

An Answer to "Hoy's" Slander on Trotskyism And Cuban Revolution

By Joseph Hansen

What has been the response of the other leaders of the Cuban Communist Party to the vigorous measures undertaken by Fidel Castro against Anibal Escalante and the bureaucratic practices he fostered? All reports indicate that they were among the most enthusiastic in applauding the sudden downfall of their comrade. Never have they appeared so warm in their congratulations to Castro over a timely action in behalf of the welfare and advancement of the Cuban Revolution.

Out of gratitude to Castro for such a felicitous measure against what could have developed into a bureaucratic cancer, one might expect a contribution from these other leaders of the Cuban Communist Party, a bit of self-examination and self-criticism that would help explain why Escalante felt that he could get away with it.

How did it happen, for instance, that none of them took the initiative in exposing Escalante's practices? How did it happen that none of them stood up in active opposition to this factional-minded bureaucrat who set out to build a personal machine? Were they afraid to speak up? If so, what made them afraid? Were they involved, too? Or were they just blind to the glaring faults of their fellow leaders? If so, how explain this blindness? Was it due to the long years of training in the school of Stalinism where bureaucratic practices and bureaucratic personalities were so much the norm that they could develop into a cult?

Honest, frank answers by Escalante's associates to questions like these could provide instructive educational material for young revolutionists — and not only in Cuba. Some self-criticism did take place, at least enough to make the record. But considerations other than the educational needs of young revolutionists have evidently preoccupied Escalante's former intimate collaborators.

Fidel's moves against bureaucracy hold certain implications. If Fidel persists in this course, Escalante's comrades no doubt have reasoned, it will inevitably lend impetus to the antibureaucratic mood. Indeed, the ruin of Escalante signified in itself a considerable strengthening of the tendency to democratize the revolution along Leninist lines. But how can

pressure be placed in the opposite direction without openly challenging Fidel? An indirect approach is needed. To influence Paul, attack Peter. This is especially shrewd if Peter happens to be gagged or the victim of much prejudice.

Such, we may surmise, were the calculations behind the campaign which *Hoy*, the daily newspaper of the Cuban Communist Party, recently opened against "Trotskyism."

Because of the imperialist embargo of Cuba and the consequent communication difficulties, we do not receive *Hoy* regularly. We are therefore unable to measure the campaign with precision. But we do have at hand six articles, some of them quite long and quite evidently placed on target with painstaking care. These are sufficient to indicate the real state of mind among at least some of the leaders of the Cuban Communist Party since the news was broken to them about Escalante being no longer at his desk. In no other sector of the world Communist movement is such alarm evident over "Trotskyism."

Before getting into an analysis of the articles published by *Hoy* it will prove useful to state the essence of Trotskyism:

(1) It offers the most profound theoretical appreciation of the development of the Russian Revolution and, by extension, all modern revolutions, especially in colonial and semicolonial areas. (This is the theory which Trotsky developed, in the light of Russian experience, from some observations Marx made about "permanent" revolution.)

(2) It offers the only logically coherent explanation of how a bureaucratic caste could rise in the Soviet Union and the only program that, in the Leninist tradition, combines opposition to bureaucracy with unconditional Soviet defense.

(3) It offers the most thoroughgoing program of opposition to fascism and all similar reactionary tendencies symptomatic of the decay of capitalist democracy.

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Medicare — Congress' Football

By Marvel Scholl

All possibility of any medical care for the elderly coming out of this session of Congress was killed July 17 when the Senate tabled the Anderson-Javits amendment, a compromise version of the King-Anderson Bill.

Medicare has been a political football ever since Aime Forand introduced a comprehensive med-

ical care plan for Social Security pensioners in 1957. That bill finally died in the House Rules Committee in 1959. Forand retired that year and now heads the National Council of Senior Citizens.

Kennedy made Medicare one of his campaign promises. The King-Anderson Bill, a paler version of the Forand measure, was introduced in January 1961 and has

Socialist Candidate Files for Congress From Minneapolis

MINNEAPOLIS, July 22 — Joseph Johnson has filed as the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress from the Fifth Congressional District of Minnesota, which now consists of the City of Minneapolis. His supporters collected over 1,500 petition signatures in one week's time. He is running against the Republican incumbent Walter H. Judd and the Democratic-Farmer-Labor candidate Donald M. Fraser.

Johnson, a hospital worker and Twin Cities branch organizer of the Socialist Workers Party, is a member of Local 113 of the Building Service Employees Union. He has participated in Students for Integration, a Minnesota civil-rights group and is active in defense of the Cuban Revolution.

In his first public campaign meeting last night, Johnson analyzed the recent plot by some Saskatchewan doctors and their "association" against the Saskatchewan socialized medical-health plan. He pointed out the anti-social pooling of selfish interests by doctors, hospitals, insurance companies and drug firms. Noting the change from the original basic unit of the doctor's office to the modern complex hospital, he emphasized the need for a consistent, planned and just means of providing medical care.

Ceylon Tells Washington 'Hands Off' in Oil Dispute

The Prime Minister of Ceylon, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, has formally demanded that the U.S. stop interfering in her country's internal affairs. Ceylon recently nationalized some of the storage facilities and service stations belonging to Shell Oil Co., Caltex and Esso. Compensation is yet to be fixed. The new, state-owned oil company is importing low-priced Soviet and Egyptian gas and oil.

Demanding quick compensation, the U.S. ambassador to Ceylon threatens that U.S. aid to Ceylon may be halted. The *New York Times* of July 16 reports the Prime Minister as retorting that "the best form of aid that America could give small nations like Ceylon was to abstain from interfering in their internal affairs."

been kept in a pigeon-hole in the House Ways and Means Committee ever since.

