

"National Republic"

ALFRED HIRSCH

"ONE DAY I was addressing a group of industrialists. I told them that they were the ones supporting Communism. Naturally they were amazed and asked me what I meant.

"Well," I said, 'you pay your workers, don't you, and they support the Communists with your money.'"

The speaker was Mr. Walter S. Steele, editor of The National Republic, a monthly publication "specializing" in Communism. He added, with a sigh covered over with a plucky smile: "The trouble is there's nothing much you can do about it. The Communists have you coming and going."

The National Republic has been attacking Communism since long before most red-baiting publications were in existence. It has indulged in deliberate falsification, and the spurious use of American "aristocratic" traditions. Further, it is no enemy of anti-Semitism and it heaps praise upon Hearst.

A few months ago an acquaintance teaching at a small midwestern college, showed me a letter he had received from The National Republic informing him that "a friend" had sent in seven dollars and fifty cents to provide a year's subscription for him. It suggested that he might want to do likewise for a colleague. My friend did not fall for this racket and discovered that seven of the forty faculty members had received the same letter. His subscription included both the magazine and The National Republic Lettergram issued periodically in multigraph form, which contains "Confidential Information For Members Only."

The National Republic does not stop at deliberate falsification. At the expense of THE NEW MASSES it indulges in willful distortion as illustrated in the accompanying photographic reproduction obviously intended to give the impression that during the San Francisco General Strike, Communists gave the order: "Shoot to Kill." This is a deliberate lie. It was not the Communists who gave the order "shoot to kill," but the commander of the militia as the first two sentences of THE NEW MASSES article (July 17, 1934) unmistakably prove.

First published in 1914 in Muncie, Indiana (and moving to Washington in 1918), the magazine was originally The National Republican and was printed under the patronage of the late George B. Lockwood, later to become secretary of the Republican National Committee. Stockholders in 1932 included James J. Davis, Secretary of Labor from 1921-1930; the Estate of John Wingate Weeks, Secretary of War from 1921-25; John T. Adams, Charles D. Hilles and Claudius H. Huston, all Republican National Committeemen; and Mr. Steele, listed

Who are the stockholders of The National Republic, outstanding anti-labor, Jew-baiting sheet?

What is their role in the leadership of the Republican Party?

Why do members of President Roosevelt's Cabinet write for this fascist paper?

as "formerly secretary of the Delaware County (Indiana) Republican Central Committee." Early in 1925, a few months after Steele had become editor, the publication changed its name to The National Republic and became "non-partisan."

It will be remembered that during 1923-24 the Ku Klux Klan had been particularly active in Indiana, having enlarged its program to include opposition to Catholics and Jews as well as to Negroes. Moreover, it captured the Republican Party in Indiana which in November, 1934, elected Governor Edward Jackson, an open supporter if not a member of the Indiana K.K.K. The commands of Democratic "Imperial Wizard" Hiram W. Evans of Atlanta, Georgia (still the Klan's chief) irked D. C. Stephenson, "Grand Dragon" of Indiana, and the Indiana Klan, credited with over 260,000 members in 1923, began to disintegrate. As a result of the K.K.K. fracas, the Indiana Republican Party had acquired a slight odor in national Republican Party circles and this is probably the reason that the magazine now became The National Republic.

Among the men whose signatures grace recent articles favoring expansion of "defense" forces, are George H. Dern, Secretary of War, who writes on "Armies Do Not Start Wars." He concludes that "the people bring about wars and the army brings about peace."

Shortly after his chief's article appeared, Assistant Secretary of War Harry H. Woodring contributes a sprightly article in which he pats the Reserve Officers' Training Corps on the back. He winds up with a *bon mot*, perhaps typical of the cultural level of the Department of War:

"Our schools must not be the ground where the seeds of national defenselessness can be planted." Mr. Woodring will be remembered for his article in Liberty (Jan. 6, 1934) in which he wrote: "The C.C.C. mobilization is thus more than a great military achievement; it is a dress rehearsal of the Army's ability to intervene in combatting the depression." Incidentally, a recent request for a copy from the Macfadden Pub-

lications revealed the fact that "no copies of that issue are available."

Still another representative of our war apparatus, Rear Admiral Clark H. Woodward, offers the suggestion that the merchant marine be built up since it "furnishes vessels that our Navy would be helpless without, and a seafaring personnel on which to draw in an emergency."

