negro oppression. It feeds illusions. It makes it appear as if the system of discrimination can be wiped away by mere education. It refuses to recognize that there are forces that stand in the way, enemies that must be fought.

We have shown the intimate relationship which existed between the rise of the Jim Crow system in the latter quarter of the nineteenth century and the rise and growth of world imperialism as the oppressor of weaker peoples. But that period was also marked by a domestic development which was part and parcel of the larger world one. This was the rise and growth of trustified capital, leading to the ultimate domination of monopoly.

Without this domestic development the reversal of the tide of Negro freedom, and the imposition of a hateful new system of oppression, could not have occurred. It must be remembered that Northern industrial capital fought the Civil War not for the sake of Negro freedom, but because this was the only way by which it could establish and maintain its own economic and political domination over the entire length and breadth of the country. It had opposed not slavery as such, but its extension. The question of freeing the slaves arose for it as a practical objective only when this became absolutely essential for the winning of the Civil War itself.

With the war ended, something had to be done about the South. Strangely enough, if something were not done, the very act of freeing the slaves could have led to even increased Southern Bourbon influence in national politics. This was because the freeing of the slaves required augmenting Southern representation in Congress and in the Electoral College. When the Constitution was drafted in 1787, a compromise was worked out between the slave and free states. State representation in Congress was to be determined by counting each free person "excluding Indians not taxed," and "three-fifths of all other Persons." Thus each slave counted as three-fifths of a person. This gave the Southern slave owners a larger representation than they would have received on the basis of white population. But with the freeing of the slaves each Negro counted as five-fifths. Unless,

therefore, certain steps were taken to give the freed Negroes their rights, the former slaveowners would continue not only to control the Southern states but could even increase their political weight nationally.

The betrayal of 1877, which put an end to the period of Southern reconstruction, was based on a compromise worked out between the Southern plantation interests and Northern capital. The former slaveowners were to accept the rule of the Northern industrialists. They were to permit Northern capital free access to the South and maintain Southern economy as a subordinate principality in the Wall Street domain. In return, the plantation interests were to share in political power and be given a free hand in the oppression and super-exploitation of the former slaves in the South.

Northern capital feared a continuation of the Reconstruction revolution. It recognized that it was facing a bitter and prolonged struggle with new antagonists, the working and farming population. As became evident during the 1880's and 1890's there was good ground for such fears. The white and Negro agrarian masses of the South were finding their way toward unity, joining with the Populist upheaval nationally, in opposition to monopoly power. It was in this period, writes Woodward, that "Negroes and native whites achieved a greater comity of mind and harmony of political purpose than ever before or since in the South."

It is this which explains the second stage in the great betrayal, the erection of a huge edifice of Jim Crow brutality, sanctioned and supported by Supreme Court decisions and federal law. It also explains why it became necessary to inculcate the white masses with a white supremacist ideology and to re-write Southern history to attempt to prove that such views were always current. As Woodward correctly notes, "The policies of proscription, segregation, and disfranchisement that are often described as the immutable 'folkways' of the South, impervious alike to legislative reform and armed intervention, are of a more recent origin. The effort to justify them as a consequence of Reconstruction and a necessity of the time is embarrassed by the fact that they did not originate in those times. And the belief that they are immutable and unchangeable is not supported by history."

There is one other aspect to all this. The system of discrimination and segregation was, and is, exceedingly profitable, not only to the plantation interests, but to the capitalist as well. It enables the capitalists to maintain a steady supply of cheap unskilled labor, which

can be robbed more fully, while, at the same time, tending to pull down the wage levels of the working class as a whole. The wage differentials between North and South are the crassest expression of this. But there is also a differential between what is paid white and Negro labor throughout the land, and this despite all the efforts of the labor movement and the Negro people to break it down. Segregation is also highly profitable to finance capital. It squeezes Negro families into overcrowded slum ghettos, where, because they must live somewhere, they are forced to pay fabulous rents, turning heaps of rubble into real-estate gold mines.

Previously, we showed that the increased industrialization of the South was producing a crisis in some of the older forms of Negro subjection. This does not mean, however, that the industrial interests desire to abolish Negro oppression as such. Jonathan Daniels, in an article in the *Virginia Quarterly Review*, proves by facts and figures that increased industrialization of the South has not and is not wiping away discrimination. He points out that from 1930 to 1950, the number of white workers in the South increased by 2,700,000. During this same period Negro employment in the South dropped by nearly a million. In 1954, "the Negro 25 percent of the South's labor force was estimated to have received less than 5 percent of the new jobs—and those, of course, at the lowest wage and skill levels."

Daniels declares that "an even harsher segregation is growing in the life of America." He shows that "newcomer industrialists sometimes subscribe to the 'customs of the community' more completely than native managers." They "are not so interested in the charm of the region as in low wages in it. Indeed, if the wages they pay their white workers are low in interregional comparison, they are high always by the earnings—and the standards—of the mass of Negroes beside them." Nor is this limited to the South. Daniels points an accusing finger at the North. New York, he writes, has almost as many Negroes as Georgia, and yet employs far fewer Negro teachers. Referring to the huge Negro ghettos of Northern cities and to other manifestations of continued discrimination, Daniels concludes, "What is actually in process in America is not less segregation but more."

Whether one agrees or disagrees with Daniels' observations, one cannot disagree with his facts. The Negro workers are still the last to be hired and the first to be fired. Even Walter White, who did not see monopoly as the enemy, was realistic enough to understand that some of the headway made in Negro employment and job

opportunity of recent years was because "the United States has since 1940 been consistently in a period of high employment." But, he added, "no one—and especially no Negro— . . . has forgotten what a real depression is like. And the Negro worker knows today that, despite the gains he has made in the last fifteen years, in another depression he would stand a very good chance, in many places, of being the first to suffer from unemployment, regardless of seniority or skill." What White is really saying, therefore, is that given a depression the capitalists will utilize the surplus labor situation to even more harshly exploit the Negro workers as a means by which to increase the exploitation of all workers.

It can be seen, therefore, that monopoly is no friend of Negro equality and rights. So long as discrimination and segregation hold forth such huge additional profits for the ruling class, so long will it refuse to give this system up. It may agree to modify or alter some forms of oppression. But it will hold on to the essence of oppression as long as it can. To think otherwise is foolish. Monopoly power is the main enemy which stands in the way of Negro freedom.

THE DEEP SOUTH

We have said earlier that the rule of monopoly capital does not depend for its existence upon the system of Negro discrimination and segregation, even though an end to the Jim Crow system would greatly weaken monopoly power by opening up the flood gates of a great democratic advance throughout the land. Southern Bourbon rule, however, depends entirely upon the continued oppression of the Negro people. Particularly is this true of the areas in which the Negro people constitute a majority or substantial minority of the population.

The Southern historian V. O. Key, Jr., in his book *Southern Politics in State and Nation*, makes clear that "In its general outlines the politics of the South revolves around the position of the Negro." He also sees the relationship between the status of the Negro in the black belt areas and the situation in the South as a whole. "The hard core of the political South," he writes, "is made up of those counties and sections of the southern states in which Negroes constitute a substantial proportion of the population. In these areas a real problem of politics, broadly considered, is the maintenance of control by a white minority. The situation resembles fundamentally that of the Dutch in the East Indies or the former position of the British in India. Here, in the southern black belts, the problem of governance

is similarly one of the control by a small, white minority of a huge, retarded, colored population. And, as in the case of the colonies, that white minority can maintain its position only with the support, and by the tolerance, of those outside—in the home country or in the rest of the United States.”

In this statement of the problem, Key indicates a grasp of the *special* national character of the oppression of the Negro people in the black belt regions. He recognizes fully that were it not for the “support” and “tolerance” of state and federal governments, minority rule in these areas could not long continue. Key also discerns the *economic* roots of this special subjection. “It is the whites in the black belts who have the deepest and most immediate concern about the maintenance of white supremacy,” he states. “Moreover, it is generally in these counties that large-scale plantation or multiple-unit agriculture prevails. Here are located most of the agricultural operators who supervise the work of many tenants, share-croppers, and laborers, most of whom are colored. As large operators they lean generally in a conservative direction in their political views.” And “the black belts have powerful political allies in the cities among conservative groups . . . such as urban industry and finance.”

Time and time again in his book Professor Key returns to the special role of the black belt areas. “It is in this relatively small part of the South,” he writes “that attitudes thought to be universal in the South occur with the highest intensity. The black belt counties can be regarded as a skeleton holding together the South. They have, in a sense, managed to subordinate the entire South to the services of their peculiar needs.”

Well put, indeed. How has the ruling clique of the black belt counties been able to subordinate the entire South to “their peculiar needs”—the needs of minority dictatorial rule? Key also answers this question: “By the over-representation of rural counties in state legislatures, the whites of the black belts gain an extremely disproportionate strength in state law making.”

We would qualify only one formulation in this otherwise accurate description of the situation. In our opinion it is not the “whites of the black belts” who gain, but a minority of these whites, for a majority of whites in these regions, as throughout the South, are not the gainers but also the losers by this state of affairs.

Thus, by denying the Negro people in the black belt region the right to vote, and with them a large percentage of poor whites, and also by the over-representation of rural counties, the Southern

Bourbons, and in the first place their extreme Right-wing, the Dixiecrats, obtain and hold on to governmental power. This is necessary to maintain their rule in the black belt counties. In turn, through their control of state governments and the election machinery, and by the positions they occupy in the U.S. Senate and House, the Dixiecrats are a power nationally as well.

This has great advantages for monopoly. It enables the Northern reactionaries to unite with their Southern cronies. Through the seniority system it enables Southern politicians to hold commanding posts in Congress. Even when the Democrats win a majority in Congress, monopoly knows that the influence of labor and its allies will be greatly nullified through the positions of the Dixiecrats.

In recent years the Dixiecrats have favored a situation in which the Republicans held the White House and they the control of Congress. As Heard points out, the South can be considered as "the strategic center of the future of the Democratic party." "Through its representatives in Congress and in party councils, *especially when the party is out of power*, Southern Democrats can, perhaps, control their party's course—whether it will continue as a broad-based party of the Left, or whether by rejecting the liberal role it will encourage the emergence of a new party of the Left." (Our emphasis). This is accurate but for one statement—the Democratic Party has had the support of labor and liberal forces, but it has not been "a broad based party of the Left."

Were it not for white-supremacist domination over the black belt areas, the South normally would be playing a progressive and not a reactionary role in national politics. This also was seen by Key, who indicates that "the South, ought, by all the rules of political behavior to be radical. A poor, agrarian area, pressed down by the colonial policies of the financial and industrial North and Northeast, it offers fertile ground for political agitation." What a liberal, not to speak of a radical South, would mean for national politics is too little understood, as yet, by the labor and progressive movements. But it is understood quite well by monopoly.

Knowing these facts, it is impossible to believe that the struggle for full equality in the South—particularly in the black belt regions—is going to be won easily. How arrogant are the Dixiecrats! "Nine men sitting 2,000 miles away," said Governor Allan Shivers of Texas, "are not going to tell Crossroads, Texas, how they are going to run their schools." And throughout the deep South today there is a reign of terror directed against the Negro people who militantly are claim-

ing their rights to first class citizenship. This is the meaning of the brutal lynchings of recent months. This is the meaning of the network of so-called "White Citizens' Councils" being organized throughout Dixie with the intent to intimidate, maim, and murder in the name of white supremacy.

How, then, are the Negro people of the black belt going to achieve their freedom? This question cannot be evaded. The Negro people cannot be told to wait endlessly and to endure terror and oppression in patience. Nor can they pin their hopes on the changes transpiring in agriculture to alter things basically and rapidly. Even Key, who puts great stock in the changing economy of the South, is practical enough to realize that "Southern farming will place a special impress on Southern politics for a long time to come."

Those who preach patience, and a waiting upon economic factors to automatically produce political changes, remind us of a remark made by Alexander Pope. He said that he never knew a man who could not bear another's misfortunes like a true Christian. To which we add the biting words of the French revolutionary and Catholic Bishop, Henri Gregoire, who said: "If the gentlemen were suddenly to turn black they would sing a different tune."

