

LABOR ACTION

Independent Socialist Weekly

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France Faces New Election Under Rigged Voting Law

By HENRY JUDD

PARIS—On June 17, France will hold its first general election in five years. The present National Assembly, the first to be elected since the country's liberation from the German occupation, will go out of existence and a new one will be returned to office to form a new government at the beginning of July. It is doubted if any country has ever held national elections under such strange and unfathomable circumstances as exist in France today!

The tripartite government which has ruled France for several years, since the exclusion of the Stalinists from the original, post-Resistance government, consists of a coalition of the Catholic-liberal MRP (Popular Republic Movement); the SFIO (Socialist Party) and the traditional, middle class Radical Socialist party. This feeble and leaderless coalition has been responsible for the familiar descent of France into economic hopelessness and political reaction. The grandiose schemes of social reconstruction which emerged from the war have been liquidated in this morass of contradictory elements, trivial politicians, reactionary Catholics and "laissez-faire" economists. Particularly, on the parliamentary plane, this combination has brought disgrace and shame on the institution of parliamentary democracy itself by its activities.

So strengthened had totalitarian and reactionary sentiment to the very existence of a parliament become, that the government was obliged to revise drastically the entire system under which the elections are to be held in order to preserve artificially its own existence! The last four months of its existence have been devoted almost exclusively to reform of the electoral law—to the exclusion of all economic and social problems created by the rearmament program. Now that task has been completed, and the most pathetic Assembly in the history of France's four republics is about to dissolve. What shall replace it?

RIGGING THE ELECTION

First of all, we shall not attempt to explain in detail the new electoral system, some of whose complexities would require a combined mathematician-statistician to unravel. In essence, with the exception of Paris and its immediate surroundings, the old system of proportional representation, on a departmental basis, is abolished. No change has been made in Paris and its surroundings because it is precisely here that the government parties (the tripartite) are weakest and therefore most likely to gain from retention of proportional representation. In France's remaining 90-odd departments (counties), proportional representation is re-

placed by a bloc voting system under which parties group together their votes. That bloc obtaining an absolute majority of the votes gets all the seats from that department, which they then proceed to



portion out among themselves according to . . . proportional representation! The idea, of course, is to return the government bloc and exclude the non-government parties (Stalinists, Gaullists, etc.). The whole thing is a clever attempt to continue the present coalition in power and to avoid facing the real issues which disturb the French people by substituting a weighted electoral scheme for a free discussion and measuring of opinion. The popular vote will not be reflected in the new Assembly, since the electoral law will distort this popular vote.

No one dares commit himself as to how the thing will work out, but the probable result will be a

continuation of the present coalition government with a shift to the right in the sense that the socialists' proportion of seats will fall, as against that of their coalition allies. At the same time, it is freely predicted there will be a huge abstentionism "vote," with perhaps one-third of the 24 million eligible voters, not voting. Their motives for not voting will be a combination of disgust, confusion, apathy and hostility toward the fantastic maneuvering and "bloc-ing" now going on amid the multitude of parties, groups, lists, etc. In the complete disarray of French political life, it is not too easy to make sense out of the combinations, or grasp any firm threads of understanding.

With various qualifications, each party and group can present lists of candidates in the various departments. Thirty such departmental lists must be presented to be considered a national party; i.e., a party which may form electoral blocs. If the present rate of formation and presentation of lists continues, some departments may have anywhere from 15 to 20 "parties" or lists to present to the voter on June 17! Begging the voters' indulgence, let us try to group together the major tendencies from this multitude. Even allowing for French skill at improvisation; we must remark that this time it has exceeded itself!

THE POLITICAL TENDENCIES

To be sure, the traditional divisions of "right," "left" and "center" have no significance, and such a grouping of the lists would be meaningless. It is better to group them in terms of modern political tendencies: that is, *reactionary-totalitarian*; *moderate-reformist*; and *socialist-radical ten-*

(Turn to last page)

Detroit AFL-CIO Block Mayor's Scab Threat

By WALTER JASON

DETROIT — For over three weeks, Republican Mayor Albert Cobo, elected with the active support of the AFL leadership here, has tried every trick short of employing scabs, to break the strike of the AFL street car and bus drivers union.

The complete solidarity of the 2,600 strikers, supported by the AFL and the UAW-CIO, prevented Mayor Cobo from carrying out his strike-breaking plans and Detroit remains without any public transportation.

When Mayor Cobo threatened this past week to hire scabs a city-wide meeting of all AFL and CIO local union leaders was called in which they pledged their organizations to give all-out support to the strikers. Emil Mazey made a

strong speech on behalf of the UAW-CIO which helped curb Mayor Cobo's enthusiasm for any strike-breaking through the use of scabs. "No one's going to bust a strike in this town," Mazey told Cobo.

The city administration is now seeking to break this important AFL strike by employment of the notorious Hutchinson Act passed by the state legislature. This act prohibits strikes of public employees, bargaining during any strike, and precludes any concessions to employees who engage in a strike, even after they return to work.

That similar laws in Kansas and Wisconsin have been declared unconstitutional has made no difference to Mayor Cobo. He has sought to hide his strike-breaking

under the excuse, "I've got to enforce the law." This has fooled no one except the editorial writers of Detroit's newspapers, who agree with him, to be sure.

Detroit's major stores downtown have been screaming for mercy for they have been very hard hit by lack of customers (something their man Cobo didn't expect). Autoworkers have teamed up in car driving so that very little absence from work has been due to the lack of street cars and buses.

Now that the autoworkers will get another six or seven cents increase on June 1st as a result of the escalator and annual improvement factor clauses in their contracts, the AFL unions are determined to get comparable raises. The city administration has balked

on giving a raise to the street car and bus drivers and has demanded elimination of all fringe benefits.

The formation of a United Labor Policy Committee of the AFL and CIO unions is a very probable outcome of the close solidarity they have shown in this fight with the mayor.

How this will effect the city's mayorality campaign this fall remains to be seen. In previous elections, the AFL leadership has supported Republicans against Richard Frankenstein and George Edwards, when they were UAW-CIO backed candidates for mayor. Certainly a united labor movement, backing a labor man for mayor offers a real possibility of success compared to the confusion, division, and defeat of the past political efforts of labor in Detroit.

Senate Passes Sham Aid Bill In Indian Famine

By ABEL BAKER

In an atmosphere of complete ill-will and grudging reluctance the Senate last week finally passed the Wheat to India Bill. Amidst a general denunciation of Indian foreign policy and criticism of the measure the senators sent the bill through the final stage of its tortuous legislative journey.

The House, which has a somewhat different version before it will probably vote this week. The two bills will then go to joint committee of both Houses where the differences will be compromised so as to minimize opposition—and this is customarily done by including the worst amendments of both in order to garner maximum votes. Then both Houses will re-vote the touched up bill and send it to the President for signature which will make it law.

We can thus expect that sometime in the middle of June, the month the Famine Season begins in earnest, the first trickle of grain will leave for India. But as the curtain falls on the domestic stage the tragedy only begins for India. For countless millions it will already be too late.

The original bill for aid to India as proposed by the administration almost six months ago called for an outright grant of two million tons of wheat. A handful of congressmen were able to keep this bill tied up for two months. It finally emerged only when an agreement had been reached to eliminate the grant and make it a loan (this is all that New Delhi had asked for in the first place).

Since the Indian press had a very intimate concern in every step of these machinations in Congress, literate Indian public has been kept constantly informed of the various expressions of opinion on a matter so vital to them. All the public questioning

of whether India deserved to have the food in view of her policy in Korea, were instantly reported.

At the final Senate session the longest debate took place over an

(Turn to last page)



Ballot on National Officers in Longshoremen's Union

Following the convention just held in Honolulu, the biennial election of international officers in the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union took place with Harry Bridges' slate of officers running unopposed. At present writing the coast-wise results are not available; but the results in Local 10, San Francisco, the home local of President Bridges and second vice-president Germaine Bulcke, are interesting. In a recent local election over 4000 votes were cast. Yet in this election only 2064 votes were cast, with 55 void ballots, leaving 2009 valid votes counted. Out of this the uncontested principal officers received the following votes: Bridges, President, 1446; Robertson, 1st Vice-Pres., 1292; Bulcke, 2nd Vice-Pres., 1353; Goldblatt, Sec'y-Treas., 1270.

In addition to their failure to vote in this largely uncontested election, the membership of the local expressed their attitude in another way: making use of a write-in vote (in an entirely unorganized fashion). For International President a total of 18 different names were written in and given a total of 86 votes. For first vice-president a total of 15 names were written in receiving altogether 42 votes; for second vice-president 26 names and 41 votes; and for Sec'y-Treas. 17 names and 35 votes.

THE EARLY HISTORY

Some of the early history of the union is of interest in connection with this election. It should also be remembered that in most elections Bridges and his fellow officials have been unopposed. In the early days of the Longshoremen's Union in San Francisco, the Communist Party group in the union published a mimeographed paper entitled "The Waterfront Worker." In 1935 Bridges was president of the San Francisco local, then existing as Local 38-79, I.L.A., and was unopposed in the elections of that year. While expressing "the highest regard" for Bridges, the waterfront workers condemned as "very bad" the fact that he was unopposed. Nevertheless Bridges, supported by the Communist Party, has brought about a situation where large numbers in the union believe it is a crime for anyone to run against Bridges or any of his principal fellow officers.

Considering the amount of opposition to the Bridges leadership in the ILWU the failure of any opposition candidates to run in the election must be blamed primarily on the lack of effective leadership and organization on the part of the opposition. Unfortunately, the opposition to the Bridges regime, aside from those characterized as "right wingers," consists of scattered individuals.

A provision in the ILWU Constitution makes it more difficult for opposition candidates to run for office. The provision holds

that, except for incumbent officers, no one can run for office who is not elected a delegate to the convention. Nominations are made at the convention. If more than two are nominated for any principal office, the convention selects the two names that are to go on the ballot. In Local 10 at least, the election of delegates is very largely a popularity contest, so that only the most popular members of the pro-Bridges, or of the "right wing" faction, stand any chance of election. The lack of courage and of principle in the representatives of the latter group results in no contest in the election.

UNCONTESTED ELECTIONS

The uncontested elections in the ILWU is not at all unusual in the American labor movement. It is a symbol of bureaucratism and the weakness of rank and file control in the labor movement of this country. It is to be remarked upon in the ILWU precisely because that union boasts so much about its democracy and rank and file control.

Actually, the tremendous emphasis upon "unity," characteristic of the Communist-led unions, is still an effective obstacle to the development of that healthy opposition to administration that is the necessary condition of genuine democracy in any union. Democracy can exist only when the membership can make effective choice between possible alternatives. In any union, this requires the existence of an opposition group or groups, to the administration. Unfortunately, like the entrenched regime in any other union, the Bridges officialdom and its supporters have exerted all their efforts to prevent the development of such opposition.

