

*The American*  
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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him, that he who loves God should love his brother also." (1 John 4:20, 21. R.S.V.)

Rev. Wm. Baird Chicago

## Man the measure of all things?

According to the identification of Dr. Hans Freistadt offered by the editors, he is a professor of physics who writes on scientific topics. His recent article in the August issue of the *American Socialist* ["Science, Truth, and Religion"] would seem to indicate that he also writes on religion. It is a good article on the problem of knowledge, which the philosophers tag *epistemology*; but it doesn't even hint at the vital issues that ranking Protestant theologians of the caliber of Tillich, Niebuhr, Barth, Brunner, Hromadka are seeking to analyze. In fact, one cannot but wonder if Mr. Freistadt has even bothered to read what these men are writing, and if so, why in a discussion of science, truth, and religion, he does not introduce the *real* issues with which Christian theologians are wrestling.

The problem of knowledge is an interesting one for college philosophy, but is hardly the problem which is causing honest Christian theologians of either right or left (fundamentalist or humanist) a great deal of mental agony. What is bothering them more than a little is the problem of *salvation*.

The good professor may be all for dismissing God as irrelevant, but when there are many signs to indicate that when he (and his colleagues) does so he is also dismissing man, it would seem that perhaps he should pause to consider if by chance there might be some relationship between the one and the other. When man himself becomes the measure of all things, why is it unscientific to use him as a guinea pig, or for that matter as material for lamp shades? Where is the evidence that the innate goodness of man, guided by his mentor, science, produces the good life for all? Do we look to Germany? To Russia? To the United States? Or to Africa? Or do we look to one like the Teacher of Nazareth who became a savior? It's all very well to espouse Jesus' ethic, but the evidence seems to indicate that one doesn't get very far with his ethic until one appreciates (and it may be, even espouses) the faith which He engendered—and still engenders.

The question that needs to be asked is not whether our knowledge is valid but whether our continued existence is. How does an honest man who has some insight into his own involvement in that which is horribly evil get right with himself—especially when he cannot accept such an outmoded conception as God? How is man to survive on this planet? Does *true* religion have a vital role to play? Can the Christian churches produce community instead of conflict?

Are there resources other than those which science has to offer through which

man can learn to live with himself and his neighbor? Is there any other reason to live nobly than because one is human as well as animal? Why is it that science produces Salk vaccine—and H-bombs? Is this purely the result of man's stupidity? Or is there something in man that does need correction, which science can never remedy?

Unfortunately, it is true that by and large the Christian religion as propagated by the Christian church of *all* denominations has concerned itself for the most part with supernaturalism and "pie-in-the-sky-when-you-die," but is this actually the emphasis of the living, revolutionary faith in the possibility of a new world introduced by those followers of Jesus of Nazareth who believed in the vital reality of his proclamation of the Kingdom of God *on earth*? The Bible may seem to many no more than what Billy Graham says it is; on the other hand, it may be an instrument to inspire man to seek to achieve a new world of freedom, justice, and righteousness in which there will be peace and prosperity for all. So, too, religion may be and no doubt universally is an "opiate of the people," but it need not be! It should be the motivating force through which man lives to achieve by scientific means the good life on earth as Jesus, the humble carpenter, believed: "And you will know the truth and the truth will make you free." (John 8:32 R.S.V.)

I deeply sympathize with Mr. Freistadt's problem, but would suggest that he be less concerned with epistemology, and more concerned with, "If any one says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom

## Politics and the novel

I would dissent from George Hitchcock's findings about Irving Howe's "Politics and the Novel" (reviewed in the *American Socialist*, September 1957). It is impossible to substantiate the complaint that Howe "is engaged in tailoring an anti-socialist tradition" of literary criticism by pointing to the anti-socialist policies of most of the authors Howe discusses in his book. To support the complaint, one would have to show that Howe admires the policies of these novelists.

D. H. Minneapolis

## The blinders are off

September *American Socialist* at hand; I am proud to be in such unjaded company. The blinders are off: We can look at the world for ourselves, and not through an interpreter. What a boon this is to the entire socialist movement!

We do not have to go the way others have gone. We try to understand why they went that way, but not necessarily with endorsement. The political revolution cannot be skipped without disastrous consequences. Let's hang onto ours (incomplete as it is) and carry it forward into the age of social transformation.

The above comment after reading Bert Cochran's "The Chinese Riddle," a real service to those of us who have not been able to reach more than tentative conclusions as to the "riddle."

Reuben W. Borough Los Angeles

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## Where there is no Vision . . .

**BY** now every literate person knows that the labor unions are in a crisis. The daily newspapers feed the public only the surface, sensational derivatives; the real substance of labor's crisis is compounded of more than bad public relations stemming from the exposures of high union officials caught redhanded pilfering their organization treasuries and consorting with hoodlums and crooks. The unions are smack up against a typical dead-end of business unionism which the old AFL faced time and again in its seventy years of existence. What happens is that the dry rot of business unionism eats away the moral vitals of the organization; at a certain point, when the process has advanced far enough, labor's enemies take advantage of the decay which they foster and feed to disembowel the unions. The labor leaders are trying to squirm out of their excruciating dilemma by tossing out a few of the most vulnerable from their midst to appease the voracious anti-labor wolves that are baying at their heels, while leaving the policy and practices of the movement intact.

Every organization and movement must have some motive power to keep it going. A union is a rudimentary defensive organization of workers to protect themselves against the depredations of the employers and through the economic strength of their solidarity secure improved wages and working conditions. Where these aims are synthesized into a comprehensive social program and the daily tug-of-war subsumed under a larger political framework, social philosophy engenders its own sense of morality, leaders are bound by a set of commonly accepted values and standards of conduct,

transgression of which spells speedy disgrace and repudiation, and leaders' ambitions and strivings for status become channelized along defined lines of service and constancy to labor's cause and aspirations. Where there is no socialist philosophy, where as a matter of fact, the socialist philosophy is specifically repudiated and stamped as wicked and unworthy, what other



motive drive is left but capitalist values, mores and folkways of personal aggrandizement and aping the living styles of the privileged and rich?

**T**HE ambivalence of Meany's position and that of the rest of the AFL-CIO officers is that they are enthusiastic apostles and devoted practitioners of business unionism which includes such natural corollaries as big salaries, padded expense accounts, con-

spicuous consumption, social collaboration and personal *camaraderie* with business executives and capitalist politicians; but confronted with the public scandal of corruption, they seek to draw some line of personal ethics so that the disintegration of the moral tie-rods that hold unions together can be stemmed and the good name of unionism restored with the public.

The AFL-CIO Executive Council heads are veering, tacking, retreating under the lashes of the Senate Investigating Committee and feel helpless to take the counter-offensive. While the McClellan Committee is a scarcely concealed anti-labor instrument, its disclosures have merely uncovered and sensationalized existing crookedness on the part of high union officials. The informed few know that most union corruption is not a one-sided affair and involves a venal relationship between business figures and pliable labor leaders. The Senate Committee with malice aforethought is glossing over this basic relationship and creating in the public mind an over-simplified, Hollywoodized image of powerful, greedy, ruthless labor bosses victimizing workers and employers alike and spreading putrefaction and rot in the community. The labor people have made a few feeble gestures to balance the record, but labor's disgrace is so extreme, the qualifying amendments have gotten lost in the grand smear, and Meany and the other labor moguls are afraid that the unions are too compromised to take McClellan head-on (for the present, at any rate).

That's the trouble with business unionism. It cannot create a prosperous and stable enterprise, because labor unionism, no matter how many Rotarian speeches are delivered before no matter how many civic bodies, cannot be conducted as a capitalist business. In the nature of the organization, it is in conflict with business. Where its essential nature is subverted and it ceases this conflict, it loses its members' allegiance and becomes a tool of the employers, or succumbs to the employers' opposition. Where, as is generally the case today, the philosophy of business unionism involves a pedestrian routine of collective bargaining for wage increases and fringe improvements, the élan of the move-

ment disappears and in a reactionary political climate it becomes a sitting duck for the predatory operations of its enemies.

**M**EANY and Reuther know only too well that labor is in a bad spot and must go to great lengths to get itself in the clear, else its future is in jeopardy. But while these men are personally honest and have never had their palms outstretched for greasing like the Becks and Hoffas, they are nevertheless either pupils out of the same Gompers school of business unionism or else have long ago yielded to its tenets. Hence, they do not have the moral authority or the intimate relations with the ranks to appeal to them over the heads of their own leaders to clean house in the Teamsters or the Bakery Workers unions. The reform movement consequently becomes a tussle in the top echelon between two sets of bureaucracies. The membership is not in the picture. Having adopted a generalized code of ethics, the Executive Council has no other weapons but to expel from the Federation those unions that are too tainted with racketeering. And this is a tragic turn of events, as it is creating internecine warfare inside the labor movement, and the bitter inter-union battles that swept the New York waterfront in the past few years may be repeated on a larger scale in many parts of the country.