The King-Anderson Bill retains the Social Security financing feature of the Forand bill, but reduces benefits to recipients by two "deductibles." A federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance (Social Security) recipient would have to pay \$10 for each of the first nine days of any hospitalization and \$20 for each diagnostic study.

In an effort to get a Senate vote on the pigeon-holed bill, the bipartisan-sponsored Anderson-Javits amendment was tacked on to a general welfare bill already passed by the House. It would have "removed the most objectionable (to the AMA) features of the King-Anderson Bill." While retaining the Social-Security-tax financing feature, it would have allowed private health-insurance organizations a hand in the administration of funds, would have given Social Security recipients the choice of government-financed medical care or an additional \$9 a month to buy private health insurance, and would have covered an additional 3 million persons not covered by Social Security or railroad pensions.

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Photo by Jack Arnold

STACK ARMS! Picket signs from strikes for union recognition at two New York City hospitals stacked after July 18 settlement. The workers go back without contract but strikes raised struggle of the city's Negro and Puerto Rican workers against low wages to a new level and the union has foot in door.

Hospital Workers End Brave Strike

By William Bundy

After fighting bravely for eight weeks and marshalling unprecedented support behind their strikes for union recognition, the non-professional workers at two New York City hospitals returned to work July 18 under a formula agreed to by leaders of the New York City AFL-CIO Central Labor Council and Governor Nelson Rockefeller.

Rockefeller promised to support a bill at the next session of the legislature granting collective bargaining rights previously denied employees of "voluntary non-profit" hospitals. The proposed law would also ban strikes, providing a form of compulsory arbitration. The settlement further provides for the return of strikers to work without discrimination and an as yet undisclosed amount of retroactive pay.

The workers at the two struck institutions — Beth-El in Brooklyn and Manhattan Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital — ratified the settlement after leaders of their union, Drug and Hospital Employees Local 1199, hailed it as a victory. Local President Leon J. Davis said "our major objective has been achieved through the very solid commitment the governor has made." He said the union's organizing campaign among the city's 80 non-profit hospitals would be stepped up.

The great majority of the strikers — nurse's aides, porters, laundry and dietary workers —

are Negroes and Puerto Ricans. Their plight is typical of some half million low-paid Negro and Puerto Rican workers in New York City. A union study of 54 families of strikers at Beth-El hospital revealed that 34 of them or 64 per cent would be better off financially on a public welfare allowance than on their wages.

The strike at Beth-El began May 23 and at Manhattan Eye in mid-June. The strikers attracted active support from hundreds of youth, some of whom were arrested on the picket line and in mass sit-ins in the Beth-El corridors. Central Labor Council leaders appeared on the picket line with over a thousand pickets in one demonstration. A committee of leaders of the Negro and Puerto Rican communities rallied support and the Congress of Racial Equality threatened a sit-in in the governor's offices.

In face of this pressure Rockefeller stepped in, granting essentially the same deal the labor leaders had been unable to get from Mayor Wagner in weeks of negotiations.

Backers of the city's Democratic administration include the "liberal" capitalists who employ much of the city's low-wage workers as well as Catholic leaders opposed to unionization of their hospitals. It is an open scandal in the labor movement that top leaders of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, close political allies of the "liberal" capitalists,

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BEN BELLA SPEAKS

The Algerian revolutionary leader, Ben Bella, who figures so prominently in current developments in that newly independent nation, made a point of granting his first interview, after release from a French prison, to Carlos Franqui, director of the Cuban newspaper, *Revolución* (March 31). The following is a translation of that interview.

"We live in in Algeria but our heart is with Cuba," Ben Bella told us, and he went on: "this is a truth, not an empty phrase; the fundamental line which we have chosen is the same and it determines the closeness and the unity between our peoples and our revolutions."

Ben Bella received us at the door of the house which the Moroccan government had made avail-

able to him in the outskirts of Rabat. Outside, anti-aircraft guns among the trees guarded the sky, alert for any colonialist attack. Ben Bella shook our hands vigorously. Moments later it seemed to us that this man had been a lifelong friend, not the extraordinary leader, the hero whom we were meeting for the first time. Ben Bella gives the impression of

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(4) It is the most consistent present-day proponent of the revolutionary-socialist way out of the wars and other horrors of a world capitalist system in its death agony.

Hoy does not offer its readers these facts about Trotskyism. It offers a different picture. In the June 16 issue, for instance, the editors devote an entire article purporting to present the history of Trotskyism beginning with 1909. That year is chosen instead of the more appropriate one of 1905 because of a bitter factional dispute in the Russian Social Democratic Party which reached its culmination in 1912. At one point in this dispute Lenin angrily called Trotsky a "Judas." What the real issues were in that dispute of a half century ago remains obscure in Hoy's account. But it must be admitted that the epithet "Judas," which Hoy hauls out of the dusty archives, does help divert attention from the more troublesome word of current political interest — "Escalante."

Hoy's presentation of Trotsky's role in the 1917 Revolution adheres quite faithfully to the version concocted by Stalin for use in the infamous Moscow frame-up trials of the thirties. For instance, Trotsky "entered the Bolshevik Party with the aim of struggling within it against Leninism." After the triumph of the Revolution "Trotsky continued opposing Lenin in a series of major questions..." In 1921 Trotsky "began a factional struggle inside the Bolshevik party..." With the death of Lenin in 1924, Trotsky "directed his principal attack against Stalin who had been ratified as General Secretary of the Party."

In 1927 came "expulsion," these Cuban partisans of General Secretary Stalin inform us, and Trotsky "went abroad and organized a rabid campaign of calumnies against the Soviet power, while

directing conspiratorial activities of his followers inside the Soviet Union itself."

And so on and so forth. All that is required to answer this falsified version of history is an asterisk and a footnote for the serious newcomer to the radical movement.

What Escalante's former collaborators leave out of their lying account is more interesting than the concoctions they put in. Two items have special pertinence to the problems of the Cuban Revolution.

