

# I. F. Stone's Weekly

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## The Russian Visit to Belgrade Is The Key to Events

### The Liberation of Europe Has Begun

What we are seeing is the slow liberation of Europe, the liberation of the West from American and of the East from Russian control. The areas in between the two great Powers have recovered; the Russians are tired of Stalinism and its heavy costs; American big business has decided for relaxation of tension and tax cuts. The real rulers of Germany have decided that while they still want to be on our side—who wants to refuse dollars as long as they continue flowing?—they want to be *neutral* on our side—like Tito.

It is in Belgrade, not Vienna, that the meaning of events may be read. For Tito demonstrated that it can be done. He got American aid. He commands a big Army. He has an alliance with two members of the Atlantic Pact. Yet he voted against the U. S. in the UN. He is comrade-in-arms with Nehru. He remains a Communist and a dictator. He kicked Moscow and the world Communist movement in the face. And his reward is a State visit from the most important Soviet delegation to be sent abroad since Potsdam—a delegation from which Molotov, who took part in Stalin's purge of Tito, has been tactfully excluded.

#### The Reich A Larger Yugoslavia?

The Austrian state treaty is supposed to have been bait for the Germans. The forthcoming agreement with Yugoslavia will be more to the point. The Reich cannot be a second Switzerland, but it could be a larger Yugoslavia, able without explicit treaty restrictions—worthless anyway, as past treaty restrictions on the Germans have proven—to play the role of an armed neutral in the middle of Europe, dealing with America, yet friendly with Russia. This is the message the Russians will write for the Germans in the skies over Belgrade. And it will prove irresistible, too tempting for the Germans to reject, too subtle for the State Department to cope with.

The Russians have seized the initiative for two reasons. One is that mankind is hungry for peace. The other is that the Russians, unlike ourselves, have been big enough to bow gracefully to the inevitable. They couldn't topple Tito, so they will deal with him. No Soviet "China lobby" of die-hard Yugoslav Communists ties the Kremlin's hands. The Belgrade visit is impressive because it reflects a willingness to face up to realities. And in those realities there is beginning to unfold a new era in East European history and in the history of Communism.

#### Rolling Themselves Back

We have talked of a rollback. The Russians are rolling themselves back. Dulles—the chief American advocate of a rollback—seems singularly unhappy over the course of events,

and with good reason. What he had envisaged was a rollback of Russian power before a rearmed and truculent Germany, able to reestablish the counter revolution in Eastern Europe and again make it a preserve for German exploitation. This is a different rollback. It reflects the fact that the Russians are beginning to learn what centuries of empire taught the British—to hold the reins lightly. Until now we have seen an unpleasant draconian Russian and Russian stooge rule over Czechs, Poles, Hungarians, Bulgarians and Rumanians—each with their own ways and traditions. Even their Communists found the Russian hand heavy, as repeated purges of "nationalist" Communists demonstrated.

But now watch Belgrade. If the Yugoslavs may have a Tito, why can't the Poles? If an independent Communist regime, genuinely native and non-subservient, with its own variants of communism, is possible in Yugoslavia, why not in Hungary? Krushchev and Bulganin cannot go a-wooing in Belgrade, and then purge those who will not give them 100 percent obedience in Warsaw. And from Russia's point of view—*isn't this a better path than Stalin's?* She can have friendly regimes in Eastern Europe, Communist regimes, really standing on their own feet. A series of Titos would be a bulwark against Western penetration, yet the Russians could honestly claim that they had withdrawn to their borders. There could be a new *cordon sanitaire* in reverse, as part of a new pattern of co-existence.

#### An Echo from Germany

This, too, is being read in the skies over Belgrade by the Germans. The *Sunday Times* of London (May 8) ran a Bonn dispatch from its well-informed German correspondent Antony Terry saying that the new German Ambassador to Britain was carrying a proposal whereby the West would accept German neutrality in return for the neutralization of the Soviet satellites between the Reich and Russia. The Germans, too, according to this dispatch, are talking of thus creating a new *cordon sanitaire*. What happens to the "liberationist" slogans of Dulles if we are confronted by a series of independent Communist regimes in East Europe like Tito's?

Tito in his speech at Pula on May 7 spoke for all Europe when he criticized those who thought one could achieve "peace through strength" and said this led only to an arms race. Europe is tired of the burden this entails and the tension it creates. The Russians are dealing with Europe over our heads. That is why Dulles was so glum in that TV cast from the White House. We must join in making peace, or have it made without us.

