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Editorial Book Review

The U.S. Radical's Road To Treason

THE ROOTS OF AMERICAN COMMUNISM. By Theodore Draper. Viking Press. 498 pp. \$6.75.

WHEN Lincoln Steffens, the veteran American muckraker, returned from Russia in 1919, he looked in on sculptor Jo Davidson. Bernard M. Baruch, the wartime economic administrator, happened to be sitting for a portrait bust at the time.

"So you've been over in Russia," said Mr. Baruch.

"I've been over into the future, and it works," replied Mr. Steffens.

It was little more than a casual quip, an offhand remark. But a whole generation of early American Reds was weaned on its seductive significance.

THE Bolsheviki "future" was a dead end of terror, betrayal and mechanistic misfires. How then, did it attract so much starry-eyed interest in the United States?

What manner of marriage between the various shades of this nation's socialist left produced the American Communist Party?

Many, but not all, of the answers will be found in THE ROOTS OF AMERICAN COMMUNISM. By Theodore Draper has produced a monumental book. It is detailed, engrossing and painstakingly objective. If it has a major fault it is that, in presenting a great mass of material in card-leaflets, he fails to solve successfully the complex problem of motivation.

This need not detract, however, from the value of the book as history or its value as the first definitive and completely factual study of the American Communist Party from its early background through its founding in 1919 to its emergence from the underground in the 1920s. Later, Mr. Draper will complete the narrative through 1945 as part of a series of books assessing the influence of communism on American life, sponsored by the Fund for the Republic.

THE ROOTS OF AMERICAN COMMUNISM is a valuable addition to the library of every intelligent American because it exposes for the first time in a careful and thorough way the most fantastic political hybrids in U. S. history. The author knows his subject well because he himself was swept up and made captive by the meretriciousness of the movement, having worked on the Daily Worker, the New Masses and in the Tax News agency before he broke with communism early in World War II.

MR. Draper deals at length with the history of American radicalism from the mid-19th century. It is a broad and gaudy tapestry that he weaves—complete with the early anarchists, the Molly Maguires, the birth and early childhood of trade unionism, the I.W.W., and A.F.L., Socialism, Populism, Progressivism, Deaking, the Socialist Labor Party, the Leftish Left Wing and other expressions of radical social action.

His principal finding is that the Communist movement was a new expression of American radicalism transformed in its infancy into the American appendage of a Russian revolutionary power.

But even in its early years, the socialist movement received its lifeblood from Europe. Its reins of power were largely in the hands of immigrants. There were some notable exceptions—such as John Reed and Max Eastman—but even Engels sadly noted that, as practicing socialists, America's native radicals were "backward in theory."

Yet the glamor of the Russian revolution and the triumph of Bolshevism was somehow exciting to left wingers everywhere. They could take a proprietary interest in it because they saw in it their "their" revolution, as if they were entitled to part of the credit of belonging to the left wing.

"Some students," writes Mr. Draper.

significantly, "have expressed the opinion that the American Communist movement was totally unrelated to the socialist left wing of 1912. The view seems to minimize historical continuity. The Bolsheviki revolution transformed the left wing, but it did not create a new one out of nothing. On the contrary, the leading roles were played by men and women who were prepared for them by past inclinations and experience. The Bolsheviki revolution came to fulfill, not to destroy, the peculiar development of American communism can be understood only in terms of the way in which the new Bolsheviki influence impinged on American radical traditions... It was born because the old left wing was fanned for something new, different, more successful, as with new things, the flesh out of which it came was not new."

THE early American Communists — those who flocked to the colors before 1923 — were taught up often as not in that fierce and ugly fratricidal struggle to determine the successor to Lenin's leadership of Russia and of international communism. This struggle was important because American communism was indeed merely the appendage of Russian revolutionary communism.

The American party had reason to be grateful to Moscow and much of its membership did not object to Moscow's dictation. After all, as Mr. Draper writes, they enjoyed the reflected glory of the Russian revolution, the international glamor of the Comintern, the desperately needed subsidies and other technical assistance. Any hopes of truly "Americanizing" the Communist Party were very dim indeed.

