

officers of the United States government to help him peddle arms, he was convinced that his chief competitor, Vickers, was receiving equally direct help from King George to control a Polish order.

Testimony that Germany is building submarines, contrary to treaty, in a host of other countries.

Testimony that the navy department proved willing to "loan" a naval officer to Colombia when war threatened with Peru, and that this officer worked hand-in-hand with the Driggs company which hoped to get the order to supply the armaments the American officer recommended. The officer, by the way, later resigned from the United States navy and now commands that of Colombia.

Testimony that the Vickers company had a working agreement with Armstrong, another British firm and supposed competitor, whereby Armstrong would run up its bids while Vickers "starved out other competition."

Testimony that Congressman Fred A. Britten—whose self-portrait appeared in *The Christian Century* for April 18—tried to help representatives of the American Armament corporation in persuading the state department to let a shipment of arms slip through to Bolivia despite the official embargo.

And through it all, testimony that the whole business is bathed in graft, and lives in an atmosphere of secrecy and deceit.

If this is only the beginning, it is difficult to imagine what the later stages of the investigation will reveal. Certainly, however, what has already come out leaves little hope that the inquiry will give a factual basis for that belief, so widely held, that the worst phases of the armament racket are after all European, and that American hands are comparatively clean. What European armament manufacturers are doing, Americans are doing. The difference, if there is any difference, is only in quantity and not in kind.

Yet even now it can be seen that this investigation, whatever it may disclose, is going to precipitate rather than solve problems. Bad as the business practices of the private arms makers have been, it is not proved that they are much if any worse than the practices of most private big business. Indeed, the inability of the heads of the companies, both in this country and in England, to understand the present outcry grows directly out of the fact that they are not aware of having departed from familiar mercantile practices. If they have used whatever devices seemed nearest at hand to drum up trade, what other corporations under the compulsion of earning dividends and paying off loans have failed to do likewise?

Already it is clear that if the Nye investigation is not to exhaust itself in a storm of popular emotion, it will be necessary for the peace forces to keep reminding the public that the armament makers are, after all, agents and not makers of the war system. It is national policy which provides the markets the arms makers supply. It is national policy which insists on having large scale private armament plants—the national policy of the smaller states in order that they may not have to bear the expense of erecting such plants; the

national policy of the United States in order that it may have a going munitions industry capable of supplying an army of 4,000,000 already in operation on any day when war may be declared.

A proposal to do away with private manufacture and to place the making of arms entirely in the hands of the government—which it is often forecast will be made by the Nye committee at the end of this investigation—might, if adopted, do much to clean up some of the filthiest aspects of the industry as they are now revealed. But if it is the future of peace with which the nation is concerned, our citizens must not be allowed for a moment to forget that, despite the sensations loosed from Washington, this is not fundamentally an issue of arms making but of arms buying and arms using. It is national policy that presents the final issue.

In the meantime, however, the nation has reason to be profoundly thankful for the work of the Nye committee so far, and to determine that nothing shall contrive to block it until the committee itself announces that its work has been completed. Rumors already come from Washington of a decision by the senate budget committee to restrict the investigation's appropriation sufficiently to choke it. Against such a contingency, or anything like it, public opinion must remain constantly on guard.

## Do Socialists Want Socialism?

**I**F Upton Sinclair doesn't get anything else out of his campaign for governor of California he is certainly amassing plenty of material for another book. It should be a memorable book, even though somewhat suffused with irony. For few things have happened in recent years to reveal with equal clarity the realities of American political life; the forces which, beneath all surface appearances, actually operate to make the American political scene what it is. Mr. Sinclair's nomination still seems like a sudden flash of lightning which, blasting into the murky darkness of our politics, has disclosed the manipulators of the political machinery not as they have proclaimed, out of the darkness, that they are, but as they are in truth.

It was to have been expected that such a nomination would reveal that, to a large part of the professional political gentry, the distinction between party labels was wholly arbitrary; that they belonged actually in whatever camp might represent the status quo. The storm of abuse, the rain of epithets which fell on Mr. Sinclair from conservative quarters during his primary canvass, and now bids fair to increase during the electoral campaign, may irritate but it should surprise no one. Indeed, a certain amount of reassurance as to the potential effectiveness of our American political devices can be extracted from this evidence that such a nomination can so quickly and clearly draw the lines of battle for another conflict in that struggle on

which the future of the nation depends—the struggle between the determination of an old order to persist and of a new to rise to power.