Individual opponents have suffered all kinds of slander and character assassination. The "indispensability" of the officials in office has been stressed again and again through an extreme exaggeration of their supposed superiority of talents and of purity of purpose. "Unity" has been hammered upon for so long that the suggestion of opposition to the established regime brings one

under suspicion of disloyalty to the union.

Up to the present, these procedures in the ILWU have been eminently successful in preserving intact the control of the International by the Bridges group. The opposition lacks courage, program and purpose. Never having held office one cannot tell what hidden talents and abilities exist in the ranks of the union. But this by no means guarantees the future success of the defenders of the reg-



ime. The tide is running rapidly against the Communist Party and all its fronts and fellow travellers. The fortress of the ILWU will be swept away like a child's sand fortress on the beach—like the former Stalinist fortress of the NMU. What is guaranteed by continued conduct of the union through the undemocratic procedures of preventing opposition groupings, of deciding all issues in the leadership and submitting them only in referendum form to the membership, of insisting that all virtue and all ability resides in the Bridges' leadership and that all critics are union traitors, is its utter destruction, and the rise to power of a conservative or reactionary despotism as in the NMU, one which would destroy every vestige of membership rights and control of the union.

If any democracy is to be defended in the union, full democracy must be built in the union,

and soon. The democratic rights of all must be defended—including the democratic rights of the Bridges' anti-democratic faction, and the anti-democrats of the "right wing." The dictatorial pretensions of all, including the above-mentioned groups, must be eliminated. In modern society, including our modern unions, democracy can exist in any important degree, only as organizations representing diverse opinion can freely exist. In the ILWU the Bridges group, including the Communist Party, has always existed in organized form. The conservative opposition exists in scattered form without ability to organize itself. Neither group fights genuinely for established principles. They fight for their own organizational power first, and then plan on execution of principles upon which they operate: the Bridges group representing the principles of the Stalinist movement in the interest of Russia; the "right wing," the conservative capitalist interests. Neither can well represent the immediate

economic interest of the membership because each is subject to an interest contrary to the interest of the working class.

What is needed is the open organization of a new group, one standing solidly on both progressive and democratic principle. It must stand for the right of opposition—always—and its right to freely organize and express itself. It must stand for genuine rank and file control in the union, for the presentation of issues for thorough consideration in the membership in pre-convention and pre-caucus discussion, not simply in post-convention referendum. It must be free from subservience to all imperialism, whether American or Russian. It must stand for genuine support of the struggles of all workers and genuine cooperation with them—no matter who they are. This is not everything, but it is a good beginning, good enough to organize and begin a progressive fight against the Bridges' bureaucracy which has a stranglehold on the ILWU.

BAY AREA PICKETS SPANISH CONSULATE

The Spanish Consulate in San Francisco was picketed last week by representatives of several Bay Area socialist organizations and the IWW. Demonstrating in solidarity with the workers of Spain who have been imprisoned in connection with the recent wave of strikes and boycotts in that country, the pickets distributed leaflets and carried placards reading: Halt U. S. Government Aid to Franco; Release the Imprisoned Spanish Strikers; Down with Totalitarianism on Both Sides of the Iron Curtain.

The organizations participating in the picket line were the Socialist Party—Local East Bay; Berkeley Socialist Club; Industrial Workers of the World; Berkeley Socialist Youth League; Independent Socialist League.

The pickets chanted slogans, and attracted considerable attention from passers by. Leaflets were distributed, which read in

part: "We march before the Spanish government's consulate in solidarity with these valiant anti-fascist fighters. Their coming victory over Franco will deal a powerful blow to world reaction everywhere—including Stalin's Russia. It will aid the working people of every land."

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THE BILLION-DOLLAR CLUB

Last week's *Business Week* reported on the growth of that wonderful 100 per cent American organization—the Billion-Dollar Club. The story is not a very long one. On the contrary, it is quite brief. We are sure the editors felt that the accompanying table tells us more than anything they could have written and we assume that is the reason why their story merely recorded the fact that the club took in one new member.

We should add, however, that there are really two Billion-Dollar Clubs, whose membership sometimes dovetails. One is the Billion-Dollar Club based on assets, and the other based on annual sales. The latter club has only (1) nineteen members compared to the twenty-two which belong to the assets club.

	Assets as of		% Growth Since 1939
	Dec. 31 1950	Dec. 31 1939	
Bell Telephone System	\$9,750	\$3,218	203.0
Standard Oil (N. J.)	4,188	2,035	105.8
General Motor Corp.	3,444	1,323	160.3
U. S. Steel Corp.	2,829	1,769	59.9
Pennsylvania R.R.	2,217	2,018	9.9
Southern Pacific System	1,854	1,646	12.6
New York Central R.R. Co.	1,843	1,631	13.0
Standard Oil Co. (Ind.)	1,640	723	126.8
Socony-Vacuum Oil Co.	1,610	930	73.1
E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Co.	1,472	736	100.0
Texas Co.	1,449	661	119.2
Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Ry.	1,379	1,116	23.6
Gulf Oil Corp.	1,344	523	157.0
Ford Motor Co.	1,343	692	94.1
Consolidated Edison Co. (N. Y.)	1,329	1,024	29.8
Bethlehem Steel Corp.	1,314	733	79.3
General Electric Co.	1,277	434	194.2
Union Pacific R.R.	1,247	1,101	13.3
Baltimore & Ohio R.R.	1,243	1,110	12.0
Standard Oil Co. (Cal.)	1,233	629	96.0
Pacific Gas & Electric Co.	1,111	657	69.1
Sears, Roebuck & Co.	1,033	324	218.8

What do the tables show? Merely that the big corporations—all of them monopolistic giants—have grown tremendously richer as a result of one war and a permanent war economy. Despite their loud howls about "confiscatory" taxes and the unfairness of the government in taxing "merit," they know as well as we do that the government, which is really their own, has been very kind to them and is the source of their present great wealth.

With the current war program manned almost exclusively by Big Business it is a certainty that the corporations will continue to expand and may get a few more members into the Billion-Dollar Club.

While the membership is exclusive it is publicly known, and we print the table which appeared in *Business Week* so that you may know the vulture corporations by name.

	Sales or Revenues		
	1950	1939	
General Motors Corp.	\$7,531	1,377	446.9
Bell Telephone System	3,262	1,107	194.7
Standard Oil Co. of (N. J.)	3,135	934	235.7
U. S. Steel Corp.	2,947	846	248.3
Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Co.	2,905	990	193.4
Sears, Roebuck & Co.	2,556	617	314.3
Swift & Co.	2,214	757	192.5
Chrysler Corp.	2,191	550	298.4
General Electric Co.	1,960	396	394.9
Armour & Co.	1,860	715	160.1
Bethlehem Steel Corp.	1,740	414	247.8
Socony-Vacuum Oil Co.	1,367	496	175.6
E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Co.	1,310	299	338.1
Standard Oil Co. (Ind.)	1,303	344	278.8
Texas Co.	1,249	365	242.2
Montgomery Ward & Co.	1,170	475	146.3
Gulf Oil Corp.	1,150	277	315.2
Safeway Stores, Inc.	1,101	306	259.8
Westinghouse Electric Corp.	1,020	175	482.9

Military Caste Winning "Great Debate"

Were MacArthur's Blunders Covered Up?

By WALTER JASON

When President Truman last week declared that he had been contemplating the removal of General MacArthur since last August, he stepped into dangerous territory. For President Truman inadvertently focused attention on a major aspect of the dispute between himself and MacArthur which could be very damaging to both of these factions.

Thus far, all questions at the Senate hearings have avoided the crucial questions: (a) Why did "our" political program collapse Korea, (b) Why did "we" suffer a military debacle before the Chinese Stalinists intervened and when they intervened?

The delicate handling of General MacArthur by the Senators was so outrageous that one important military critic in America could not restrain himself. In his brief but pungent broadcast on the hearings, Colonel S. L. A. Marshall, noted military historian of the American Army, who had just returned from a four-month study of the Korean war, virtu-

ally called the hearings a fraud. "They didn't handle General MacArthur with one pair of kid gloves. Each senator wore six pairs."

MACARTHUR'S EVASIONS

Colonel Marshall was bitterly indignant over MacArthur's evasion of responsibility for the debacle when the Chinese hit the dispersed American forces, and the fact that the senators didn't begin to question MacArthur seriously about his absurd alibis. Colonel Marshall bluntly characterized the MacArthur strategy of that period as "unbelievably reckless, and the most stupid possible." He declared the military disaster that took place to be similar to the notorious debacle of the Russian army in World War I at Tannenberg and the Masurian marshes.

Is it a wonder that Colonel Marshall was again called quickly back into active duty that week, and that Detroit has not heard another broadcast nor been able to read his military com-

ments in the Detroit News on this subject?

In an article dated May 10, Hanson W. Baldwin, military critic of the New York Times, finally came out with some of the obvious contradictions and evasions in General MacArthur's testimony.

Baldwin declares flatly that MacArthur had been warned of the intervention of the Chinese Stalinists. Col. Marshall in his radio broadcast also made quite a point of this. In fact, the latter said that if General Willoughby ever talked and were to quit taking the rap for his higher up (General Courtney Whitney and General MacArthur) this country would hear an amazing story.

THE EMBARRASSING TRUTH

The full truth of the Korean debacle would embarrass the Truman administration from two points of view. (1) Truman was busily engaged during that whole period in covering up MacArthur's blunders, since they had both agreed on the reckless adven-

ture. (2) Even the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who are against MacArthur both in terms of strategic concepts for war against Russia and in terms of internal military factional politics, do not care to have one of their top men, a rival, be exposed as a military failure in this important situation.

Thus the acute dilemma of the Truman administration. It wel-



comed the pro-war chauvinism aroused by the MacArthur return to America. It is anxious to keep its present strategic course unaltered, yet it can't permit MacArthur to discredit it during the process. But it can't permit MacArthur to become too strong!

It is these contradictions which make for the mumbo-jumbo in the hearings. Even Hanson Baldwin finds it necessary to present a "line" of defense of American intervention in Korea, after his careful criticisms of MacArthur's testimony.

How could either General MacArthur or the Joint Chiefs of Staff answer for the situation which Baldwin describes as existing between the Tenth Corps and the Eighth Army, in time of actual combat when close liaison was vital. How many lives did that mess cost?

Why doesn't the Senate hearing call before it everyone, including Col. Marshall, Hanson Baldwin, and Homer Bigart and Keyes Beech (the Pulitzer prize winners for their coverage—with criticisms—of the Korean campaign)? Then the American people would begin to have the full facts in the situation in order to make up their minds on foreign policy.