MOSCOW'S line changed; Moscow's domination remained," writes Mr. Draper. "Some 'American' Communists learned this lesson—and rebelled. Some learned the lesson—and built their careers on it."

"The first change of line in embryo was every other change of line in embryo. A rhythmic rotation from Communist sectarianism to Americanized opportunism was set in motion at the outset and has been ever since. The periodic rediscovery of 'Americanization' by the American Communists has only superficially represented a more independent policy; it has been in reality merely another type of American response to a Russian stimulus."

As the radiofactive has always effectively begun and ended it. For this reason, "Americanized" American communism has been sporadic, superficial and short-lived. It has corresponded to the fluctuations of Russian policy; it has not been a genuine need within the American Communist movement. Despite the fact that the American Communists have increased in numbers and influence only in periods of "Americanization," they have again and again surrendered their gains in order to demonstrate their loyalty to Russian leadership."

SUCH is the case today, when U. S. Communists are again embarked on an "Americanization" under. But the U. S. Communist Party has acquired no genuine American accent because it has no organic connection with American life and culture.

Furthermore, as Sidney Hook has observed, there are no longer even any intangible fellow travelers. Even in political, unsophisticated circles there is finally recognition that those who cooperate with the Communist Party today are accomplices in conspiracy.

Here, as elsewhere, are the architects of the conspiracy. Here, too, are absorbing portraits of the men and women who tended and cultivated those roots, only to be crushed by them.

From The Raleigh News and Observer

CLOTHES AND STUDENTS

EDUCATORS have sounded off recently about the sloppy clothing and the weird haircuts of high school students. They declare that disheveled attire is incompatible with first-class scholarship and with proper classroom decorum. Maybe so. Perhaps, a necktie, a coat, pressed trousers, and a conventional haircut are inductive to scholarship. In appearance may reflect pride in intellectual attainments. On the other hand, each successive generation of students has thought of itself as "young Turks," as rebels against something or other, and each has had a somewhat "their" revolution, as if they were entitled to part of the credit of belonging to the left wing.

and-polish regimentation of a military academy. And the educators should remember in passing that day before yesterday, in parlous economic times, countless students wore overalls to school, made good grades, fought a war, and became useful citizens. There is nothing new about all this. Each generation has made itself ridiculous in the eyes of its elders, and each has survived. And the barber's shop can dismiss its disheveled and priceless yearning for knowledge. Let the youngsters wash regularly and wear what they think pleases them. Education is not held together by neckties, and besides that new styles in clothing and hairdos are right around the corner. They always are.

Cogswell had taken up the saxophone and had become pretty unpopular in the apartment house. He was riding down in the elevator one morning and met another tenant. "Tell me honestly," he said to the neighbor, "does my practicing make you nervous?" "Well, it used to, when I first heard the other tenants complain that it was a nuisance," he replied, "but now I don't care what happens to you." —FORT MYERS (FLA.) NEWS-PASS.

'Hey! Let's Not Go Whole-Hog Here'



Decision Time Nears Toll TV Hangs In Balance

By CONGRESSIONAL QUARTERLY

WASHINGTON AFTERTWO years of hand-wringing, the Federal Communications Commission is ready to decide on controversial proposals for pay-as-you-watch television. The forthcoming FCC decision will have real meaning for the owners of America's 40 million television sets, but it will affect most directly the pocketbook battle between two groups of powerful business rivals.

Most support for subscription television has come from owners of the three licensed experimental systems: Zenith Radio Corp.'s "Phonovision," Skatron TV Inc.'s "Subsizer-Vision," and the International Telemeter Corp.'s "Telemeter." Primary opposition to the idea are the three big radio-television networks and the nation picture theater owners.

Under the staff plan, the fee television shows would take up "some percentage" of the broadcasting time of existing television stations. Promoters would be directed to keep costs to the public for the test programs at "the absolute minimum."

The three proposed toll television systems differ in technical details, but are similar in two fundamentals. 1 — The program is coded or "scrambled" by the transmitting station to prevent general reception of the telecast. 2 — A device attached to the television set enables the owner, for a fee, to decode or unscramble the program he wants to see. Favorite decoding devices are coin boxes and punch cards.