The McClellan Committee can already chalk up two resounding achievements: It has blackened unionism in the public eye; it has brought on a new labor division which may lead to an organizational split. But as *Business Week* calls to our attention in a remarkable study called "Labor Violence and Corruption" in its August 31 issue, the powers-that-be are shooting for even bigger stakes: They have a closet-full of repressive laws that they are going to try to get passed. Says *Business Week*: "Punitive action is in the air. The unions are in for trouble." Radicals have been warning for a decade that the labor leaders in lending themselves to the witch-hunt were playing with fire. Now (to mix the metaphor) their chickens are coming home to roost. These *real-politikers* have proven not to be so

very practical, after all.

Why don't the members do something about all this? Already columnists and news commentators have begun to righteously berate the union members for staying home and watching television instead of going to union meetings and cleaning up the mess. Well, why don't the members do something? The thing isn't that simple. Mass democracy is a devilishly complex proposition consisting of an intricate, graded set of relationships between leaders and ranks. The mass, when disorganized and leaderless, is just as helpless as a babe in arms, despite anything the union constitution or local by-laws do or do not provide.

**L**ET us establish first that the pious pretense that the Senate or the courts or the metropolitan press are interested in having the membership run their own unions along militant lines, and are prepared to offer aid and comfort to the ranks in such an endeavor, is a cruel hoax. They are just playing a diabolical confidence game.

A remarkable instance of the crafty division of labor which they have perfected was seen just in the past weeks. Sixty-five Puerto Rican workers at the J. Radley Metzger Company in Bronx, New York, quit their United Textile Workers local dominated by a notorious racketeer, "Tony Ducks" Corallo, and struck the plant to get a new agreement under Local 485 of the AFL-CIO International Union of Electrical Workers. The boss had herded these workers into the so-called union; in contracts covering five and a half years, these imposed-on workers had not gained a cent increase. Their only raise had come last March when the Federal minimum wage was raised to \$1 an hour. Yet, with all the hullabaloo in the press and over the air waves about racketeers and "sweetheart agreements," a New York Supreme Court judge issued an injunction enjoining the workers from picketing the plant, and in effect, hounding them back into the arms of the racketeers. The Pontius Pilate employer piously pleaded that he was caught in the middle between two unions, and the judge-executioner stentoriously car-

ried out the sentence: "The court will not sit supinely by to watch the destruction of a business whose owners have merely been charged, without proof, with collusive conduct. . . ." To make the picture complete, the *N. Y. Times*, which had been inveighing for months against the labor racketeers, did not even bother to tap the judge on the wrist; it breezily told the workers to go try the NLRB for redress.

As for ousting from the inside an entrenched bureaucracy, that takes a bit of doing. A bureaucracy, like that of the Teamsters, does not only embezzle union funds and accept indirect payoffs from employers; it also wins improved wages and working conditions for the union membership. It is a contradictory phenomenon. To clean up a union of this kind means to organize an effective opposition, to gain wide adherence to a militant program, to build up a new set of superior leaders who have the experience and know-how in carrying through a complicated strategy and in directing a protracted battle. (As a matter of fact, democracy in unions, as in any mass formations, gets reduced to peripheral levels, if the only organized cohesive force is that of the administration.) But such struggles for reforms have traditionally been sparked only by the most idealistic and broad-minded members—in a word, the radicals. And the very same forces that are now pontificating about clean unionism are the ones that have stoked the fires of the witch-hunt and wiped out all expression of radicalism from the unions.

**T**HE rout of the radicals gave a clear field to the business unionists, and their monopoly of union power has in turn set in motion the present train of evils. If the labor movement is to regain its crusading zeal, it must have a social vision, a larger aim, to crusade for, and it must have leaders who want and are competent to lead a crusade. When radicals, social reformers, iconoclasts, become *persona grata* in the labor unions again, and are able to act as a yeast in the doughy mass, we will again see verve and animation in today's stale and stodgy unions, and with that, the decline of the power of the boodlers and grafters.

The Belgian labor movement also has its New Left—a grouping of unionists and socialist intellectuals in the Socialist Party which desires a more militant policy.

# Debate in the Belgian Left

by Belgian Correspondent

**B**ELGIUM, a nation of 8½ million inhabitants divided into two principal linguistic communities, has a socialist movement that is numerically strong, although heretofore a minority in elections. The unions, co-operatives, and the Socialist Party collaborate to give it a solid foundation.

Since the introduction of universal suffrage, the socialist movement, by its participation in different governments and still more by its trade union struggles, has won appreciable reforms and some degree of security for the Belgian workers. But Belgium still has the lamentable privilege of remaining the "paradise of capitalism" that Marx once called it: the one political democracy of Western Europe whose capitalist apparatus has been least disturbed. The nationalized sector of the economy is much less important here than in France or Great Britain, and, in contrast with the Scandinavian countries, the co-operatives play an insignificant role.

The capitalists assure their dominance through the Liberal and Social Christian parties. The former is an anti-clerical and even sometimes an anti-religious party, which has on certain occasions collaborated with the socialist movement. It resembles the Radical Socialist Party of France, but it has not been shaken up during these last few years by any renovating movement comparable to that of Mendès-France. The Social Christian Party, founded upon the idea of political unity for Catholics, is totally dominated by ultra-conservative interests, and the Left minority in it, made up of "Christian Democrats" elected by the Catholic workers, has up to now been incapable of separating itself from the conservatism that characterizes the party. In the Catholic front, this Christian Democracy is thus only a marginal organization which acts to prevent the adherence of Catholic workers to the socialist movement.



In 1950 the Social Christian Party, by playing upon the unpopularity of the monarchy (King Leopold III remained in occupied Belgium during the war and was compromised in liberal and socialist opinion), gained an absolute majority for four years. In power, the Catholic party did nothing against capitalism, but it did utilize its control to grant financial support to Catholic schools, which provoked criticism from the two principal opposition parties, the Liberals and Socialists. In April 1954, these two won the elections and took power together, for a term ending in the spring of 1958. Where the previous government was homogeneous only in defense of the Catholic religion and its multiple organizations, the present government is homogeneous only in its anti-clericalism.

**I**T is on this very point that the leadership of the Socialist Party and that of the minority around *La Gauche* face each other uncompromisingly. The present leaders of the Socialist Party believe that the path to socialism in Belgium necessarily passes through a prolonged alliance with the Liberal Party, an alliance which in their eyes requires heavy but indispensable concessions. This proposition rests upon their conviction that the Catholic Church, not likely to resign itself to remaining out of power for an extended period, will have to give more leeway to its Christian Democratic wing, thus helping the mass of Catholic workers to the Left, to the Socialist Party, or at least toward acceptance of social reforms unacceptable to the traditional clerical Right.

While waiting for this eventual development which it hopes will buttress its strength, the Socialist Party, united with the Liberals in anti-clericalism, will progressively weaken the institutions that the Church maintains that further the conservative influence of the Social Christian Party. It is by way of this path involving heavy, unilateral concessions on the economic and social fields to the Liberal Party that the Socialist leadership hopes to demonstrate the

superiority of the socialist doctrine to the social doctrine of the church. Socialism, for an undetermined period, must postpone its economic and social program to the Greek Calends and make itself the loyal guardian of capitalist interests. Its positions will be radical only in connection with the relations between church and state.

This attitude of the Socialist leadership is one of unmitigated opportunism, and poorly disguises the total absence of any intention of socialist reorganization of society. The presumed Socialist majority that is to be acquired in several years by means of anti-clerical measures and the change in church policy, is really a pretext to avoid an immediate socialist examination of the economic structure. While waiting for this absolute majority, the top-rung Socialist leadership introduces the greatest confusion in the working class on the question of socialist objectives.

They declare that nationalizations are not worthwhile. They also declare, with little concern for the self-contradiction, that it will be necessary to maintain the coalition with the Liberal Party even if the Socialist Party wins an absolute majority at the next elections. They continually exalt the achievements of the present government; in reality, thin indeed. It can take credit only for the reduction in the term of military service from 24 months to 18, the increase in old-age pensions to an annual maximum of 28,000 francs (\$560), a fight against corruption in the National Defense Ministry, and reform of family assistance. The very insufficient increases to offset the high cost of living were forced on the government by trade union action, and compare ill with the liberal aid given to business.

Fleeing from their responsibility as socialists, they are running off in all directions, and attempt to disguise their confused behavior by talking of the necessarily tortuous itinerary destined to guarantee the "triumph of the cause" in the long run. The fraternal support of Guy Mollet and his actions in Algeria in the official Socialist press of Belgium, the haughtiness manifested towards workers' opinions or the opinions of German and Scandinavian Social Democrats, as well as the piddling nature of the measures taken in the direction of freedom for the Belgian Congo, are other indices of the adaptation of most of these political leaders to an order the transformation of which is presumably their mission.

**S**INCE 1954, a minority opposition has reacted to this state of affairs. The most significant aspect of its stand is represented by the programs adopted by the Socialist trade union conferences in 1954 and 1956. The principal proposals of these extraordinary sessions concerned the nationalization of the sources of energy (coal, gas, electricity, and the future peaceful use of atomic energy), economic planning, economic democracy, and the fight against the formidable power of the financial groups. Without going into all the details, it is worth noting what one of the important points in this program means in its practical application.