RISE OF MILITARY CASTE

Of course, the answer to our question is obvious. Such a hearing would damage the reputations of both the Truman administration and its political rival, headed by General MacArthur at the mo-

ment. The rift in the ruling circles in America has opened slightly the doors behind which American diplomacy and the military operate. Very little is hidden from the Russians, who are engaged in counter-moves everywhere in the world. Much is hidden from the American people, however.

Thus we have a development where MacArthur goes, but MacArthurism remains: a strong pro-war tendency backed by major newspaper chains in America, having a greater mass support than anyone thought three months ago, and with powerful influence in a major capitalist political party.

The emergence of the military caste as a very important policy-making power in American politics signifies another major step in the Europeanization of America. From the standpoint of American capitalist interests, General Marshall and the Joint Chiefs of Staff had an unassailable answer to the pro-MacArthur Republicans. "We aren't ready yet. War now would be premature." But the appetite of the military machine for men, equipment and all preparedness remains insatiable.

In any case, the military caste will be the winner of the great debate.

Horror Story

If you have tears, prepare to shed them now:

The Wall Street Journal, well-known fighter for the underprivileged, has been weeping bitterly over the following victims of the Welfare State.

In one family, both husband and wife work and manage to scrape together only \$17,000 a year. They have one child. Despite a \$10,000 inheritance, they have managed to get \$22,000 into debt.

The other family makes \$35,000 a year but has only \$26,600 left after paying taxes. The result is the man is so broke he "had to sell some stock" to buy new cars for himself and wife.

You're Invited

to speak your mind in the letter column of L.A. Our policy is to publish letters of general political interest, regardless of views. Keep them to 500 words.

Loyalty Oath for Public Employees Passes in Pennsylvania State Senate

By FRANK HARPER

PHILADELPHIA—The Republicans in Harrisburg never fail to serve the public. The American Legion calls for a Keystone State Loyalty Oath and the GOP eagerly complies. The bill sponsored by Albert R. Pechan of Armstrong county has passed the State Senate and is now being rewritten in the House State Government Committee. All public employees, including school teachers, will be required to take the same oath now required of federal employees. Candidates for elective office must, at the time of filing nomination papers, swear that they are not subversive.

IT IS ALREADY DONE

No better argument is needed against this proposal to circumvent the provisions of the bill of rights, than the fact that the FBI has been circumventing them illegally already. An agency which holds the law in such light esteem in the pursuit of all who dare disagree with the ideas of the National Association of Manufacturers and the United States Chamber of Commerce should not have additional powers conferred on it. If Congress is interested in preserving democracy in America, it could spend some time fruitfully in investigating illegal wire-tapping activities of the FBI.

Next to the socialist organizations the trade unions have been the chief victims of the whole

From the beginning the sponsoring senator stipulated that there would be no public hearings on the bill. He was not going to provide a forum for the disloyal elements to display their fifth. Only four persons were asked to testify before the Senate committee. These were the heads of the University of Pennsylvania, Temple University, Pennsylvania State College, and the University of Pittsburgh.

The main theme of the educators was that the bill was unnecessary since the colleges were now working day and night to remove subversive elements from the campus. This so impressed the legislators that they amended the bill to permit institutions of higher learning to report to the Governor once each year on the progress of programs to rid teaching staffs of subversive elements. Another change provides that visiting teachers from other states who serve only temporarily here will not have to take the oath. Heads of government depart-

ments and school boards will have the right to dismiss those found to be subversive. There is the right of appeal to the State Civil Service Commission and Department of Public Instruction.

The Senate version provided that the State Attorney General could designate any group of persons or organizations as subversive. The revised version does not contain this provision as it "would be dangerous to give that power to any state official." It would seem equally dangerous to require special oaths of candidates for political office. This danger is evidently of little concern.

It is conceivable that this provision would virtually eliminate such organizations as the Progressive Party and the Militant Workers Party from the election scene in this state and might even be an obstacle to "radical" labor unionists appearing on the ballot even under the Democratic Party banner.

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J. EDGAR HOOVER

The ISL Program in Brief

The Independent Socialist League stands for socialist democracy and against the two systems of exploitation which now divide the world: capitalism and Stalinism.

Capitalism cannot be reformed or liberalized, by any Fair Deal or other deal, so as to give the people freedom, abundance, security or peace. It must be abolished and replaced by a new social system, in which the people own and control the basic sectors of the economy, democratically controlling their own economic and political destinies.

Stalinism, in Russia and wherever it holds power, is a brutal totalitarianism—a new form of exploitation. Its agents in every country, the Communist Parties, are unrelenting enemies of socialism and have nothing in common with socialism—which cannot exist without effective democratic control by the people.

These two camps of capitalism and Stalinism are today at each other's throats in a world-wide imperialist rivalry for domination. This struggle can only lead to the most frightful war in history so long as the people leave the capitalist and Stalinist rulers in power. Independent Socialism stands for building and strengthening the Third Camp of the people against both war blocs.

The ISL, as a Marxist movement, looks to the working class and its ever-present struggle as the basic progressive force in society. The ISL is organized to spread the ideas of socialism in the labor movement and among all other sections of the people.

At the same time, Independent Socialists participate actively in every struggle to better the people's lot now—such as the fight for higher living standards, against Jim Crow and anti-Semitism, in defense of civil liberties and the trade-union movement. We seek to join together with all other militants in the labor movement as a left force working for the formation of an independent labor party and other progressive policies.

The fight for democracy and the fight for socialism are inseparable. There can be no lasting and genuine democracy without socialism, and there can be no socialism without democracy. To enroll under this banner, join the Independent Socialist League!

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Why is Morale of GI's So Low? Asks Times' Survey

By GORDON HASKELL

A survey of the "morale" of the soldiers in a number of army camps in this country by Benjamin Fine of the *New York Times* has given publicity to one of the central problems which faces the government in preparing the United States for war.

Fine set out to study the Troop Information and Education Program which is supposed to inform the soldiers on the broad issues of foreign policy which have led to their being in the army. But in studying the program the reporter had occasion to talk to a large number of soldiers, and get their opinions both on foreign policy and on the army itself.

Here are some of the opinions expressed:

"Why do we pay income taxes, and generals don't?"

"Democracy doesn't mean a damn thing to me in this hell-hole."

"If democracy means fighting for freedom, why don't we have some of it in the army?"

"They tell us about how bad communism is. Well, why not wait and defeat it when it comes here? Why look for trouble?"

"You know what they say about us? They call it the only legalized concentration camp in America."

Fine puts his finger on a number of reasons for the ignorance, indifference, and hostility of the soldiers toward the foreign policy of the government and toward the army. The troop information programs are understood and conducted chiefly by incompetent and indifferent leaders. Many of the soldiers who show a serious and even avid interest in getting information on what is happening in the world are thwarted by the poor instruction. Yet Fine admits that even a much better staffed and conducted program would not solve the problem.

After all, the men who become soldiers have had every opportunity to find out "what it is all about" in civilian life. The newspapers, radio programs, magazines which are available to the rest of the population were available to them before they were drafted or called up for service. They are, on the whole, no more ignorant or misinformed than the average citizen. The fact is that despite a deluge of propaganda by every means of communication, which is supposed to "inform" the people of the United

States on why they are fighting in Korea and why they may have to fight all over the world, ignorance and prejudice prevails much more widely than knowledge and understanding. And this state of affairs is not confined, by any means, to the "man in the street." It was one of General MacArthur's chief defenses when he appeared before the joint Senate committee.

The big difference is that the soldiers are that part of the population on whom the hardships of the rearmament program have concentrated themselves. Up till now no one else has felt them very much, except in the rapidly climbing cost of living. It is the soldiers, therefore, who feel most outraged, most frustrated by the mobilization program which has mobilized their whole lives. Hence the "low morale." Hence their desire to find out what it is all about.

It is an old saying that an army reflects the society of which it is a part, but in a more concentrated, sharpened form. The most striking example of this in our time was the Russian army which pursued the Germans all the way to Berlin. The Russian soldiers, brutalized by both the oppression and the example of the ruling class in Russia, spread a hatred of Stalinism wherever they went, which will not be the smallest element which will contribute to the eventual downfall of that system of tyranny.

American society is different from that of Russia, and its army is different also. Yet the same principle applies. The class relations which prevail in the country at large, the emphasis on personal gain at the expense of society which is central to capitalism, all these are reflected in more extreme form in the military cast system. The soldiers are told they are to fight for democracy, but in their daily lives they are shown that what counts is rank, "pull," or what is often termed "politics." Is it any wonder that they become confused, and that no amount of "information" lectures will solve their confusion? Is it any wonder that when they go abroad they tend to display to the peoples of the world not the positive aspects of political democracy, but rather the "principles," the "morality" which they are taught by the society from which they come, and even more, by the military society into which they are mobilized?

WORLD POLITICS

Bevin Summarizes Reasons for His Resignation

By ANEURIN BEVAN

(The resignation of Aneurin Bevan from the cabinet of the Labor Government in Great Britain excited a tremendous world interest because it brought before the public a long struggle that had been going on in the ranks of the Labor Party leadership over its program and policies. Bevan is known as the leader of the "left wing" of the Labor Party, but this appellation should be understood in its most general sense and in relation to the conservative Attlee leadership. The great interest of the socialists of the world was in what kind of program and policy Bevan urged in face of the deep world crisis and the difficulties of the Labor Government, which has continually moved to the right in succumbing to the tremendous world and domestic pressures exerted upon it.)

The following article by Bevan, while it does state his differences with the government, states them in such broad terms that it is difficult to know exactly where they differ in the concrete on more than just one or two domestic issues. We know that Bevan believes the government should go forward and not retreat; that it should act more independently vis-a-vis the United States and the monopolist-capitalist pressures which America exerts upon Great Britain today; that the government must not just "consolidate" its accomplishments, but go forward.

In what ways? What does Bevan think of the foreign policy of the government not only in the councils of the world today, but in relation to the remaining colonial empire of Great Britain? Of workers' control of production? Of the struggle against bureaucratism? And of the concrete extension of a "socialist" policy? On these matters Bevan speaks only in generalities or says nothing at all. And these questions are crucial ones.

Despite that, we think Bevan's statement, as written for the *Reynolds News* of London on May 6, 1951 is of interest to socialists everywhere, and we reprint this article for the information of our readers. Interest in Great Britain is so high that every bit of information is eagerly received in trying to understand events in that country. Bevan's article should help us understand what is happening there.—Ed.)

I should like in the first place to thank the many thousands of comrades in the Labour Movement who have sent me letters and telegrams of support.

