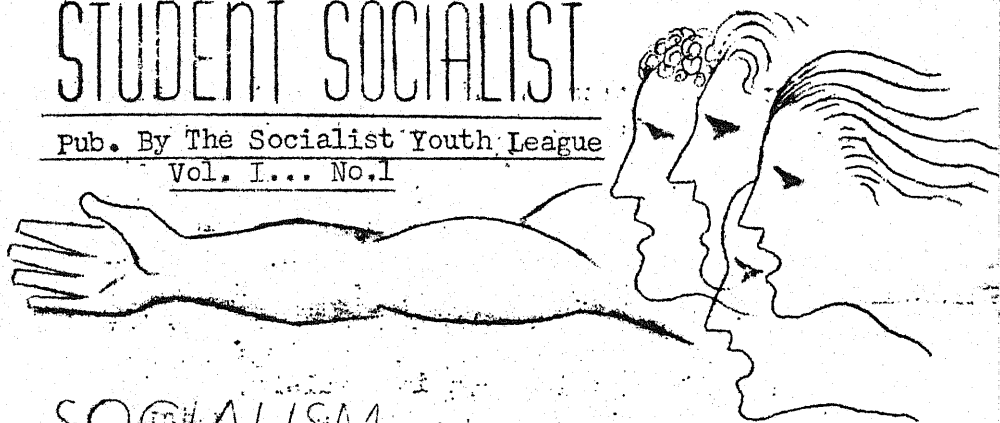


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STUDENT SOCIALIST

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SOCIALISM AND THE WAR IN KOREA

Incalculable human suffering; a more tangible destruction of towns, land and industry; brutality, atrocities and human degradation; - these grim features of war were never more sharply contoured than on the Korean battlefield. If the winning of the war by one side - either the Russian or American - meant that culture would have the opportunity to reach the heights and universality man strives for, we could derive some comfort, perhaps even some enthusiasm, from such "historical justification" of the war. But the real tragedy of the war, both personal and historical is that it has no justification at all from the point of view of human progress.

The war between Russian and American imperialism is as yet limited to a small peninsula, but it is an ominous preview of a third world war. For the military and political events within Korea cannot be separated from the conflicting ideologies, economic

systems, politics and diplomacy of the entire world. Korea is a political seismograph recording the international methods and policies of Stalinism at work; it clearly reveals the "program" and objectives of Washington; graphically exhibits the dilemma, fear and resentment of Western European powers; above all, the sensitized needle indicates that the mass of oppressed people are beginning to shake off their lethargy in revulsion against the Korean prelude to a world-wide conflict.

The war in Korea further reveals that the military disaster for American forces is not merely a matter of tanks, guns, tactics, military intelligence, etc. It is a political problem.

The forces of Stalinist totalitarianism have won important political advantages which are of military importance; they have an ideology and a program, executed cleverly, which can win the support of large numbers of workers, peasants and youth. Stalinism is a despotic force, no less brutal than Hitlerism, but it directs its appeal to the people, promises them freedom, land reforms, the expulsion of the foreign imperialist, the expropriation of the landlord and the capitalist. The dynamism of Stalinism rests in its ability to pose as the champion of the people, to falsely lay claim to the traditions of socialism and democracy, to win support for it self on this basis and then to clamp its supporters and opponents alike in a vise-like totalitarian grip, once in power. The ability of the Stalinists to successfully propagandize the people is made possible by two factors.

In the first place Stalinism appears to carry out its promises. Wherever it does come to power it expropriates landlords and nationalizes important industries; but it carries out these measures within a system of political terror reducing a newly conquered land to an economic and political colony of Russian imperialism. That the people who supported or, at least, were tolerant of Stalinism inevitably become hostile to this new despotism is a certainty, but it is an hostility of limited effectiveness once the Stalinists have secured political power.