In August 1956, a terrible catastrophe in the mines, due in large measure to the negligence of the owners, took the lives of nearly 300 miners. Public attention was as a

result drawn to the proposed mine safety measures and the public-ownership proposals of the trade unions. The Socialist Party heads, faithful to the policy described above, tried to calm the indignant working class and to sacrifice an essential demand in the interest of governmental stability. The opposition in the party, at this same time, wanted a dissolution of Parliament and a Socialist electoral campaign around the theme of nationalization of the mines. Such a campaign would have strengthened the party on the parliamentary plane, made it possible to reach many of the Catholic workers, and given the Socialists a strong bargaining position in relation to the Liberals. The party

### *"La Gauche" Looks at the World*

**O**N international policy, the paper will defend an independent socialist position on all the great problems of the day. . . .

The paper will resolutely and without compromise defend the freedom movement of the colonial people. Without doubt, the independence of these people is not the final goal in and of itself, for it must be completed by the establishment, in the new nations, of democratic political and economic structures, and by bonds of friendship and cooperation with other nations.

But such a result can only be attained if the working-class movement fights unremittently alongside the colonial people against all forms of colonial oppression, and especially denounces unequivocally every effort to maintain the privileges of the former colonial power under the cover of schemes and associations not freely consented to.

The paper will back efforts for the economic development of the disinherited countries. It will conduct a campaign for vigorous international action towards this end. But this effort must be free from private capitalist interests working behind camouflage. It should not result in retrogressive political structures or new feudal arrangements. It must be activated by a disinterested spirit, renouncing policies that would serve to introduce insidious forms of imperialism.

While socialist action on a national scale still offers considerable possibilities that should not be neglected, the paper considers the present national states outdated and ineffective. But the promoters of the paper believe that action designed to destroy national barriers, action for European unification, can be worthwhile only if conducted in accord with the interests of the working classes concerned and aimed at harnessing the entire economy to socialist planning and the attainment of true economic and social democracy.

**I**N regard to the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and China, the paper is opposed to any effort to restore capitalism in these countries. It will refuse to associate itself with any moves, military or ideological, seeking such an objective. However, the paper cannot accept any form of dictatorship or police state. But the paper's promoters think that the best method of aiding the democratization of the regimes in the Soviet bloc is not through aiming a coalition of hostile capitalist powers against them, but by enhancing the possibilities in these countries of political democracy based on a collective economy. They believe that the most favorable factor for such an evolution is the reinforcement of the international workers' movement, and particularly the establishment in the West of authentic socialist democracies. That would furthermore be the only guarantee of the rapid industrialization of the underdeveloped countries within the framework of political democracy.



Left demands that the Socialist Party, instead of seeking accommodation of the working class to capitalism in an amended form, ought to assume revolutionary positions seeking to extend to the economic sphere the achievements of political democracy. *La Gauche* is thus a militant proponent of a truly socialist program, favoring a clear distinction between the orientation of the Socialists and that of the Liberal Party.

The principal support for *La Gauche* comes from unionists, notably the French-speaking metal workers. Unlike British Bevanism before Frank Cousins (Secretary of the Transport Workers Union) rallied to the cause, the Left movement here is not based primarily on political elements although the directing committee of the paper is composed in majority of militant political people. Only two members of Parliament, a young deputy and the president of the Chamber of Deputies, collaborate with the weekly. *La Gauche* has, however, evoked considerable support among socialist youth, particularly the intellectuals.

By contrast with the New Left in France, sparked by Claude Bourdet and grouped around *France Observateur* and *Nouvelle Gauche*, the Belgian group around *La Gauche*, at least up to the present time, believes it is possible to work inside the Socialist Party. A break might however be imposed upon us by the leadership. We face important obstacles. The distribution of the paper is hindered by the brutal opposition of the whole party apparatus, and the crudest kind of pressure is brought to bear on backers of *La Gauche* to get them to withdraw their support. The party leadership does not yet dare to lay a finger on the several trade union leaders that aid the weekly, so it tries to create a vacuum around them. The journalists and supporters of *La Gauche* who are dependent in any way upon the party or organizations connected with it are menaced by the most serious sanctions. To try to win the fight in the unions, the party leadership is depending upon certain union leaders who are also members of Parliament and hence inclined to docility. The apparatus of the government itself is used to try to thwart those union projects the party leadership opposes.

heads, instead, proceeded to discipline the workers, ignoring in the process a policy declaration of the last Congress of the Socialist Party itself. In the end, these leaders accepted a mine-reform project elaborated by the Liberal Party that is even less satisfactory than the proposition of co-operative control submitted by the Catholic trade unions. On this point as on many others, the party officialdom sacrificed the socialist program for the maintenance of the coalition and all the personal advantages that participation in the government offers them and their circle.

This situation has continued to push a minority of Socialists, composed of non-scholastic Marxists plus some Catholics who have broken from Christian Democracy, to group themselves around a new weekly, *La Gauche*, launched at the end of 1956. Supported by part of the trade union leadership and a growing proportion of Socialist youth, this weekly seeks to break the unity of the Socialist Party by conforming much more closely to the tenets of class struggle. By the fight against the power of the financial groups and for basic reforms, the socialist movement will attract the workers still connected with Christian Democracy. Pure and simple anti-clericalism can only serve to hold those workers who are believers in Catholicism inside the Catholic organizations, and block the possibilities of working-class unity.

Seventy percent of the Belgian electorate is composed of manual workers and intellectuals who are divided on the religious question. The Socialists, by putting this on the secondary level (that is, by refusing to attack head-on the religious sentiments of Christian workers), and by basing themselves on a program for the nationalization of the sources of energy, of the financial institutions, a struggle against the cartels and holding companies, etc., in other words, by socialist opposition, would be able to establish rapidly the political unity of the working class and to conquer power for authentically socialist goals.

**A**FTER the mine catastrophe at Marcinelle, the left wing demanded, in addition to the dissolution of Parliament and a new election, a sharper distinction between the government and the party, and greater autonomy for the Socialist trade unions, muzzled at present. In brief, the

**M**ASS support for *La Gauche* and its line of thinking is not in the cards for a good while yet, although there are some sure signs of working-class awakening. The minority of *La Gauche* will try to do the impossible in order to continue its activity inside the Socialist Party, because the unity of the labor movement is a precious thing. *La Gauche* is making every effort to attract to the Socialist Party, despite its terrible shortcomings, not only Catholic workers, but also Communists disillusioned by certain realities of present Soviet society and now hostile to Stalinist methods and the subordination of the Belgian workers' struggle to the Kremlin's diplomatic interests. The future will tell if it is possible to re-orient from the inside a movement which, strangely lacking in ideology, austerity, and faith, utilizes its power only for the most timid of political objectives and for the satisfaction of careerist ambitions. Let us hope that the Left will achieve some successes that will reinforce the determination of its forces and increase its backing and influence.

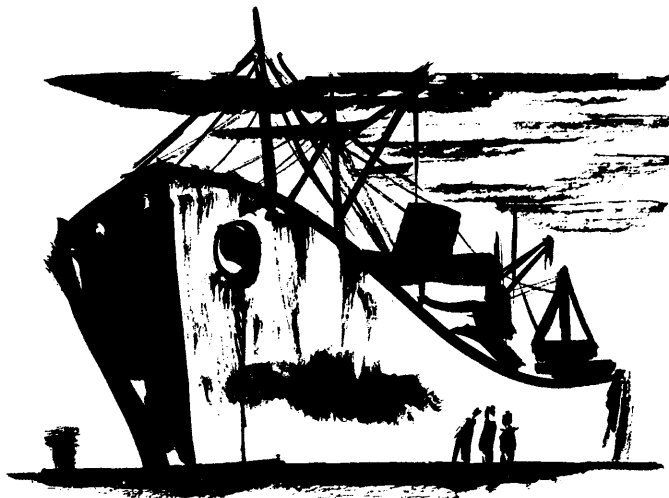
Can government commissions "clean up" the labor movement? East Coast longshoremen's experience with the Waterfront Commission shows why workers prefer to do their own cleaning up, without interference by their employers or by government agencies.

# On the Waterfront

by Al Burton

ADVERTISING of the Port of New York Authority urging the prospective shipper, importer, or traveler to use the port describes the length of the waterfront (650 miles), the number of piers (1600, two hundred of which can berth four hundred ocean-going vessels at one time), the number of ships that enter or leave the harbor (one every 20 minutes on an average), how many steamship lines use the port (170 in a year), and the modern facilities (limited, in fact). But there is never any mention of the element without which their imposing array of data, fancy, and trivia would be meaningless, the work force. Not that there has been a dearth of news about the longshoremen in the last several years. Newspapers have carried innumerable lurid news stories and editorials, magazines have run feature articles, even a big Hollywood movie was devoted to the New York longshoremen. In the light of this notoriety, it would probably surprise most to learn that there was a long period, a stretch of twenty-six years, when the information media were as mute about the dock workers as the Port of New York advertising blurbs are now. True, the press did occasionally report a communion breakfast attended by International Longshoremen's Association leaders, or a testimonial dinner at which ILA President Ryan presented some henchman with a diamond ring. The murder of a rank-and-file longshore leader in the thirties was deplored and condemned. But a perusal of the *N. Y. Times* Index brings out forcefully that only in the past few years have the East Coast longshoremen become news-o-genic.