"LET MY PEOPLE IN"

The South African novelist Alan Paton, after a special survey of the status of the struggle for Negro rights in this country, observed, "The cry of the Negro is no longer, 'Let my people go;' it is 'Let my people in.'"

There is considerable truth in this statement. The Negro people are going toward integration, not separation. This is true of the Negro people in the black belt; it is true of the Negro people nationally. Why is this the direction in which the Negro people are advancing?

In the first place, the American nation is a young nation, still in process of development. The American people who compose it are a blend of many mixtures of foreign peoples, coming from many different lands. The only ones who have been denied the right to integration are the colored peoples, and primarily the Negro people. Thus, the Negro oppression in this country did not take the form of forcing assimilation upon the Negro people, as was true of national oppression in Europe. Here national oppression took an opposite form. It forced the Negro to stand apart from the general process of assimilation and integration. The struggle of the Negro people for

equality, therefore, has been a struggle to become a part of this greater America. This was movingly stated by the Communist leader Benjamin J. Davis, Jr.: "As a Negro American, I want to be free. I want equal opportunities, equal rights; I want to be accorded the same dignity as a human being and the same status as a citizen as any other American. This is my constitutional right. I want first-class, unconditional citizenship. I want it, and am entitled to it, now."

Furthermore, the old cotton belt, or black belt, in which the Negro people lived through slavery and which, even today, represents the largest and most compact mass of the Negro people, was not, a colony, for example, like the West Indies, separated geographically from the mother country. It was an area within the mother country—that is, the United States—and surrounded on all sides by it. This, too, tended to operate against separatism as a goal. The rapid growth of Negro population in other parts of the country, particularly the North and West, has intensified further the yearning for integration. The Negro people South and North consider themselves as one people, with one common destiny.

Most important of all, the Negro people are convinced that they can win their fight for full integration. They believe that important headway has been made and they are determined to fight on to victory. This is by far the most important factor influencing the course of the Negro people. Why should this be so? Because if the Negro people believed, as a great many of them did at one point, that they had lost their fight for equality and full integration within the United States, they would be compelled to begin moving in another direction.

In the first quarter of this century, when Negro oppression was at its peak, a movement of separatism did develop in the ranks of the Negro people. There was talk by some of a 49th state, while many supported the Marcus Garvey "Back to Africa" movement. At one point Garvey claimed as many as two million members in this country, although there is reason to question this figure. Nonetheless, his movement was a potent force and arose from conditions in which the Negro, in desperation, was compelled to look elsewhere for the solution of his problems.

It is clear from all this, therefore, that the Negro people are not travelling in the direction of a separate Negro Republic or state. In fact, any reference to such a course arouses fears in their minds that a Jim Crow status is being proposed for them. Moreover, while a new reversal toward increased oppression cannot be excluded—not as

long as monopoly capitalism exists—it is hardly likely that the Negro people will once again, in any large numbers, think of separation as a solution. The great and growing trend of recent years toward white-Negro unity has developed beyond that. If anything, a new reversal would harden the determination of the Negro people and their white allies to restore democratic liberties and with it the process toward integration.

How then do the Negro people see the solution to the present situation in the black belt region? They certainly have no illusions that the fight will be won easily or that the Southern Dixiecrats will give way without using every force at their command to maintain the status quo. The answer is that they are counting on the active support of the democratic forces nationally to compel a change in the deep South. They have expected nothing from the Mississippi Supreme Court. They have expected a great deal from the U.S. Supreme Court. They also expect that the progressive and democratic forces of the entire country will join with them in compelling Southern states to live up to the U.S. Constitution.

This recognition of the importance of allies and of influencing the federal government greatly explains the political pattern being followed by the Negro people. With grudging admiration the Montgomery, Alabama, *Advertiser*, had to speak of the political tactics of the Negro people. "The Republican party was 'the party of his [the Negro's] fathers,'" the editorial states, "for it was the GOP that freed him from slavery." And yet, "In 1932, and particularly in 1936, the Negro . . . went over to the Democrats. He did so because the Democrats offered him more of what he wanted. No blind party label held the Negro in chains. And the Negro, being independent . . . is pampered by the Democrats."

The Negro, of course, is far from being pampered. The harsh truth is that the Democrats nationally have promised the Negro equality at the same time that they have been protesting their eternal love for the Southern poll-taxers. What is true, however, is that the Negro recognizes that he has a better chance of making headway by being allied with the other class forces who make up the bulk of the Democratic Party's mass support. It is this which explains his entrance into the much hated Democratic Party of the South, in which, together with liberal and progressive white forces he is challenging the power of the Dixiecrats. As White correctly observed, "Above all else the Negro voter has been taught by hard experience to be a realist. Sooner than most he saw the narrow difference between

the philosophies and objectives of the two major political parties in the United States. He recognizes early that reactionaries of the Republican party from the North and of the Democratic party from the South were united not only against the Negro but against labor unions, social security, housing, minimum-wage laws, prevention of exploitation of woman and child labor, and every other measure to expand the benefits of democracy. Because necessity taught him these lessons, the Negro voter is certain to remain an independent."

The Negro people obviously are not going to move politically alone. However, when labor and other democratic forces begin to build a truly progressive party of their own, the Negro people will be in the forefront of that development.

What does all this add up to? To the fact that the fight in the deep South is a nationwide struggle. It requires the most aroused public opinion against every act of violence perpetrated against the Negro people. It calls for a powerful movement of white-Negro unity which will compel additional federal legislation against discrimination and segregation—especially, anti-lynch, anti-poll tax, and FEPC legislation. But it requires far more than this, the determination of the federal government to enforce the laws of the nation *throughout the land*. Were there that determination today, even present laws would suffice to bring the Dixiecrats to book. But such determination does not now exist. How can it, when both the Republican and Democratic national leaders are wooing the Shiverses and Byrneses?

A typical example was the Emmett Till lynching. Here was a case in which the murderers brazenly admitted having kidnapped their victim, but were not even indicted on this charge. Yet a federal law against kidnapping, the so-called Lindbergh Law, does exist. But the Department of Justice and the FBI were too busy interfering with the constitutional rights of law-abiding Americans to do anything about a crime so ghastly that it shocked the civilized world.

That federal action must play a part in ending the present terror in the deep South is being understood by more and more people. According to press reports, the Chicago branch of the NAACP adopted a resolution at the time of the Till murder which called for a number of federal actions. These included the early withdrawal of the rights of federal and local franchise from Mississippi, the suspension of Mississippi's representatives in Congress, and the occupation of that state by federal troops while "an investigation of the causes and results of abrogations of citizens' rights in violation of the constitution shall be thoroughly prosecuted."

Whether one agrees with each of these proposals is not as important as the recognition that federal action must help guarantee that the Negro people of the black belt areas are given their constitutional rights. We are not advocating a new military occupation of Dixie. What we are advocating is the enforcement of the Constitution in Mississippi no less than anywhere else. We are sure that once the determination to do this is made clear, the present cracks in the wall of Southern regionalism will become yawning chasms. For the Dixiecrats do not speak for the white South any more than for the Negro South. Once their intimidating influence is countered, it will become clearer to even larger numbers of white Southerners, that by helping to hold the Negro down they are being held down themselves.

Basic to changing the present situation in the deep South is the winning of the franchise for the Negro people and poor whites. A powerful movement for the franchise already exists in the South and an increasing number of Negroes, although as yet a minority, are registering and voting. This is helping to inject new political currents and alliances into Southern politics. Once the right to vote is won by the Negro people and poor whites in the black belt, then the pre-conditions will be established for a "New Reconstruction" based upon a new great movement of Negro-white progressive unity. The areas of Negro majority, as long as they remain dominated by the rule of the Dixiecrats, are a reactionary millstone around the neck of the entire South. Once the franchise is won, these areas can be transformed rapidly into important bastions for Southern progress. A change in these areas, therefore, together with changes already taking place in the peripheral sections of the South, and in Southern cities, can rapidly transform the South as a whole.

Guaranteeing all the rights of the Negro people in the deep South will not take place at one stroke—it will be a process. One cannot overnight wipe away the cruel effects of centuries of oppression, nor of racial prejudice. Even after the right to vote has been won, additional problems will remain. So long as economic power rests in the hands of a tiny white minority, so long will it have a coercive influence upon the landless, poverty-stricken Negro and white sharecroppers and tenant farmers. This is what happened after the Civil War. Political reconstruction was not coupled with economic reconstruction. Had the large plantations been broken up and the land divided among the landless Negroes and whites, the former slave-owning class could never have made a comeback. This means that

certain agrarian reform measures will also be necessary. Where there is determination this problem can be solved. The federal government can buy out the present plantation owners and parcel the land to those who are its tillers, extending credit, seed, fodder, and implements to guarantee that this land does not fall into the hands of the old owners, or the banks, and that its new owners are given every chance to make out.

Moreover, as the present-day political structure of the deep South was devised with the object of holding the Negro people in subjection, as can be seen in the gerrymandered "rotten-borough" and "county-unit" systems, it will become necessary to make certain democratic alterations and changes in political structure. These would aim to guarantee to the Negro people their full rights to free and equal development. What the concrete nature of these steps would be cannot be foretold at this time. The people of these areas, Negro and white, would have to be the judge. Special measures would also have to be taken to help industrialize the black belt region, which has shared the least of all other sections of the South in the recent industrialization.

In other words, everything must be done to give the Negro people their full freedom. And he who is a true democrat (small "d"!) will not hedge from so doing. Winning the battle for democracy in the South is not only necessary for the South. It is necessary for the future of democracy in this country. A "New South" would infuse the democratic forces of the nation as a whole with a new vitality and power, just as the organization of Southern labor would give the labor movement a strength and influence hitherto unknown. This is the greater significance of the struggle for Negro freedom.

THE COMMUNISTS AND THE RECORD

For many years the Communists, nearly alone, stressed the strategic importance of the black belt region in the struggle for Negro freedom. In the late 'twenties and early 'thirties, witnessing the half-century of renewed and increasing oppression of the Negro people which followed the end of Reconstruction, the Communists believed that the line of development was leading toward a separate Negro Republic in the black belt. At the same time they fought, as no other political group in America, for the attainment of economic, political, and social equality both North and South.

In more recent years, the Communists took note of the progress

made in the struggle for Negro equality and that the Negro people were no longer thinking in terms either of a "black republic" or a "49th state." The Communists did not depart, however, from the basic principle that all oppressed peoples have the *right* to self-determination, that is, to determine the conditions under which they best can attain their own free and full development.

The Communists in defending this principle, have been accused by their opponents of advocating separation. This is not in accord with the facts. Defending a right is not advocating its use, any more than defending the right to strike means advocating a strike. We have indicated previously that we understand the special historic conditions in the United States which have influenced the Negro people toward seeking integration as their desired goal.

A special book, *The Negro and the Communist Party*, has been written making the misunderstanding of this question its central thesis. This book by Wilson Record has become something of a bible for those who seek to undermine the influence of the Communists among the Negro people. Walter White, who devoted a chapter in his book to the Communists, frankly acknowledged Record as his authority.

Record marshalls arguments to prove that the Negro people do not desire separation. But he does not limit himself to this lancing at windmills. He charges that the Communists, by raising the question of the right of self-determination, have been injecting a foreign concept. This, he claims, is alien to the tradition and desires of the American Negro, counter to his best interests of integration and harmful to Negro-white unity.

This argument cannot stand close scrutiny. If it were really true that the principle of the right of self-determination ran counter to the interests of integration and Negro-white unity, pray then, how does Mr. Record explain the fact that the Communists have done more than any other political group to further the very cause of Negro equality and Negro-white unity?

Record cannot overlook the imposing record of the Communists, even if he buries it in over three hundred pages of snide innuendoes questioning their basic integrity. He admits that unlike the Socialists, the Communists, from their inception, placed the question of Negro rights in the center of their program—not only on paper, but in what they did. Discussing the success of the early CIO unions in attracting Negro workers to their ranks, he gives the Communists the main credit for this. "While it is true," he writes, "that the CIO . . . would have had to organize the Negro workers, it is not likely that union

leaders would have given as much attention to the matter or developed the specific programs they did in the absence of prodding from the Communist elements. . . . It is questionable, for example, whether the UAW-CIO would have developed its remarkably effective program for combating union and management discrimination had not the Communists served as a hair shirt."