The second reason for the advantageous position of Stalinism is the nature of its most active opponent: American imperialism. The policy of the United States simplifies matters for the Kremlin. All that the Stalinists have to do is say: "examine our enemy, see how they carry on, look at their allies, see what is happening to democracy in their own country, etc." and they will receive a sympathetic hearing from countless thousands of European workers and Asiatic peasants.

American support to the reactionary and detested Rhee has created the conditions in which Stalinism can most easily operate. It was this support which enabled the Korean Stalinists to enlist in their own reactionary cause thousands upon thousands of peasants, living in wretched servitude, and organizing them into a powerful guerilla army.

American policy in Korea is no accident. It is not a question of bad or foolish

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statesmanship versus a more enlightened-foreign policy. The policy in Korea is an expression of the economic and political nature of American imperialism. The United States is the last great capitalist power in the world. In every other land capitalism has either been replaced by a reactionary Stalinist system or else is collapsing from its inherent weaknesses. It is only in this country that capitalism has some vitality, enjoys a popularity among the inhabitants and can maintain the living standards of the people on a relatively high standard. It is only natural that American capitalism in its foreign policy will seek allies among those who likewise feel the need to protect capitalism. And the staunchest defenders of the capitalist order in Europe are the most conservative and corrupt politicians who are daily losing what confidence they once enjoyed among the working people. In Asia it is the Chiang-kai-sheks, Rhee and the Bao Dai reactionary elements who must be supported by the Washington "statesmen" as the most reliable allies and subordinates of American capitalism.

The consequences of this American policy, if successful, cannot be an extension of democracy on a world scale but its very opposite. The United States, which is rapidly losing the confidence of the world will be driven to an isolated position in which it can maintain its world supremacy only through use of the mailed fist. At home the McCarran Act, the loyalty purges, the anti-labor legislation is but a hint of future domestic policy.

The consequences of successful Russian policy can only mean the liquidation of every democratic right of all people. This has been demonstrated not only in Russia but in the countries of Eastern Europe where the Communist Parties under the tutelage and surveillance of Russia have organized their regimes on the totalitarian pattern of their Kremlin overseers.

Both Washington and Moscow are pursuing policies inimical to the interests of the people of the world. Neither camp can be supported.

The only realistic policy with which we can strive for peace successfully is the organization of the Third Camp of socialism and democracy. The potential for this Third Camp is to be found in the organized and unorganized working class of the world among the peasants of Asia rebelling against foreign exploitation, among the students and intellectuals in every country who must be made to see the futility of supporting either American or Russian imperialism. This Third Camp is as yet largely a potential but even in its unorganized state it has made its pressure felt on government and politicians. Were it not for the reaction of the embryonic Third Camp to the prospect of an Atom War, the Korean War might have already been extended to a world war.

To support Stalinism is suicidal; to give support to American imperialism is self-defeating. To build the Third Camp which ap-

pears to be so difficult today, particularly in America, is nevertheless the only realistic alternative to war and imperialism.

N. Y. U. BANNING OF HOWARD FAST

Do students have rights? We believe they do. But there are many school administrations determined to prove that students are second class citizens.

The concept of student rights has been attacked in recent months by different college administrations: suspension of the student newspaper, refusal to seat elected student officers, banning of speakers before clubs, suspension of students and prohibiting student magazines from using school facilities.

That a student club has the right to hear speakers of their own choosing is one of the elementary democratic rights if clubs are not to be censored. But it is this basic right that Washington Square College of NYU recently denied.

The YPA at NYU tried to hold a meeting on the McCarran Act with Howard Fast as the

speaker. However the administration refused to allow Howard Fast to speak on the campus.

The stated reason for the banning was a "recent" ruling prohibiting "criminals" from speaking on the campus. (This is in reference to a jail sentence served by Fast for contempt of Congress.) But when the administration was asked when this "recent" ruling was formulated, the student body was told, "I made it up this morning."

This "reason" is little more than a fig-leaf to hide the political censorship of the Stalinists on the campus. While we disagree with Howard Fast and all the friends and defenders of totalitarian Russia, we do not believe that they should be denied the right to express their point of view.