But if this manner of response to the Sinclair challenge is what was to have been expected of conservatives, what is to be thought of the reception which the Sinclair candidacy and program is receiving from socialists? For here is a man who has given his life to the cause of socialism, who has used up several fortunes in spreading socialist teaching, who has aided in the founding of several socialist organizations, who is regarded in other lands as this nation's one important interpreter of socialist thought, who is being fought by conservatives in this campaign largely on the basis of his socialism—yet who is now being excoriated and anathematized by those who have in the past called themselves his socialist comrades! If the fact were not so tragic it would be laughable.

Consider what has taken place. In a state which occupies a peculiarly important position in the strategy of our national politics, this veteran socialist, overwhelmed by that waste of human and material resources which is the conclusive condemnation of the present order, determines to make a bold, single-handed attempt to seize the machinery of one of the effective parties in order to apply a socialist remedy to the social disease. To do this, does he recant his socialism? No, he avows it and glories in it. Does he conceal his desire for the coming of a socialist commonwealth? No, he declares that everything he attempts now is as a step toward that goal. Does he pussyfoot on vital issues? No, he goes out of his way to make his position and his program as clear as human speech can make them. But he sees the two-party system for what it is—a mechanical contrivance for the approximate registration of the public will—and he determines to use it as it waits to be used to capture the control of the state and to put his socialist remedies for the social ills of the state into actual effect.

If it is thought that this is a misreading of the Sinclair campaign, or that Mr. Sinclair actually has deserted his socialist principles, a study of the "Epic" platform will show the contrary. As a matter of plain fact, it may be doubted whether the socialist party as such ever entered a campaign which it had a genuine hope of winning—as in cities like Milwaukee, Bridgeport and Reading—with as radical and far-reaching a socialist platform as Mr. Sinclair is running on in California. Mr. Sinclair says to the citizens of California, "Elect me governor and I will lead you toward a state which has—

"Cooperative colonies, state controlled, for the rural jobless.

"Cooperative factories, state financed, for the city jobless.

"A state system of finance, beyond control of private banks.

"No more sales tax, which falls heaviest on the poor.

"A graduated state income tax, planned to fall heaviest on wealth, where its weight can best be borne.

"A state inheritance tax, which will levy up to one-half of large fortunes.

"Taxes on the public utilities and banks sufficient to loose their grip upon state government.

"Exemption from taxation of all homes and farms occupied by the owners which are assessed at less than \$3,000.

"Taxation of idle land, in order to put an end to speculation in land values and to put idle land to work.

"Old age pensions.

"Pensions for the blind and disabled.

"Mothers' pensions."

This is the platform with which Mr. Sinclair has already electrified the state of California. The chances are great that, before this campaign is over, this platform will have become a text for passionate discussion in every part of the nation. It may be regarded as a good platform or as a bad one. Whatever the verdict, it will be regarded as a vital platform—a genuine proposal for immediate, concrete, understandable action—and men everywhere will react vitally to it. Its socialistic nature will be alleged and admitted, but in the end men will range themselves for or against it, not on the basis of its label but of its content.

But now, at this juncture when it is clear that great masses of Americans are going to make this choice, what are the socialists—the official socialists, the party socialists—doing? The party's executive committee hastens to meet and inform the country that Mr. Sinclair is a party renegade, and that nothing he does or proposes is longer to be regarded as genuine socialism. The party's leader expresses his personal friendship for Mr. Sinclair but warns the country that the Sinclair program is quite visionary. And the party in the state in which Mr. Sinclair is actually running adopts a document whose tone and import can be gauged from these excerpts:

It is the despair that follows hopes falsely raised by plans like "Epicism" that makes the people ready to follow a demagogue like Hitler. . . . Sinclair's theory of getting power is essentially the old theory of electing good men to office on a program of reform that frequently has been tried (*sic!*) for the last one hundred years. . . . We need to try a new method, the socialist method of getting power for the workers and common people—not of electing individuals, but of electing a party into office, a party that is disciplined and educated to withstand capitalistic propaganda, a party united definitely against capitalism and for straight socialism, a party large enough and solid enough to be powerful, a party backed wholeheartedly by organized labor and dirt farmers, who will call strikes to support it when necessary—a party more powerful than organized big business.

And yet the socialist party, after sending out this description of itself, accuses Mr. Sinclair of wishful thinking!

The campaign in California, with its national repercussions, is going to have a lot of effects which even now are not to be forecast. But if the current socialist attitude toward Mr. Sinclair and his platform continues, one of those effects may easily be the raising of the question in many minds as to whether the interest of the official socialist party is primarily in pushing forward as fast as possible toward a socialist order, or in securing and enforcing party regularity. While to individuals who have become convinced that the processes of history have brought us to a point where

some sort of socialist society is required, this action by the official party representatives may raise the question as to whether these representatives expect to achieve such an order by calling down anathemas on every man who dares to deviate from what they have declared is the party line.