While repeating all the stale canards about how the Communists "used" the Scottsboro Case, Record quotes from an editorial which appeared in the NAACP magazine *Crisis*, in December, 1935. This read in part: "For almost five years the welkin has been ringing. The exploitation of Negroes by the South has been pitilessly exposed to the world. An important legal victory has been won against the lily white jury system. As far as propaganda is concerned the whole Negro race is far ahead of where it would have been had the Communists not fought the case in the way they did."

What about the Negro peoples' movement itself? Have the Communists had a salutary or noxious influence upon it? Let Record tell us. He grants that Communists helped Negro leaders "to see that the solution of the complex problem of discrimination was intimately tied up with the success of the labor movement. . . . The growing identification of the NAACP with the labor movement, which dates back to the early 1930's," he writes, "can be viewed as partly the result of Communist pressure. The greater concern of the National Urban League for educating Negro workers about trade union membership . . . also falls into this category." He even concedes that there was some justification for the Communist sharp criticism of NAACP and Urban League leadership during the 1920's, "for the NAACP had been extremely cautious in its legal and legislative work for Negroes . . . and the National Urban League played a questionable role in a number of the large industrial strikes." Furthermore, the "growth of internal democracy within the NAACP has been in part a gratuitous by-product of the Communist threat. . . . This threat has tended to increase the responsiveness of the NAACP officialdom to rank and file will."

This is indeed high tribute, even if words like "threats" are used to imply some sinister motives. Touching on the struggles of the 'thirties, Record quotes from *Black Metropolis*, by St. Clair Drake and Horace C. Cayton, to show that, "The reds won the admiration of the Negro masses by default. They were the only white people who seemed to really care what happened to the Negro." And even more laudatory are the words of Henry Lee Moon, Public Relations Direc-

tor of the NAACP, who in his book *Balance of Power: The Negro Vote*, summarizes the role of the Communists: "It is a matter of record that the Communists have generally fought for full recognition of Negro rights. They have carried on this fight through their own organizations and through those organizations in which they exert influence. They have pushed the Negro to the forefront in party work. They have consistently nominated him for office on the party ticket. They have dramatized his problem. They have risked social ostracism and physical violence in his behalf. They have challenged American hypocrisy with the zeal, if not the high principle, of the Abolitionists. In all this they have performed a vital function as an irritant to the American conscience."

So much for the record! Is it not clear that if in the past twenty-five years there has come into being a new movement of white-Negro unity, which offers such great promise, the Communists had a little to do with this? And yet Record and Moon charge that we are opposed to integration and are for separation!

Does this mean that the Communists have displayed no weaknesses and made no errors in the fight for Negro rights? Not at all. As in other fields, we have made errors in how we worked together with other people and in slowness to recognize new trends. Moreover, while correctly emphasizing the decisive importance of the struggle for freedom in the black belt region, and the national character of the oppression of the Negro people, the Communists, however, raised the slogan of the right of self-determination in a one-sided way, thereby permitting this slogan to become a source of misunderstanding and confusion on the part of many and of wilful distortion on the part of some.

Record, White, Moon, A. Phillip Randolph, Williard Townsend, and others, charge that the Communists are not honestly concerned with winning Negro rights, but only in "using" Negro oppression for their own anti-capitalist ends. Record quotes from another portion of the *Crisis* editorial on the Scottsboro Case, which reads: "It is not a question of whether the Communists have done a good job in exposing and fighting the evils under which Negroes live. They have. The question is: did they have the right to use the lives of nine youths . . . to make a propaganda battle in behalf of the Negro race or the theories of Communism? The *Crisis* does not believe they had that right." To which Record adds: "With that concluding statement the writer is in agreement."

Wait one moment, please! The Communists did not "use" the

lives of nine youths; they helped save them! That makes quite a difference, doesn't it? You cannot say that the Communists did a good job and yet had no right to do so. Should not every evil be exposed and fought against? Does not every political group have a right to draw whatever conclusions it sees fit from such exposure—whether of unemployment, child labor, juvenile crime, low wages, or Negro mistreatment? Do not all political parties use such issues to propagate their own views? Why should the Communists be criticized for doing the same? No one is harmed by the exposure of evil except those responsible for it. If capitalism cannot stand up to exposure, if this adds grist to the Communist mill, whose fault is that? Would it not be a good thing for the Negro people if all political groups joined in an exposure of and struggle against the Jim Crow system? It would help put an end to it. Once that happened the political issue would also disappear.

Record, Randolph, Townsend and Moon charge further that the Communists are more concerned with the welfare of the Soviet Union than with the rights of the Negro people. This is the old charge of foreign agent. But in this, too, they are wrong. Why is it necessary to pose the interests of one people as against another? Is it not true that the interests of the Negro people are basically the same as those of the white people? The same is true as between countries. The Communists recognize the Soviet Union to be a socialist land, run by working people in their own interests. They know also that the monopolist and reactionary forces in the United States and the world hate the very thought of socialism and would do nearly anything to hurt the Soviet Union and bring about its fall. As Cox correctly noted in *Caste, Class and Race*, "The principle danger of the USSR to the ruling class in the United States is the former's alarming prospects for economic and social success."

We also are firmly convinced that the stronger the forces of socialism in the world, the better are the chances for peace and, the stronger are the forces of the common people in our land as well. As we have shown at the outset of this chapter, it is impossible to understand why the world situation has become transformed into one advantageous to the cause of Negro freedom without also recognizing the great liberating influence which socialism represents. Our desire to see the lands of socialism succeed, therefore, is only another expression of our intense desire to benefit our own people, white and Negro.

The most fitting answer to the critics of the Communist Party is to be found in what Congressman Adam Clayton Powell wrote in his

Marching Blacks, at a time when the tongue of truth had not yet become paralyzed by anti-Communist hysteria. He said: "Today there is no group in America including the Christian church that practices racial brotherhood one tenth as much as the Communist Party."

We hope the day soon comes when this statement is no longer true—when *all* American organizations practice racial brotherhood.

HOW FAR FREEDOM

Let us now return briefly to the question posed at the beginning of this chapter: How far freedom? We have shown the many positive factors operating in favor of Negro equality. We have shown also that the freedom road is by no means all smooth and clear. It still faces serious roadblocks in the shape of monopoly domination nationally and Bourbon and Dixiecrat rule in the deep South. We have indicated further that the danger of setbacks and reversals cannot be discounted, particularly when a new economic crisis breaks forth, or if extreme reactionary forces succeed in winning political power.

We have warned, therefore, against illusions that all is well and that it is only a matter of a few years before final victory is won. It is our opinion that the rights of the Negro people cannot and will not be won until a movement of white-Negro unity arises more powerful than any this nation has yet seen. It is also our opinion that so powerful a movement cannot arise unless and until the real enemy is seen and fought. As long as there is a failure on the part of labor and Negro leadership to see monopoly as that enemy, so long are illusions inevitable, and with these, heart-breaking disappointments.

What is needed, therefore, is not merely a continuation of present-day unity between the Negro people's movement and organized labor, but a new growth and development of this unity in the form of a crystallized political alliance. Only then will the White House and Congress, and the politicians of both old parties, find it more difficult to evade measures to implement and enforce the Constitution and the civil right laws of the land. What is needed also, is the maximum support to the embattled Negro people of the deep South, and the building of a great new progressive reserve within the South by the organization of Southern labor, white and Negro.

A "New Reconstruction" period is not yet here. It will come when the battle for the right to vote is won in the South. Then a powerful movement of Southern Negro-white unity can sweep the Dixiecrats

out of political power and begin to change the role of the South in national politics. Such a development began to shape up in the 1880's and 1890's. But monopoly and its Southern henchmen were strong enough to crush it.

Next time it will be different. The Populist movement was mainly agrarian. Now, in addition to agrarian forces, there is a powerful labor movement. The Negro people also are better organized, more conscious, militant, and determined than ever. In the South important changes are taking place in the thinking of people. And on a world scale, the situation is radically different than in the 1890's.

If winning the franchise in the South is a prime necessity for a basic political change in that region, a change in the South is a necessity for a basic political change nationally and for the bringing into governmental office of a labor-farmer-Negro people's coalition. Thus the cause of winning freedom for the freed merges with the whole democratic struggle of the American people.

CHAPTER XIV

AMERICA'S FUTURE — SOCIALISM

The rapid progress true science now makes, occasions my regretting some-times that I was born too soon. It is impossible to imagine the height to which may be carried in a thousand years the power of men over matter. We may perhaps learn to deprive large masses of their gravity and give them absolute levity, for the sake of easy transportation. Agriculture may diminish its labor and double its produce; all diseases may be by sure means prevented or cured, not excepting even that of age, and our lives lengthened at pleasure even beyond the antediluvian standard. O, that a moral science were in a fair way to improvement that men would cease to be wolves to one another, and that human beings would at length learn what they now improperly call humanity.

—From letter of Benjamin Franklin to Joseph Priestley, 1780

CAPITALIST UTOPIA

LESS THAN TWO hundred years separate us from Franklin's prophecy of wonders to come and his hope that man would learn to be brother to man. How profound has been the progress in the conquest of nature! Even the prodigious imagination of a Franklin would be staggered by the immensity of the changes wrought by science since his day. Yet these appear puny and insignificant compared with those still to come, some just ahead. Limitless sources of energy—torn from the atom, stored from the sun, captured from the tides, and harnessed with the winds—will soon be available. When these powerful Paul

Bunyans and John Henrys set to work, Old Mother Earth will never look, or be, the same.

What all this means is that man is at long last approaching the day when labor need not be a burden but a creative joy, and when abundance for all can replace amplitude for some and poverty and insecurity for many. The age-old dream of man is now within reach. No longer need society operate under the dictum of "What's mine is mine and the devil take the hindmost," but under the civilized maxim, "From each according to his ability; to each according to his needs."

Henry Van Loon wrote that history "is the record of man in quest for his daily bread and butter." When this bread and butter was not enough to go around men fought over it like wolves. When men did learn to wrest from nature a surplus above their daily needs, a new struggle began, and this surplus became the privileged possession of a few. Thus small leisure classes arose, living off the backs of the rest of society. Today, however, for the first time in human history the material conditions are here to meet the needs of all men amply. Not only material needs, but spiritual as well—the need to live fuller and richer lives and to develop individual abilities, both physical and intellectual, to the utmost.

Men, therefore, no longer need be wolves to each other. It is possible to bring an end to the struggle for individual existence. And when that occurs, wrote Engels in his *Anti-Dühring*, "in a certain sense, man fully cuts himself off from the animal world, leaves the conditions of animal existence behind him and enters conditions which are really human." It is then that the humanity for which Franklin pleaded properly begins.

That America "has approached an adequate material base for a higher stage of civilization" is the topic discussed in a recent book, *Time for Living*, by George Soule. It also is the subject surveyed by Morris L. Ernst in *Utopia 1976*. Both authors believe that the revolutionary technological changes now under way are bound also to revolutionize our lives. They see a wondrous age arising, in which the hours of necessary work steadily decline and in which more and more time is devoted to the "art of living." They recognize that the leisure classes have now outlived their usefulness. The time is coming when all men will enjoy leisure and contribute to culture. Instead of the one-sidedness of present-day individual development they see future man developing with the many-sidedness of the talents of a Leonardo da Vinci. And this earthly paradise is not in the distant future. It is

close at hand. Ernst, as the title of his book indicates, believes that this new world will be upon us within twenty years, in time to celebrate the second centennial of the Declaration of Independence.

Ernst and Soule certainly are correct in noting that the age of atomic energy, electronically controlled automation, and new synthetic materials, will produce such abundance as to make possible the banishment of poverty, and all that goes with it, forever. Both authors also believe that some agreement will be worked out to prevent war with the Soviet Union or, if not an agreement, at least a *modus vivendi*. This is coupled with their opinion that the paradise a-borning will prove beyond the shadow of doubt the superiority of "our way" and provide, therefore, a powerful magnetic pull on the peoples of the socialist lands. At least it can be said for both Ernst and Soule that they have faith in the future and in peace.