They are most moving evidence of the essential soundness of our Socialist Movement. They form by themselves a complete rebuttal of those people who have stated so frequently that disagreements

Man for the Job

Harry A. Jung has a new job. He is now helping Chicago employers blacklist "disloyal" workers.

Jung's "service is now available to companies and individuals who need to check the background of persons to help determine the color of their sympathies and the depth of their patriotism." (That plug is from a staff writer of the *Wall Street Journal's* Chicago edition.)

His qualifications: for 30 years a professional racist and Jew-baiter; peddler of the notorious forgeries "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion"; professional strike-breaker; hailed by the Nazi World Service during the war as publisher of *The Vigilante*; etc.

in our Movement would have the effect of weakening it.

It must now be apparent to everyone that the opposite is the case. The Movement has been refreshed and enlivened by the controversy.

Of course, the Tories and the Opposition Press will do their best to try and build up the controversy into a split. We must be on our guard against that. Differences must not be allowed to be built up into divisions.

A lively and growing awareness of the problems that are facing our movement and the world is evidence of quickening life, and is in marked and hopeful contrast to the debilitation which had begun to overtake our movement.

It must have become apparent to any thoughtful student of British political affairs that the Socialist Party in this country



had begun to mute its message. Even before the last General Election, counsels of feebleness and of vacillation had suggested that electoral victory lay in the direction of diluting our Socialist policies.

It has always been my view that that is not only an incorrect estimate of the attitude of the vast mass of electors, but that even if it were true, there is no justification in diluting your principles in order to get votes. The duty of political parties is to educate the electorate, not to adjust themselves to the shifts of electoral opinion.

The task before us in general terms is clear. The British Socialist Party must declare to the world in unmistakable terms that there is a destiny before mankind which does not lie through the police state of the monolithic nations, nor through the jungle of uncontrolled competition.

From 1945 to the General Election we carried out a massive achievement, but this was concealed from the world by the misrepresentations of business men and others travelling abroad, of Opposition newspapers, and by, of course, the fear of governments in other countries that the success of British Socialism might ignite similar movements in their own countries.

At last, however, the truth was beginning to penetrate through this barrage. There was discernible in Italy and in France and in Germany a growing recognition that in this country something

new had been started that they could well make a model for their own political activities.

It was not that we had nationalized the railway system, because many other countries have had nationalized railway systems long ago.

It was not merely that we had nationalized coal—other countries have nationalized coal mines. But there were two things that we had done which struck their imagination. The one was the National Health Service, and the other was the public ownership of steel.

The nationalization of the British steel industry was the first real indication that British Socialism meant business. We had struck a blow at the central citadel of privileged property.

The other things that we had done, even the nationalization of the coal industry itself, could properly be described as first-aid operations, but the nationalization of steel was a sharp thrust forward.

The second glory of our 4½ years of power was in the free National Health Service. This is a piece of genuine, undiluted Socialism. Its central principle is one which has been proclaimed from the Socialist platforms for almost a century. It was fiercely and even bitterly attacked in other countries where commercial medicine was powerfully entrenched.

It was resisted in this country, as we all know, by the Tories and by those elements of the medical profession which had been brought up in the values of a commercialized society. But it was established in the teeth of all this opposition. It had gone through its early troubles, it was settling down, the people were beginning to use it prudently and with a sense of responsibility. It could safely be left to administrative care, and we were boasting about it in every country of the world.

The issue before the Socialist Movement is whether we are going to press forward. It is not whether we are going to consolidate what we have accomplished. That was always a foolish phrase. We either go forward—or we go backwards. As we have already seen, the short period of consolidation was followed by the beginning of a retreat.

The retreat must stop. The Socialist Movement must regain its faith. It must act up to its responsibility to itself and to the world.

It must do this, not only in domestic affairs; it must assert itself also in the councils of the world.

Although we must preserve our alliances and keep our friends, nevertheless our own views in the conferences must be a distinctive voice, a voice expressing our own definite attitude toward the modern world.

There is no time in a short article of this nature to describe in detail what it is we should say, or what we should do. The first necessity is to face in the right direction. It will then be for us to take counsel together to determine the rate of our advance.

Parliamentary Elections in Israel Bares Fight with Religious Bloc

By AL FINDLEY

Part I

New national elections to the Knesset, the Israeli parliament, are scheduled for July 30 and the campaign is already in high gear. The new elections will take place against the background of a world plunging madly toward war and with an almost bewildering series of developments within the parties and groups in Israel.

Every party, with the exception of Mapai and the General Zionists, face serious internal factional struggles and developing splits. The three main issues in the election are: (1) religious question; (2) foreign policy, and (3) economic policy. The Arab question, of vital importance to the future of Israel, is, unfortunately, not a real issue in the campaign.

The religious controversy is, however, one of the most important now facing the country. It was punctuated this week by the arrest of a group of religious fanatics who had planned to "bomb" the Knesset in order to focus attention on the religious problem.

The present elections come after the fall of the cabinet in a dispute over the religious question, and therefore, we shall treat with this first.

Israel has a real and serious clerical problem. If it is not resolved now in a progressive way it is sure to become an increasingly worse one. One of the factors making for the intensification and aggravation of this problem is the influx of backward, religious Jews from oriental areas.

COALITION RULES

The modern state of Israel is governed by a coalition headed by socialists (in the most general meaning of the term), yet it has a state-established religion. How did this come about? In part, it was a carryover from the laws of the British mandate; in part from a desire not to antagonize the Moslem and Christian clergy; but in the main, it is the product of an unprincipled alliance of the non-clerical parties and the religious bloc.

When the first Knesset was elected, the Mapai had about 35 per cent of the vote, Mapam 15 per cent, the religious bloc 13 per cent, and the General Zionists and Progressives about 6 per cent each. The programmatic positions of the various parties made a mistaken attitude toward the churches on the part of the Polish government.

Lebediev has been Stalin's ambassador in Warsaw since 1945 when the international situation required a "mild" policy in Poland. Mikolajczyk and his Peasant Party were still participants in the government and the Potsdam meeting had only just taken place. Lebediev had been instructed by Stalin to pursue a "soft" policy toward the peasants and the Catholic Church. Lebediev's mistake apparently consisted of his loyalty to those original instructions from the "great master" who, in the meantime, had completely changed his own policy in accord with the new interests of Russian imperialism in Poland and Europe. That is why in March Radio Moscow announced the removal of Ambassador Lebediev.

The clergy has complete control of all personal matters such as marriage, divorce, inheritance status of women and children in the family, etc. The Ministry of Religion, ostensibly created for all religions, is headed by an orthodox Rabbi and devotes its main efforts to furthering the interests and tenets of the orthodox sect among Jews. Yet, it would be wrong to state that the only orthodox Jewish religion is a state religion. The truth is that in Israel all other non-Jewish sects also have the legal right to impose their religious ideas on the members of their respective communities.

Since the clergy has full control of all "personal" questions, civil marriage is non-existent in Israel. Even atheists must be married by clergymen. In addition, polygamy is still legal amongst the Mohammedans and child marriage is practised by both Arabs and oriental Jews. The most glaring contradictions are to be found in the status

of women in this modern state. Women enjoy full equality in the cities and collective farm settlements. Yet they have an extremely low status under the religious law of the Mohammedans, Arab-Christians and Jewish orthodoxy. There is no need to dwell on the inferior positions that women occupy in the Arab countries since that is fairly well known. They are virtually chattel possessions of their husbands with few or no rights at all. So that despite women's political suffrage rights, the power of the religious bloc in Israel continues their low status in everyday life and the ancient patriarchal rule of the family continues with legal sanction.

Orthodox Jewish law also imposes severe disabilities on women. They cannot inherit property. They cannot be witnesses or judges in religious courts, and they have no right to divorce their husbands under any circumstances. If a man becomes insane, deserts his wife, or is missing in battle, she remains bound to him for the rest of her life.

The control of marriage by religious law affects not only the status of women and the family, but threatens freedom in the choice of marital partners. Thus, the clergy can legally prevent marriages between Jews and Arabs. This enhances some of the worst features of segregation and discrimination. At present, partners to a mixed marriage in other countries find it very difficult to migrate to Israel with their families.

While the Israeli government recognizes many Christian and Moslem sects, the orthodox clergy has a monopoly on the Jewish religion. No reform or conservative

Orthodox rabbis are paid by the state and orthodox synagogues are built by the state. Other Jewish sects enjoy no such rights. It is reported that the three reform temples in Israel must conduct their services in accordance with the orthodox pattern of seating men and women separately if they want to remain open.

Another aspect of this problem is the attempt of the orthodox clergy to impose its concept of Sabbath observance on the community. All public transportation is stopped on Saturday. Theatres, restaurants and all stores must close. In fairness to the moderates, one must say that they propose to establish a theocracy. Their program calls for individual freedom of conscience, but they demand, at the same time, that the Jewish religion be observed in public. However, the multiple laws of the Jewish religion and the restrictions that it imposes, makes impossible such a demarcation. For example, if a private individual wants to visit his family in another part of town, he finds that there are no busses to take him there.

The blue laws of the Jewish religion are many times stricter than the blue laws of the most puritanical Protestant sects. These laws impose the severest of restrictions on the individual. The moderates also get caught up in the logic of their own position and have to stand by while extremist groups burn private automobiles, or stores

that sell non-kosher meats. After all, what difference is there between a public bus that violates the Sabbath and a private car which uses the public highways to do the same thing? If public observance of the law is required, how can one permit the public sale of non-kosher food, or its importation by the government?

Fundamentally, there are two ways of establishing religious freedom: one, is to support all religious sects equally; the other, is to establish a secular state with complete separation of state and religion, and allow the individual complete freedom in the practise of religion, or rejection of it. Israeli leaders, including some of the top leaders of Mapai, have chosen the first path as their road to religious freedom. In practice, as we have shown, Israel has no religious freedom of any kind.

As long as all people believed in one or another of the many religions, either of the above two methods could have given religious freedom to them. In modern times, however, when a sizeable section of the population accepts no religion, the complete separation of church and state is the only way in which religious freedom, or freedom from religion, can be maintained.

Having won a very important victory in the establishment of the state of Israel, the religious leaders of the country began to use their position as a means of enlarging their power. The conflict came to the fore with the mass immigration of thousands of religious Jews from the oriental countries.

(To be continued)

Stalin Prepares Poland for War

By A. RUDZIENSKI

The news from Poland is that the Russian ambassador to Poland, Lebediev, has been recalled. The Polish press in England reports that Lebediev's recall was caused by his policies in Poland. Lebediev is reproached for proceeding too slowly with the collectivization of the Polish villages and also for permitting a mistaken attitude toward the churches on the part of the Polish government.