*Al Burton, who has been both longshoreman and seaman, wrote on the West Coast maritime labor picture in the March 1955 American Socialist.*



Metropolitan newspapers and magazines are little interested in workers, no matter how exploited by their employers, or imposed upon by corrupt union officials, while these workers are docile or terrorized enough to go about their daily work chores without kicking up a fuss. It is only when they break the smooth flow of economic activity that the kept press deigns to take notice.

From 1919 to 1945, there were no major work stoppages on the New York waterfront and nobody worried very much about the longshoremen. At the end of the period that Charles P. Larrowe describes as "the long sleep,"\* the New York longshoremen threw off their torpor and moved swiftly and independently. President Ryan triggered a latent movement on October 1, 1945 when he announced a "fine new contract" providing an increase of ten cents an hour, a forty-hour week, and a few minor changes in working conditions. The longshoremen rejected the contract by "hitting the bricks" and then raised such demands as the reduction of the sling load, an increase in the size of the gangs, and a decrease in the number of shape-ups per day from three to two. The strikers tied up the port for eighteen days, going back to work only when negotiations were resumed. The employers refused to come to terms on a limited sling load and the dispute went to arbitration. The arbitration award was substantially better than Ryan's original agreement (for example, shape-ups limited to two a day and a twenty-five cent increase as compared with Ryan's dime), but didn't limit sling loads or increase the size of the gangs.

THE revolt was outstanding not only because the longshoremen successfully challenged their own leadership but because they stood alone—opposed by the AFL Central Trades and Labor Council of Greater New York, the New York State Federation of Labor, and the Eastern AFL representative. This hostile lineup was maintained

\* "Shape-up and Hiring Hall," Charles P. Larrowe, *University of California Press*, 1955. A comparison of hiring methods on the New York and Seattle waterfronts.



against them in their many later revolts against the ILA officialdom over the next years.

In 1951, the Crime Commission of New York State entered the picture massively on the orders of then Governor Dewey as a result of the longshoremen's strike of that year. The 1951 strike was the high point of the periodic rank-and-file revolts which had flared up since 1945, and made it fairly clear that Ryan's day of controlling the dockers was at an end. Only that motivated Dewey's intervention. Most of the powers-that-be got along famously with Ryan before that 1951 beef. The case of Mr. Dewey is especially worthy of mention since he is commonly regarded as the hero of the piece. On May 9, 1950, Governor Dewey sent the following letter to Ryan:

*Dear Joe:*

*I would surely be delighted to come to the annual affair of the Joseph R. Ryan Association, if possible. As it happens, Mrs. Dewey and I have accepted an invitation to the marriage of Lowell Thomas' only son that weekend and we just cannot possibly make it.*

*It is mighty nice of you to ask me and I wish you would give my best regards to all the fine people at the dinner.*

*On behalf of the people of the entire state, I congratulate you for what you have done to keep the Communists from getting control of the New York waterfront. Be assured that the entire machinery of the Government of New York State is behind you in this determination.*

*With warm regards,  
Sincerely yours,  
Thomas E. Dewey*

As late as November 4, 1951 the *N. Y. Times* published the following view:

*In fairness to the ILA leadership and to the shipping industry, which is in a sense partly responsible for waterfront conditions, it must be conceded that the average dock walloper is in a class by himself as far as organized labor is concerned. He can be maddeningly contrary and irrational and is often unpredictable.*

*Leading shipping executives who have dealt with Joe Ryan and his ILA for many years shudder to think what would happen if the Ryan hierarchy were overthrown by men with less control of the hot-headed, opinionated and stubborn sea-lawyers and salt-water politicians who make up the Eastern seaboard's waterfront labor force.*

**L**ONGSHOREMEN were well aware of the collusion that existed between the ILA leadership, the stevedoring and shipping companies, and the politicians. Having seen earlier investigations which failed to bring any changes they were very skeptical about the Crime Commission. Also, a fairly sizable proportion of the New York longshoremen do have police records. While there is no doubt that some entered the industry for racketeering purposes, the presence of most is explained by the casual

nature of longshore labor—it was easy to work on the docks when one had “done time.” So suspicion and hostility toward the Crime Commission's baby, the Waterfront Commission, was natural.

To satisfy labor critics of the projected Waterfront Commission Act, the law endorsed collective bargaining and included the language that “nothing in this compact shall be construed to limit in any way the right of employees to strike.” Perhaps this clause calmed the fears of those who recognized the menace contained in this precedent-setting legislation which enables a government agency to deprive workers of their right to a livelihood in their chosen industry without regard to any statute of limitations, which makes its own rules for determining who may or may not work, and is specifically excused from following common law, statutory rules of evidence, or formal procedures. How well justified were the fears of the Waterfront Commission opponents, the later events made evident.

Utilizing the exposures of the ILA and in thinly disguised collusion with the Waterfront Commission, the AFL moved against the union and in September 1953, the ILA was expelled by the national AFL Convention. Within a few weeks the parent body began a campaign with a million-dollar fund to switch the longshoremen over to a rival union. Of the original five-man committee appointed at the AFL Convention to direct the affairs of the new organization, only two, Dave Beck (who pressed the AFL leaders to set up a rival union) and Paul Hall, took part in the organizing effort. These two soon made it embarrassingly clear that they had conflicting plans for the future of the waterfront and that in both cases the well-being of the rank and file had not entered into the calculations. Beck's interest in the longshoremen was largely limited to snatching the men who loaded and unloaded trucks on the piers for his Teamsters. In November, Beck chartered a new Teamsters' local to take over the 2,500 loaders on the New York docks. Paul Hall, head of the AFL Seafarers' International Union, was interested in the new union as a source of jobs for his SIU seamen while they were “on the beach.” The conduct of these two leading AFL crusaders was hardly designed to inspire the longshoremen with confidence in the AFL union, despite their hatred of the racketeers in the ILA.

Even then, the AFL might have won the longshoremen had they conducted a vigorous campaign on behalf of the workers' demands. Nothing was further from the minds of the AFL hierarchy. They entered the picture when and because Ryan and Company had lost control over the longshoremen and they saw their task of liberation primarily as one of re-establishing “order.”

**D**ESPITE the barrage from all sides against the crooked ILA officials, the AFL union, propelled by two jurisdiction-obsessed AFL skates, and playing footsie with an anti-labor government commission, looked mighty unappealing to the average longshoreman. When the NLRB election results were announced in December 1953, the AFL officialdom was shocked to find that 9,060 men had voted for the ILA and only 7,568 had cast for the

AFL. (The ballots of 4,397 men were challenged.)

The AFL and Governor Dewey immediately demanded that the NLRB set the election aside on the grounds that the ILA had used intimidation and gang violence to influence the vote. The NLRB officials eagerly agreed to investigate the charges. Sporadic skirmishes started on the docks, with the rival unions competing for control of particular pier areas. In late February 1954, more than two months after the election, the fighting grew worse and tie-ups spread from pier to pier. The NLRB got a restraining order requiring ILA members to go back to work but without enjoining the rival union, a participant in the dispute, from picketing. Instead of ending the localized work stoppages, the board's action brought to a head the growing irritation ILA supporters felt toward the NLRB for delaying a decision on the December election. The day after the court order was issued, ILA members struck in most sections of the port.

On the sixteenth day of the walkout, Paul Hall tried to break the strike by running men through the ILA picket lines. The Mayor and the Waterfront Commission worked closely with Hall in the hope that they could get the 7,500 men who had voted AFL in the election to break the ILA lines. After four days, only 1,200 of the usual 15,000 longshoremen were on the job. The Mayor then increased the number of cops assigned to the piers, but since this didn't work either, Paul Hall and the AFL strategists decided to use AFL seamen for the job. This maneuver also failed to open the port.

The longshoremen who struck again and again from 1945 on against ILA racketeer control and the piddling contract settlements of their leaders refused to be made strikebreakers for the AFL. It was that simple. The longshoremen were striking in March to force the NLRB to decide who had won the December election. Also, just as in past walkouts, the rank and file followed those still anonymous leaders on the piers who led the strike. President Bradley and the other ILA officials only endorsed the battle twenty days after the men acted.

On April 2, 1954, the twenty-ninth day of the strike, the NLRB finally announced its decision to set aside the first election and hold a new vote. It also proclaimed that if the ILA didn't end the tie-up it would be kept off the ballot. The strike ended, longshoremen went to the polls on May 26, and again the ILA won, 9,110 votes for ILA and 8,791 for AFL. Once more there were enough challenged ballots to leave the issue in doubt and three months went by while the NLRB studied the challenges. Finally, on August 27, the board announced that ILA had won by 263 votes (final official count, 9,407 for the ILA and 9,144 for the AFL) and certified the ILA as the exclusive bargaining agent for the longshoremen.