Advocates contend subscription television would make available, at a fraction of box office prices, such features as current movies, plays, operas and top news events — programs beyond the budgetary scope of sponsored television.

LOW COSTS Further producers would be limited to programs of the traditional "box office" variety, features that cannot be produced by ordinary sponsored television. The report adds this warning: "Subscription television is so devised to extinction unless it can provide a new service without material damage to free television."

Infographic titled 'Proponents Say Toll TV Would' and 'Opponents Say Toll TV Would'. It lists benefits like 'INCREASE TV AUDIENCE', 'BROADEN RANGE OF PROGRAM CHOICE', and 'BRING QUALITY PROGRAMS INTO HOME' for proponents, and 'END TRADITION OF FREE BROADCASTING', 'CATER TO "MASS AUDIENCE" TASTES', and 'HIGHJACK PROGRAMS FROM FREE TV' for opponents.

Drew Pearson's Administration Probes Truman's Brother

WASHINGTON THE Eisenhower administration has been investigating Harry Truman's brother, Vivian, and it has made the President of the United States see red. He cussed out the investigator to his face in language so purple it can't be printed here. The mildest name Mr. Truman called the agent from Washington was "ambled."

Behind the investigation was an old Missouri feud waged by ex-Congressman Jeff Hilleison of Kansas City against his nephew, Truman's brother-in-law, and anyone associated with the name of Truman. Hilleison kept up a steady bombardment against Holloway. As fast as one charge was investigated and disproved, Hilleison would fire another. After several investigations had failed, he called on then-GSA Administrator Ed Mansure and insisted: "There must be some skulduggery in that region."

Democratic Party Has Lost Its Soul To 'Modern GOP'

By STEWART ALSOP

WASHINGTON THERE has been a sudden spate of soul-searching among the Democrats, with advice and admonitions from Adlai Stevenson, Sen. Jack Kennedy, and lesser luminaries. The reason for all this soul-searching is simple: The Democratic Party has lost its soul.

The Eisenhower administration has deftly snatched it away. The administration's "modern Republicanism" has, in other words, taken over the heart and soul of the Democratic program, so that the Democrats are left with nothing to talk about. Consider three specific examples. Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare Marion Folsom is currently defending before Congress a program calling for a 23 per cent rise in his department's expenditures, and including a budget deficit of \$4 billion. The new tendency toward economic isolationism in the South, which is being spearheaded by the revived Sen. Richard Russell, is forcing the split the party wide open in this area too.

Of the 18 Democratic senators recorded in opposition to the Eisenhower Doctrine, all but three were from the South or border areas. The split will be further accentuated by the forthcoming battle over foreign aid. And the long bitter fight over civil rights, which is also in prospect, will course further dramatize the division in the party.

FOREIGN POLICY For the sharp division on foreign policy which has developed among Democrats is an essentially new phenomenon. Until recently, foreign policy was one area on which northern liberals and southern conservatives could agree. But now that the conservative phase — the Eisenhower Doctrine, all but three were from the South or border areas. The split will be further accentuated by the forthcoming battle over foreign aid. And the long bitter fight over civil rights, which is also in prospect, will course further dramatize the division in the party.

People's Platform

'Box Car' Trucks Crowd An Avenue Charlotte Editors, The News: THE race trucks are on the increase in the streets and highways in the many ways. The one we see more of is on Sylvania Ave. The box car trucks are taking over in a great part as time comes and goes. The larger is the truck number and the greater is the damage to the avenue and the danger to the pedestrians.

Do Boys Need Versa? Or Is It Vice Versa? Charlotte Editors, The News: AS A CITY resident and voter, I am very interested in the May election, and therefore I read with much interest the article concerning the campaign of Mr. Smith in a local newspaper. After reading the article, I wonder why Mr. Smith feels he needs the support of the big political leaders. Aren't they the same "Boys" that refused to support him in the last election? And still without their political support, he won by a majority.

Transfer Arranged As a civil servant employee, Holloway couldn't be fired without cause. So he will be transferred away from his home, Kansas City, to Seattle, in the hope that this will leave the Kansas City job open finally to Hilleison.