The attacks against the Stalinists today are the indication of the attacks against the civil rights of all non-conformist political views tomorrow. This gives rise to an atmosphere of political hysteria and intimidation where even critical supporters of U.S. foreign policy are attacked as "communists."

Certainly there can be no better example of a contemptuous attitude toward students on the part of an educator. In order to censor a student activity a rule is made up on the spur of the moment. The flimsy reason given is of little matter for the school authorities do not believe that students have rights and that they have the right to do anything they please.

And the school authorities do have the right to do anything they please as long as the student body allows them to get away with it. But if the student body challenges the authoritarian actions of the administrations and demands an end to this censorship, then the administrators will hesitate before coming into conflict with an articulate student body actively defending student rights and civil liberties.

The students at Washington Square College in a referendum decisively voted in favor of allowing Fast to speak on the campus. But the fact that a referendum had to be taken on the right to speak at a school serves to indicate the dangers to democratic rights on the campus and the country at large. Freedom of speech and assembly on or off the campus is meaningless if minority points of view have to depend on the willingness of the majority to allow them to be heard.

The cold war between thought control and academic freedom
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GIDEONSE ATTACKS

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

AT BROOKLYN COLLEGE

The running struggle between the organized student body at Brooklyn College and the administration of Harry D. Gidonse has come to an abrupt-but only temporary-halt with the discontinuance of the publication of Campus News. The Campus News, sponsored by the leading political student organizations at the school, was launched on October 20 as a protest when the college authorities arbitrarily revoked the charter of the then official newspaper Vanguard.

The discontinuance of Campus News followed eight weeks of publication highlighted by constant editorial criticism and condemnation of the autocratic policies of the school administration, a persistent demand for the reinstatement of Vanguard and an objective coverage of school news.

The dissolution of the paper followed two weeks after the dissolution of its creator and sponsor, the Campus Coalition to Reinststate Vanguard. The reason for the dissolution of both was primarily administration pressure and terrorization directed on both the student and organization levels. The de-

mise of Campus News was further hastened by financial and technical difficulties which, however, can be traced indirectly to administration pressure.

This pressure was exerted in many ways. One method was the employment of the hostage system, whereby Gideonse personally threatened to hold Bill Taylor, Vanguard editor in Chief, responsible for the appearance of any opposition paper, regardless of whether or not he actually participated in its publication.

The threat of suspension was used liberally by Gideonse time and again, against both students and organizations. This was a potent factor especially when applied to draft-age male students who were not yet in the army only by virtue of their active student status.

A number of students actually were suspended; others had official reprimands put on their permanent record cards, and all clubs affiliated with the Campus Coalition were specifically and officially threatened several times with suspensions or revocation of their charters. Needless to say, all student leaders involved were under constant threat of suspension.

Other methods were employed, such as the rejection of elected student representatives to faculty-student committees because of bad "campus citizenship". The "campus citizenship" is a new concept originated with Gid-

sonse which will undoubtedly be more extensively used in the future. To apply for honorary membership in this category, a student must have a minimum of gray matter, a not too sturdy and rather yellow-tinted spine, plus a passionate need to rationalize away every blow which Gideonse strikes against democracy as being in the interests of democracy.

Students nominated by the Student Council for inclusion in Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities were rejected because of their activity in the Campus Coalition.

Gideonse did not hesitate to put similar pressure on the faculty. This was done so successfully that it has become extremely difficult for the now dissolved Campus Coalition to get a faculty adviser so as to re-establish itself as a recognized organization on campus.

Legal devices were also concocted to "dissuade" the faculty. It is now necessary for every leaflet handed out on campus to have at the end of it the following statement: "Authorized by ---, faculty adviser," with the name of the club's faculty adviser inserted. One can imagine the pressure on faculty advisers when their club produces leaflets critical of the administration.

It is necessary to say that Campus News failed in its avowed task of publishing until Vanguard or a paper like it was reinstated.