Where they are mistaken, and profoundly so, is in their belief that the new civilization will develop automatically out of present day capitalism. In fact, they believe it already is in process of becoming and awaits only the perfection of the new technological changes to be ushered in full-blown. How is the new millenium to take place? According to them, simply by adding more and more to the nation's productivity. This, they think, will bring about an ever wider distribution of goods and services and an ever greater dispensation of leisure and culture. With abundance for all, with paid work-time taking up only a minimal number of hours per week, there no longer will be a leisure class—for all will be part of it. In this painless way a classless society will arrive, brought about by capitalism itself. Such is the fabulous near-future portrayed by the authors.

In Chapter V we quoted from George Soule's exposure of the prosperity myth of the 'twenties. Written in 1932, Soule had the advantage of hindsight to ridicule the myth in which "all fears for the future were banished," and which proclaimed, "We were all in a 'New Era' wherein not only would poverty be abolished but every one would become rich." Today, under the disadvantage of foresight, the same Soule is selling the new and bigger myth.

Ernst is not entirely blind to the danger of monopoly. He even states that, "There is nothing inevitable about the good days to come to our people by 1976." He sees a twin danger—that further concentration of capital into fewer and fewer hands will not only wipe out "essential competition," but will lead to "take over" by the government. The latter fate, to his mind, is just as bad, or even worse, for it also removes "essential competition." How to avoid both pitfalls,

he does not know. He points out that the Pentagon by giving its orders to the biggest corporations has only "aided the drive toward a monopoly market." He further notes that the insurance companies alone hold assets of over eighty billions of dollars, and that, "without a revision of life-insurance-company power, freedom will be difficult to maintain."

Moreover, he recognizes that the conversion of atomic energy to peaceful uses presents the nation with a new problem of great magnitude. Such immense capital investments are required for the production of atomic power "as to leave the operation either to the government or, at best, to a few score gigantic private conglomerations of capital." According to Ernst, therefore, we're in the soup either way. If we let private industry control atomic fission, we have monopoly on a colossal scale. But if we let the government take it over, we have what Ernst calls "statism" on a colossal scale. And if there is anything he seems to fear more than bigger business it is "bigger government."

Ernst evinces surprise that Big Business and its political henchmen should be encouraging the growth of monopolies. "For some odd reason," he says, "it fails to recognize that, faced by monopolies, our public will eventually prefer the government-run monopoly to the state-supervised private monopoly."

By stating the question in this way, Ernst betrays a basic lack of understanding of the inherent objective nature of the drive toward ever greater monopoly. He seems to think that the capitalists can turn this off and on, at will, like a water spigot. But monopoly, by its dominant position in the market, and by price-fixing arrangements, can counteract the tendency toward a declining rate of profit which arises from the need for ever larger capital investments. Thus monopoly, alone, guarantees the very maximum of profits. And these, as we have discussed previously, are not merely desirable for the sake of greed. They are absolutely essential for survival against merciless competition. Monopoly does not eliminate competition. It only drives it ever higher, into an even more vicious war between giant monopoly combinations fighting for national and world supremacy. The final outcome may be armed warfare between capitalist states.

Ernst's fear of government ownership of the means of production is also poorly grounded. In essence it is a repetition of the point of view expressed by Frederick Hayek in *The Road to Serfdom*. In this reactionary glorification of capitalism, Hayek wrote: "It is only because the control of the means of production is divided among

many people acting independently that nobody has complete power over us, that we as individuals can decide what to do with ourselves. If all the means of production were vested in a single hand, whether it be nominally that of 'society' as a whole or that of a dictator, whoever exercises control has complete power over us."

We know of no better reply to Hayek than that given by Oliver Cox in *Caste, Race and Class*. "In this passage," states Cox, "Hayek does not put the question fairly; yet it indicates very clearly the great fear: the fear of democracy. If the resources, the means of production, are vested in 'society' the people will not have 'complete power over us,' but rather *complete power over themselves*. . . . Under capitalism the people cannot have complete power over themselves for, in their attempts to achieve this, they are continually frustrated by private masters. To get this power they must first get it over the capitalists and their private officials. Moreover, compared with the total population, the individuals who control the means of production are not 'many' but few."

This is an accurate placement of the problem and can suffice as an answer to Ernst as well as Hayek. How does Ernst extricate himself from his self-inflicted dilemma of "bigger business" versus "statism?" He does so by an act of sheer faith. He believes that a way will be found by which to break up the big industrial and financial combinations in their own interest, and with their agreement. For example, "banks will be curtailed as to branches and deposits . . . no insurance companies may operate outside of a single Federal Reserve District, of which our nation has twelve," gargantuan companies will be controlled at the point where they tend to "stifle competition," the "vertical trust will be broken up," and by 1976, "we will prevent further loss of competition through merger or sale." Nor does Ernst exclude a possible need for some increased government ownership. He points out that the fire departments of our cities and our mails were operated at one time by private concerns, but now the government runs these and quite efficiently. He even challenges the assumption that there is more corruption in government than in Big Business.

From all this it is obvious that Ernst is not as serene about things as he pretends. He is worried about monopoly. But fearing what he calls "statism" even more, he shies away from the logical conclusion that monopoly curbs can be imposed only as a consequence of bitter struggle with monopoly. His faith is based on the illusion that through a spread of stock ownership the big corporations are going to be democratized. "With the shift from family or small group domination to widespread worker-owner participation," he opines, "labor leader-

ship with preferential balloting will soon be associated in the management of business.”

There is no need to repeat here what we said in Chapter V about the fallacy of this belief. Whatever increase there has taken place in stock ownership—and this has been greatly exaggerated—corporate control rests more firmly than ever in fewer and fewer hands. What miracle it is that will change this, and with the acquiescence of Big Business, neither Ernst nor anyone else can say. His faith is built, therefore, on the quicksand of illusion.

What about the problem of over-production, unemployment, and economic depression? Both Ernst and Soule say we must strive to prevent these, but they do not indicate how. They believe that the shorter work-week is the answer to automation. But when has the shorter work-week come without prior mass unemployment and the most bitter class conflict? This was true of the ten-hour day, the eight-hour day, and the forty-hour week. Is there any reason to believe that the thirty-hour week will come more easily? Will the corporations agree to such a reduction in the work-week while maintaining the same forty-hours of pay? Yet a shorter work-week which cuts into take-home pay solves nothing—it only aggravates the problem by lowering living standards.

Our two modern utopians also do not explain how economic crisis is to be prevented. Forgetting that each capitalist produces for profits, and with the hope of grabbing an ever larger share of the market for himself, they forget, further, that planning is impossible under capitalism and a periodic glutting of markets inevitable.

So long as the means of production are privately owned they remain a demonic force, created by man's social labor, but master over him. Only when society takes possession of these, and utilizes them on a planned basis, does man cease to be the slave of the powerful productive forces he himself has brought into being. In becoming their master, he becomes also the master of his own destiny.

Yes, America is more than ripe, from a material point of view, for a new and higher stage of civilization. But when it comes, it will not be some capitalist utopia. It will be socialism. This is as inevitable as is the impossibility of the capitalists to master the productive forces in the interests of man.

WAS MARX MISTAKEN?

Soule and Ernst both assert that the economic basis of Karl Marx's theory of scientific socialism "has been proven invalid." Soule devotes

a section of his book to "Marx's Mistaken Predictions." In this he declares that Marx was wrong about "increasing misery" under capitalism, about exploitation of colonial markets, about war among imperialist nations, about over-production, unemployment, and economic crises. He says hours have been reduced and living standards raised, "at least in the United States and Britain." He further notes that there are still "a large number of independent businessmen" and that even "European colonial empires are disintegrating."

But "most striking of all," says Soule, is that Marx was even wrong in his claim that the proletariat was the growing class in modern society. According to Soule this is not the case—the proletariat is shrinking in size and becoming more and more of a minority class. And lastly, the final proof that Marx was wrong, according to our utopians, is that the people in the most developed capitalist countries "have not been so dissatisfied as to wish to overthrow the system," while it has been overthrown in the countries in which capitalism was most weakly established.

It is not necessary to discuss each of these assertions. Some of them have already been dealt with. But we cannot refrain from touching on a few of them. Let us start with Soule's last point first. It is true that Marx and Engels believed that socialism would come first to the most highly developed capitalist countries. It has not. It has come first to some of the more backward industrial countries. Lenin gave the reasons for this. He showed that since Marx's day capitalism had become transformed into a world system, in which the majority of mankind was being oppressed by a handful of "advanced" countries. Thus the various national economies had become links in a single world chain. This, together with the fact that the economic and political development of the various countries proceeded at an uneven rate, meant that socialism would triumph first where the imperialist chain was weakest, irrespective of the level of industrial development.

This explains the 1917 socialist victory in Russia and the victories which followed World War II in China and in other countries. But it is incorrect to say that Marx's "prediction" was wrong. Marx was neither a utopian dreamer nor a crystal-ball prophet of things to come. He was a social scientist. He dissected capitalist society, unravelled its workings and exposed its contradictions. He studied capitalism as it had developed out of earlier social systems; showed the direction in which it was moving and the inevitability of socialism. He never claimed, nor has any Marxist, that the last word has been

uttered in social analysis. In fact, both he and Engels, as did Lenin and Stalin after them, refused to treat Marxism as some catechism which when memorized provides the answer to all problems. They insisted that only the groundwork had been laid for the science of society and that it was necessary to build upon this constantly, never fearing to add new conclusions from a study of new facts. Thus, this particular criticism of Marx is in reality a tribute to his scientific method—to Marxism as a *living* social science which does take into account and can explain new and changing social phenomena.

Special problems have arisen as a consequence of the prior victory of the socialist forces in more "backward" countries. But before discussing these, let us return to some of Soule's other criticisms. What about his claim that the working class is a declining class? This contention has become quite fashionable of late. But it is not true. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., in his book *The Vital Center*, "proves" this allegation by some sleight-of-hand juggling. By making the term "working class" synonymous with that of "common laborer" he easily proves that the proportion of common laborers in the total labor force has declined. Of course it has. Hardly anyone works with a pick and shovel nowadays. And if they work with any kind of machinery they are classified in U.S. Census reports as either "operatives" or as "craftsmen." If Schlesinger had troubled himself to look at these two categories, he would have found that they had grown. From 1940 to 1950, for example, the number of employed persons increased by 25 percent. In this same period of time the number of "non-farm laborers" declined by 10 percent, but the number of "operatives" increased by 38 percent, and the number of "craftsmen" by 51 percent.

The number and percentage of clerical workers has been increasing even more rapidly, some 57 percent between 1940 and 1950. It is this trend that Schlesinger, Soule, and others, cite as proof that the middle class is growing at the expense of the working class. But a white collar does not make one middle class any more than overalls makes one working class. If a person has to work for wages in order to live, he is a part of the working class regardless of how clean or dirty his collar, or whether he realizes this or not. Soule and Schlesinger also fail to recognize that mechanization and automation are only now pushing their electronic "brains" into the office. These will soon replace large masses of clerical workers, just as mechanical vending machines are replacing scores of sales people. According to Soule, "By virtue of automation, it [the industrial working class]

seems to be on the way toward extinction." In this contention he is wrong. Automation will bring unemployment to many workers, industrial and otherwise, and even reduce the number of production workers relative to the volume of production. But one thing cannot change. The more machines are used in factory, office, or field, the more machines must be produced. For this human labor is required, and under capitalism this cannot be anything else than wage labor.

Some of Soule's other criticisms of Marx indicate that he suffers from an extremely short memory and that his social vision is blurred by more than one blemish. This certainly is true of his reference to war, over-production, and economic crises. Are the 'thirties to be forgotten so soon? And the ghastly world war of the 'forties which "solved" the depression? But even more remarkable is his reference to "disintegrating" colonial empires as proof that Marx was wrong in speaking of "colonial exploitation." But what is bringing on this "disintegration" if not the revolutionary forces at work in the world, as analyzed and disclosed by Marx a century ago?