Lebediev has been Stalin's ambassador in Warsaw since 1945 when the international situation required a "mild" policy in Poland. Mikolajczyk and his Peasant Party were still participants in the government and the Potsdam meeting had only just taken place. Lebediev had been instructed by Stalin to pursue a "soft" policy toward the peasants and the Catholic Church. Lebediev's mistake apparently consisted of his loyalty to those original instructions from the "great master" who, in the meantime, had completely changed his own policy in accord with the new interests of Russian imperialism in Poland and Europe. That is why in March Radio Moscow announced the removal of Ambassador Lebediev.

Lebediev continued to carry out the old instructions of the "genial master" but in the meantime the master had changed his mind. The tyrant of the Kremlin is highly discontented with the power of Catholicism in Poland and the resistance of the organized Church. He is also dissatisfied with the opposition of the peasants to collectivization, their economic "autonomy" and relative independence from the regime.

THE NEW INSPECTOR

This dissatisfaction is so great that Stalin distrusts Rokossovsky, who was once imprisoned because he was suspected of being an oppositionist during the military purges. Now it is said that Rokossovsky's star could pale. It would appear that the new ambassador to Poland, Skobolev, is also Rokossovsky's political "overseer." He has had considerable experience in this field because he was also "inspector" over Marshal Zukov when the latter was head of the Russian Army of Occupation in Europe.

Skobolev's vigilant "inspection" of Zukov ended with the Marshal's recall from Europe. Skobolev was also head of the American department of Stalin's foreign ministry and a member of the Russian delegation at Potsdam. More recently, he had "important work" at the "peace conference"

and militarily for the new Russian offensive in Europe and Asia.

In the case of Lebediev, he proved incapable of accomplishing this task because he thought the situation in Poland was different from the one in Czechoslovakia; that the danger of a Polish insurrection and of the rise of Polish Titoism was greater than elsewhere. He therefore took this to mean that the policy toward the Catholic Church and the peasants should be "softer" and the pace of Russification slower.

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(To be continued)

in Warsaw. He belongs to Stalin's most confidential group of sycophants. Since the Russian police system requires and produces many types of control and purges, Skobolev's role becomes obvious.

It is obvious that Russian imperialist policy in Europe and Asia requires a swifter pace in the Russification of Poland because that country is the center of Russian occupation in Europe, and also its weak spot. The Polish opposition is very dangerous to Russia because a Polish insurrection might easily extend to the other occupied countries of Europe and jeopardize Stalin's domination of the satellite nations.

So, Russian military and war policy requires the mobilization of Polish industry under Russian control and a lowering of the standard of living of the Polish working class to the Russian level. It requires also the incorporation of agriculture into the war economy through forced collectivization in "Ukrainian style." It also requires a cultural Russification, i.e., an eradication of Catholicism among the peasants and middle class and destruction of the cultural power of the Catholic Church. The Poles are the only Slav people who are entirely Roman Catholic and hence very much opposed to the Russian Greek Orthodox Church.

The Warsaw regime, despite the help of Rokossovsky, has not made very great progress in breaking the resistance of the workers, peasants and the Catholic Church. The Master in the Kremlin is looking for a scapegoat, a new victim. Who could be a better one than the "great Marshal of Poland," Rokossovsky?

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Background to the Crisis in Iran

By RICHARD TROY

Ever since the assassination of Iran's Premier, Razmara last February, that strategically-located and unique middle-eastern country has been front page news. Razmara's assassination by a Moslem fanatic who resented the Premier's opposition to the nationalization of the huge Anglo-Iranian Oil Company led immediately to the coming to power of the anti-British National Front, under the leadership of Dr. Mossadeh, now Prime Minister. Under his direction the Iranian Parliament (the Majlis), enthusiastically passed several bills nationalizing the rich British oil properties.

All these events have caused considerable consternation in the west and a great deal of chaos in Iran. The British in a frantic but apparently vain appeal have insisted that their property cannot be unilaterally expropriated. The reaction of the American press has been ambivalent. On the one hand it speaks of the possibilities of Russian encroachment in Iran, interpreting the victory of the anti-British Mossadeh party as a victory for Stalin and his Tudeh (or Masses) Party, and on the other, deny that Russia can gain anything out of the situation there.

There have been many long-winded attempts to explain the "failure" of western policy toward Iran, and to find means to "correct" it before it is "too late." Reporters in Iran have been dispatching urgent cables pointing out that "something must be done" immediately. Even the Hearst Press has recognized that a crisis is at hand and recently devoted several pages of the Journal-American to a picture-portrayal of the "plight" of Iran.

The picture of modern Iran is distressing, particularly since it reflects the distress of almost all the backward nations today. Because the problems of Iran are so typical of these nations, a more detailed examination of the country is required.

For those who were familiar with the Iranian scene the events of the past few months have not been a complete surprise. The history of post-war Iran has never been a hopeful one, it had always been looked upon as a "sad" country, an "unfortunate" geographical entity. Caught in the web of Great Power conflicts, saddled with an incredibly backward economy which has not changed much for hundreds of years, and suffering one of the most parasitical and corrupt ruling classes of our century, Iran plodded into the post-war world without great hope.

It was an area in which, as every correspondent pointed out repeatedly, the Stalinists might make a great deal of headway. In recent times Iran has known little stability. It is true that before the last war Reza Shah Pahlavi, a typical between-the-wars dictator and father of the present Shah, had brought Iran, by force of arms, to a certain measure of order and stability (he built the great boulevards of Teheran!). But around 1936 his control began to slip and, in 1941, when the Russians and British occupied Iran, he was forced to flee his country and hand over the shabby crown to his son, the present Shah. No great change followed since the post-war Iranian Government has not been able to pull the nation together. And one does not have to look far to find out why.

NATURE OF THE RULING CLASS

The ruling class of present-day Iran contains within itself all the weaknesses of the ruling classes of the majority of backward nations. And it has a few more distinctly its own. As absentee landowners the Iranian aristocracy makes its headquarters the counting houses and halls of parliament in Teheran. In this city the wealth of Iran is accumulated and spent.

Aside from collecting the revenue from their vast estates (it is estimated that 300 families control a majority of the land of the country) the landed aristocracy grows continuously richer by digging into the vast sums of money received by the government from the oil and other concessions. The government, which they control lock, stock and barrel, is, in a sense, merely a huge over-stuffed organization devoted chiefly to the disbursement among these landowner-politicians of the royalties and other revenue of Iran.

Needless to say such a Government is incredibly corrupt; all the important posts are filled from this small inbred and closed class of landowners. There is absolutely no check upon the power of the ruling class and its method of dividing up the spoils. To understand this fully one must realize that, Iran has a pre-capitalist economy in which money and profit play a small role. Only in Teheran itself, where there is a steady income from foreign countries does money dominate the economic relations. Consequently the gap between Teheran and the rest of the country is tremendous. With the fluid wealth of the nation entirely in its hands, this small, completely corrupt group of landed aristocrats enjoying artificial supply of wealth, lives in a splendor unknown almost anywhere else in the Middle East. Instead of importing goods which can benefit the country as a whole they import luxuries for their own material pleasures. The peasant sector of the nation is hardly touched by the modernization of Teheran.

The landowning class of Iran only takes out of the poor economy; it gives nothing in return, not even direction. Consequently, the agricultural economy has suffered a terrible decline in productivity. A nation which could normally sustain itself is now faced with periodic threats of famine. Thus, the level of the peasant, never very high, sinks lower and lower.

How explain the absence of a powerful, native, rebellious peasant movement in a country like this? The answer to this situation, we believe, is to be found in the incredibly backward Iranian peasants themselves, who are only dimly aware, that they are even part of a

nation. In China, where a similar situation had developed, the peasantry was in a position, psychologically, to be roused against the landlord and foreigner even if it was incapable of taking democratic control for itself.

In Iran the peasantry is still an almost inert class. Consequently, it has not yet substantially challenged the domination of the Teheran rulers. Power continues to be centered in the hands of this decayed class, one of the most short-sighted ruling cliques in modern history, one which does not even betray an anxiety to "clean up" the country, even superficially, in order to obtain the American loan which the more "conscious" leaders have been hoping for over the past two years.

The recent surge to power of the National Front of Mossadeh does not represent such a threat to the ruling class. As a matter of fact, Mossadeh is himself a landowner (of the pre-1906 regime) and leads a clique within the landowning class which has exploited the anti-British sentiments of the country as a means of riding into power. Undoubtedly the hatred of the British which is proverbial in Iran is sincere; but it is a mistake nonetheless to think that the National Front ideology is of any real social significance. The Front brings to office no coherent plan for expropriating the British or operating the oil resources for Iranian benefit. They do envision a greater share of oil profits than hitherto but say nothing about the purposes for which it will be used.

The new Front cabinet appointed by Mossadeh is merely another shift in the eternal game of musical chair by which Iranian governments have always been formed. No new faces; no new program; simply a new distribution of the loot. The fact must be noted, however, that Mossadeh was able to rouse sympathy among the masses for his slogan "Iran for the Iranians."

CHALLENGE TO THE RULING CLASS

The only ones to challenge the undisputed rule of the Teheran aristocrats are the Stalinists and their newly organized Tudeh Party. They have recently emerged from illegality as the Partisans of Peace. They are apparently well organized, their discipline is very strong. They are chiefly composed of three groups: frustrated Iranian intellectuals (many of them aristocrats) who cannot break into the government bureaucracy, segments of the peasantry in northern Iran (bordering Russia) and the new proletariat formed in the British-owned Abadan oil fields (who staged the recent mass strikes). It is doubtful whether the Stalinists could assume power without the Russian army; their base is still too small. But should they ever win over a segment of the peasantry they would represent a real challenge to the Iran government. Even so, their May Day Rally, attended by 30,000 in Teheran, caused alarm throughout the ruling circles.

(It is interesting to note that, although the Stalinists are vigorously pushing Nationalization of the British today, they have not always favored it. Earlier—when the Russians were bringing pressure to bear on Teheran (1946-7) for oil concessions in the north—the Stalinists, naturally, were silent on the issue of nationalization.)

There is another challenge to the rule of the landed aristocrats who so thoroughly dominate Teheran politics. This came from the outside world. Iran has been through-out its entire history a focal point for imperialist developments and conflicts. Hegemony over it has been prized and sought by many nations, especially in recent years, Great Britain and Russia. That Stalin's policy toward Iran differs little from that of the Czars is quite obvious. (Stalin has only recently made indirect references to the rights Russia should enjoy in Iran under the infamous Anglo-Russian "spheres of influence agreement" of 1907). The British, of course, particularly since their exploitation of Iran's huge oil deposits have been keenly anxious to prevent Russian domination. For Iranian politicians the job was to balance off one power against the other.