The dissolution of Campus News and of the Campus Coalition is a defeat for the student body and a victory for Gideonse. But it is also necessary to say that what was lost was a battle and not the entire war, and that the setback will prove to be only temporary.

The notice published in the last issue of Campus News ended with: "This phase of our activity, the publication of Campus News, has ended, temporarily at least. But the determination of individuals to oppose an arbitrary force which by its very nature endangers democracy will continue. It will be supported by everyone who values democratic ideals."

The long struggle for student rights at Brooklyn College will undoubtedly continue. New forms will be adapted for this purpose. But in any case a number of excellent results developed in the campaign to reinstate Van-guard:

(1) The socialist and liberal forces at Brooklyn College are now more united than ever in the struggle for student rights and academic freedom. The role of Gideonse and the role of the Stalinists have destroyed many of the illusions about both of them. The trend which began with the Conference on Democracy and Education was concretized in Brooklyn College: the formation of a force which, while including various political tendencies, is able to unite around a program to preserve and extend student rights and academic freedom—a force that could do this with such

consistency that it has taken the initiative out of the hands of the Stalinists.

(2) The Stalinists on campus are more isolated today than ever before from the mass of the students and those liberals who tended to be pro-Stalinist, as a result of the campaign. Because the campus coalition was not allied with the Stalinists in the campaign, its condemnation of Gideonse for using totalitarian methods was immensely more effective. From the beginning a correct analysis of the reactionary role of the Stalinists with respect to civil liberties was pushed by the militant socialists and adapted by the coalition.

OPEN SYL FORUMS

Feb. 23-Friday at 9:00 P.M.

"THE WAR IN KOREA"

Speaker-BEN HALL, NY Organizer, ISL

Mar. 2-Friday at 9:00 P.M.

"THE 20th CENTURY POLITICAL NOVEL"

Speaker-IRVING LOWE, contributor to
NATION AND PARTISAN REVIEW

Both forums at 114 W.14th St. NYC

PROGRAM OF THE

SOCIALIST YOUTH LEAGUE

The Socialist Youth League stands for a democratic socialist world; a world which will have nothing in common with either the capitalist or Stalinist systems of exploitation.

We believe that capitalism is a reactionary social system which cannot be patched up by Fair Deal measures. It must be replaced by a socialist democracy, a system whereby the people themselves control production and distribution, whereby complete democracy, both political and economic, prevails. It is only in a socialist society that the peoples of the world can obtain peace, freedom and abundance.

Stalinism is a new social system, a brutal totalitarianism based on collective property. As a totalitarian society it is diametrically opposed to socialism which is based on genuine and complete democracy. Its border agents, the Communist Parties of the world, function as nationalist appendages of Russian Stalinism.

The present struggle between capitalism and Stalinism represents a death rivalry between two conflicting and reactionary social

systems. Its consummation in war can only lead the world into a terrifying barbarism of atomic destruction. We of the Socialist Youth League believe in the strengthening of the Third Camp against both imperialist war camps.

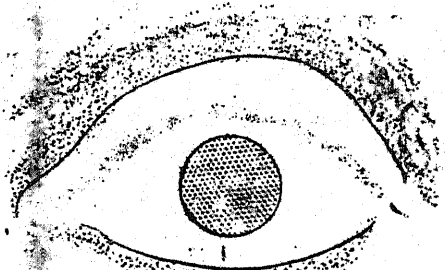
In addition, as a part of our fight against World War III, we firmly support the maintenance and extension of civil liberties. We fight against all attempts to destroy our democratic rights through the McCarran and Feinberg Acts.

The Socialist Youth League supports the struggle of students to gain recognition of their democratic rights as students, and in their fight against reactionary school administrations. The SYL is opposed to Jim Crow and anti-Semitism and all discrimination against minorities.

We join together with those militants in the labor movement who are 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 stand under this banner in the struggle against the third World War, join the Socialist Youth League.

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