Charles P. Larrowe gets to the heart of the matter in discussing the outcome:

*What influenced the longshoremen to vote as they did remains a mystery. Many voters must have been negatively rather than positively motivated, because both unions deserved to lose; the ILA for its historic betrayal of its members, the AFL for its egreious*

*campaign. One guess is as good as another as to what tipped the scales in favor of the ILA, but my guess is that the overzealous support given the organizing drive by all branches of government put the kiss of death on the AFL.*

**I**N the three years that have elapsed since the NLRB was reluctantly forced to certify the ILA as the accredited union of the longshoremen, the ILA has re-established itself with surprising strength and commands today in some respects more bargaining strength and membership support than it ever had in the past. The big test came in the 1956-1957 coastwide strike, when it managed to beat off injunctions, another AFL raid, and a third NLRB vote, which it won decisively by 11,827 votes for itself as against 7,428 for the AFL outfit. As a result of the strike, the union has for the first time a modified form of a coast-wide contract in place of the port-by-port agreements that formerly prevailed. In this period, the ILA has been conducting itself far more like a legitimate union than it had in the decades of Ryan's reign. Not that the personnel has been changed very much. As a matter of fact, most of the racketeers are still around, but under the whip of necessity, and the restiveness of the ranks, there was a reshuffle on top and the leaders had to start performing, else they would have found themselves in the ranks of the unemployed. As against the improved status of the union and the better working conditions, the docks are now dominated by an anti-labor government Waterfront Commission which in effect regulates the affairs of the union. Emanuel Celler, liberal Democratic Congressman from New York, at the July 1957 Chicago Convention of the ILA, lashed out against the punitive powers voted the Waterfront Commission by the New York and New Jersey state legislatures. As happens when a problem is resolved bureaucratically, some of the old evils remain in modified form with new evils introduced.

For years, the immediate sources of corruption on the New York waterfront were the "shape-up" combined with a labor surplus. "Kickbacks" to the bosses for the privilege of working, organized theft, "shylocking" on a grand scale, and murder have been traced to these sources. The ILA leaders favored this system in part because the hiring foremen eliminated "trouble makers." The employers favored it for the same reason.

The Port of New York isn't one labor market for longshoremen but rather ten submarkets (or pier areas), each of which operates largely independent of the others. In each of these sub-markets the need for workers could reasonably be expected to increase at one time or another up to three times the normal requirements. In the Port of New York as a whole, however, peak needs wouldn't exceed twice the normal demand. One sub-market might have a shortage of workers while another had a surplus. But longshoremen were required to work only in their own pier area. Those longshoremen who did leave their locals during a slack period to work where loading and unloading was at a peak would find themselves permanently rejected in their original location. By this means the employers assured themselves of a large supply of workers



during their busy periods. It isn't surprising therefore that 23,000 men, over 62 percent of the labor force, earned less than \$2,000 in 1950.

**O**NE solution would have been the establishment of a closed register based on the union membership, with seniority or rotary hiring, and a union-permit system that would give preference to the permit men after regular members were hired (comparable to West Coast ILWU longshoremen, who have a rotary system). Such a plan would have envisaged the use of mobile gangs to eliminate any excuse for maintaining a surplus of longshoremen in the various pier areas and would include union hiring halls in which the longshoremen elect their own dispatchers. Interested only in re-establishing control over the longshoremen, however, the state officials gave little consideration to a solution of this kind. The law relating to the waterfront, as finally adopted, placed control of hiring, including who had a right to work, in the hands of the Waterfront Commission. This agency opened hiring halls, correctly dubbed "fink halls," but which the Commission named "Waterfront Employment Information Centers."

The Waterfront Commission came to regard the labor surplus as a source of unrest among longshoremen, and in its second year, in a move reminiscent of Seattle waterfront employer tactics in 1921, the agency dropped thousands of workers from the longshore register. The ILA charged that while the commission was eliminating longshoremen from the register it was licensing new ones, sometimes as many as 300 a month. According to the commission's own figures, in 1956 there were 26,700 longshoremen when no more than 20,000 were employed for peak periods, and when 15,000 were employed on

an average day. Larowe says that the shape-ups took place outside the hiring halls and the hiring was reenacted for the Commission in its hiring centers. Thus, even in this area, the Commission's only claim to achievement, the waterfront hiring halls are only "shape-ups with roofs over them," and the basis for corruption remains.

One of the acts of the Commission that should have brought down on its head the wrath of the official union movement—but didn't—was its overriding of a union agreement between the ILA and the employers. The ILA signed a contract that made provision for hiring of "extra" gangs from the union halls. This hiring clause was carefully worded so that the parties would not become liable for prosecution under the Taft-Hartley law. On April 1, 1955 the Commission arrogantly set aside this agreement and pushed the ILA out of the hiring picture altogether with an announcement of a new gang-posting, gang-hiring system.

In order to assuage the fears of critics when the Waterfront Commission was set up, assurances of the agency's temporary nature were not only given, but its temporary character was written into the code itself. Yet, each year the Commission has spent more and taken on more personnel than the year before. Three years after its formation, in mid-1956, Commissioner Weintraub declared that an early end of the Commission was out of the question and demanded and got police powers for the agency, and another increase in its staff and budget. Congressman Celler described it as "the inevitable bureaucratic tendency of empire building, aggrandizement and self-perpetuation."

**T**HE Commission's high-handed conduct demonstrates that the menace it constitutes to longshore unionism in particular, and, by the precedents established, to unionism in general, transcends in importance the hangovers of racketeering on the New York waterfront. The support of the official labor movement for the agency, and its silence as this hydra-headed creature grows, highlights the sorry, defensive state of the labor movement today.

The new tensions inside the AFL-CIO will probably enable the ILA in time to shake off its present isolation and to make new alliances with some other powerful unions, whether inside or outside the AFL-CIO. But the officials, constantly harassed by the Waterfront Commission, remain heavily dependent on support of the ranks, and dare not over-reach themselves. East Coast longshoremen have come through a dangerous, difficult period with a strong union, no thanks to AFL bureaucrats or the politicians, so that when they are ready to tackle the Waterfront Commission, they will be in possession of effective weapons in hand.

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From the July 4 issue of *Machinist*, published by the International Association of Machinists:

"The effect of disarmament on employment and the national prosperity cast a deep shadow on the sixth I.A.M. aircraft and guided missiles conference last week. As the 165 delegates were reminded, about one out of every three jobs in the United States is directly or indirectly dependent on defense spending."

London Letter: Suez stirred British labor as it hasn't been stirred in years; at the same time Hungary hastened the decline of British Communism. A great ferment is in process, which can rebuild the foundations of British socialism from the ground up.

## New Currents in British Socialism

by A Special Correspondent

IT is a good time to be in England. A lot is happening. Unlike France, where the swift, dazzling succession of political explosions has been merely the pyrotechnics of *immobilisme*, here there is little of that French political effervescence, but though things move very slowly, they seldom return to their starting point.

The Marxist Left is being shaken out of its old mold at precisely the moment when the Labor Party is coming back into popular favor. New forms of Left activity, a rash of new publications, a new frankness and fire, an outburst of analytical energy, all the agony and exultation of laying bare the political soul to the fresh winds of life—what is taking years to achieve in America is telescoped here in a matter of a few short months.

How account for the turbulence and the success of the new publications such as *Universities and Left Review*? It was not enough to have a dazed core of ex-Communists for an audience. There had to be Suez. The effect of the Suez fiasco on non-Communist leftists and on conscious, decent people generally, can roughly be compared to the jolt Communists took over Hungary. It was terrific.

The drowsy consciences of the students and college dons were re-awakened. Workingmen and egg-heads poured into the streets in unprecedented numbers, and filled Trafalgar Square for the great anti-Suez demonstration called by Labor, which was swept into a new militant unity. From then on, the political temperatures of Englishmen started rising sharply and have kept right on going.

Listen to Mervyn Jones, of the Bevanite weekly *Tribune*: "I went to the Trafalgar Square rally in the Suez week nearly an hour before it was due to begin, expecting to stroll around and meet the usual customers in the usual way, and had to squeeze in the last vacant square foot in the spray of the fountain. I penetrated to places with names like Llanpumpsaint to see if village meetings were as futile in Carmarthen as they'd always been elsewhere, and harassed policemen let me stand in the doorway. I wandered into the Royal Hotel in good time before Isaac Deutscher was due to speak [at a *Universities and Left Review* meeting], and had to sit on the floor. . . ."

CRUCIAL to this renaissance has been the dramatic eclipse of the Communist Party of Great Britain. The Russian Twentieth Congress and Soviet tanks in Budapest dealt the British CP a body blow from which it may



never recover. As in America, the "Stalin revelations" and the ensuing Hungarian events struck like bombshells. Thousands of loyal Communists, including the bulk of the impressive array of intellectuals that used to adhere to the party, tore up their cards. The official estimate of 7,000 defections (at the Easter convention) was probably too low a figure then, and is even more so now.