This policy collapsed in 1941 and has been only partially revived since the war when the threat of direct Russian aggression became a political reality. In addition, the United States has stepped in, generally on the side of the British, to stave off the Russians. Both powers are anxious to prevent any overturn in the Middle East.

Consequently, the policy of the United States Government has been to bring pressure to bear on Teheran for a more orderly, efficient, and less corrupt government, one which would be strong enough to withstand both pressures from below and from without. To implement this policy the U. S. has held out to the Iranian officials the possibility of a huge loan, and for two years there have been negotiations about it. Thus far, aside from some military aid, nothing has happened.

American participation in Persian affairs likewise has a long history dating as far back as 1910. In one way Iran welcomed the participation of American emissaries, hoping that the U. S. would protect Iran from England and Russia. But U. S.-loaned experts always got in trouble trying to put in order the entangled and disorderly finances of the government. The U. S. faces the same insoluble problem today, the only difference being that the American stake in a strong Iran is much greater.

The fact that no American loan has been extended so far may signify that even the U. S. State Department, which has endorsed loans to Nationalist China and Franco Spain—"down the drain" as the editorialists put it—has finally recognized that they are confronted with an insoluble problem in dealing with Iran through the Teheran regime.

ANGLING FOR A LOAN

The post-war years are a record of one failure after another, both for the central government in Teheran, and for U. S. foreign policy. Immediately after the war the Iranian Government drew up dozens of plans for reform and construction. Vast plans for the revival of

agriculture, developed by League of Nations committees, the Allen Commission of the Near East Foundation and local economists, were resurrected by commissions of the enlightened Shah. There was continuous talk of land and financial reform, but they came to nothing. There existed no social force to implement any of these plans.

Certainly the corrupt Majlis had no desire to tamper with a system which was giving its members and constituents of luxury and splendor; they did not even possess sufficient vision to realize that a few small concessions might even strengthen their rule. No attempt was made, for example, to build the kanats, an ancient but still plausible method of irrigating vast new lands. No attempt was made to collect income taxes (aside from the publication of the names of those who had not paid them—a list which included many important officials) And absolutely no change has occurred in the land tenure system. The heavy taxes levied against the peasants remain in force and the villages are ruled from above. Absentee landlordism continued unchecked. (The Shah did offer many of his lands for sale and division, hoping to set a precedent; but it is doubtful that many will follow him.)

Thus, when the Shah made his famous visit to the United States in December 1949 he was courteously rebuffed by the U. S. Government and given none of the loans for which he made the trip. It was a case in which the corruption and venality of the government was so obvious and so pronounced that the State Department has consistently denied them help; the case was well-nigh hopeless. In addition, there appears to be no well-paid lobby in the U. S. that stands up for Iran, no organized press to whitewash the corruption of the ruling regime, no pressure-group continuously pointing out the "necessity of backing all anti-Communist regimes, including even Iran." It seemed not to be a good risk. No foreign correspondent seems to overlook the decay; and thus Iran must turn to its own devices.

THE SEVEN-YEAR PLAN

One of these devices was direct contact with American industry. In 1949, agents of the Iran Government got in touch with an American engineering "consortium" known as Overseas Consultants Incorporated. O. C. I. is composed of representatives of the most brilliant and successful American engineering firms whose specialty was the planning and organization of huge economic undertakings (one of them, for instance, had been in charge of Oak Ridge).

O. C. I. was hired for \$600,000 to plan and organize a scheme for the improvement of Iran's economic position. An elaborate plan was drawn up and presented to the Teheran Government and accepted. It was known as the Seven-Year-Plan and envisioned the eventual self-sufficiency of the nation. It was hailed in a long article in Fortune magazine as a plan "as sensible as anything that has yet been written on the development of 'backward areas.'" Fortune predicted a grand future for Iran in the hands of the American technicians. It pointed out that, potentially, Iran had great wealth ("properly managed, the Persian ranges could be the greatest meat factory in the Middle East"). And it was shown that the expenditure of 600 million dollars over a period of seven years was going to lift the standard of living of the Iranian people to respectable heights. One hundred million dollars was to be devoted to agricultural projects and purchases; 60 million to irrigation; 154 million to the improvement of transportation facilities; 80 million to public health and education; 85 million for urban housing and development. The 600 million dollars was to come mostly from the increased oil royalties, and the remainder from an internal loan and a World Bank loan.

The O. C. I. was to take actual charge of the operation of the plan and hopes were high at the start. O. C. I. stayed in Teheran for a little over one year. But rumors of friction between O. C. I. and the Government circulated continuously and, then, suddenly, last January, O. C. I. quit in a huff and abandoned the whole project. They admitted that they had failed to reckon with the character of Teheran politics. Max Thornburg, O. C. I. boss, looking back on his work said "the plan was doomed from the very start by political interference."

The Seven-Year-Plan never got all the money it was supposed to operate with; much of it was drained off by the Majlis before it even got into the Plan's jurisdiction, and the rest of it was taken for special projects of the political bosses after it was in the Plan's treasury. "Important appointments," Thornburg cried, "were made on the basis of personal and political interests instead of competence and experience. Utilization of the money available was determined by personal and political needs." The taxes were not collected; the land reforms bogged down at the start. Teheran newspapers charged that there was widespread graft in the handling of funds after they left O. C. I. offices. The Seven-Year-Plan was dead in its first year.

AN ATTEMPT AT REFORM

Other attempts have been made to organize and order Iranian life. The reign of Razmara during the last six months of 1950 was one such attempt. Razmara was an enlightened strong man with a western orientation and the full endorsement of the Shah. It had been hoped that he might have been able to enervate the nation by strong executive rule. And Razmara, with the Shah's approval, spoke often of reforms for his country. But, again, no results were forthcoming. The Majlis crowd stood stubbornly in the path. The temper of the people grew more resentful and sullen; and when it became obvious that no loan was coming from the West this feeling took on great proportions. The Tudeh party gained in strength. But most of the resentment was channeled into Mossadeh's National Front. And Mossadeh shouted that he would "cast off the chains that bind Persia's feet," that is, get rid of the British.

(Continued on page 7)

A Study in Government-By-Crony CRIME, PROFITS and POLITICS

By MARY BELL

The United States, stronghold of world capitalism, warring militarily and ideologically with expanding Stalinism, fares poorly in the realm of ideas. Since the ideas it officially sells are devoted to the preservation of the capitalist status quo, the reasons for its weakness are easily discoverable. It peddles these ideas to a world wherein two-thirds of the population will go to bed hungry tonight, to peoples one-half of whom cannot read nor write, and to many countries where 75 per cent of the people suffer preventable diseases.

But attempts are continually being made to bolster U. S. strategy against Stalinism, to increase its ideological arsenal. An effort by Chester Bowles, former head of OPA and former Governor of Connecticut, appeared recently in the New York Times. His is a pristine, almost chemically pure example of the line of the liberal, ADAer, left-wing Democrat, well-fare-stater and—alas! some "socialist" supporters of the administration in the war.

Bowles is concerned that the United States might be too preoccupied with military might and forget the battle of ideas. "Military power is not enough," he says, "because it deals with only part of our problem—the danger of aggression by the Red Army and the Red Air Force. . . . As we face the threat of world communism we should also be thankful that inherent in our American democracy is an idea which potentially is the most powerful idea in the world."

Elsewhere, Bowles underscores, ". . . we will be catastrophically wrong if we assume that we can build a decent world with atom bombs, or that we can secure the peace by trying to force the world into an American mold, or, worse still, that we can defeat the Communist idea by turning our backs on our own dynamic American Dream, and adopting, whole hog, the cynical methods of our Communist opponents."

Bowles outlines what he considers the American Dream: the right of free speech, free choice and practice of religion, right of assembly, right to a fair trial, the belief in the dignity of every human being, etc. Bowles thinks the dream has expanded and is viable, whatever temporary setbacks it has encountered. He believes that the American Dream, wedded to a program of economic assistance, can turn the tide for democracy throughout the world. He pleads, by way of program, for an annual expenditure of only \$1 of investment in the underdeveloped countries for every \$10 spent on military items.

It becomes clear in the course of a quick scanning of Bowles' piece, that the idea he proposes to combat the Russian ideology is not so much something living and actual, but something he wishes the administration would

put forth. It is something he believes inheres, if it is not manifested in America. Yet he is so serious about the importance of the idea in the world today that he feels if America fails, the free world will die, the Toynbee cycle will engulf this country as it did other great nations "which placed their sole faith in militarism and materialism, and so finally died of moral dry rot."

While Bowles numbers among the rights making up the American Dream "the right to live in a society free of class lines and arbitrary restrictions," he suffers from the typical hiatus in such liberal thinking. He cannot see or does not want to see, that in this fabulously wealthy country—so wealthy that its working class must be referred to as an aristocratic working class—we live in a class society. Monopoly rules the country, makes enormous profits, controls the government, resists conversion to war if its profits are menaced, converts and makes profits from war, is the conspicuous fact in economic life today. Monopoly, production concentrated in the hands of the few for private profit, is in contradiction to Bowles' America Dream, the antithesis of democracy in the world today.

Monopoly, vast wealth, the commercialization of life, the worship of the dollars, have led to the shocking by-products of graft and corruption in our city life, the lid of which was tipped by the recent Kefauver hearings. These things do not quite fit into the American Dream pattern. In unholy trinity was disclosed in city after city—the criminals, the cops and big business. That is, legitimate big business, aside from the illegitimate big business of gambling and crime. While emphasis was laid in the Kefauver exposures on the gamblers and cops, the role of business was underplayed, although it was revealed directly in the case of Detroit auto industry and New York waterfront strikebreakers.

But the cities are not the only places where graft and corruption flourish. The national administration, presented by our aforementioned liberals as all Point Four and welfare-statism, has a record of corruption unparalleled in recent American history. (One must go to a Republican administration for a comparison.) Fletcher Knebel and Jack Wilson, writers for Look, dug up the record of that magazine in the May 22 issue since the beginning of the present regime in 1945. Labeled "The Scandalous Years," their article describes this period alternately as the "era of Pendergastism" and the "six-year story of the underbelly of the Truman administration."

During this time, two of the White House coterie of friends have been convicted of fraud and a third indicted; fourteen high officials have been exposed selling their influence; nine administration officers have accepted valuable gifts, including a mink coat;

ten federal agencies have been involved in rankly suspicious deals; almost 900 federal employees have been exposed using their positions on the public payroll for personal profit.

The story begins in 1945 with the famous conversation between Harold L. Ickes, former Secretary of the Interior, and Edwin W. Pauley, the California oil promoter, wherein Pauley wanted Ickes to stop federal plans to take the tidelands away from the states. Ickes later revealed Pauley offered to obtain \$300,000 for the 1944 Democratic campaign from California oilmen if the administration would overlook the tidelands matter. When this scandal broke, Truman counseled Ickes to be "gentle" with Ed.