We are by no means convinced that Mr. Sinclair can, if elected, carry all his program into effect. Neither are we sure that it would be a good thing for the state of California if he could and should. But we are convinced of his sincerity; we are convinced that his success in inducing the voters of California to deal with their political and social issues on the basis of such a definite economic program is of immense importance; we are convinced that if he gets a chance to try out 50 per cent, or 25 per cent, or even 10 per cent of his plan it will be a matter of national and international significance. As between him and the reactionary political hack who is his only real opponent, surely those who seek escape from the clutches of the status quo can have no hesitancy in deciding. By what species of self-deception, therefore, do Mr. Sinclair's fellow socialists convince themselves that they are aiding to bring in a new day by following a course which is actually calculated—if it has any influence at all—to contribute to the election of his opponent?

## Oh, "G"!

EDITOR THE CHRISTIAN CENTURY:

SIR: I think we owe a vote of thanks to that eminent British psychologist, Spearman, for his suggestion of the symbol "G" as a means of designating the general ability that is more or less common in all men. It is a refreshing reminder of the nativity of our common Adam; a voice from the laboratory that makes the whole world kin, and a sort of higher rescue mission to revive us from those dizzy roller-coaster rides known as I.Q. tests. With highbrows weaving brain cobwebs either *in vacuo* or in special professional sessions, we may at times be disposed to relegate all but our breath to the experts, but here once again is something, known to our foundling fathers as an appeal to "the decent opinions of mankind."

By all appearances, sir, the present world leaders have little time for "G." The soviets these many years have declared a moratorium on the thing for which this seventh letter stands. Theirs is rather an appeal to the economic interpretation of history, and although it ends uneconomically in a direction of intelligence under soviet management, they are not dismayed. The decapitation of all contrary heads is now possible by dialectic. Then there is Herr Hitler. What chance has "G" in a Nordic world where all gentlemen prefer blondes? Benito Mussolini with his brood of forty million odd has long since ceased to pray, "Make no more giants, God, but elevate the race," and "G" for him is used only as the first letter for "giant." Would anyone accuse Japan of undue partiality to this symbol of general ability, or charge the United States govern-

ment with favoring it, when we discriminated against Japan among the nations?

Look, sir, at the high-powered technique that the world is using in order to dragoon into dogmas those who disagree with us. We have everything from senatorial investigations to tear-gas; from armaments to censorship; from lynching to capital punishment, and from political patronage on high to jobs from district leaders. Verily the use of "G" seems but a superfluity of naughtiness! Think you that Menckenes on Mount Olympus who view the "great unwashed" as merely so many "omnivorous bipeds that wear breeches" have need of it?

Lift up your eyes and behold! The politicians are too busy seeking formulas to neutralize the intelligence during months like November. The big fellows are satisfied with the militia to keep the world safe for dividends. The walking delegates—who now usually fly—can always fall back on unctuous phrases about "the American standard of living" even in a world depression with twenty million of their countrymen on the dole. The Daughters of the Revolution, still worshipping at the shrine of dead radicals, can always pass resolutions that the new world ended at 1776. The American Legion can issue pedagogical orders to the N.E.A. that they confine all teaching to the art of "getting by" under present economic traffic laws, and finally, sir, the preachers, afraid of talking over heads, can circumvent the summit of the spinal column altogether, and merely "put on the rousements," but, from your small corner and mine, I can hear a constant lamentation "Oh, 'G'!"

Yours for an appeal to General John Doe,

QUINTUS QUIZ.

## *Suffer Even Unto Death*

CHURCH of the Ages, waken to thy trust,  
 Throw off the comfort of dull lethargy  
 That threatens to engulf thee; break the crust  
 Of outworn ways that breed calamity  
 In a new epoch. For, if you will sup  
 With enemies, your rank apostasy  
 Will crush believers. Dare to drink the cup  
 Pressed to thy lips in this Gethsemane.  
 And suffer till your very heart is wrung  
 Sharing the sorrows of humanity.  
 Suffer until again is born that young  
 Eternal Spirit urged to destiny.  
 Now when the storms of evil crowd and lower,  
 Church of the Ages, waken to thy power.

MARY CHANNELL STEVENS.

## *Garden Steeples*

EVERY lupin and larkspur stalk  
 Points above like a churchly steeple.  
 Their blossoms are chimes that call the people  
 To leave the world for the spirit's walk.

MARGARET LATHROP LAW.