One is Trotsky's role, as the intimate colleague of Lenin, in organizing the political and military defense of the Soviet Union against the combined imperialist and counter-revolutionary assault undertaken first by Germany and then by the Allies. This period holds many lessons which partisans of the Cuban Revolution could profitably study.

The other is Lenin's initiation in 1923 of the struggle against bureaucratism in the Soviet Union which he began by seeking Trotsky's collaboration in a fight to depose Stalin. The Escalante case vividly demonstrates the relevance of this chapter in the history of the Soviet Union to the current problems of the Cuban Revolution.

But it is precisely these historical lessons which Escalante's former friends and collaborators wish to keep the Cuban revolutionists from studying. The reason is simple. Anyone who objectively examines the facts of that heroic time cannot help but conclude that Leninism and Trotskyism are identical. Still worse from the viewpoint of the Cuban Stalinist faction, all the lessons of those days speak against the basic policies represented by the Escalante tendency.

Stronger Stuff

For people addicted for a quarter of a century to the dope of the Moscow frame-up trials, it is not possible to stay on such mild stuff as vague references to 1909, etc., in talking about "Trotskyism." The craving for something that foams better in the mouth is well nigh irrepressible.

Unfortunately the de-Stalinization process in the Soviet Union cut off the habitual drug at its very source and it is not easy to find a substitute. However, Escalante's former comrades are not completely devoid of imagination; and they have come up with something that can give you quite a jag. Hoy devotes its June 17 article to presenting this synthetic drug.

On the one hand they minimize Cuban Trotskyism. "Trotskyism in Cuba," Hoy proclaims, "never represented anybody and never had any influence." On the other hand they saddle Cuban Trotskyism with a figure who never belonged — the biggest labor czar under Batista.

Eusebio Mujal, deservedly one of the most hated bureaucrats in the history of the Cuban labor movement, began his career as a member of the Cuban Communist Party. As Hoy explains it, he was expelled in the thirties. According to these same historians, Mujal, after his expulsion from the ranks of the Communist Party, became "leader of Trotskyism in Cuba."

We are next informed that

* For better appreciation of typical Stalinist statements like these, consult the investigation and conclusions made 25 years ago in 1937 by the "Commission of Inquiry into the Charges Made Against Leon Trotsky in the Moscow Trials" which was headed by the well-known educator and philosopher John Dewey. In two volumes, available in most libraries, *The Case of Leon Trotsky and Not Guilty*, both published by Harper & Brothers. For the truth about Trotsky's life, his relations with Lenin and his revolutionary views and activities, consult Trotsky's autobiography *My Life* or the standard three-volume biography by Isaac Deutscher. For easily available evidence of Trotsky's view of Lenin see the biographical article written by him in the thirteenth edition of *The Encyclopedia Britannica*, Vol. 30, page 697.



Fidel Castro

Mujal's role is "well known." Among other things, he "placed himself at the unconditional service of North American imperialism." Mujal's record as a witch-hunter, company-serving bureaucrat and imperialist servant is then recounted as if this had some connection with "Trotskyism" rather than his original training ground, the Cuban Communist Party.

The absurdity of such an amalgam can perhaps be better appreciated if we put it in terms of the U.S. labor movement. Namely, that the Socialist Workers Party "never represented anybody and never had any influence." Moreover, its leader was George Meany, well-known bureaucrat of the AFL-CIO, who placed himself at the unconditional service of Wall Street and then followed reactionary policies in accordance with the character of "Trotskyism."

To indicate the true record of Cuban Trotskyism at the time in question a few paragraphs from a report published in the October 1935 *New Internationalist*, magazine of the American Trotskyists, should prove of interest:

"The army of Cuba (a country without national frontiers) reaches the exorbitant figure of 18,000 soldiers, with a budget of \$18,000,000, which means, consequently, per capita expenditures higher than in Europe or in America. To this must be added several thousands of men of the technical and secret police who devote themselves exclusively to the political persecution of every person and organization opposed to the government. In addition, there is the rural police, controlled by the municipal governments, which is only an appendix of the general staff of the army and which collaborates loyally in the persecution of all opponents. In general, the soldiers as well as the police are recruited from the most degenerated social strata, the slum proletariat of the cities and the famished peons of the country. They are very generously paid and enjoy all sorts of privileges which assure their unconditional submission to the government.

"To supplement the oppressive apparatus, directed essentially against the working class, exceptional tribunals have been created which judge all affairs of a political nature. These tribunals have put into practice a series of laws of a Fascist nature, like the prohibition of strikes, of trade unions, the suppression of proletarian propaganda. They have likewise prohibited the right of free speech, free assembly, etc. This series of laws, put into effect by the regime of Mendieta and Batista, wipes out all democratic rights and puts the working class of Cuba in a position known only in the completely Fascist countries.

"The exceptional tribunals have

pronounced sentences of from six months to ten years against members of the Bolshevik-Leninist party [the Trotskyists] and have condemned our trade union militants for the sole crime of possessing a membership card. At the present time, thirty of our comrades, eminent political and trade union leaders for the most part, are in prison. With the rank and file members of our trade unions, a total of nine hundred workers have been imprisoned, including a minimum of sixty women. These figures refer exclusively to the city of Havana.

"Outside of those mentioned above, hundreds of students and petty bourgeois revolutionists have been imprisoned. The repressive conditions are at present undoubtedly much more violent than in the years of the Machado dictatorship. In addition to imprisonment, the number of workers assassinated rises every day."