Then President Truman issued pardons to fellow workers in the Pendergast machine—before he had been in office a month, the authors point out. These included 15 ballot thieves who were restored to political life, without a single announcement about the pardons.

Paul Dillon, Mr. Truman's Senate campaign manager and ex-errand boy for Tom Pendergast, secured through Washington influence a transfer of two notorious Capone gangsters from Atlanta, where they were serving ten-year terms, to Leavenworth, the latter being closer to the Chicago base of the mob's operations. Dillon was supposed to have "discussed politics" with the assistant director of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, Frank Loveland.

Truman commuted the sentence of James J. Gavin, Indiana gambler, up for five years in income tax evasion on horse winnings. Gavin's brother contributed \$1000 to the Democratic national campaign fund.

The President's military aide, Brig. Gen. Harry H. Vaughan, started his un-military operations. They included special plane priorities for perfume manufacturers and the notorious John Maragon during the war; gifts of freezers to many government officials, Capt. James H. Vardaman, now on the Federal Reserve Board, and Bess Truman.

At the close of 1945, in another interesting presidential epistolary effort, Truman put himself in good standing with Jim Pendergast, heir of the machine, with the following note:

"Dear Jim: I am enclosing you check for \$6.00 in payment of my Jackson Democratic Club dues. I hope the outfit is still going strong. Sincerely yours, Harry."

"Courthouse gang" ethics marked the Truman regime. Hatch Act violations were numerous. The Federal Alcohol Tax Unit granted numerous licenses to known mobsters, including former associates of Capone.

The President supported Enos Axtell in the Kansas City priority in 1946. He had his photo taken with Pendergast, but it was the since assassinated racketeer, gambler and ex-bootlegger Binaggio who delivered the goods.

Knebel and Wilson quote a report to the effect that "Binaggio in that election not only voted them from the grave but 'from England and France.'" The stench was so bad that the FBI investigated, but then Attorney General Tom Clark limited the inquiry to the truth of newspaper accusations and later became associate justice of the Supreme Court.

At the 1948 \$250-a-plate Jefferson-Jackson dinners in the Roney Plaza in Miami Beach, ten tickets were bought for Frank Erickson, recently jailed in New York, by his Miami associate Abe Allenberg, both of whom attended the dinner.

Dealing in illicit licenses in international trade was a not uncommon practice of the Department of Commerce. A \$130,000 item of "other income" on the tax return of Chicago gangsters "Greasy Thumb" Guzik and Tony Accardo in 1947 escaped investigation.

While a grand jury was attempting to investigate the 1946 Kansas City vote fraud, the vault containing their ballots at the courthouse was blown up. Truman was sleeping two blocks away. Disappearance of the evidence and delay blocked prosecution of the case until the statute of limitations ran out.

In the Ricca-Campagna (Capone mobsters) case, a \$670,000 income-tax lien against the pair was settled without explanation for \$128,000.

REACHING HIGHER UP

While President Truman warned that "grain prices should not be subject to the greed of speculators who gamble on what may lie ahead in our commodity markets," more than 800 officials and employees of his administration speculated to the tune of \$213,000,000 in these markets during 1946 and 1947! His personal physician, Brig. Gen. Wallace H. Graham, was in grain for at least \$22,500. Ed Pauley was in the market for \$932,703. Senator Elmer Thomas was in and so was his wife.

Under Tighe Woods, during the acute housing shortage, a permit was issued through the intervention of Gen. Vaughan, persuaded by William Helis, who in turn had connections with Frank Costello, for the construction of Tanforan race track near San Francisco. Helis contributed \$4000 for the 1948 Democratic campaign.

Mayor James M. Curley of Boston and Donald Wakefield Smith, formerly of the NLRB, were freed from the federal pen after their \$60,000 mail fraud. Curley staged a huge demonstration for Truman in 1948.

Frank Cammerata, Youngstown, Ohio, underworld character linked to the Licavoli slot-machine mob, with a 17-year police record, was released from Ellis Island where he was held as an undesirable alien, by a bill introduced by Rep. Mike Kirwan.

The RFC scandals broke in 1949, involving the \$1080-a-year

government messenger who rose in eight years via RFC to an \$18,000 vice-presidency of the Lustron Corporation, the pre-fab housing outfit, while holding simultaneously a \$10,000 job with a Detroit recipient of RFC benevolence. (This was the "royal pastel mink" scandal.)

Harley Hise, former RFC chairman, delivered himself of the immortal sentiment that "he could not see anything wrong with lending public money to finance a gambling spot."

In September, 1950, Truman removed New York Mayor William O'Dwyer of the hot spot of the police investigation, which O'Dwyer had labeled a "witch hunt." The mass of police retirements and indictments, spurred by the Kefauver hearings, followed. O'Dwyer's water commissioner, James Moran, was indicted recently.

Chicago's Cooke County Democratic leaders backed ex-Police Captain Dan A. (Tubbo) Gilbert, "the world's richest cop," who admitted before the elections he had saved \$360,000—from grain speculation, that is.

Bordello operators, abortionists, juke-box plants, gambling houses, legitimate and illegitimate businesses—all were tangled in the skein of government corruption. The list is too long and by now should be all too familiar.

Such is one of the side-effects of our system—government by "crony-ocracy," and consequent wholesale grafting. While it does not figure in the roseate picture of the American Dream, it is "Americanism."

ANOTHER WAY OUT

But it is a by-product, and all somewhat beside the main point. The main point being a government of the rich, the moneyed class. In an economy dominated by wealth, by giant corporations which operate for the ends of profit, it is only natural that all of life be dominated by the mores of profit, "getting it while you can, however you can."

The economic stakes are as loaded against the common man as are those of the pin-ball machine or the race-track. The only way to break the monopoly of wealth is for the labor movement to break the monopoly of political control of the big parties, and in its particular case, of the Democratic Party. The Republicans, by the way, are not exempt from the charges of corruption and influence. Republican-run cities are no different. It just happens, having less power, they have less influence to peddle.

It is a crying shame that the coffers of the labor movement, filled with the dues of working men and women, are dumped into the same poisoned stream as are the coffers of profiteering criminals and criminal profiteers. That labor should break its ties with the two corrupt political parties has been indicated long ago. A good way for it to begin is to get rid of corruption and gangsterism in its own ranks.

Background to the Iranian Crisis — —

(Continued from page 6)

It is undoubtedly true that the royalties paid by the Anglo-Iranian was insufficient (less than the American companies paid to Iraq, for example). But the British had negotiated a more favorable agreement and the new treaty was only awaiting approval by the Majlis. However, approval was not forthcoming. A scapegoat had to be found for the widespread misery in the country. England was a natural selection and early this year, under the prodding of the National Front and a Moslem group called the Fadayan Islam, the anti-British sentiment mounted irresistibly.

Razmara stood in the way of "nationalization" and thus he was assassinated. Immediately the anti-British faction in the Majlis swept into power and the British properties were nationalized. No one can tell exactly how

it will work out, just what arrangement will eventually be made. But one thing is certain, nationalization solves none of the basic problems of Iran. The National Front, the most reactionary faction of the landlord class, certainly has no plan for effective utilization of the new properties. It is, of course, doubtful if Iran has the technical means by which to run the huge petroleum operations involved.

As in the past the Government of Teheran will be little more than a gang devoted to splitting up the royalties among the landowning class. Beautification of Teheran may be extended and the opera house may be finished. But a solution to the problems of Iran still awaits a day when the ruling class of Iran is abolished by an aroused people. This day, however, which many predicted a generation ago, does not appear to be in the immediate

the task, or is kept in reserve by the Kremlin. topped by the Stalinists, and it is as yet insufficient for the task, or is kept in reserve by the Kremlin.

Iran is a startlingly vivid example of a backward nation whose progress has been completely paralyzed by an outmoded social system. Point Four concepts, as the O.C.I. experiments point out, are really irrelevant, meaningless in Iran. Any attempt to reform the country—that is, in the end to build its economy—through the existing apparatus is hopeless. Until a force develops which is capable of representing the genuine needs of peasant population, reform and reconstruction will painfully slow and difficult. No easy formulas exist which might describe the development of this force in a country like Iran, but it can only come from the peasants and the slowly growing workingclass in struggle against the incredibly corrupt and outlived regime now in power.

Congress Stalls as Indian Famine Rages — —

(Continued from page 1)

amendment which, included in the finished version, for "immediate and continuing transfer of substantial quantities of monazite and manganese." This, in spite of the fact that the laws of India include an embargo on these strategic materials. Worse than a "string" this was a crude and stupid threat, a show of power, which could only have the political and psychological effect of nullifying the passage of the bill itself.

CONGRESS AIDS RUSSIA

When the congressmen take time out from the Battle of the Generals to denounce Nehru and the Indian Parliament for being ingrates because that body cheered reports of agreement with Russia for 50,000 tons of grain, they are only again revealing an abysmal incomprehension of the significance of their own actions. The fact is—and it will not be altered by any number of speeches in Congress or by adding a new station to the Voice of America—that the delay and the obvious bad faith displayed by all levels of the government in Washington in this relatively simple question of humanitarianism has successfully dissipated any pro-American feelings among Indians of all classes. There has never been a time when the U. S. has been more thoroughly detested.

Even the arrival of American grain under the new law will not change this because of the way in which Washington has for six months indulged its penchant for anti-foreignism with relation to India. While Stalinism, with far less grain actually sent to India and under terms that are hardly different from the American, has made great political capital and achieved wide popularity simply because the arrangements were made with the normal dignity of a business arrangement and at a time when the only news from Washington was of more stalling. The Russian deal for 50,000 tons, was so heartily greeted because it served to offset Washington's political blackmail and gave India a sense of alternatives, and, therefore, of independence.

Needless to say the Russians drove a hard bargain, making their deal on a barter basis. The Russian agreement called for Indian compensation in certain specific commodities—and when they discovered that these commodities were not available in any larger quantities they immediately expanded their offer to 500,000 tons, leaving it to New Delhi to refuse. It thereby gained public approval at no cost to itself whatsoever. The Chinese offer sent a positive thrill through India. It signified that Asians could help each other without recourse to the imperialist powers. Here, too, reality has not diminished the initial impression. China is itself in the throes of hunger, if not actual famine, and the food it would send to India, except for insignificant shipments, would have had to be obtained from Russia and sent in Russian ships.

DEPTH OF FAMINE

The farce and irony in the situation is that the U. S. is the only country which can readily spare both the food and the ships. The alienation that has resulted was completely unnecessary, as the final passage of the bill has so clearly shown. As the famine deepens, hatred of America will grow even though American wheat will be flowing in. For to all it will be clear that the famine need not have been so extensive had it not been for Washington's lack of humaneness and failure to respond instantly to India's needs.