The CP is wobbly on the canvas, but it is not anywhere near the graveyard shape of its knocked-out American counterpart. Nobody who reads the *Daily Worker*, or saw the H-bomb demonstration at Trafalgar Square, or who talks to shop workers, can fail to be impressed by the CP's refusal to give up the ghost. Try hard as it may, the party has not yet run itself entirely out of British political life. Communist organization and Communist influence still are elements of the political picture. Avowed Communists occupy top chairs in important unions. Communist influence is strong in the shop stewards' movement and on local civic councils and peace committees. Hungary left the Communist intellectuals dazed and embittered, but fazed the industrial worker less. Not that the British worker has, necessarily, a less sensitive conscience. It is simply that he takes his class struggle, and the CP's defense of his rights in that struggle, far more seriously than anything the CP says about events elsewhere.

Something we Americans tend to forget is that the British class struggle, as a reality, is more visible to the naked eye than in our own country. Fairly defined classes warily, incessantly maneuver for the next bash. Class

feeling is thick. Few in Britain take seriously the cant of "social mobility," "income revolution" and "people's capitalism" which passes for political analysis in America. Despite the Welfare State the Tory ruling class continues to be armed with an incredible array of class prerogatives which, when it feels provoked or threatened, it does not hesitate to use. The extent and depth of class venom, running both ways, is startling to an American.

The other side to this coin is not so pretty. For it is no less true that the working class, and to a greater extent the middle class, are infected with an awe of aristocracy painful to behold. The force of tradition, coupled with the steady, skillful cultivation of the myths of the ruling class by Church and Press, is so potent as to render the British worker a schizophrenic in his attitude toward the Establishment. He will vote against it, strike against it, even go out into the streets against it, and then he will go right back home to settle back bemusedly in his favorite arm chair in order to chum up with Prince Philip on "telly" while his wife devours, adoringly and whole, newspaper accounts of the Queen's latest lawn hooraw.

Many British Communist intellectuals might have stuck it out in the party had not King Street committed the blunder of treating them like naughty children. In response to a barrage of pointed questions from party members going through the miseries of the Twentieth Congress, the theoreticians, ever at a loss to reconcile their statements with actual events, opted for suicide. Good-hearted Communists whose earnest wish was to reform their party into a decent thing were insulted, scourged by their leaders, and, with the Budapest events, sent flying out of the party like nine-pins. The spark of this mass defection set off a chain reaction which led directly to an exciting blaze of discussion and shifting of forces on the Left.

AS immediate outgrowths of this escape to freedom, two new flowers sprang into instant bloom: the Forum movement and the *New Reasoner*. The Forums, organized by newly ex-CP people, indicated an urge to discuss Marxism outside the cage of "correct" ideas. In the first issue, the magazine of the movement, *Forum*, delivered a statement which, I believe, would be acceptable to all the other flowers of the New Left: "All [Forum supporters] would acknowledge the existence of the class struggle, although they might differ about the extent to which it underlies or excludes other forms of struggle. All of them have been influenced by Marxism, though some might no longer wish to label themselves 'Marxist.' All of them recognize, in their several ways, that the mainstream of Socialist thought has been diverted into the stagnant waters of Welfare-ism and Stalinism. All of them agree that the revival of Socialism in Britain requires a critical re-appraisal of the history of the Labor movement both here and abroad. Even more, such a revival depends upon a fresh statement of Socialist principles in terms relevant to contemporary capitalism, the mixed economy, high levels of employment and expanding social services."

Communists darkly accuse the Forum movement of heavy Trotskyist infiltration. Indubitably, the "Trots," as they are known here, do come to Forum meetings to make converts. But how effectively such a dwarfish and isolated

cult can penetrate anything is hardly a matter for straight-faced speculation.

The *New Reasoner* is the offspring of the *Reasoner*, which was the opposition journal inside the CP (similar in intent to the French *L'Étincelle*) which attracted widespread notice by its witty, passionate attacks on party dogma. The new quarterly is devoted to polemic, research, and the arts. The two leading lights—John Saville, an authority on Chartism, and Edward P. Thompson, the biographer of William Morris—are university lecturers. At its present stage, the magazine is still principally addressed by ex-Communists to ex-Communists, and has also a strongly academic flavor.

The Forum movement plus the *New Reasoner* add up to something more than just a crisis in the CP. They are symptomatic of British socialism suddenly getting out of its rut.

One of the most important new developments on the Marxist Left is the *Universities and Left Review*. This periodical is the best Marxist-influenced journal in England. It is bold, young, honest, and hopeful. Overnight, it has become one of the finest political quarterlies in the English language. Its haphazard origins, shoe-string financing, and the bucolic hopes of its founders would have pole-axed any other new periodical. But the timing of *Universities and Left Review* was perfect. In a very real sense, the Soviet tank men and Anglo-French paratroopers were the "angels" of the new venture.

LATE in 1956, four young Oxonians, none yet thirty and a couple barely over voting age, conceived the idea of putting out a little magazine for circulation around the colleges. The planning of the first issue was rudely interrupted by the bloody month of November, when, in the company of so many English, the editors got on fire. They quickly elevated their sights to the stars and, in the event, hit the target miraculously. Left-wing eminents (G. D. H. Cole, Claude Bourdet, Isaac Deutscher, and others) gladly, even eagerly, agreed to contribute articles, and what was to have been a small firecracker proved to be a catherine wheel of sparkling, exploding left-wingism. The first issue showed all the signs of hasty all-night conferences; it was riddled with typos, squeezed-in print, and an awkward layout. But to thousands it was a beautiful job for the things it said. It was alive with that quality the British Left was parched for: hope. The first time out, 7,000 were sold. The second (Summer '57) issue has rolled off the presses with the assurance of an already established institution.

The coincidence of *ULR* copies sold and the number of Communists who walked out of the party is not fortuitous. A good part of the readership is either Communist or ex-Communist, which is also true of the people who flock to the *ULR* Thursday night meetings. But the journal is destined to play a far broader role. Already, it is providing a forum and focus for the free exchange of ideas among Bevanites, homeless radicals, and Lefts of all hues.

The litmus test, however, will be the success of *Left Review's* appeal to the younger, less committed generation. The very youthfulness of the editors is a strong point in their favor. More than most, the *ULR* people know

that theirs is a cynical and detached stratum of youngsters who sense something basically wrong with the system but are not about to be drawn out of their holes to storm at life by the picayune piccolos of Transport House or the shrill klaxon of Khrushchev. They are sensitive to their mission, and impatient, above all, to avoid embroiling their magazine in the archaic and sterile controversies of the Old Left, of which the English youth has had a bellyful.

Many of the thousands of ex-CP members are joining, or trying to join, the Labor Party. Some applied immediately on departure. Others, if for no other reasons than simple tact, are waiting a decent interval. But that is the general idea. In no way is this an "infiltration." These former Communists, so far as the party and its doctrines are concerned "'ave 'ad it, chum." They should make valuable Labor Party members—where they'll be accepted. (Some LP branches won't take in ex-Communists. But it shouldn't prove a serious problem.)

The Labor Party is no picnic for left-wingers. It is a mass organism whose wheels grind exceedingly slow and not always in the right direction. Sometimes, the Labor Party leaders can hardly be told apart from those on the Opposite Bench. Hugh Gaitskell clearly has more in common with many Conservatives, in terms of temperament and background, than with his own rank and file. The Labor Party has no theory to match the avarice of the Tories. The dead hand of the union bureaucracy smothers bold experiment. Before an election, middle-class prejudices rather than principle determine the line of the party.

**O**F course, there is Aneurin Bevan, the fiery, unpredictable Member of Parliament from Ebbw Vale, Wales. There is a shifting, amorphous galaxy of Labor MP's centering around Bevan, adding and dropping members at will. There is *Tribune*, the pugnacious, eclectic weekly newspaper which is the unofficial organ of Left Labor. Most important, there are those thousands of hardy Laborites who devoutly believe in Left Socialism and who follow Nye Bevan because they think he best expresses what they want. What they want, and how they plan to get it, is not so easy to define. I suppose the irreducible planks on the Bevanite platform are more Socialism at home, an end to colonialism, and world peace. But as soon as you start getting down to cases, such as how best to nationalize what, you find that Ian Mikardo may disagree strongly with Dick Crossman who may disagree with Jennie Lee who may not agree with Barbara Castle, and so on. A Socialist vision, Socialist traditions and instincts—but no Bible, no hierarchy, none of the trappings of an organized movement—glue these elements together into an anarchic and yet remarkably disciplined force.