Batista's Terror

The report tells in more detail about the terror: "Even in the day-time it was considered a criminal misdemeanor to walk the streets by twos or more. The police and the military hordes invaded the streets and fired on the workers wherever they dared to assemble. The headquarters of every proletarian organization were raided, sacked and demolished. Our trade union center, the Havana Federation of Labor, was raided, all the furniture in it smashed, the documents taken, and all found there arrested and beaten. The government admits a total of thirty dead, although the figure is actually much higher. Among the dead was our comrade Crescencio Freire, the head of the bakers' union; the student leader Armando Feito and the leader of the Cuban Revolutionary Party, Enrique Fernandez, who was a member of the Grau San Martin cabinet. After the general strike, the military tribunal sentenced to death the young revolutionist Jaime Greenstein, who was executed at Santiago de Cuba, and condemned comrade Eduardo Galvez and others to perpetual incarceration..."

"The persecution is becoming increasingly intense. Our comrades imprisoned in the penitentiary of the Isle of Pines are forced to work in the swamps and quarries that surround the prison."

Of special interest in the radical movement at the time was the rapprochement between Antonio Guiteras, head of Young Cuba, and the Trotskyists. The report refers to this: "Guiteras had a broader view than his successors. He had an international perspective for the Cuban revolution. To achieve this goal he had the intention of convening a continental congress in Mexico of all the parties of the Left and he insisted a good deal on inviting all the sections of the International Com-

munist League [the Trotskyists] on the American continent, as he informed our party.

"But early in May, Guiteras was taken by surprise by the army near the town of Matanzas, just at the moment of embarking for Mexico. Together with the Venezuelan Colonel Carlos Aponte, he was assassinated.

"The death of Antonio Guiteras created a different situation on the Cuban political scene."

Today Antonio Guiteras, who might have developed into the Castro of the thirties, is revered as one of the martyrs of the Cuban Revolution. Rightly so, for it was the independent current represented by him and the Trotskyists and similar revolutionists in the thirties and preceding decades that finally produced a leadership capable of toppling the Batista dictatorship and winning the first great victory of socialism in Cuba.

Where was the Communist Party in those days? It had its martyrs and its heroes, too, and they will always be remembered for their valiant and self-sacrificing struggles. But the policy makers of the Cuban Communist Party did not look towards the rank and file for inspiration and guidance. Their eyes, like those of Earl Browder in the United States, were on Moscow and this was the time of the great purges, the frame-up trials, the savage witch-hunting of "Trotskyists"; the time of blood which was capped by sinking a pickax into Trotsky's brain; the time which Hoy, like its sister publications throughout the world, today euphemistically calls the time of "the errors of Stalin."

"Man of the People"

In 1934 Stalin initiated his "people's front" policy. In the USA this meant switching to support of Roosevelt, a policy which Browder carried to its ultimate logic of open support for Wall Street. In Cuba it meant switching to support of Roosevelt's and Wall Street's man, Batista. In June 1935, shortly after Batista murdered Guiteras, the *Communist International* commented approvingly on the change in tone in the Cuban Communist Party press as the new line went into effect: "This is a splendid beginning. The Party is ridding itself of the mistaken idea which restricted its initiative, the idea that the proletariat is opposed by one reactionary front composed of all parties from the A.B.C. to the Guiteras group. It is beginning to differentiate in its approach to these organizations. It is beginning to seek its allies — albeit even inconsistent and temporary allies — in the organization of a genuine national revolution..."

The supreme reward for this turn was posts in Batista's cabinet. In return the grateful leaders of the Cuban Communist Party hailed their "inconsistent and temporary" ally Batista as a "man of the people."

The Cuban people, however, paid a bitter price for this policy. Instead of winning their revolution in the thirties as might have occurred had Guiteras lived, had the Trotskyists survived Batista's terror, or had the Communist Party followed a revolutionary-socialist policy such as was advocated by the Trotskyists, the Cuban people had to wait for a new generation of revolutionists intelligent and audacious enough to hew their way around the Escalantes.

(To be continued)

Hunger Strike Protest

BOSTON—Myrtle Alice Worthy, sister of Negro newsman William Worthy, has been on a hunger strike since July 11 to protest the indictment of her brother for returning to the U.S. from Cuba "without a valid passport." Worthy, a native American, is the first person ever indicted for coming home.

Weekly Calendar

NEW YORK

Summer Film Series. Sun., July 29: Japanese film about the bomb, *CHILDREN OF HIROSHIMA*, plus a Soviet short, *EDUCATION IN THE USSR*. Sun., Aug. 5: *STRIKE*, S. Eisenstein's first film, plus the short, *Charlie Chaplin*. Showings at 7:45 and 10 p.m. at 116 University Place. Contrib. 99c. Ausp. Young Socialist Alliance.

NO MORE HIROSHIMASI Annual Observance of Hiroshima Day — Monday, August 6. Assemble 5:30 p.m. 42 St. and 6th Ave. Walk to United Nations Plaza via 42 Street. Rally 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. at UN Plaza, 47 Street and 1st Ave. Ausp.: Hiroshima Day Observance Committee.

WEST COAST

West Coast Socialist Educational Camp at Big Bear Lake, Calif., Sept. 1 to Sept. 9. Stimulating talks on current events by Marxist authorities. Lots of fun, sports, recreation, swimming, relaxation, and excellent food at low rates with special student rates. Operated on co-operative, interracial basis. For brochure, reservations, write West Coast Vacation School, 1702 East 46th St., Los Angeles 33, or phone AN 9-4953.

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Behind the Peruvian Election

The State Department is boiling mad about the Peruvian army's annulment of the recent elections and arrest of outgoing President Prado. It threatens to cut off all U.S. aid.

When the Brazilian army refused Vice President Goulart the presidency he was constitutionally entitled to until it had stripped that office of its powers, there was no apoplexy along the Potomac. Nor did Washington get agitated when the Argentine military annulled the elections and imprisoned President Frondizi. Why all the righteous indignation about Peru?

The army-backed candidate, Belaunde Terry, is "safe." Like his opponents, he denounced Castro. Moreover, the reactionary Peruvian army is the darling of the Pentagon and CIA whose hands it licks in gratitude. Many observers think the Pentagon and CIA brass are nowhere as upset about Peru as is the State Department.