The famine will grow. Nehru, for his own reasons, and the American press, for its special purposes, have not indicated the true extent of the disaster. In June the monsoon season will begin and cut off many areas from

relief. June to September are the months between crops for most of India, the time of greatest hunger and probably the largest number of deaths. Wheat arriving by the end of June—the earliest possible time under the new Act—would hardly be distributed easily or quickly, because of the monsoon rains, because governmental machinery is notoriously inefficient, because transportation is at a premium and because roads are bad. It will take perhaps months for some of the worst stricken regions to get relief.

Conditions in Bihar have been noted in the American press. West Bengal, the most populous province of the whole sub-continent, Madras, Bombay and Assam are equally stricken. In fact, in only three provinces have there been anything like normal crops. The peasants in these areas are in no hurry to sell grain until they are certain their own needs will be met and until they are in a position to take some advantage of the present situation to pay off their debts to the rapacious usurers and landlords.

INEQUALITIES OF FAMINE

In all India the daily ration of the basic food staple, rice, has been nine ounces for several months now, a level which is in itself starvation even for those who get it. The normal Indian diet, which is certainly minimal, was some 16 ounces. There are few provinces where even this 9-ounce hunger ration is being met. In many regions the government has followed the counsel of merchants, who are growing wealthier than ever in the present crisis, to abolish rationing altogether, throwing the people into complete helplessness. Where so-called "fair price shops" have been set up these have often proven failures for the simple reason that they run out of stocks precisely when the needs are greatest.

Some picture of the extremity

of the situation can be obtained from the story which appeared in the Madras Daily Mail as long ago as March 1: "As is the case in almost every other district of this State, Chittoor district too is in the throes of grim famine. . . . The Monsoon has failed and production, without any irrigational projects worth the name, is humanly impossible. . . . Rural rationing has been recently abolished and the fate of nearly 80 per cent of the rural population is hanging in the air. . . . While famine is knocking at the door and further production is impossible the popular government has seen fit to abolish rationing. . . ."

HUMAN SKELETONS SEEN

A pro-government member of Parliament, after touring Bihar, reported to New Delhi several months ago, "What my friends and self saw during our tour is still haunting our memory. We saw streams of semi-naked, moving human skeletons who flocked around us in the villages, rapidly but helplessly marching the 'Jaws of death.' In many parts of Madras—and now in many other areas as well—the ration shops are unable to meet even the nine allotted ounces and are reduced to issuing four ounces per day, hardly enough for survival. From the interior of Bombay reports are already coming in of deaths from 'malnutrition,' 'underfeeding,' 'sub-starvation' or just plain 'hunger.' Hundreds of villages are emptying as their whole populations abandon their homes to move off to the hills for tree-bark or to more fortunate regions."

Meanwhile, as has been true for uncounted centuries, the famine is also a social tragedy as whole peasant communities become submerged in debt, with money lenders and merchants making loans at fabulous interest rates, while still other peasants lose their land entirely. Since the state has made almost no provision for cheap or free loans to

tide the people through these disasters the usurers are finding the famine a bonanza.

EFFECTS THE WHOLE COUNTRY

While the villages are turning into death traps, the cities and towns are in some respects even worse off. This is, of course, particularly true for the working class which depends so heavily on official rations.

The Socialist Party has taken the lead in many areas to organize protests against the Congress regime's utter failure to cope with the disaster. In hundreds of villages and cities demonstrations have been organized, protest marches held against the closing of ration shops, petitions signed and new peasant organizations established. In the cities the Party has been particularly alert to ration cuts and workers have appealed to the Party for help in numerous strikes against the cuts.

The All-India Railwaymen's Union, one of whose top leaders is Jaiprakash Narain, head of the SP, set February 27 as Protest Day against the decreases and in Allahabad, the great textile center, in Madras, in Trichinopoly, and elsewhere meetings were held opposing "the 25 per cent cut in cereal rations, and increase in foodstuffs prices, and the abolition of rural rationing. They demanded an increase in the dearness allowance. The meeting (in Allahabad) decided that if their demands were not met they should consider the question of taking a strike ballot." (Madras Daily Mail—3-1-51)

Since there has been a general inflation of all prices, and of food prices in particular, many of the unions are now pushing for escalator agreements.

The Congress Party has proven itself completely inept in the face of calamity, and in most instances has been unable to resist the pressures of the profiteers.

The result is general discontent with the government even inside the ruling party, which is now torn by factionalism to such an extent that all sorts of moves are afoot to restore unity and a "Unity Group" has been organized inside the Party. Nehru's personal stock has fallen considerably in all circles.

Basic to the whole situation is the underlying fact that Indian agriculture has again failed in its task of feeding the nation even though eight out of every ten Indians are directly engaged in food production. Without a realization that what India is facing is a collapse of this vast sector of her economy there can only be the same periodic recurrence of famine. Nor will industry ever achieve the essential national goals so long as the countryside cannot feed urban workers or serve as a reservoir for new capital from agricultural surpluses, and so long as peasants remain in an environment of deepest cultural backwardness and frightful poverty. It is absurd to propose industrial plans while the largest part of India's imports must be cereals, rather than capital and capital goods.

AGRARIAN REVOLUTION

The famine, then, forces the country with unpostponable urgency, to face the question of a social transformation of the countryside. It is not even a matter of political outlook. All of the problems of Indian society, beginning with the elementary one of feeding the nation, are inherent in the problem posed by the famine. It has become a question of survival—this question of the agrarian revolution. And what is true for India holds with equal force for all Asia.

So far as the U. S. is concerned, it has nowhere indicated, in spite of all the Point Four programs, that it can take part in this revolution. And this is the fundamental source of its alienation and defeats in Asia.

French Elections Under New Vote Law — —

(Continued from page 1)

encies. While not completely accurate, it provides a basis for generalizing.

How, then, do the various camps stand? In the reactionary-totalitarian camp, we find the party of General de Gaulle (RPF) which, in its sectarian intransigence, refuses to bloc with anyone else. It will receive a large popular vote. A bloc of traditional reactionary and semi-fascist parties and groups has been created (PRL, Peasants' party etc.). Finally, there is the totalitarian Stalinist party (PCF) with its various open and disguised allies. The Stalinists will present an independent list everywhere and one will at last be able to judge their popular vote as compared with 5 years ago.

Other Stalinist front groups (e.g., l'Union Progressiste) are presenting candidates, and the newest recruits to the fellow-travellers of the Stalinist movement, the so-called Trotskyists (PCI) have quite naturally instructed their supporters to vote for the Stalinists where the PCI has no candidates. So much for the reactionary and totalitarian parties (of all shades) against whom the electoral law was formulated to begin with. It is, unfortunately, all too clear that all these parties added together will get more than a majority of the vote although, of course, they can never form a coalition government to rule the country.

The second grouping—moderate, liberal, reformist—is substantially the government bloc with a few minor parties of little significance attached to it. It is these three parties (Catholic MRP; Radical Socialists and Socialist) which hope to emerge with a spurious victory from the elec-

tions and to form a new coalition which will continue where the present government left off. The Socialist Party, which has just concluded its annual convention, is deeply committed to the coalition concept and is prepared to establish blocs with its partners everywhere in France. The SP is bound to lose both votes and seats in the election, and the only question is, how many? It must be noted in passing, however, that the convention recorded a slight turn to the left in that it adopted a program of economic and social demands which, it stated, would be a condition to its accepting participation in the new coalition to be formed in July. Furthermore, its most reactionary and detested leader—Minister of War Jules Moch—was roundly defeated in elections to the new Party executive, and the hand of the center leader, Guy Mollet, seems to have been strengthened.

One may say that for the first time in several years, there are signs of a reawakening of militancy or political activity within the ranks of the sadly depleted SP which has sunk from 330,000 members in 1945 to about 100,000 members today. Their Catholic MRP and Radical Socialist allies continue the same perspective they have had over the past years, with a noticeable tendency to swing away from the SP in the direction of the Gaullists and other reactionary elements. This evolution will depend upon the actual election results.

WHAT KIND OF VICTORY?

Finally—and unfortunately, least significantly—we come to the various groups and organizations of the socialist and radical left. Divided among themselves and apparently unable to develop

a common policy for the elections, they are bound to receive an insignificant vote in the elections and stand little chance of electing anyone. There is the pacifist-radical grouping (Peace Artisans) which is running candidates on a pacifist, social reconstruction program; there is the small grouping of left-socialists and radical democrats who, united with similar elements, have formed the *Cartels des Gauches Independents*, which will run candidates in Paris and the surrounding area. This group has a left-wing "neutralist" viewpoint, with a generally socialist program, and desires to participate in the rehabilitation of the socialist movement in France. It remains to be seen if it will have any electoral success.

Within the ranks of the Stalinists, there have been two developments which may have their repercussions. One, the revolt of a Stalinist miners' leader in the north who, with a good deal of support in his union, has left the party but has not as yet taken an electoral stand. Secondly, the "French Communist Movement," headed by one Darius le Corre, is running candidates on an anti-Stalinist basis. This movement, whose character is unclear, bears a slight resemblance to the now famous Cuccchi-Mangani revolt in Italy, but it clearly does not have the strength or support of the latter. Many doubts have been raised about the sincerity and seriousness of its leader. It has rejected an alliance with the so-called Trotskyists, which it describes as a "Stalinist reformist" movement. All of these groups together (and there are others) are not expected to influence the electoral results, and reflect rather the complete disorganization and confusion of

the socialist left in France.

To conclude this lengthy survey, then, two matters must be noted. First, the only way in which one can accurately gauge the election results next month is by an analysis of the popular vote for the various parties and groups. The results in the National Assembly, while obviously having their importance, will not justly reflect political opinion in France.

Secondly, and more important from the viewpoint of France's perspective, it is by no means guaranteed that a government can be formed once the elections are over. Not only can no one be sure as yet that the government *tripartite* will have a working majority in the Assembly, but it is not at all clear whether the three parties will be able to renew their past arrangement which, indeed, was largely temporary and on a day-to-day basis. Will the socialists seriously insist that their latest program be accepted? Surely they know the two allied parties will not accept it! What will be the consequences of a crisis due to a failure to form a government? New elections? A new coalition, excluding the socialists, and still further to the right? Those who thought that the elections will "solve" problems and bring a measure of stability are bound to be deceived; it will only result in more acute problems of a different nature. The troubled present of France shows little signs of clearing up in the future; over everything hovers the reaction of Stalinism and de Gaulism; before everything else we see the fatal weakness of the socialist left which, sole exception in Western Europe, still has to regroup and reorganize itself for the future.