Bevan is the most popular figure in the Labor Party. As Foreign Minister in the "shadow cabinet" of a Labor Party whose most important leaders sometimes act as if they are playing for the vote of John Foster Dulles, Bevan stands up and *leads* a fight for peace. Where other Party chiefs quibble over clean and dirty bombs, Bevan roars out, in language any man can understand, that the H-bomb must be destroyed. Though I cannot discount Left criticisms of the man's inconsistencies and vacillations, I

must say that I am deeply impressed by what he has been saying lately. He may not always be right, but he is not a quibbler. At the Socialist Party conference in Toulouse, France, he distinguished himself by clashing with Mollét over Algeria. In Commons, hardly a day passes when he doesn't snap off a few well-aimed rounds into the Tory foreign policy. Best of all, he shows few signs of wanting to be a "gentleman." Perhaps, once in office, he will let himself be bulldozed by old-school-tie charmers of the Foreign Office the way Ernest Bevin did. But today he is the man of the hour. Any leader who publicly urges that the H-bomb issue be taken out of the hands of the politicians and into the streets exercises an irresistible attraction for me. In the eyes of the public, and certainly of the rank-and-file Labor Party, Nye Bevan is the biggest man in the Party, quite overshadowing the formal leader, Hugh Gaitskell.

**B**EVANITE stock inside the Labor Party is rising enough to sustain rumors that it may be Bevan and not Gaitskell who will be the next Prime Minister. The same Nye Bevan who was almost expelled from the party a few years ago! Two symptomatic events which further buoy up Bevanite hopes have occurred in the unions. The first, eighteen months ago, was the death of Arthur Deakin, number one man in Britain's largest union, the Transport and General Workers, and his replacement by Frank Cousins, a man of the Left. The second was the decline of Communist influence in two other important unions, the Electrical Trades Union and the Amalgamated Engineers. The ETU is still regarded as Communist-led but the Communists have had to keep their heads down since Budapest. The Bevanites see here their grand opportunity to replace the Communist argument with the Left Socialist argument.

Though he has made transparent efforts to pretty himself up for public consumption, it remains true that Bevan is still something of the Bad Boy of the Labor Party. The right wing is deeply suspicious of him. Too rebellious and headstrong, they complain. Always upsetting the apple cart. He wants to go too far too fast. He might lose the Americans by buddying up to the Russians. And when he tells the British people to take the peace issue into the streets it is difficult to say who is the more dismayed, the Tories or the right wing labor leaders.

Many old time revolutionary socialists insist on their part that Bevan is inconsistent, that he is at heart a Social Democrat. They are uneasy over his lashing hatred of Nasser, whom he regards as an unscrupulous demagogue. And, mutters the Old Left, if Bevan has in the past shown himself capable of admirable acts of political courage, he has also exhibited an opportunism which sometimes brings his adherents up short.

Perhaps an example of this alleged undependability may be seen in Bevan's attitude toward the new Labor Party statement on nationalization. A life-long supporter of the principle of public ownership, Bevan could hardly keep silent over the recently published policy pamphlet *Industry and Society*, especially when it came out under the auspices of the select committee on which he sat. And yet, his public comment was in curious contrast to his usual flam-



ANEURIN BEVAN

ing pronunciamentos. It sounded like the statement of a man whose instincts cry out for battle but who wishes to include himself out of this particular fight. The plain fact is that Bevan's statement has disappointed his backers. Bevan's attitude is even more curious in light of the militant mood of the party rank and file as reflected in the resolutions pouring into Labor headquarters for the forthcoming Brighton conference. Second only to the issue of the H-bomb and peace, local parties and unions are resolved to keep public ownership as the linch-pin of Labor's program.

**T**HE Conservative press has greeted Labor's take-over scheme with sedate contempt. The *Economist* calls it "the mouse with a leer." Whether *Industry and Society* will be a man or a mouse depends upon the temper of the Labor Party members and the will of the leaders. While the rank-and-file wants more and explicit nationalization, the party leadership hauls out a calculatedly ambiguous declaration. The leader of the party, Gaitskell, at the press conference to "explain" *Industry and Society* (an unenviable task at best) "left a considerable covey of experienced journalists with the impression that (a) we shall nationalize very little, and (b) we shall only take over what's inefficient and leave private owners to go on reaping profits of what's efficient," growled Left-wing Labor MP, Ian Mikardo.

Among pro-nationalizers in the Labor Party feeling against the leadership is running high. Where will Bevan stand in this debate? Thus far, he has given no leadership in the nationalization controversy. Bevan's paper, *Tribune*, is in there swinging away for "old fashioned" nationalization, but Bevan is not.

Labor Party conferences are decided by a card vote; i.e., each union casts a block vote according to its numerical strength. The block vote can make or break great policy decisions. For years, the Transport and General Workers Union has been the despair of Left-wingers. For years the vote of the largest union in Britain has been cast on the side of moderation, orthodoxy and rightist

policies. In the past, it was always possible to calculate in advance which way decisions would go by the simple method of adding the TGWU vote with that of the General and Municipal Workers, the Miners and one of the other big unions. Between them, these unions could out-vote the combined opposition. Now, for the first time, the card which says 1,300,000 votes is poised on the side of the Left.

The man who holds this card is Mr. Frank Cousins, a 52-year-old former miner and truck driver. Overnight, as the new general secretary of the TGWU, occupying the seat warmed by past giants like Ernest Bevin and Arthur Deakin, Cousins has shot into prominence as a man of the Left and the whipping boy of the Right. He calls himself an "old fashioned Socialist." He says he is a believer in no-nonsense nationalization.

Cousins makes his debut at a time when the Tory Government is showing the mailed fist to the unions. Macmillan and his chancellor of the exchequer, Thorneycroft, with an able assist from the press, are doing their level best to whip up an inflation scare with the labor movement cast as the chief villain. The only solution the Tories can see to the economic muddle they have created "is to cut the standard of living and try to balance things up at a lower level for the wage earners," said *Reynolds' News*, organ of the Cooperative movement. "They cannot do it unless the trades unions will be 'statesmanlike' and 'patriotic' (i.e., allow their members' standards to fall). It is no accident that the big strikes this year (engineering, ship-building and provincial busmen) all started by employers acting on the government's hint to 'get tough.'"

The coming Brighton conference will meet when the Labor Party is seething over the nationalization issue and when the unions are up against a stiff Tory campaign to drive down their standards.

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*The following is from a Labor Day editorial by Max Steinbock in the Record, published by the Retail, Wholesale, and Department Store Union, AFL-CIO.*

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**O**UR own strictly non-expert guess is that labor's static and defensive position today came about through a number of circumstances, among which we'd include the past 15 years of full employment which has induced a certain amount of complacency; the 1935-1955 breach between AFL and CIO which diverted much energy into fruitless channels and sapped labor's strength in jurisdictional disputes; the continuing trend toward monopoly in industry, particularly in the field of the press, TV and radio—making it harder than ever for labor's case to be presented fairly; and—most important—the general attitude of our times, which seems to couple a cynical, materialistic "I'll-get-mine" approach with a fear of anything smacking of radicalism or even liberalism. . . .

It seems to us that what's needed right now is a revival—a revival of idealism, of the crusading spirit that built the labor movement against all odds, of the social outlook that goes beyond the bread-and-butter issues to grapple with the larger problems facing all mankind. . . .

What is needed now is not more resolutions and policy statements but the will to fight for their translation into realities. What is needed is the dedication, the sense of mission, that once animated the labor movement. When we find these things again, we will find too that the leeches and parasites who have infiltrated the labor movement will fall by the wayside.

# Notebook of an Old-Timer

by George H. Shoaf



## Gompers as I Knew Him

**T**HERE were giants in those days—50-60 years ago—men and women who organized and led the labor and socialist movements, movements that did much to affect the thinking of the people and bring about social and economic transformation in this country. What labor unionist will forget the name of Samuel Gompers? What socialist will cease to revere the memory of Eugene V. Debs? Or among libertarians, who can match the acumen and restless energy of Clarence Darrow? There were John P. Altgeld, Albert Parsons, Henry George, Louis F. Post, single-tax editor, Daniel De Leon, editor of the *Weekly People*, J. A. Wayland, publisher of the *Appeal to Reason*, H. G. Wilshire, editor of *Wilshire's Magazine*, with labor and socialist orators and organizers such as Walter Thomas Mills, Job Harriman, Victor Berger, W. D. Haywood, Vincent St. John, J. J. McNamara, Ida Crouch Hazlett, Lena Morrow Lewis, Kate Richards O'Hare, and others of the long list of unforgettable memory.

All these pioneers of progress have passed, but what they stood for and advocated has taken such a deep-seated hold that not even the almighty power of Wall Street can eradicate it.

As salaried organizer for the Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway Employes, under W. D. Mahon, and, later, founder and first editor of the *Union Leader*, Chicago weekly labor paper, and, still later, "war" correspondent for the *Appeal to Reason*, I was thrown into intimate association with the celebrities just named. It is not my purpose in reciting my personal experiences with

them to treat them historically, with dates of birth and death, their family associations, etc., for the reason their biographies have been written and rewritten, and their lives and activities well publicized. Rather, I will limit my recitation to incidents and conversations that came within the purview of my acquaintance and personal association. At the same time, for what is written to be consequential, I shall try to relate what these pioneers thought and did, and what they accomplished, to the current movements now in the making, many of which are designed to carry on with renewed vigor the great cause to which they dedicated their lives.

