

# Stalinist and Trotskyist Debate on Radio in S.F.

By Roy Gale

SAN FRANCISCO, Aug. 5 — Speakers representing the viewpoints of the Socialist Workers Party and the Communist party debated the topic of "The Downgrading of Stalin" over Radio Station KPFA here today. The speakers were Frank Barbaria, SWP Candidate for Mayor last year, and Adam Lapin, Associate Editor of the People's World (West Coast Stalinist weekly). Participating with them in the panel discussion was Sidney Roger, well-known liberal and radio news-caster.

Agreement among the three panelists was limited to their common belief that the nationalized property forms in the Soviet Union are progressive. But they diverged widely over why Stalin had been dethroned and what the consequences would be.

Barbaria stated that Khrushchev was forced into denouncing Stalin and revealing part of his crimes because of tremendous mass pressures developing in the Soviet Union. Khrushchev and Co. are granting concessions, said Barbaria, because they "hope by this method to hold on to their bureaucratic privileges and the higher standard of living they enjoy at the expense of the Soviet Workers and peasants."

"We don't get very much news out of the Soviet Union on this point," he said. "But we can gauge the pressure of the masses by three examples from recent history: (1) The East German general strike in June 1953,

in which the workers expressed support for the nationalized property but wanted a voice in running the factories. (2) The Vorkuta strike in the prison camps of Siberia in which the prisoners demanded better food and more lenient working conditions. (3) The recent general strike in Poznan, in which, again, workers demanded better working conditions and some voice in running the plants. In none of these struggles was the demand raised for a return to capitalism."

Lapin blamed what he called Stalin's "excesses" and "bad means" on holdovers from Czarism. Since there had never been any democracy in Russia it was easy for the Soviet regime to use terrorist methods to push through its program of nationalization and planning, was his argument. He promised that the Khrushchev regime would be more democratic citing Khrushchev's 20th Congress speech as marking a turn toward democracy. He urged radical workers to forget the Stalinist past and turn their attention to the better prospects he predicted for the future.

Roger thought that Khrushchev had been forced into his revelations by what he called the highly educated scientific strata, whose very training teaches them constantly to ask questions. When a large body of educated people are taught to ask questions in their field of study, he said, they have a tendency to wonder why they cannot ask political questions as well. He

thought that the change in the Soviet Union since Stalin's death was for the better and that democracy would expand.

## MALIGNS BARBARIA

In the course of the panel discussion, Lapin alleged that by attacking the Khrushchev regime, Barbaria was attacking the Soviet Union itself. Barbaria replied that he had always defended the Soviet Union but had never condoned the rule of the bureaucratic caste in the USSR because of the enormous privileges it accrued to itself at the expense of workers. This bureaucracy, Barbaria charged, has acted as a brake on the development of socialist potentials lodged in the nationalized property forms of the Soviet Union. For that reason, too, he had opposed Stalin's rule in the past and the rule of Khrushchev today.

## Liberals Rally Bel

By John Thayer

AUG. 6 — Senator Estes Kefauver's withdrawal from the race for the presidential nominations and his simultaneous endorsement of Adlai Stevenson has made the latter's nomination on the first or second ballot at the Democratic convention a strong possibility.

At the same time the air is thick with rumors that part of the deal was the promise of the vice-presidential nomination to

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