The State Department-backed candidate was Haya de la Torre, an anti-imperialist years ago but now a turncoat. He is the kingpin in the fragile alliance of liberal politicians in Latin America who have made deals with Washington. If the State Department allows him to go down, repercussions for the others, like President Betancourt of Venezuela, are apt to be disastrous.

On cue from Washington, the U.S. press declares the Peruvian elections were honest. There is ample evidence otherwise. Whether the election thievery was principally that carried out by President Prado and Haya's party, is not yet clear. Certainly the parties of the other two main candidates, Belaunde and ex-dictator Odria, are equally capable of fraud. But false registration and phony counting are trivial dishonesty compared to the fraudulent basis of the elections.

In a nation of eleven million people, only a million and a half can vote in elections. There is a monumental election fraud!

The White House and Albany, Ga.

"The Justice Department sits idly by while hundreds of citizens are beaten, falsely arrested, and shot in cold blood." That statement of the simple truth about the Kennedy administration's role in the civil-rights struggle in the South was made in Washington, D.C., by Charles Jones, a field secretary for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee.

Jones knows whereof he speaks, for he belongs to that intrepid band of young people who have been risking their lives in the South trying to exercise rights which the federal government is supposed to protect. They have been repeatedly jailed on false charges and beaten; Negroes they have urged to register to vote have been threatened and murdered — under the noses of federal law-enforcement agents. Shortly before Jones spoke the above words, one of his colleagues in SNCC was slashed with a knife by a member of a racist mob in Cairo, Illinois.

Jones made his statement while in Washington with a delegation of Negroes from Albany, Georgia, on June 26 — before the present crisis in that Southern City broke out. They tried in vain to see Attorney General Robert Kennedy and warned, "We are making this protest as a last resort."

Since then over 200 more Negroes have been jailed by the racist police in Albany who are in clear violation of federal law and administrative rulings. Obviously, warnings and pleas by Negroes mean nothing to the administration. The Albany movement for civil rights will get no intervention from it without continued mass actions which put the Attorney General and local racist officials on the spot and keep them there.

Trust the TV Quiz Riggers?

A new attack on section 315 of the Federal Communications Act by the private owners of the radio and TV stations and certain senators is under way. Six bills are now pending in the Senate to eliminate the section in whole or in part. This section requires that broadcasters, giving time to one political candidate, must give equal time to his opponents for the same office. The provision has never been fully enforced but it has provided minority parties with a legal weapon in fighting for a bit of broadcasting time.

The rule was suspended for the 1960 presidential election campaign and the result proved that, without it, minority parties will be frozen out and the Democratic and Republican parties will have a monopoly of the airwaves.

The elimination of the provision is being palmed off as a "plan to promote political debates." The plan is actually to leave it up to the station directors to decide who gets time on the theory that if they don't have to give any to minority candidates, they will give more to Republicans and Democrats.

Many Congressmen, however, are wary of the proposed changes for fear that the networks may favor candidates of one of the two capitalist parties over those of the other. No doubt the station directors will do just that if they feel they can get away with it. Their record on fixed quiz programs is but one example of their tendency to yield to temptation. So in this case, letters to your Congressmen urging the retention of section 315, as a safeguard for fair play and a support of free speech, can have significant effect.

The SP-SDF Convention

Realignment: Advance or Surrender?

By Fred Halstead

At the recent convention of the Socialist Party-Social Democratic Federation, held in Washington, D.C. June 7-9, two questions of central importance for the entire radical movement were posed. One is what kind of political action radicals should engage in — "realignment" work within the capitalist parties or independent political action. The other is the question of united action by different currents within the radical movement. This was raised by an open letter to the convention from Gus Hall, Communist Party leader, proposing united action by the CP and the SP-SDF. (Hall's letter appears in the June 10 *Worker*.)

The June 29 issue of the SP-SDF paper, *New America*, reports the action taken on these two issues. In our opinion, the position taken by the SP-SDF was wrong in each case.

The convention debated three resolutions on political action. One, presented by William Briggs, favored independent political action. Another, supported by Max Shachtman and Michael Harrington, was for "realignment" work in the Democratic Party as the central axis of party activity. A third, presented by Deborah Meier, recognized "realignment" as party activity but emphasized other work as well. On the first roll call, the respective votes were 38, 32 and 23. After caucusing, supporters of the Shachtman-Harrington position switched to the Meier resolution. This brought them the essential victory since "realignment" work — including support of Democratic candidates — is now granted formal status as SP-SDF party activity.

The proposal of the CP for united action was rejected in a statement signed by SP-SDF leaders Norman Thomas, Max Shachtman and Darlington Hoopes and authorized by the SP-SDF national committee. We will analyze this statement and detail why we believe there can and should be united action on many issues by different radical currents in a subsequent article. The question of political action is taken up here.

The "realignment" proponents argue that the present political alignment in the two major capitalist parties is irrational. There are liberals in the Republican Party as well as conservatives and there are reactionaries in the Democratic Party along with the liberals. What the country needs, their argument goes, is a real two-party system, in which the labor-liberal-civil-rights-oriented elements are united in one party and the Dixiecrats and the big-business-oriented conservatives are left to another party.

Radicals, their argument goes, can be effective acting for the "intensification of the struggle against the Dixiecrats and machine politicians taking place in the Democratic Party." Presumably, they expect this struggle to become so intense that the Northern big-city machines will be reformed and the Dixiecrats will leave their commanding positions in the Democratic Party and formally join the Republicans.

It is also argued that some liberal Democrats need active workers in their campaigns and that if radicals fill this need, they will be able to exert some real power.