## The Prospect of Peace Begins to Give Wall Street The Jitters

### Why the Stock Market Sags in New York, Rises in London

The New York stock market opened last week by hitting the lowest level in five weeks. Arms issues, especially aviation, and steel were hardest hit. The *New York Journal of Commerce* last Tuesday in a front page editorial began to discuss the "major repercussions" to be expected from "further abatement of the cold war." It noted that "initial cuts in defense spending" by the Eisenhower Administration had "contributed to the business recession of 1953-54." The financial organ speculated that "much sharper reduction in taxes might become feasible as an offset to further armament cuts if the Austrian treaty "is followed by the settlement of other outstanding disputes with the Russians."

One cause for worry is the international balance of payments. The "dollar gap" between what the U. S. sells abroad and what it buys has been chronic since the early years of World War I. Other countries have been able to buy more from us than we buy from them—but only because we found ways to lend or give them dollars with which to do the buying: Last year's gap of almost 5 billions was filled by 4.7 billions in military aid and other grants. What happens if tension is reduced? Since 1915 U. S. loans or grants to carry on war, then to clear up the damage, and then to prepare for a new war have financed U. S. exports. How will exports be maintained if the world is stabilized? The big upcoming question: can we learn to spend and invest for peace on as large a scale as we have for war?

#### Even Steel Rose in Britain

While the New York stock market opened weak, the London market opened strong. "Russia's agreement to a four power meeting," a London financial cable to the *New York Times* reported last Tuesday, "cheered the stock market here today." British government bonds, Dominion and colonial loans, moved upward. So did German and Japanese bonds, along with Czech and Hungarian issues. Steel, engineering and store shares rose.

This contrast between the New York and London stock markets is striking. Every time hopes of a settlement appear, the New York market sags, the London market rises. Perhaps one reason is that we are rich enough to face with equanimity the prospect of priming the pump of business by

#### Victory for Civil Liberties

The best news on the home front since we last went to press was the passage of S. Res. 94 by the Senate. It was approved by a voice vote, with no opposition other than a rather querulous inquiry from the economy-minded Ellender of Louisiana. The resolution authorizes a Senate Judiciary subcommittee to spend \$50,000 between now and next January 31 on an investigation of civil liberties. This will be the first time since the pre-war LaFollette committee that either house of Congress has acted to defend basic rights. The subcommittee will be made up of Hennings (*D. Mo.*), Langer (*Rep. N.D.*) and O'Mahoney (*D. Wyo.*).

It looks as if the Hennings subcommittee may be the only inquiry of its kind at this session. Much was hoped for from the investigation promised by Senator Johnston (*D. S. C.*) into the security program and the "numbers game" played by the Eisenhower Administration with figures on risk discharges. The Senate on February 21 passed S. Res. 20 and appropriated \$125,000 for "a full and complete study." A Senate Post-office and Civil Service subcommittee of Johnston, Neely (*D. W. Va.*) and Carlson (*R. Kans.*) was set up and retained former Senator Gillette as special counsel. But justifiably or not the impression has spread on Capitol Hill that this inquiry may peter out. Testimony on the Commerce Department budget just released by the House Appropriations Committee shows how badly civil servants and others subject to clearance need a champion. The hearings disclosed that of 85 "security separations" at Commerce in 1954 only two were cases in which the employe was told the charges against him.

a perpetual cycle of war, catastrophe, reconstruction, a new arms race and then war again. The European capitalist powers impoverished by two world wars cannot afford to purchase "prosperity" at the price of a third.

#### Foreshadowing the Russian Proposals for Atomic Inspection and Control

The new Russian proposals for solving the problem of atomic inspection and control resemble those suggested over a year ago by James R. Newman, counsel to the McMahon committee in the framing of our Atomic Energy Act. In a letter to the *Washington Post* published January 9, 1954, (the salient portions were reprinted at the time in Vol. II, No. 1 of this *Weekly*) Newman wrote:

"It is commonly supposed that the operation of an effective inspection system entails almost insurmountable difficulties. It is assumed, for example, that a very large inspectorate would be needed for each country that would seriously hamper the conduct of internal affairs—government and private. These assumptions are unjustified.

"The several inspectorates need not be large. A small group of inspectors at key points can keep major production activities under surveillance. It is not important to know everything; it is important only to know important things. It is important to know if a country is mobilizing.

"If an international agreement fixes levels of armaments production . . . these levels will be reflected in certain critical indices: steel and aluminum production, the use of electric power, shipbuilding, mining of strategic metals, the manufacture of machine tools, airframes, jet and internal combustion engines, electronics equipment.

"Any significant departure from agreed-upon levels of production can be detected. It is unnecessary to keep every

mine and factory under observation. The economy of a large industrial nation is so integrated, its parts are so interdependent, that a sharp increase in rate of output at one point is visible at every point. The inspectors need not concern themselves over leaks; their task is to watch for floods. War mobilization is a flood. The notion of hidden preparation for a major war is absurd.