As for "increasing misery," it all depends on who takes the measurement, where, when and how. If we bear in mind that capitalism has become a world system, we will realize how impossible it is to discuss one country outside of its relation to others. We will realize that whatever improvements in living standards have been made in the "advanced" countries have been, to an extent, at the expense of the "backward" ones. Thus the American "high" standard of living cannot be separated from the Latin American low one, for Wall Street is the economic ruler over that region. Even Soule qualifies his statement with the phrase "at least in the United States and Britain." What are we to infer from this—that these two English speaking countries are superior to others' or that they have held the dominant position in world markets? Moreover, can we forget the tens of millions who perished needlessly in the wars of this century, and the mountains of misery and oceans of grief brought to the world's peoples? As we have shown in Chapter V, to discuss America's higher standard of living independent of these factors, and of the fortunate economic and geographic position in which this country found itself during the two world wars, is to close one's eyes to the bitter truth. Soule also forgets that he is taking his measurement at a moment of economic boom. What will things be like when this boom goes the way of all others?

Soule is correct when he states that Marx's analysis led him to the firm belief "That capitalism could not possibly produce abun-

dance for all in spite of its technical proficiency," and that, "This is the basic economic theory by which the expropriation of private owners of productive property has been defended." Not merely defended, may we add, but proven as indispensable for the salvation of society itself.

This, therefore, is the crux of our differences with Soule and Ernst. They believe that capitalism can control the productive forces and can usher in a modern utopia. We are of an opposite opinion. If capitalist utopia comes, there is no need for socialism, and it shall perish. But if it does not, will the Soules and Ernsts concede that it is capitalism which must perish? We wonder.

OF OX AND MEN

As long as Soule and Ernst cannot prove their utopia to be anything more than wishful dreaming, there is not only room for a socialist movement in this country; it is inevitable. Emerson wrote: "The river makes its own shores, and each legitimate idea makes its own channels and welcome . . . and disciples to explain it." This is true if objective conditions are understood to determine the legitimacy of ideas, for they are the waters without which the river itself dries up. Moreover, while a river wends its way regardless of whether there are disciples to explain it, ideas become a material force only through winning the minds of men, and for this disciples are necessary.

Ernst and Soule wrote their books because they wish to influence the minds of men, to win disciples for their ideas. Ernst admits, "of course I run the risk of being proven wrong by 1976." But he defends his right to dream, for, "Dreams are a form of ideas and hence are powerful makers of history . . . if enough men and women so want."

Yes, there is need for dreams. To dream is one of the characteristics which distinguishes man from beast. The bee is the most proficient and painstaking of workers. It performs its mechanical operations with an exactitude and perfection impossible to duplicate by other creatures. And yet it cannot visualize the cell or hive it is building. It operates by pure instinct alone; each cell exactly like the other. Man is different. He alone visualizes in his mind's eye the structure he is erecting. And when the dream of a better society dies, it will be because man himself is dead.

Our disagreement with Ernst is not, therefore, because he dreams;

only that his dreams are impossible of realization under capitalism. But if he asks for the right to dream, and for the right to persuade men of his views, he must be ready to concede the same right to others. This he does in the sense that he abhors the excesses of the witchhunt of recent years. He refuses to do so, however, by acknowledging that the idea of socialism has legitimacy. Thus, while conceding he may be proven wrong, he is not ready to concede that the opposite point of view may be proven correct.

Ernst recognizes that there may be legitimate grounds for some people in other countries embracing the ideas of socialism and following Communist leadership, but he has nothing but ridicule and scorn for Americans who hold such views. It is his opinion that those who turn to Communism in this country are being propelled in that direction by "psychological resistances to fathers and mothers. . . . American communism," he asserts, "has its psychological roots in the son's battle against a reactionary father and in the girl's resistance to an overwhelming mother."

This psychiatric explanation for Communism, which Ernst by no means limits to the United States, is a humorous, yet sad reflection upon the state of mind of some people. Incapable of explaining phenomena in a rational way, they turn to psychiatric mumbo-jumbo to explain everything. It is on a par with the imbecility which says that Marx's devastating criticism of capitalism was due to his suffering from carbuncles.

If, as Ernst holds, resistance to parents is the explanation for anti-capitalist views, then by the same tortured logic his own raptures over capitalist utopia must arise, not from objective judgment, but from what Freud and he would call "father love." But if that be the case what claims to objective truth can Ernst's views merit? Of course he would resist applying the psychiatric yardstick to his own social views, but then logic is logic and he cannot use an opposite measuring rod on himself than he proposes to use on other people.

But enough of this nonsense. If we indulge in it at all, it is only to show how utterly absurd it is to explain social ideas as distorted reflections of subjective impulses, instead of as reflections of objective reality. We do not know whether Ernst loved his father or not, nor do we care. We are discussing his views in an impersonal fashion, as they deserve.

Ernst is particularly derisive of middle class intellectuals who become Communists. He is guilty, therefore, of the crude mechanical materialism of which the Communists are accused, but of which they

are not guilty. He believes that only if one is hungry is there a rational explanation for an acceptance of Communist beliefs. Once again, therefore, he denies the existence of objective truth and the ability of human reason to grasp it. He also denies the possibility of individuals to sacrifice personal interests in the greater interests of society.

The very life of Marx, the materialist, is a refutation of this callous belief. In a letter to a German-American Socialist, Siegfried Meyer, Marx wrote of his toiling to finish the first volume of *Capital* "while constantly hovering at the edge of the grave." And in the course of the letter he said: "If one chose to be an ox, one could of course turn one's back on the sufferings of mankind and look after one's own skin." Yes, if one chose to be an ox!

SOCIALISM—ERSATZ AND REAL

A far more common practice of refusing to face up to the challenge of socialist ideas, and to the reality of the world movement toward socialism, is to brand all who advocate socialism as "foreign agents." Some may object to our placing the question this way. They may argue that the epithet "foreign agent" is reserved only for those who support the Soviet Union.

But a striking fact of our time is that it is becoming less and less possible to advocate abstract socialism without taking up the cudgels in defense of the only concrete socialist states that do exist in the world. It is no longer possible, as it was a quarter of a century ago, to draw some artificial distinction between the teachings of Marx and those of Lenin. The reality of world socialism is too imposing today to be treated as anything but the genuine article.

It is not required of all who consider themselves socialists to be in full accord with each and every thing done in the lands building socialism. It does require, on their part, a full recognition that for the first time in world history, and in the face of gigantic obstacles, these peoples are forging their way forward and building the foundation and edifice of a new society. As such they deserve the ardent good wishes and support of all who have the vision to see that the great productive forces created by man's collective labor must become his collective property.

The issue being joined, it is becoming more and more untenable to favor abstract socialism while rejecting its concrete forms. This has compelled a more public and frank disavowal of Marxian so-

cialism on the part of those who had previously abandoned it surreptitiously. These now accept the mirage of capitalist utopia as the gospel truth. They believe that through some form of osmosis, capitalism is acquiring all the virtues they formerly saw in socialism.

Let us cite, as an example, an article which appeared in the twentieth anniversary issue of *The Socialist Call*, by one of its former editors, Gus Tyler. According to this new knight-errant of capitalism, the objective of the socialist movement is being fulfilled, for it "has been and is converting the old capitalism into a 'mixed economy.'" "

Tyler concedes that a class struggle still exists, but not of the kind Marx described. "The fact is," he writes, "that the world today is split right down the middle, *Not* along the horizontal lines of *Class* differences, but along the *Vertical* lines of the Soviet power versus the non- or anti-Soviet power. . . . The fact is," Tyler continues, "in the light of the major struggle in the world today, the British proletariat has more in common with the British capitalists than with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union or the Communist Party of Great Britain. The fact is that . . . Norman Thomas has far more in common with Dwight Eisenhower or even William Knowland than he has with Khrushchev or Mao Tze-tung."

This "new socialism" which Tyler admits "sounds like stark betrayal"—and not only of socialism!—is less Tyler-made than Wall Street-made. He has not a word about the danger of monopoly—of reaction, race discrimination or colonial oppression. He has nothing to say about the huge profits being piled up by our billionaires. Nothing, but that the "basic struggle is . . . Soviet versus non-Soviet."

The issue between Tyler and ourselves is not between so-called "democratic socialism" versus so-called "dictatorial socialism," he himself makes plain. Is society moving toward socialism? Tyler answers: "if by 'socialism,' we mean public ownership and democratic control of the socially necessary means of production—a standard old fashioned definition—then the answer is, No, or—at best—Hardly." To which we ask: Is it possible to have socialism without public ownership of the means of production? And the answer is by no means "Hardly"; it is "No!"

We are grateful to Tyler for publicly acknowledging that his brand of socialism no longer resembles the real thing, even if, as he himself admits, his type of socialists have been "denying the fact or admitting it with shamefaced reluctance." One thing can be said for Tyler—he has neither shame nor reluctance. He, and those like him, both here and abroad, are thereby inadvertently helping to clear the

air. They are helping to bring an end to the division in the ranks of the honest adherents of Marxism. For any person possessing even a smattering of socialist consciousness must wince with pain, and turn sick to the stomach, at the Gus Tyler pretensions to socialism.

Even G. D. H. Cole, professor of social and political theory at Oxford, England, and an old-time British Socialist, finds it hard to swallow the betrayal of socialism in the name of socialism. In an article which appeared in an April, 1955, issue of *The Nation*, Cole calls for "A New Socialist Program." He writes, "I am assuredly no Communist." But, "I cannot, however, for that reason consent to regard the peoples of the Communist countries, or the Communists of my own or other countries, as enemies with whom I have nothing in common. I have much in common with them. I share their desire to help all the subject peoples of the world to emancipate themselves from foreign imperialist rule; I admire their planned economies and their vast achievements in economic construction; and I see them, on one condition, as advancing, however deviously, toward a classless society and an expansion of freedom, for the ordinary man and woman in the affairs of everyday living."

Cole is not blind to the failures of the Right-wing Socialists. "Even where nominally Socialist parties have gained majority support," he shows, "they have never attempted to establish socialism; even their attempts to further welfare have shown signs of petering out after their initial successes, owing to the difficulty of advancing further without disturbing the smooth working of the capitalist structure—to which they are supposed to be hostile—and the fear that by attacking it they will alienate marginal support." Bitterly he admits that the British ruling class is "holding down Malaya and Kenya"—"with Socialist acquiescence," and that, "It has been left to the Communists, from whatever motive, to appear as the champions of the oppressed peoples of the world."

Moreover, Cole notes that this perverted brand of socialism is "being forced on the Socialist parties by a reactionary leadership that has come to be more anti-Communist than pro-Socialist and sees nothing amiss in turning to capitalist America as its ally against Communism."

This attempt at an honest reappraisal is to be greeted. Cole is still strongly opposed to certain aspects of Soviet society. But he is not so biased as to fail to recognize betrayal of socialist principles when he sees it. He and other old Socialists find themselves, he states, "in a terribly difficult position. We are adjured in the name of unity and

of loyalty to our parties, to renounce our opposition to policies which we feel are disastrous and amount to a betrayal of socialism. . . . I for one cannot do this without violating my fundamental beliefs. . . . I know there are others in Great Britain who share this sentiment," Cole adds, "and I feel there must be many in other countries too."

There are, and many of them are in advance of Cole in their socialist thinking. In Italy, for example, the Nenni Socialists represent an important party allied with the Communists and accepting the reality of world socialism. In the United States, too, the betrayal of socialist principles by Right-wing Socialist leaders has increased the number of "independent" socialists sincerely striving to achieve clarity. These individuals express themselves at this time through a variety of ways, including local and national trends and through a number of publications. Many of them still have major theoretical and tactical differences with the Communists, and even continue to bear certain anti-Communist prejudices, but they stand, on the whole, in firm opposition to the anti-Soviet war drive, and recognize, in the Soviet Union, China and the Eastern European People's Democracies, countries that are building a new socialist life. The day will come when the best of these forces, and many more who have not yet spoken out, will unite together with the Communists to form a single, united party of socialism in the United States.