In the first place, the current setup in the Democratic and Republican parties is neither accidental nor irrational. It results from the fact that any capitalist party in the U.S. today is bound to be controlled by big business and cannot be a force for progress. The present setup is consciously arranged by big business, which is the real power behind both parties, and the liberals are by and large a conscious part of the act. The liberals are blocked by the Dixiecrat-Republican coalition be-

cause they allow themselves to be, just as in each Congress they have allowed the filibuster rule to stand without a serious fight.

For these reasons the chances of "realignment" are slim indeed. Kennedy — to mention one "liberal" — stands four-square against it. But even if it were possible, its result would still be two capitalist, cold-war parties.

How would such a development aid the coming of socialism? The realignment policy is not designed to further the struggle for socialism; it is designed to channel the resurgent radical forces — particularly the thousands of newly-radicalized youth — into capitalist politics. This may make it easier for certain "socialist" leaders to find comfortable positions within the two-party system. It may aid such leaders in building personal careers in capitalist politics or in the union bureaucracy. It may channel the time and energy of sincere socialist youth into building the careers of such leaders, but it is not a policy designed to further the building of the socialist movement. Nor, in our opinion, will it further the immediate struggle for peace, civil rights or civil liberties.

This does not mean we believe radicals should ignore the contradictions facing the Democratic Party. The unions are finding their political subservience to the Democratic Party increasingly untenable. The Negro people are engaged in a gigantic struggle to win equality — including the right to vote in the South. Is this new voting power to be sidetracked behind the very party which oppresses Southern Negroes? Great masses of Americans are opposed to nuclear testing and thousands of youth are actively challenging the drive toward war. Are their energies to be dissipated inside one of the parties of imperialism?

These are the country's forces for progress and they are politi-

cally impotent now only because they remain largely trapped in the Democratic and Republican parties. Organized for independent political action, they will have tremendous political power.

The "realignment" advocates argue that the small radical forces in the U.S. at present cannot be effective in independent political action. Actually, the radical forces are not as small as they seem to be, and they are growing. They appear smaller than they are because by and large they are not united on political action. Too many such forces are buried in the Democratic Party, where their energies serve an end they do not want — increasing the power of the cold-war, capitalist, racist Democratic Party. If all these energies were directed toward re-establishing the Debs tradition of independent political action, they would have widespread effect.

The union movement has the power, finances, and organization to establish a labor party, a party responsible to the working people, the minorities and the youth. Such a social base is not bound to the profit system, imperialism and war preparations.

A labor party is the great need in the U.S. The Canadian labor movement has already begun building one. To work toward this end it is necessary to work toward this end — not toward strengthening the Democratic Party. It is necessary to expose the capitalist parties, to educate for a labor party, to maintain and extend the tradition of independent parties getting on the ballot, to challenge the war preparations, and to present the socialist alternative to the newly-radicalized youth.

This is the political action program of the Socialist Workers Party and why it calls for united, independent, political action by the radical forces and why, pending that, it is running its own candidates next November.

...Senate Defeats Medicare

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The Senate maneuver was not a serious attempt to pass Medicare at this session of Congress but simply a move to provide the administration with a campaign issue for the elections this fall. Had the Anderson-Javits amendment been successfully added to the general welfare bill, the amended bill would have had to go back to the House where it would require unanimous consent for it even to reach the floor. Since that is obviously impossible it would have gone to the Rules Committee and

then at best to a joint committee conference. Since both the House and the Senate conferees, who would then consider it, are known to oppose medical aid under Social Security, it would without question have been dropped.

It should be borne in mind that the Senate, which voted 52-48 against the Anderson-Javits amendment, has a Democratic majority of 64 to 36. The Democratic majority in the House of Representatives is 260 to 174. The House Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee, which engaged in delay-unto-death tactics with the King-Anderson Bill, like all other Congressional committees, have heavy Democratic majorities.

That administration pressure for the Anderson-Javits amendment was not all it could have been was indicated in a *New York Post* story from its Washington correspondent, Milton Viorst, dated the day before the vote. Viorst wrote: "Some supporters of the bill quietly expressed resentment that President Kennedy, who considers the bill the major domestic issue in his legislative program, went to Cape Cod over the weekend when he could have been exercising persuasion on marginal Senators."

The reactionaries are happy with the continued success of their campaign to prevent Medicare; the liberals are happy for they have a live campaign issue. The only people who are not happy at the latest defeat are some 17 million retired persons, who need that care, and their children, who face the hard choice of dumping their aged parents on the unloving arms of charity or mortgaging their own and their children's future in order to provide medical care for the oldsters.

...Hospital Strike

(Continued from Page 1)

did almost nothing in support of the hospital strikes.

One political implication of the settlement is that in order for Rockefeller, a Republican, to live up to his promise, he will have to be re-elected this November. The labor leaders who made the deal with him previously supported Democratic candidates.

Except for the retroactive pay, the strikers have won only promises from capitalist politicians. Similar broken promises forced them to strike in the first place. Even if the law is passed, it will not give the workers a union contract — not to mention good wages. It will only mean the hospitals are obliged to negotiate. But the proposed law bars strikes and experience has taught that these hospital managements grant nothing unless forced to.

On the other hand, the strike at Beth-El was "illegal." Nevertheless it won important precedent-setting support for the campaign by Negro and Puerto Rican workers to improve their lot. This settlement is in the nature of a stand-off. More struggles lie ahead.

Straw in the Wind

An Election in Moscow

By Pierre Frank

Relatively little space — and that in only a few papers — has been devoted to what may be considered the first democratic election in the Soviet Union in almost 40 years.

On April 4 and 5, the Moscow organization of the Writers Union proceeded to elect its leadership of some 80 persons. The official list of proposed candidates contained 76 names.