"There are three essentials to keep in mind. First, both conventional and atomic weapons are needed to wage war. Second, small-scale illegal production of weapons in either category is pointless as a preparatory measure; simply not worth the risk of detection. Third, illegal manufacture of fissionables is no more difficult to detect than illegal manufacture of any other item requiring a large industrial effort."

The *Washington Post* in an editorial (May 13) noted the resemblance of the new Russian proposals to those in the Newman letter and said the Soviet plan "seems to acknowledge that what is important in this stage of the nuclear race is an effective alarm system . . . a nation intending to launch a war would have to assemble weapons and planes and manpower on a large scale. Inspection of bases, ports and highway and railway junctions might provide a key, not to control, but to advance warning of hostile intentions. Russia's proposal seems to go a considerable distance in recognizing the need for this kind of inspection."

**That Past Connection With The Ku Klux Klan May Prove Politically Fatal****The Fight Against Wood's Nomination to the SACB**

The fight to prevent the confirmation of John S. Wood to the Subversive Activities Control Board would ordinarily be hopeless, since he has the backing of both Senators from his home state of Georgia, the powerful George and Russell. Congressional courtesy works in favor of a former Congressman like Wood, a lame duck in need of a job. As long time chairman of the House Un-American Activities Committee, he is—from the standpoint of the Justice Department, the FBI and the right generally—admirably suited for the Board. The Board has from the beginning been a dumping ground for lame ducks and witch hunters. The only liberal appointment, that of former Congressman Charles La Follette of Indiana, failed of confirmation; the maverick Cain would never have been confirmed if there had been the slightest suspicion that he would develop qualms and courage, a sense of perspective and a capacity for independence. It would be naive to suppose that Wood's witch hunt past was anything but a recommendation.

There is but one possible way to block the nomination. This lies in the opposition of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples. The NAACP did not appear at the hearing on Wood's nomination, a one-man Judiciary subcommittee affair before Senator Watkins. The only two witnesses were Royal W. France for the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee and William L. Patterson for the Civil Rights Congress. Both relied heavily on unverified charges from Georgia that Wood was a member of the Ku Klux Klan, and these drew from Wood an admission that in the 20's he paid an initiation fee and went to a meeting. Wood claims that he withdrew when he learned the Klan was committed to violence! This is enough for the NAACP; obviously Wood is no Hugo Black. There may be hesitation in the Senate at the prospect of offending the Negro voter. This is the slim chance, and even this will be of little avail without some public pressure.

**Klan Charges Unproven**

There is no proof that Wood is a Klansman or that he did not tell the truth, and no good will be done by intemperate overstatement on this score. But there is a powerful avenue of attack open for some Senator with the nerve to use it. And that lies in the way Brownell has handled the Klan charge. The Attorney General received a letter last March 7 (from a fellow Republican at that) saying that he ought to know—"I have been reliably informed that ex-Congressman Wood was not only a member of the Klan, but was one of the leaders of that organization in his community." The letter was signed by John Wesley Dobbs, vice chairman of the Republican State Central Committee of Georgia. Mr. Dobbs is a respected Negro business man. His letter was supported by the NAACP, which wrote Brownell to ask that these charges be investigated before Wood was confirmed. The NAACP letter was acknowledged by Deputy Attorney General William P. Rogers, but no report was made to the Judiciary committee and there is no indication that Brownell did anything about this.

Considering the lengths to which the government goes in prying far back into the private lives of file clerks and postal

carriers, this yawning disinterest in Wood's background is instructive, if not surprising. This is not a matter of "loyalty"—the SACB job requires Senate confirmation and in such cases the Justice Department is supposed fully to investigate the appointee's character and background. The Klan is on the Attorney General's subversive list, and it is easy to imagine how differently he would have reacted if someone charged that Wood was a Communist, or even that he had once bought insurance from the International Workers Order. The Justice Department and the Judiciary committee would not be satisfied to take Wood's explanation at face value—nor would Wood himself if the roles were reversed and he as chairman of the House committee were presiding over a hearing at which someone else was accused of having belonged to a subversive organization. This is worth rubbing home, and since it might pay off politically in Negro votes some Northern Democratic Senator might get up the nerve to air it on the Senate floor.

**SACB Aimed Only at Leftists**

As a matter of public education, another point is worth airing in this fight. Some people are using the argument that Wood might have to pass on the Klan itself as a subversive organization. There is no danger of this. The Internal Security Act was too well drafted by the Chamber of Commerce master minds who sold it to Mundt, Ferguson, Nixon, McCarran and finally Congress. The sanctions of the act—registration, refusal of passports, denial of government and defense employment—apply only to persons adjudged Communist members or frontiers. None of these sanctions apply to Fascists or racists. In this sense the SACB is quite different from the Attorney General's list which includes rightist as well as leftist organizations. Section 4 (a) of the Internal Security Act is the only part which might affect rightists; this makes it a crime to do anything which might contribute to the establishment of a totalitarian dictatorship in this country—but only if the totalitarianism is under foreign control. The Klan as a native home-grown affair would not be subject to prosecution under this provision.