RUNNING THE GAUNTLET—YESTERDAY AND TODAY

Just as the air is being cleared between real and ersatz socialism, the day is approaching when many other popular misconceptions will be put to rest. The position of the *real* socialists has always been distorted, even though the ruling class would have it appear that its opposition has been only to present-day Communists and that past-day Socialists were treated more kindly. The facts do not bear this out.

Eugene Victor Debs, the leader of the Socialist Party in the days when it was a virile force, was sentenced to a ten-year prison term for opposing America's entry into World War I. Eugene Dennis, the General Secretary of the Communist Party, was not the first socialist, therefore, to serve a prison sentence.

Even before Debs' day, Socialists were maligned in the public eye as wild-eyed fanatics and "dangerous trouble-makers." In fact, every generation of advanced thinkers and fighters has been treated vilely by the ruling class of its own day. When these social pioneers died, however, they usually were placed on a pedestal, while the new

generation of advanced thinkers and militants were made to run a new gauntlet of abuse. William Dean Howells, American novelist and journalist who wrote the campaign biography of Lincoln, was compelled to note in the 1880's: "There were then [before the Civil War] red-mouthed abolitionists, just as now there are red-mouthed socialists; and the agitators of that period were not shorter-haired, less incendiary, or less malevolent, in the general eye, than the agitators of this."

How true! In the 1950's, to our eternal shame as Americans, an innocent couple, Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, were executed. In the 1920's, it was Sacco and Vanzetti who paid with their lives. In the 1880's, it was the Haymarket Martyrs; and in the 1870's, the Molly Maguires. Earlier the abolitionist, Elijah P. Lovejoy, was murdered. Men such as William Lloyd Garrison were tarred and feathered and imprisoned for speaking their opposition to slavery. And just as today in the deep South, the NAACP is being called "Communitic," so in the days of slavery were the abolitionists. In a book which appeared in 1857, George Fitzhugh, Southern economist, expressed the sentiments of the slaveowners: "We warn the North," he wrote, "that every one of the leading abolitionists is agitating the negro slavery question merely as a means to attain their ulterior ends . . . a surrender to Socialism and Communism—to no private property, no church, no law, to free love, free lands, free women and free children."

How reminiscent is this of the 1930's when the same dire warnings were uttered about unemployment insurance, union organization, Negro-white unity, and so on. And today, too, there are some who would be ready to admit that William Z. Foster made a vital contribution in organizing the steel workers in 1919. They would also grant that Benjamin J. Davis, Jr., made a splendid New York City Councilman, even as Walter White conceded in his last book. Likewise, these people would have nothing but admiration for the heroism of Robert Thompson during World War II, and the courageous crusading role of Elizabeth Gurley Flynn in the 1910's and 1920's. Yet Flynn and Thompson languish today in federal prisons because of their Communist beliefs. They do so, in great part, because many who would concede the valiant pioneering character of struggles in earlier periods, refuse to see that the Communist struggle of today, against even greater odds, is just as noble and valiant.

The periodic fits of violence and repression directed at those holding advanced and so-called "unpopular" social and political beliefs, has not been due to any real fear on the part of the ruling

class that a social revolution was imminent. Such has never been even remotely close in the United States, even if the ruling class many times has used the charge of force and violence to create an atmosphere of intimidation and repression. Even when the movement of conscious socialists was considerably larger than it is today, when many unions inscribed socialism on their banners, this movement still represented only a minority and never actually threatened the rule of capital. In fact, the strength of the socialist movement in this country has been generally weaker than in the other advanced capitalist countries.

This is partly the result of historical development. We Americans are among the most progressive-minded people in the world when it comes to accepting the need for change. The experiences in hewing a civilization out of a wilderness, the sparsity of population and the shortage of labor for long periods of time, have conditioned us to look forward to ever new innovations and new inventions in production methods. This explains, in part, our love for new-fangled gadgets and for new things in general.

At the same time, because our civilization did not arise out of an earlier one on American soil, but was transplanted bodily from Europe, it has been from the outset essentially capitalist in character. While peoples in Europe, Asia and Africa think of their history in terms of different social systems and different forms of government, the American people do not. We know only of capitalism and the federal constitution and government which are based on it. These are vested, therefore, with the appearance of eternity.

Moreover, because there was no entrenched feudal system in this country, the workers were never drawn into the political arena as early, or as fully, as was true on the European continent. In these other countries the struggle between the feudal aristocracy and the rising bourgeoisie was fought out over an extended period. The capitalists needed their future antagonists, the workers, as allies against feudalism. For this purpose they even drew the workers into politics and encouraged them to form their own political parties. Thus, in a number of European countries working class political parties arose even before trade unions, and in some, as Lenin showed in his comparison of conditions in the United States, Germany, and Russia, "the proletariat had established its party before the bourgeois liberals."

In the United States, the industrial bourgeoisie did need the aid of the workers—for a period—in the struggle against slavery. But American conditions did not necessitate a special political party of

the workers. First, because the bourgeoisie had already established its rule and governmental system as a result of the American Revolution. Second, because the peculiar electoral structure did not favor multiple parties. Third, and most important, because there was no hereditary working class as yet, the native workers being quite willing to follow the political leadership of the capitalists.

When these factors are taken into account, together with the ability of the ruling class to pull out of each of its economic tailspins and to give the appearance of renewed vitality and life, we have some of the most important reasons why socialist consciousness was so late and so slow in arriving, and why it is weak to this very day.

If the American capitalists have never had reason to fear an imminent social revolution, why then the violence and repression directed against Socialists and Communists in different periods? The reason is to be found in more immediate considerations. Always the ruling class has had a specific, concrete objective in mind. Always it has sought to intimidate and silence wider masses than those being pilloried. In the 1870's, it was determined to smash the trade union upsurge that followed the Civil War. In the 1880's, it set out to break the eight-hour day movement; and in the 1890's, to disperse the Populists. During World War I, it aimed to silence the widespread opposition to the war. In the 1920's, its purpose was to stop the immediate postwar upsurge and to launch the open shop anti-union drive which began in 1921. In the 1930's, it sought to prevent the mass movement which finally brought into being the New Deal. And in the 1950's, its objectives have been two-fold—to silence all opposition to the preparations for a new world war and to break up the popular unity born in the struggles of the 'thirties and 'forties.

These were the real objectives. The hysterical outcries about "foreign agent," "red menace," "force and violence" are only so much camouflage to confuse and to divide the people. "Appearances are deceitful," said Diogenes Laertius some seventeen hundred years ago. They still are.

A COMMUNIST LOOKS AT HIS PARTY

If widespread confusion exists in respect to Communism and what it stands for, this is even more true in respect to the organization of Communists—the Communist Party. The main reason for this is not too difficult to grasp. Never has an organization been more maligned and vilified.

Yet this is not the only contributing cause to confusion and misunderstanding. A number of specific American historical factors have also played their part. In Europe, for example, where there is the tradition and practice of multi-party systems, the existence of class parties is an accepted fact. Politics would appear strange without them.

In the United States, however, the electoral system has favored a two-party arrangement. Because the mass base of both major parties consists of varied and conflicting class and regional forces, these parties succeed in concealing their monopoly control and domination. Instead, they pose as classless or above-class parties.

Under circumstances such as these it is not surprising that the Communist Party, which frankly proclaims itself to be a party of the nation's wage-earning class, appears in many eyes to be different and, consequently, to be strange. We witness, therefore an anomalous situation. What appears strange in most other countries is considered orthodox here, and what appears orthodox elsewhere is considered strange here.

Americans have also been conditioned to think of parties as mere vote-catching machines. They find it difficult, therefore, to understand a party which continues to function, year in and year out, without winning important elective office. What is the purpose of a party, some people ask, if it fails to attain local, state or federal office?

Of course, side by side with the two catch-all electoral parties there do exist a number of distinct class political organizations. These employ various means by which to influence the course of government. In Chapter XI we showed that in countries with multi-party traditions, organizations such as the ADA and the PAC would have taken distinct party forms. To these organizations could be added such groups as the NAM, the Chamber of Commerce, the Farm Bureau. These latter organizations are also essentially political in character. They represent different groupings of Big Business and big farmers. Therefore, class political organizations do exist in American life in addition to the two major parties. What is different about the Communist Party is that it does not camouflage either its class character or political objectives.

If the Communist Party, unlike these other organizations, openly functions as a political party and not as a mere pressure group within the confines of the present two-party system, the reason is not difficult to find. It is simply this: the Communist Party does not believe that the basic interests of the working class can be served through the

instrumentality of the present two-party system. Nor does it believe that the problems which the nation will face can be solved without the ultimate change-over from capitalism to socialism. Thus, even though the Communist Party has not become a party commanding a large popular vote, or holding elective offices, it believes that its continued existence is indispensable to the welfare of the nation. It likewise believes that this truth will be recognized in time by the majority of the American people.

The Communist Party, of course, is desirous of winning elective office. It runs its own candidates where it is not kept off the ballot by reactionary election laws, or where the running of independent candidates will not come into head-on collision with the main forces of the labor and people's movement. It should be noted that when a more democratic electoral system based on proportional representation operated in New York City, during the New Deal-LaGuardia period, the Communist Party did elect two city councilmen—Benjamin J. Davis, Jr., in Manhattan, and Peter V. Cachionne, in Brooklyn.

The unity, discipline and adherence to principle which characterize the Communist Party are also the subject of calumny and abuse. In American politics cynicism toward party platforms and campaign promises is commonplace. A candidate for public office will frequently endorse policies in November which he casually forgets in January. The shabby garments of political dishonesty and irresponsibility are even paraded as the fine raiment of "political independence." They are made synonymous, not with skullduggery, but with independence of character and with refusal to wear another man's political collar. In a setting such as this, the insistence of the Communist Party that its members live and act in the spirit of its basic program and policies, or leave its ranks, is branded as an example of "totalitarianism," "party dictation," and "slavish conformity." Thus, party irresponsibility is elevated to a virtue while party responsibility is lowered to a vice.

This state of affairs has many ramifications. Because the need for a distinct working class political party is not yet understood in the ranks of the labor movement, there is even misunderstanding as to why Communists are organized on a shop or factory basis. What is forgotten is the simple fact that it is at the point of production that the workers face each other as workers, as members of a single class. It is logical, therefore, that a working class party should endeavor to build its organization correspondingly, just as the NAM, as a Big Business class organization, recruits its members from the corpora-

tions. But when the Communist Party endeavors to reach the workers at the shops or factories this is treated as something sinister.

These factors have all played a part in enabling reaction to sow confusion in the minds of large numbers of people as to the meaning, purpose and character of the Communist Party. But it also must be admitted self-critically that the Communist Party has not always taken these specific factors sufficiently into account and has made errors which frequently made it easier for calumny to be cast its way. The Communist Party, for example, has been the best exponent of the profound observation made by Lincoln that the strongest bond in human relations, outside the family tie, is that which unites the working people of all nations, tongues and kindreds. It has also understood that in the modern world no nation can live unto itself, that all parts of the great human family have common interests and goals and can and must learn from each other. But in practicing this principle, in attempting to learn from other lands, and particularly from the achievements and mistakes of their working classes and working class parties, the Communist Party has frequently erred in the direction of mechanically applying international experience. It has not gone deeply enough into specific American characteristics and conditions. This is particularly true of the Party's relations to the basic organizations of the people. This has led frequently to a certain rigidity and dogmatism in approach which has expressed itself in on-sided estimates and attitudes toward other individuals, groups and organizations.

There is no force in American life which has done more than the Communist Party to help the people form and mould the great movements through which they conduct their struggles. It was the first to pioneer in the organization of the unskilled and semi-skilled mass production workers. It was the first, in the 1930's, to build a powerful movement of the unemployed. It helped build the great Negro peoples' liberation movement. It constantly stressed to the people the need for organization and unity, repeating the words of Eugene V. Debs: "Develop your own capacity for clear thinking. Unorganized, you are helpless, you are held in contempt. Power comes through unity. Organization or stagnation, which will you take?"