But from this official list, proposed by the Communist Party section, the names of three old leaders had already been eliminated. What names? Those of the editors-in-chief of important publications — Kotchetov of *October*, recently awarded the Order of Lenin for "The Regional Secretary," a conformist book; Sofronov of *Ogoniok*; and Gribatchev of *Soviet Union*. Their names had been eliminated because there could be no doubt that in election by secret ballot, they would have been beaten.

Of the 76 names on the list, only 68 received the number of votes needed for election. Eight were defeated. Among them were Abalkine, editor of the literary section of *Pravda*, and Sobolev, president of the Russian Federation of the Writers Union, who in the recent past had openly proclaimed himself the champion of the conservatives, the conformists.

Among those elected — the poet Yevtushenko, many of whose poems ("Babi Yar," "Consider me a communist") attack the bureaucracy; Voznessenski and Mariamov, considered leaders of the "progressive" wing.

The First Secretary of the Party for Moscow, Demichev, a member of the Central Committee, intervened in the course of the debates. His intervention showed the embarrassment of the party leadership, desirous of supporting the conformists (Kotchetov's novel "had been politically timely") but without cutting themselves off from the new forces.

What he said about writers — "the path was easy during the cult of the personality when one knew exactly what should be written and what should be avoided" — applies much more even to the bureaucrats.

To understand the importance of the Moscow Writers Union election, it is necessary to appreciate the important place occupied by writers in Soviet so-

ciet — an importance well recognized by the authorities. It is also necessary to realize that under present conditions writers reflect the deep currents developing within Soviet society. Indeed, they constitute the only social stratum which, since the "thaw," has some possibility of expressing itself — in a literary framework — on the problems of Soviet society, its preoccupations and aspirations — unlike the Party and many other organizations which remain political instruments in the hands of the power.

The election of the leadership of the Moscow Writers Union did not take place on the basis of opposing political platforms, but that wasn't needed to make clear the nature of the tendencies facing one another. Nobody had, or could have had, any doubt about that. In this sense, it can be said,

the election had a certain democratic character, since the participants had the opportunity of choosing between opposing currents and rejecting some proposed candidates.

What is even more significant is that the official candidates, the old leaders and those who were to continue their course, were beaten. The Moscow writers occupy the position of a vanguard of broader and profounder currents — as yet unorganized, to be sure — of the youth and laboring masses of the Soviet Union. The writers had certain opportunities which they knew how to utilize, but the Soviet masses have yet to conquer the restoration of Soviet democracy at the expense of the bureaucracy. The writers' election in Moscow will certainly stimulate the masses in their struggles for Soviet democracy.

PAMPHLET REVIEW

Southern Storm Center

MONROE, NORTH CAROLINA . . . Turning Point in American History. Two Speeches by Conrad J. Lynn. Foreword by James Boggs. Detroit: Correspondence Pub. Co., 1962, 28 pp., 25c.

This pamphlet contains the bulk of a speech delivered at the Community Church Center in Boston last December and excerpts from a speech at the Canaan Baptist Church in Flint, Michigan, last April.

The first speech is a comprehensive account of the events in Monroe, N.C., from the time of Robert F. Williams' return to his home town from the Marine Corps to the present. The second deals with Lynn's recent trip to Cuba to take testimony from Williams for the coming trial in North Carolina of a Freedom Rider and two youth of that town on framed-up kidnap charges. However, it does not go into that testimony but rather describes the position of the Afro-Cubans since the revolution and Williams' status as a popular hero there.

For those who have not heard the fiery civil-rights attorney on the platform, this pamphlet will give the full flavor of Conrad Lynn's oratory. Fast-flowing, impassioned, militant, his subject is that of the Negro people's absolute determination to be free — not

partially or gradually, but fully and immediately. He shows, moreover, how this determination is affected by — and in turn affects — the world-wide revolutionary struggles of oppressed peoples for their freedom. It is happily true that a growing number of Negro speakers today express such feelings and ideas. But the burden of Lynn's speeches is much more than just the expression of feelings. Its content is specific — that go-slowism, conservative legalism and pacifism will not win the Negro people of this country their full equality; for that the most unrelenting, militant tactics — including armed self-defense — are required.

To illustrate this crucial lesson, Lynn uses Monroe as a case history, tracing the struggle there and discussing the tactics employed by Williams and their results. The story is in itself exciting — the repulse of the Klan motorcade by Williams' rifle club, the Kissing Case, Williams' "meet-violence-with-violence" statement, his ensuing trial and suspension by the NAACP national office, the white-supremacist rioting against the Freedom Riders and the subsequent kidnap frame-up, Williams' escape to Cuba — and Lynn's retelling of it makes it even more so.

J.T.



SPIRIT THAT WON INDEPENDENCE — Six years after start of Algerian revolution in November 1954, Arab masses in Algiers demonstrated, as shown above, in defiance of French army and OAS terrorists. On July 3, 1962, in the eighth year of the struggle, Algeria's independence was finally conceded.

... BEN BELLA SPEAKS

(Continued from Page 1)

being in good shape, filled with energy and youthfulness for the great battle which is beginning and which is going to decide the destiny of Algeria and of Africa.

After an hour of conversation it is our opinion that French colonialism is never going to forget that for five years in French prisons Ben Bella deepened his learning of the revolutionary science, that to his fighting experience was now joined the theory which would permit him to see the course with total clarity. At every moment we sensed the sympathy which Ben Bella has for the Cuban Revolution. He knows Fidel's speeches, Che's book, the Second Declaration of Havana, and the many books and documents about Cuba which have been published in Europe. He enthusiastically recalled that each day in jail he and his comrades had read our newspaper, *Revolución*, so that now he was granting his first interview as an honor and a distinction to Cuba, while hundreds of journalists from all parts of the world were besieging him . . .