It is important to make the public realize that the Internal Security Act is not aimed at "subversives" generally in the sense that it might also proscribe native Fascists or racists. The Act was aimed only at the Left—and now thanks to the Morse-Humphrey-Douglas amendment of last August it is loose and vague enough easily to encompass the mildest liberals, from One Worlders to ADA-ers. Whether Wood was a Klansman, whether he is telling the truth, whether he did indeed as he claims take some steps against the Klan while heading the House committee, all these matters deserve full investigation and not just the brush-off Brownell gave them. But the truth is that a lame-duck witch hunter like Wood, fresh from the kangaroo court of the House committee, is ideally suited to the SACB. This authoritarian style court for labelling dangerous thoughts, and setting up an American political *index expurgatorius* is completely at variance with the ideals of a free society and the campaign against Wood ought to nurture no illusions about the SACB itself.

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With many thanks,

*I. F. Stone*

## A Case of Atrophied Conscience: No One Protests An Editor's Deportation

### *How Long Will Our Liberal Editors Remain Silent About Belfrage?*

Who would have dreamt that it would be possible to order an editor deported because of his political views without a single protest from America's few liberal weeklies and dailies?

It is two years since Cedric Belfrage of the *National Guardian* was arrested for deportation the day after he was interrogated by McCarthy. In all that time not a word of protest has come from any other liberal weekly or daily, indeed most of them have yet to mention the arrest. Last Thursday (May 12) the deportation order was upheld by the Board of Immigration Appeals, again with scant notice. How atrophied has the conscience of American liberal journalism become?

#### When A Hunger Strike Is Not News

Last December, in the wake of the protests from Pearl Buck over the disgraceful treatment of aliens ordered deported, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (see *New York Times* last December 10) rescinded the order which had been sending such aliens to jail ever since Ellis Island was closed. It was announced that in the future deportees would be held under custody in hotels until new special quarters had been established.

But when Belfrage was taken to jail last week-end and went on a hunger strike in protest against the conditions imposed on him, the only paper which carried the news was the *Hearst Journal-American*. Why were the other papers so queasy?

We have no doubt that if an editor were picked up for deportation, and it turned out that he was a McKinley Republican, that far from being an alien his family had scraped its shins on Plymouth Rock, and that (ha, ha!) he had just finished running a series of editorials calling for preventive war, a hundred bold editors would have sprung to his defense—and one of them would have been awarded the Pulitzer prize.

Unfortunately Belfrage's is not one of those cases of mistaken identity, one of those *reductio ad absurdums*, which can be championed without danger to respectability. The *National Guardian* is the organ of the Progressive Party. Belfrage is a Left-wing editor. Why not look the other way, and write another strong editorial about that fellow in the Air Force who

was branded disloyal because his second cousin by marriage on his mother's side once owned a book on Socialism by Karl Kautsky—although sworn witnesses of the highest repute attested (1) that the book had only been used as a door-stop, (2) that the cousin was illiterate anyway, and (3)—the clincher—that Kautsky in his old age criticized the Bolsheviks? Ah, for those libertarian causes which can be fought shoulder to shoulder with Sidney Hook!

#### A Victim of McCarthy

We challenge editors to take a look at the Belfrage case. Do they believe a person accused of Communism in a deportation action has a right to demand that the charges against him be proven? Do they believe, after reading the Board of Immigration Appeals decision for themselves, that the case against Belfrage was proven?

We believe that the case against Belfrage is so tenuous that if he gets his full day in court, the deportation order will be reversed. The Board found that he was a Communist "at least from October 1937 to the end of 1938," but not in 1945. The main evidence was a party card issued in that period to a "George Oakden" who is linked by two woozy-minded witnesses and a dubious chain of circumstantial evidence with Belfrage.

#### Only Dead Radicals Defended?

The truth, when it comes out, will show that the Immigration and Naturalization Service investigated all this when Belfrage re-entered the country in 1945, and that it would never have been hashed up in a deportation proceeding if McCarthy had not insisted on Belfrage's arrest the day after he appeared before the McCarthy committee.

But what if Belfrage were a Communist? Do we believe in a free press? Is it in accordance with the First Amendment to allow an editor's deportation for his political views? Or are these principles we affirm only in the case of radical aliens and editors safely dead and buried like that foreigner Paine and that trouble-maker Zenger?

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