When questioned about his point of view towards Communism, Dr. Roscoe J. C. Dorsey, attorney and Professor of Jurisprudence at Washington (D.C.) College of Law, and one of the most prolific and learned of National Republic authors, said:

"Communism is nothing new. Look at Plato, Lycurgus, Diocletian, Sir Thomas More, Rousseau, Saint-Simon, Fourier, Lassalle. Since it is not new, there is nothing to it. You ought to read my two articles on 'Old and New Communism.'"

His interviewer assured him that he had, whereupon the erudite law professor patted him on the shoulder and said: "You know, five thousand copies of those articles were re-printed by the California Chamber of Commerce or the California Industrial Association or some organization like that."

Dr. Dorsey then proudly produced a clipping from The Washington Herald (Hearst), which quotes a speech he made last October:

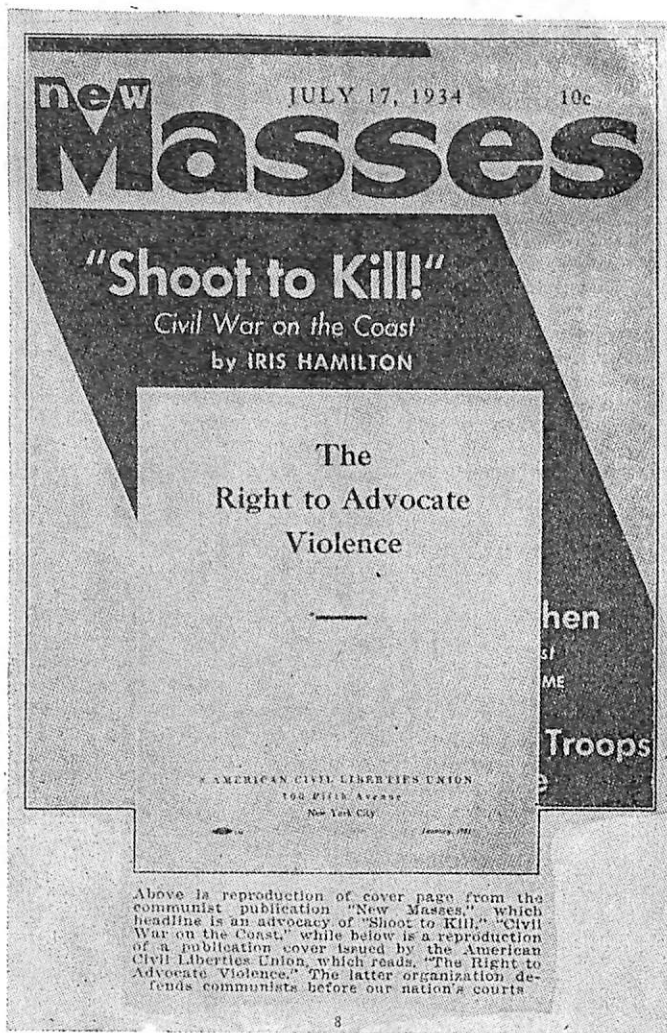
Communism is a religion itself and teaching it must mean teaching hatred of our Government, disrespect to our flag, wiping out of property rights, disregard of parents, belief in nudism, free sex relations, intermarriage with Negroes. (My emphasis, A. H.)

At last, beaming with joy, Dr. Dorsey got around to Germany:

It's the only regime they can have. Of course I don't like their drive against the Jews. But, after all, the Jews are pretty bright men. Lots of them are doctors, dentists, lawyers, other professionals. And jealousy will spring up when times are hard. So the Germans just decided: "Let's get them." Personally, I have always told my Jewish students to stop their radical activities. One of them was interested in the Townsend plan, for example. I told him he will draw fire down on his race and suggested he stick to the conservative side and be of benefit to his race. . . . But I can't sympathize with those persecutions in Germany.

The magazine itself backs up Dr. Dorsey's slurs, having printed the following, all contained in one paragraph:

A group of students at Harvard, incensed over the radicalism that prevails, burned a "nudist" number of their student publication, the *Lampoon*, recently. Six hundred copies of the issue were confiscated. The issue had already been banned from the mails and newsstands as "immoral, blasphemous and profane." It will be recalled that



Above is reproduction of cover page from the communist publication "New Masses," which headline is an advocacy of "Shoot to Kill," "Civil War on the Coast," while below is a reproduction of a publication cover issued by the American Civil Liberties Union, which reads, "The Right to Advocate Violence." The latter organization defends communists before our nation's courts.