But as the main enemy of the people, monopoly, was lost sight of or relegated to second place, as new illusions in capitalist prosperity developed, as the Big Lie was permitted to split the peoples' movement, a break occurred also between the Communist Party and many of the organizations and movements which it had helped to create

and build. The very character of the Communist Party as a united, energetic, and disciplined force was used by some to instil fear that the Communist purpose in supporting these struggles and organizations was to obtain "control" and to subject them to the party's ideology, policy and discipline. These fears were further engendered by certain incorrect practices on the part of Communists which led some people to believe that the Communist Party desired to infringe upon the democratic procedures within the organizations and upon their organizational autonomy and political independence.

There is no contradiction, however, between a Communist's loyalty and adherence to the principles of his own party and his basic loyalty to the people and to the organizations of which he may be a member. A Communist working in a mass movement—whether trade union or other type—abides by the majority view of the given organization, even where he happens to disagree. He does not, of course, surrender his own point of view. Democracy does not require this. But within the given organization, or in representing it in any capacity, he acts in accord with the majority will of its members. Even where he finds that he cannot in good conscience be a spokesman or representative for an official point of view, he still does not attempt to impose his own viewpoint upon that of the majority. In this way the Communist seeks to remain true to his principles, one of which is the acceptance of majority rule.

Henry Lee Moon, in his book *Balance of Power: The Negro Vote*, declared that "there is every reason why Negroes should oppose any attempt to purge Communists from American life." He then made the important observation that Negroes who disagree with the Communist Party "need not reject all that the Communists advocate. While cooperating with the party in the fight against lynching, terrorism, disfranchisement, unemployment, and the whole damnable Jim Crow system, Negroes have the responsibility to retain control of their organizations and institutions created to carry on this struggle. Aid should be welcomed, but outside control, whether by Communists or other cliques, must be rejected if the organizations are to hew to the line of their original purposes."

We agree wholeheartedly with this point of view. We take exception only to the designation of the Communists as a "clique." The Communists do not seek "outside control." They respect the organizational autonomy and political independence of the trade unions, the Negro people's organizations, and the other great organizations of the people. The Communists, of course, hope to influence

the policies and activities of these movements. But they aim to do this by the persuasiveness of their views and by winning the confidence of those with whom they wish to fight shoulder to shoulder for common progressive objectives.

Earlier in this chapter we referred to Emerson's remark that every legitimate idea makes its own channel and welcome, and its own disciples to explain it. But if a legitimate idea—legitimate in the sense that it reflects objective truth—makes its own disciples they, in turn, by winning the minds of men, help transform the idea into a dynamic force. This is true of scientific socialism and its organization, the Communist Party.

The legitimacy of ideas is tested in the crucible of struggle and experience. Even though the Communist Party is still a relatively small and weak party—mainly because objective conditions in this country have not favored the development of mass working class and socialist consciousness—it has, however, made a notable contribution to American life. Not even its severest critics can deny that it has helped impart more than one new and progressive idea. We witness proof of this assertion all about us: in the existence of the great organizations of the people, in the progress made toward labor unity, in the new level of the fight for Negro freedom, in the ascendancy of industrial over craft unionism, in the fight for a system of social insurance, and in the battle for lasting peace and against fascism. In each of these struggles, and in many more, the Communists have made a lasting and basic contribution to America.

In the early 1930's they were the "premature" anti-fascists, just as in the 1950's they have been the premature opponents of the "cold war" and the advocates of peaceful coexistence. Nearly always they have been called "wrong" at the outset of a great struggle, but before long these struggles became those of the majority. The same is true of the present struggle for world peace and for a recognition of the main enemy, monopoly, and of how to master this foe.

It is only a matter of time before life and experience will teach the American people the truth about Communism and the Communist Party. In the course of the struggle ahead it is inevitable that a great party of socialism will be built. This will base itself on the present Communist Party and on the unification with it of multiple forces within the working class and the nation who only now are beginning to move in the direction of socialist consciousness. For the need to master the great productive forces of man, in the interests of man, will become recognized by more and more Americans as the great need of our time.

THE "FOREIGN AGENT" CHARGE

There is one libel against the Communist Party which requires additional treatment. This is the charge of "foreign agent." This accusation is not entirely new in the arsenal of American politics. It was first used against Jefferson when he was fighting the Alien and Sedition Laws and giving vigorous support to the French Revolution. It was also used against the early Socialists—mainly German immigrants—who first planted the seeds of scientific socialism in the United States.

This charge, however, has gained much wider currency in recent years. There are a number of reasons for this. In the first place, socialism is no longer only a method of social analysis and a dream of a society in which the means of production are publicly owned. Today, some 900 million people possess Communist-led governments and are consciously building a new society. Second, since World War II the American monopolists have set as their goal complete world economic and political domination. The major obstacle which has stood in the way of this reactionary objective has been the socialist world and the peace forces allied with it. To the monopolists, therefore, anyone who has had the temerity to oppose their reactionary foreign policies and their plans for an anti-Soviet war, and—crime of crimes!—has dared to speak favorably of the Soviet Union and its foreign policy, has been *ipso facto* an enemy. But the foreign policies of Wall Street have also been the foreign policies of Washington. Thus, the refusal to support these policies has been made synonymous with treason to the nation itself, with the support of a foreign state against our own.

How dishonest is this distortion of the question can be seen when we pause to think—and without prejudice. All through the American Civil War, for example, Karl Marx militantly defended the American Government and fought against the pro-Southern, pro-slavery foreign policy of the British Government, although England had been his permanent home since 1849. Marx was a great admirer of Lincoln, referring to him as "one of the rare men who succeed in becoming great without ceasing to be good." Did all this make him an agent of Lincoln and the United States? Obviously not. And what about the British workers who were shut out of the textile mills for lack of American cotton, and who despite dire privation refused to support the pro-slavery foreign policy of their own government? Were they "foreign agents" too?

The dishonesty is even more transparent when we realize that this charge is made most vociferously at times when American foreign policy is in collision with Soviet foreign policy and not when both are in harmony.*

It was acknowledged during World War II, for example, that there were many fine things about the Soviet Union, that the living standards of the people had been rising steadily, and that the Soviet people supported their government. America's former Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Joseph Davies, wrote *Mission to Moscow*, which became a best-seller and later was produced as a movie. That was the period in which our people were amazed at the heroism displayed by the Soviet peoples, at the strength of their economic system, and at the insanity of the "experts" who had predicted Soviet collapse.

The spirit of that time was put into words by George Norris, in his autobiography *Fighting Liberal*, finished eight weeks before his death in 1944. Discussing the war he wrote: "There is the case of Russia. Her millions, unlike some of Hitler's earlier victims, did not give way to panic and despair. They fought mile by mile, their lands overrun, their cities in ruins, their homes despoiled, and their families scattered or killed. When the figures of Russian losses become known to the world, it may be found that millions have perished, and yet Russia carries on with a unanimity and a courage unexcelled in all human history. On the banks of Mother Volga her men stood at Stalingrad, and there in the rivers of their blood created a Russian spirit that truly breathes of a national immortality. I have faith in Russia."

But Norris, who did not forget the real enemy, monopoly, was worried justifiably about the peace. "We should not," he told the nation, "expect those who fought shoulder to shoulder with us to abandon their ideals of peace completely and stand by while we define the course of life in every quarter of the globe for time immemorial. We must meet these allies in understanding spirit, not

* In a column which appeared on August 17, 1955, shortly after the historic Geneva Summit Conference, Walter Lippmann actually admits that the charges of "foreign agent" and "Moscow domination" have no truth to them and were used as unprincipled weapons in the "cold war." The reduction in world tension, Lippmann states, "will compel the United States to rethink a number of its ideas. One of the first will be the assumption that the revolutionary movements all over the globe originate in Moscow, are directed from Moscow, and would fold up if Moscow could be made to behave. That is not true . . . in one way or another they would happen even if Moscow said nothing and did nothing about them."

in the belief that we alone have won the victory and we alone have the formula for permanent peace.”

These wise words of counsel were ignored, and Norris' worse fears came to pass. The monopolists did make their attempt “to define the course of life in every quarter of the globe for time immemorial.” Failing in this they set their course upon the preparation for a new war to accomplish the same objective.

WASHINGTON IRVING AND THE DIFFUSION OF ERROR

That the Soviet Union is maligned by reactionaries and misunderstood by many well-meaning people should not be surprising to Americans who know their own history. The same thing happened to this country in its formative period. This was dealt with by Washington Irving in his essay, “English Writers on America,” which appeared in his famous classic, *The Sketch Book*. In this article the author of Rip Van Winkle took the British press to task for spreading falsehood about the new, young America. He pointed to the great curiosity “awakened of late with respect to the United States,” and remarked that “The London press has teemed with volumes of travels through the Republic,” but that these “seem intended to diffuse error rather than knowledge.” Irving bitterly complained that “there is no people concerning whom the great mass of the British public have less pure information and entertain more numerous prejudices,” and this despite “the constant intercourse between the nations.”

That most of the British writers on America “should give prejudiced accounts of America,” wrote Irving, “is not a matter of surprise.” For America, is “a country in a singular state of moral and physical development; a country in which one of the greatest political experiments in the history of the world is now performing; and which presents the most profound and momentous studies to the statesman and the philosopher.”

If America was not understood, he continues, it is because those who visited it were in the main “purblind observers . . . affected by the little asperities incident to its present situation. They are capable only of judging the surface of things; of those matters which come in contact with their private interests and personal gratifications. They miss some of the smug conveniences and petty comforts which belong to an old, highly finished . . . society. . . . Trace these to their cause, and how often will they be found to originate in the mischievous effusions of mercenary writers; who, secure in their closets,

and for ignominious bread, concoct and circulate the venom that is to inflame the generous and the brave."

This description holds in general for the attitude toward the Soviet Union on the part of the American press and many American writers. The United States, in Washington Irving's day, was a young nation, building a new, more democratic state than any up to that time. The English ruling class, beaten in the American Revolution and in the War of 1812, harbored a grudge against the new Republic and scorned and derided it. Britain considered itself an advanced "finished" society. The young Republic, in contrast, sprawled over a vast territorial wilderness, and most of its people were dressed not in the finery of aristocracy but in the homespun clothes of the woodsman and the builder.

Far more venomous is the attitude of the capitalist ruling class toward the Soviet Union—a country which is building a society without capitalists. The people of the Soviet Union, too, are working with rough, calloused hands, building their own society as they would like it to be—not in the American way, nor the British way—but in their own way. They are pioneers, and they have undoubtedly made mistakes. But how foolish is he who would judge the ultimate significance of what they are doing by "the surface of things," by what Irving so aptly described as "smug conveniences and petty comforts." Conveniences and comforts are coming, many of them already here, but not for some—for all!

It has been sagely said: Never show some people a job half-done. Incapable of vision beyond their own experiences, there are people who see only the strewn bricks, the ugly scaffolding, the sorry mix-up of paint and plaster, and the workmen disheveled and begrimed.

Of course, as has been the case with America, time is the great tester—and time will also prove the nature of what is being built in the Soviet Union, China, and elsewhere. The truth cannot long be downed. Sooner or later it comes into its own. But in saying this we must not forget the great harm caused by falsehood. Jonathan Swift, the brilliant Irish satirist of the early eighteenth century, keenly observed that "it often happens that, if a lie be believed only for an hour, it has done its work, and there is no further occasion for it."

SOCIALISM AND THE UNITED STATES

We have said earlier that the victory of the socialist forces, taking place as it did in a number of less developed industrial countries

first, brought with it a chain of new problems. This arose from the strange paradox that where the material conditions for a new society of abundance were less developed, the political conditions happened to be ripest. Thus, these first socialist states did not have the material means with which to bring into being a developed socialist society. This had to be built.

The first country to take this path was the Soviet Union. We have indicated previously how shattered was its economy, how ravaged from wars and famine were its lands and peoples. And yet, it could not expect aid from the outside. The capitalist states were its sworn foes. The Soviet Union had to make the long haul, so to speak, by its own power. And this had to be done swiftly, for had it continued to lag behind the more advanced industrial states it would have been pounced upon and destroyed.