"What are the perspectives and tasks of the Revolution after the peace accords?" we asked, and he answered sometimes in Spanish — a language he speaks well enough — and other times in French, which was translated for us by our correspondent in Rabat, Amaro del Rossal, in this manner:

"The peace itself does not fulfill the objectives of the Revolution. The peace is a compromise. We need to transform this situation toward the fundamental objectives of the Revolution. The reconversion sets before us the problem of time. If the time were to be too extended, the revolutionary enthusiasm, the revolutionary spirit, the morale to struggle of our people would be liquidated. If that situation should last too long it would cool the revolutionary enthusiasm of the masses. The revolutionary consciousness, the energy and enthusiasm of the Algerian people are the fundamental capital which must be directed toward the essential tasks of the Revolution now, toward the construction of socialism later."

And Ben Bella continued: "The first objective is the Agrarian Revolution as in Cuba. You first made the Agrarian Revolution and afterwards you began to build socialism. Simultaneously with building a new Algeria, we must take part in the battles in Africa against colonialism and neo-colonialism."

Ben Bella spoke to us enthusiastically of the revolutionary struggles in Angola, South Africa, Rhodesia and the Congo. He explained to us that on his first visit

to the Algerian refugees and the Army of National Liberation in Oudja, he had taken with him Mario Andrade, revolutionary leader of Angola, in preference to Olden, candidate of the U.S. He also had taken Motssawayi, of South Africa; Dicanor Jnawe, of the Cameroons; and Djido, of Nigeria, who represent the most anti-imperialist currents of Africa.

As Ben Bella had told us he was familiar with the Second Declaration of Havana, we asked about the struggle of guerrillas and about the role of the peasantry in Latin America and Africa. His answer:

"Yes, I know the Declaration of Havana, the thesis of Fidel and also the articles of Che Guevara in this sense. The peasant masses play a great role in the struggle. They are able to take vanguard positions in the colonial and semi-colonial countries, and it is beginning from this reality in the colonial countries that we have struggled in Algeria, whose example should be taken to heart in the colonized countries and especially in Africa."

Ben Bella, when referring to Cuba, spoke with warmth, as if speaking of something that was his own: "We live in Algeria, but our heart is with Cuba. This is a truth, not an empty phrase. The experiences of Cuba are very useful for us. Although we are in Africa and you are in America, we are very close, the geographical factor is secondary. The fundamental line which we have chosen is the same and it determines the closeness and the unity between our peoples and our revolutions. There is an identity in reality and in ideology. The internal and foreign questions are complementary, the national and international problems unite or separate peoples."

I asked him if he wanted to visit Cuba and he replied: "I will visit Cuba as soon as possible and I will feel in Cuba as if in my own home. My greetings to Fidel, Raul, Che Guevara and Dórticos."

And continued Ben Bella: "In the French prison, I received a very beautiful letter from a Cuban girl. To her, to the people of Cuba, through the medium of *Revolución*, my greetings. I am happy to know that Algerian children and wounded are recuperating in Cuba. To them, our affection."

And, as we thanked him for the interview, he concluded: "It is a revolutionary satisfaction to grant to Cuba my first interview."

He gave us an embrace and in good Spanish bade us farewell. We departed in Enrique's auto. Ben Bella waved goodbye through the window. The sun shone off the red insignia which adorned the lapel of his dark suit.

It Was Reported in the Press

Young Subversives — "Bogota's 'gamins'—homeless children who roam the city by day and night in complete abandonment — are beginning to protest their plight. Headed by 13-year-old Benjamin Zabala, a group of these ragged urchins paraded through the city's downtown streets banging on garbage can covers and blowing homemade horns to attract attention. They carried signs reading: 'We are hungry.' 'We suffer from cold.' 'We want to work.' 'Gamins also are Colombians.' Police broke up the demonstration." — From an *Associated Press* dispatch from Bogota, printed July 16.

Precedent-Setting — An Ohio jury has awarded \$12,800 damages to Mrs. Ruby S. Donathan, widow of an atomic energy worker who died of acute leukemia [blood cancer] as the direct result of radiation exposure. Until the present case the Atomic Energy Commission had successfully resisted all efforts to achieve recognition for victims of radiation exposure. For five and a half years The Ohio Industrial Commission, Bureau of Workmen's Compensation and the employer, the Goodyear Atomic Corp., had all opposed the death claim. The de-

ceased husband had come in contact with radioactive material while working in the Goodyear plant in 1956.

A Friend of Labor — "The agony of Screvane's position [Paul Screvane is Acting Mayor of New York during Wagner's absence] reached its cruelest point last week when he endured the assaults of a delegation of Negro ministers. One of these visitors said that he had a man in his congregation who worked in a hospital and could not support his family on \$45 a week. 'Can't he,' Screvane asked, 'go on welfare?' He had spoken the 'Let them eat cake' of the liberal Democratic establishment." — Columnist Murray Kempton in the July 18 *New York Post*.

New Crime — "It is unlawful for any person habitually or repeatedly to loaf, loiter or idle, without any visible or lawful business, on the streets or other public ways or in laundromats, pool rooms, taverns, drug stores, grocery stores or other similar private business establishments." — A proposed ordinance before Baltimore City Council.

Christian Apartheid — "Over the last weekend, three non-white and three white employees of the explosives factory at Somerset West were killed by massive explosions at the plant. The men were literally blown to smithereens and only very small, identifiable portions of their remains have been recovered. As is usual with such disasters in South Africa, the names of the non-white victims killed and injured have not been published. A memorial service will be held for the 'white' victims in the local D.R. Church. The anonymous non-white workers are not worthy of remembrance and have been pointedly excluded from the service." — June 6 issue of *The Torch*, an anti-apartheid paper published in Capetown, South Africa.

Ring Recuperating

Militant staff writer Harry Ring is in the hospital where he is doing nicely. However, it is believed his convalescence will take another five weeks or so. Letters may be addressed to him at New York Infirmary, 321 E. 15 St., New York 3, N.Y.