Harvard University recently placed the portrait of John Reed in its hall of "fame." Reed was once proclaimed by Lenin as "Moscow's best agent in America." . . . Reed's portrait now adorns the walls of his alma mater not many feet from those of George Washington and Samuel Adams.

Dr. Dorsey's anti-Semitism is shared by The National Republic. When Arthur Garfield Hays went to Germany to aid the Reichstag defendants in 1933, we read this heading: "JEW TO DEFEND GERMAN REDS." That same year, as negotiations were being carried on between Ambassador Litvinov and President Roosevelt, immediately preceding recognition of the U.S.S.R., the National Republic printed the following:

COMMISSAR LITVINOFF (FINKELSTEIN) SPEAKS

The reds, through their clever salesman, Mr. Litvinoff (Finkelstein), have been able to hypnotize other nations. . . . Some salesman is Mr. Litvinoff, and some saps are his victims.

Finally, in March, 1934, the magazine praised Ralph M. Easley's articles in the

Hearst press on the attempt being made by radicals to "poison the minds of the youth in our public educational institutions." The anti-Communist views of Mr. Easley, president of the National Civic Federation are well known; his anti-Semitic activities were brought to the attention of NEW MASSES readers in the issue of November 6, 1934.

It should be clear by this time that the National Republic and the Hearst press have a real kinship. A summary of Hearst's general policies concludes that:

Hearst militantly upholds the *property rights* and the constitutional form of government. There's only one choice for America and it is not necessary for us to point out that it's the above Hearst policy. (My emphasis, A. H.)

Mr. Steele's office is at 511 Eleventh Street, N.W., Washington. He was deeply complimented by a visit. He said that The National Republic has a monthly circulation of 41,000 (the fact that the magazine's advertising page rate is only \$150 would indicate less), in forty-eight states and in 79

percent of the counties of the country and that an average copy is read by seven people while 49 percent of its readers file back copies. He neglected to add that each member of the staff of many newspapers receive free copies and that they have a representative who tours the country requesting individuals to contribute large sums (on a commission basis) so that free subscriptions can be sent to various university faculty members (such as my friend in the Mid-West, for one).

"We don't need a bigger circulation," he said. "The magazine is written for people who can spread its contents. It's used in high schools and colleges, it's read by leaders of patriotic movements. And its circulation is on the increase." (Mr. Steele failed to add that in 1925 the magazine had claimed an average *weekly* circulation of 200,000.)

His interviewer commented on the fact that the magazine was just about evenly divided between anti-Communist material on the one hand and material dealing with American history on the other.

"Why, yes," he said, "we build up that historical stuff to show that Communism aims at our traditions."

Then, pursuing another tack, he stated: "You know, I presented evidence to the Special Congressional Committee on un-American Activities in December, 1934. Here's my report, printed by the government and franked by Hamilton Fish, Jr."

Mr. Steele appeared before the committee as a representative of the American Coalition, made up of all the sons and daughters of all our wars, of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (listed twice), of the National Sojourners, Dupont Chapter (my emphasis, A. H.), of the Anglo-Saxon Federation of America, the Paul Reverses (a university anti-semitic outfit described in NEW MASSES, November 20, 1934) and others. Bainbridge Colby is an officer of the American Coalition.

The report recommends that all aliens who have not applied for citizenship be deported, that all others be fingerprinted, that all naturalized citizens who are Communists lose their citizenship and be deported and finally that teachers' oath bills be enacted throughout the country.

Many men prominent in public life have written for The National Republic. Among them, for instance, is a member of President Roosevelt's Cabinet. Others are Representatives Chadway of Massachusetts, Dies of Texas and Kenney of New Jersey, as well as such Army Officers as General Douglas MacArthur, General John McAuley Palmer (retired) and others. Together with The National American, The American Gentile and similar publications, it represents a tendency well crystallized in the American Liberty League and in the Hearst press. Whether or not these publications have any organic relation to either or to each other today is not known, but only their exposure can prevent their ultimate consolidation.