That this entailed great sacrifices, there can be no doubt. Even while living standards rose steadily, much of what could have gone into food, clothing and housing had to go into industrial development at a forced pace. Those who say that this world-shaking task of transforming old backward Russia into a modern industrial state should not have been undertaken, forget that nothing worthwhile is achieved easily. They also forget that the alternative was harrowing to say the least. It meant destruction—and a return to the bondage of former days. And the world can be grateful to the Soviet leaders and the Soviet people for their courage and perseverance. Had they faltered, is there anyone who can guarantee that Hitler would have been stopped without Soviet industrial and armed might?—or when?—and at what even more immense costs?

While the first stage of socialist society has been built by the Soviet people—despite the havoc and destruction of war—the Soviet Union still has a considerable distance to go to reach that level of per capita production at which the motto, "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs," can be applied. In fact, its per capita production still lags considerably behind the United States.

But now that the Soviet Union has emerged as a great world state and allied with it are a number of other socialist states, the situation is changing rapidly. Given a continuation of peace, the Soviet Union will make advances in material well-being, in culture, and in democracy that will astound the world. And it will do these things while giving other weaker states the economic assistance she herself could not get.

Many present-day misconceptions will perish in the course of these developments, although not all at once or easily. The charge,

for example, that the Communists value the state above the individual will be exposed for the falsehood that it is. Communists do not glorify the state. They believe that the state, as an institution of class rule, will some day perish, will wither away when economic classes and the struggle between them has disappeared and abundance and leisure exist for all. Thus it can be said that the Communists ardently believe in the Jeffersonian precept: the less governed, the better governed. But this can be realized only when the cycle is completed from small scattered individual production to collective production based on an abundance which can meet all men's needs. It is then that a new kind of individualism will flower, not one working at cross purposes and in conflict with other men, but in greatest harmony with them.

Socialism, when it comes to the United States, will not face the same type of problems as those faced in the socialist countries today. America, more than any country in the world, is prepared, from a productive point of view, for socialist society. Here, the economic transition from the first to the second stage of socialist society would be relatively swift. The inefficiency and waste arising from capitalist competition, from the anarchy of production, and from the excessive expenditures on advertising would be eliminated. The rich profit cream now being siphoned off by a class of monopoly parasites would be devoted to the well-being of the nation's producers. One can envision, therefore, an exceedingly rapid rise in the material standard of living and in education and culture. Moreover, production would not stand still. No longer fearing a lack of markets and over-production, the productive powers of the nation could be immensely expanded, even while the hours of work were being reduced. With the profit motive for discrimination removed, the Negro people would also have their full rights and freedom guaranteed for the first time.

Socialist democracy in the United States would take many political forms not identical with those of other countries. These would arise from two factors. First, the special history, culture, tradition, and experience of the American people. Second, from the fact that socialism in the United States would have no need to fear foreign intervention, and would not, therefore, require the strain and "forced marches" so necessary in those lands which first entered the socialist path. Different political parties, for example, could continue to exist. No political party or group would be denied access to the political arena so long as it abided by the majority will of the people.

We see the path toward socialism in the United States as one

in which the majority of the people first establish a government which aims to curb the power of the monopolists and to increase greatly the standard of living and democratic rights of the people. Such a labor-led government would be elected and brought into being by a coalition of forces such as we have described in previous chapters.

We are convinced that the experiences of the people themselves, in time, would teach them the need for exerting greater and greater control over the nation's economy and for moving toward public ownership of the basic monopoly-owned industries.

All this could be accomplished in a constitutional way, for the Constitution does provide the means by which it can be amended in part or in whole. The Communists, therefore, do not advocate the use of force and violence in the achievement of either their immediate or ultimate aims. On the contrary, they desire to accomplish necessary social change by winning the majority of the people for these, and by creating conditions in which the majority can exercise its will without infringement. Whether this is possible or not, depends not on the Communists, but upon whether the people can prevent the monopolists from unleashing violence against them.

The historian V. O. Key, Jr., in his book *Politics, Parties and Pressure Groups*, points out that a major reason for the peaceful turn-over of political power from one party to another in American politics is related to the fact that both parties are capitalist and that the ruling class has never been confronted with a radical challenge to its rule, let alone a determination to build a new society. "The question may well be raised," he asks, "how much political conflict we would tolerate. Could the nation continue an elective system, with alternating groups in control, if it were known that a change in party control would bring with it a genuinely radical change in governmental policy?"

Pendleton Herring, in his book *The Politics of Democracy*, goes even further. He concludes, "We cannot have a radical party standing for revolutionary change and a conservative stand pat party. Such parties may exist only on the plane of discussion. Revolutionary communism can be tolerated by democracy [meaning capitalism] as long as it remains an academic question!"

This is a vital problem, even if not an immediate one. When the slaveowning class of the South lost control over the federal government, it resorted to arms. There is no guarantee that this would not be the case again if a progressive, labor-led government were elected and attempted to make a number of radical changes in the

power of entrenched wealth. It is this, after all, which constitutes the real meaning of fascism—a counter-revolutionary force aimed at preventing the democratic will of the majority from being exercised.

From this it can be seen that the charge of advocating force and violence directed against the Communists is entirely false. The opposite is the case. The Communists have no intention of using force and violence to overthrow the government of the United States either in the immediate period or in any future period. This has been stressed time and time again by the Communist Party and its leading spokesmen, William Z. Foster and Eugene Dennis. Only if a fascist dictatorship were imposed over the people would the situation be different, and when we say fascist dictatorship we do not mean reactionary laws or even fascist-like laws, but a fascist state in which the democratic rights of the people are completely destroyed. Even if that terrible defeat for the democratic forces were to come, we would strive to win a majority of democratic-minded people to bring a restoration of democratic rights and processes. "The better and more progressive America toward which we strive," stressed Dennis, "can be built only by the American people, led by labor, and on the foundation of a stronger American democracy."

The charge of force and violence directed at the Communists stems in part from the popular fallacy that the word, revolution, is synonymous with the armed overthrow of a government. But as we have indicated in the early part of this book, the Civil War was also a revolution, in the sense that the slaveowning class was overthrown, but this occurred not by an armed revolution against the federal government, but by the armed might of the people in defense of the federal government and the Union.

Mary Beard, the wife and collaborator of Charles Beard, and a distinguished historian in her own right, had this to say about revolution in her *Short History of the American Labor Movement*, which appeared in 1924: "The word revolution is often misunderstood. It does not always, or even mainly, imply terror and executions such as accompanied the French Revolution, nor the destruction of life and property by violence. There can be peaceful revolutions. . . .

"The word revolution," she goes on to say, "means a fundamental or radical change in the basis of things. The winning of American independence was accomplished by a violent 'revolution' which substituted the authority of the American people for that of the British King and Parliament. . . . If the socialists should carry the election, find themselves in possession of the power of government, and intro-

duce public ownership of natural resources and industries, that would be a revolution, even though no violence whatever might accompany the process."

The fact is that no violence would accompany the process so long as the monopolists did not resort to violence to upset the democratic will of the majority.

THE HOUSE WE LIVE IN

We have come to the end of this book's journey. Our last thoughts are on this our native land.

America is a great, a wonderful country. Its people alert, energetic, intelligent—a continental tapestry woven from skeins of varied hues of nationality, religion and cultural background. The great American novelist Sinclair Lewis once said: "Intellectually I know that America is no better than any other country; emotionally I know she is better than every other country."

America's sons and daughters can understand this sentiment. It expresses the realization, on the one hand, that all nations and all peoples are equal in the sense that no nation or peoples are better or superior to others. And yet Lewis' thoughts express also something else—something we all know to be true—the special love that people bear for their own native soil and their own tongue, traditions and culture.

We all want this land to be great, even greater than it is. We want it to be respected by men and women all over the world, by the world's peoples. But the peoples of all countries are not the rich and the aristocratic—they are the common people, those who earn their bread by the sweat of their brows. America cannot be great, cannot inspire the hearts and minds of men everywhere, unless it learns to understand these peoples and to find a common language with them. This is what once made the United States great in the eyes of the world even before it was great as an industrial power.

The central theme of this book has been that what is holding America back, what threatens its future, is not some force outside our shores. It is a force here, within our midst, and it is here that it must be fought and mastered. Sinclair Lewis also said: "The United States is not a nation which in the long run allows itself to be pushed around." Very true. But those who are doing the pushing are here and not elsewhere.

We have repeated time and again—and we believe, proven—that

America can go forward only to the extent that she recognizes the simple truth underscored by Norris in his last biographical words. He said that "for more than a century the chief concern has not been infringement by the masses upon the rights of the rich, the powerful, and the strong. They have taken care of themselves. Largely until now the unceasing struggle has been to protect the helpless, the weak, and the poor from exploitation by the strong. In the main, the fight has been against . . . the greed and avarice of individuals and groups for wealth; the injection of privilege, favoritism, and discrimination in national policy.

"It will be recognized generally," he went on to state, "that those forces represent the greatest danger which American faith has faced."

Norris was correct when he warned the people "to be on guard" and that the war would be followed by "the greatest corporations" and "the most powerful monopolies the American people have ever known."

Only in the struggle to master these forces of Big Business, the real enemy, can the American people live up to and continue their great progressive traditions and fulfill the hope and promise of their age-old dream.

*Let the people take heart and hope everywhere
for the cross is bending,
the midnight is passing,
and joy cometh with the morning.*

—Eugene V. Debs

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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(Continued from front flap)

Author examines many questions about communism and world affairs that have troubled Americans, and presents the position of the Left in a fresh way. He gives major attention to the meaning of our democratic tradition for the present and the future, to the new hopes and prospects for enduring peace, to the problem of how to cope with the danger of economic crisis. The nature and dynamics of the two-party system are subjected to careful scrutiny, and the strategy of political realignment is discussed with an eye on the emergence of a party closely identified with the real needs of the people. The author analyzes the class content and relations of popular coalition, with special attention to the structure and policies of the labor movement, the changing position of the farmers in American economy and politics, and the enhanced national role of the Negro. In the process, he clarifies and reassesses some of the traditional viewpoints of the Left. In a final chapter, Gilbert Green discusses socialism as a goal for America, its native roots and its necessity for our national progress, against the background of our own history, customs and political structure.

Down to earth, the book is deeply planted in American soil, enriched by many allusions to our history and literature, and is written in a lively and lucid style, free of the dogmatism and the clichés which have often marred writings of the Left. It is offered by the author as a brief before the court of public opinion. In his own words, he "is leaving for a period of enforced absence and silence." He adds: "How long that period will be the reader will be able to determine more than the author."



About the Author

GILBERT GREEN is now serving a prison term of eight years. He was given a sentence of five years in the first trial of Communist leaders under the Smith Act. He became a political refugee on July 2, 1951, when his fellow defendants began serving their sentence. On Monday, February 27, 1956, at noon, he appeared at the U.S. Marshall's office at Foley Square in New York, and was taken into custody—at the place and the time he had specified in the letters sent over the previous week-end to the newspaper editors. "The reason I am taking this step," he wrote, "is that the main trend of the nation is no longer toward a new world war and McCarthyism. . . . New political winds are blowing. These give hope that the curtain of fear behind which democratic liberties were undermined and destroyed will be lifted." He was given another three years

in prison for "contempt of court" as a result of his failure to surrender at the appointed date.

The former youth leader and member of the Communist National Committee also wrote on the eve of his reappearance to Edwin A. Lahey of the *Chicago Daily News*: "You write, Ed, that my Communist views had turned me into a 'criminal and fugitive.' But you and I know—as do most thinking people—that I am guilty of no crime, and least of all, the ridiculous charge of conspiring to advocate the overthrow of the government by force. . . . I have been a fugitive not from justice but from injustice." Answering the charge that he had deserted his wife and three children, Gilbert Green wrote: "As for human sentiments and the capacity to love one's own kin, I give ground to no man. What I did five years ago arose from the very greatest love—for those closest and dearest to me—my own flesh and blood—and the human family of which we all are members. . . . If every individual had met the war hysteria and witch-hunt by bending his knees to it, there would not be the straightening of knees visible today."

Gilbert Green offers this book as his "own political brief before the highest court in the land—the court of public opinion."

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