**F**UNDAMENTALLY, Sam Gompers was an individualist and accepted capitalism. At heart he believed that the race was to the swift and the battle to the strong. Repeatedly, he said: Let the big men of industry and finance manage and operate the agencies of production and distribution. Let them have the responsibility of ownership. The province of the workers is not only to work, but to fight for more and more of the products of their toil and for better conditions of life. To that end, labor must organize and become equal in efficiency and power with the owning and managing class. With Gompers it was a contest between owners and workers for an equitable division of the surplus product. He eschewed political action, asserting that government should exert jurisdiction over all of the people, playing no favorites, and enforcing the laws on all alike. He disavowed collectivism completely, and for socialism and

communism he had nothing but supreme contempt.

The Briggs House, a hotel just inside the Loop district in Chicago, used to be unofficial headquarters for visiting labor leaders. In 1902, I was editing the *Union Leader*, and doing my editorial best to present the message of socialism to the 20-odd-thousand readers in the ranks of labor. Young, enthusiastic and fearless, I persisted in my advocacy of socialism despite the rising opposition of members of the Old Guard, outstanding of whom was Thomas I. Kidd, president of the International Woodworkers Union, and Bill Mellican, Catholic member of the Chicago Federation of Labor. These two men, in all kindness, advised me to lay off socialism, and confine myself to pure and simple trade unionism. Finally, Sam Gompers took a hand in the matter.

In a room at the Briggs House he and I came to grips one day. He tried to convince me that socialism wouldn't work, that it had failed wherever it had been tried, that it was contrary to human nature, that it was antagonistic to the spirit of the American way of life, and besides, he stressed, the genius of the American people was such that no power on earth would ever induce them to adopt it as their economy. After an hour's argument in which charges and countercharges were made, he put a sympathetic hand on my shoulder and in an appealing voice advised: "George, you are a very young man with a promising future if you will heed what I say. If you are cooperative in the labor movement, you may rise high and become influential. But if you stick to your socialist propaganda, you will lose out with men of labor, you will gain no adherents from the rank and file of the American people, and you will go down unnoticed, a frustrated and a bitterly disappointed man." These words came from Gompers' lips 55 years ago, but I remember them as clearly as if they were spoken to me today.

The *Union Leader* was and still is the official organ of the organized street and elevated railway employes. L. D. Bland succeeded me as editor. Following my connection as writer for the *Appeal to Reason*, an announcement of my death was given a first-page display in the *Union Leader*. My



picture occupied the center of the page, and the announcement of my demise was accompanied by words of praise from my erstwhile labor associates, all of whom, despite our ideological differences, remained my personal friends. Because of my contribution to Chicago labor journalism, I was given a life subscription to the *Union Leader*, the last copy of which arrived while I am writing these lines in my Costa Mesa, California home. But interestingly enough, my name, to my knowledge, has never been mentioned in the columns of the *Union Leader* from the day of my alleged death to this day! To what lengths can varying points of view between individual humans be carried!

**S**AM Gompers had little confidence in the intelligence of the working class. You will get farther with your socialism, he said, if you contact members of the Chambers of Commerce, the Merchants and Manufacturers Associations, professional people, and those who constitute the so-called intelligentsia. He was essentially a fighter, but within the framework of capitalism. And it was for the rights of labor he fought. However, his weakness was his unrelenting hatred of socialism, and his outstanding obsession was his dislike for those who espoused the cause of socialism. This was revealed in his attitude when Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone, officials of the Western Federation of Miners, were arrested in Denver and jailed in Idaho charged with the assassination of Steunenberg, former Idaho governor. The WFM, unlike the AFL, was a militant organization, politically, with most of the leaders being active members of the Socialist Party. Because of this, Gompers refused to go to the aid of the imprisoned WFM leaders, and continued his refusal until the uproar throughout the country, generated by the *Appeal to Reason*, grew so loud and so menacing that he had to relent. He did relent, however, and directed the AFL exchequer to make a liberal contribution to the defense.

The Gompers legend has become a tradition with the American labor movement. Keep politics out of the union, and the union out of politics, are words that constitute a time-worn

slogan, the observance of which has kept the organized workers disunited at the polls. With the projection of the CIO into the field the beginning of a change was in the making. Voices today are being lifted by labor men for a political party that will represent the interests of those who toil.



SAMUEL GOMPERS

Should what these voices demand be implemented in political action, and the 16 million organized workers, and their families, vote as a unit for the interests of their class—the working class—what an economic upheaval there would be!

Tragedy here, and it is a real tragedy, lies in the fact that most working people, when it comes to management and planning, either political or industrial, are obsessed by an inferiority complex. The operation of modern industry has tended to reduce wage earners to a dead level of mediocrity. Another tragedy involved is this: Should some bright young man or woman worker, after considerable investigation and cerebral activity, subject capitalist procedure to analysis, and suggest fundamental change, especially when the suggestion carries with it the proposition of replacing private ownership with common ownership, with worker control and management, immediately old die-hard adherents of the Gompers legend rise up in high dudgeon to denounce the innovator as a “dirty Red,” and a “tool of Moscow.” That always settles the hash of the potential or actual critic of the

status quo. Besides, as a rule, union officials, drawing good salaries, are as much opposed to change as they are to calling strikes. In these respects the men of labor play directly into the hands of the owning and exploiting class, and so prolong the agony of what many dissenters are pleased to call “wage slavery.” In the old days Mark Hanna, Republican industrial executive, used to proclaim such union officials as “my labor lieutenants,” subsidized to hold a checkrein over the aspirations of workers resentful against conditions they were forced to endure.

**S**UCH is the inheritance of legend and policy bequeathed by Sam Gompers to the labor movement as it functions in the United States today. This is not written to disparage the life and works of Gompers. During the age in which he exercised his talents he accomplished a lot for the working people of America—at least the more skilled—in the matter of increased wages, shorter hours and better working conditions.

But he was obsessed with the fear, and to this writer he stressed that fear, of the “coming slavery of socialism,” as depicted by Herbert Spencer. He knew that the development of society was a social process, but hide-bound as he was by an anarchistic-individualistic philosophy, he refused to have faith in the intelligence and ability of the masses of people to organize an economy that would be owned and managed by the people for the common good. He predicted that should such an economy be prematurely projected into the American scene, dictatorship would follow and American workers would be worse off than before.

While I disputed his philosophy and challenged his attitude toward the working class, I conceded his honesty and admired his energy in doing what he could in inaugurating improvements for the men and women of labor.

Moving step by step, trade unionism contains within itself, as a movement and a mechanism, the possibilities of establishing whatever social institutions the future shall develop for the workers as the predestined universal element in control of society.

—Samuel Gompers

# Efficiency versus Humanity

by Bert Cochran

*WORK AND ITS DISCONTENTS*,  
by Daniel Bell. Beacon Press, Boston,  
1956, \$1.50.

IT is a good thing that Daniel Bell and a few other American sociologists have taken a short breather from dilettante probings into the mysteries of status urges, and from tracing back the sources of social anxieties to the individual psyche. An immediate improvement is registered when social analysts stop trying to be rationalizers for the status quo or technicians on behalf of existing institutions. We hope that it was not sheer chance that at this same time, Reinhold Bendix has issued an impressive study of management ideologies and attitudes in a variety of countries. Current American sociology, with its superb research staffs and unrivalled statistical and data resources, may yet come up with some distinct contributions if it can get up the courage to break with the irresponsible vaporings of the Reismans and make use of its technique to conscientiously analyze some of the big problems facing people in the real world in which we dwell.

Bell tries to grapple with the question of the worker and his work by approaching it historically. He begins by recalling that Jeremy Bentham, the father of utilitarianism, for many years sought money from Parliament to build a five-storied *panopticon* jail, a star-shaped building so intricately constructed "that every convict would pass his life in perpetual solitude while remaining perpetually under the surveillance of a warder posted at the center." One half of the building was to be a prison, the other half a factory, accomplishing

the double purpose of "grinding rogues honest and idle men industrious." Utilitarianism, which is generally understood as a doctrine of the greatest happiness to the greatest number, provided likewise a new definition of rationality: "not the rule of reason, but the rule of measurement." This passion for technological efficiency, which has conquered modern industrial and business practices, led Aldous Huxley to cry out in protest, "Today, every efficient office, every up-to-date factory is a panoptical prison in which the workers suffer . . . from the consciousness of being inside a machine." Says Bell: "The indictment, damning if true, lays its gravest charge against the United States."

CONTEMPORARY enterprises are set up to conform to engineering rationality. First, the belief in concentration, leading to the establishment of big units, necessitated that large masses should be brought to a common place of work. Concentration was originally dictated because of the use of steam power. Since steam dissipates quickly, the engineer tried to crowd as many productive units as possible within the range of steam pressure that could be carried by pipes. The introduction of electric power opened the way to greater flexibility. Yet big units have persisted and even grown. "Why? In part because the engineer conceives of efficiency in technological terms alone; and he is able to do so because a major cost—the travel time of the worker—can be discounted. . . . Which is cheaper to transport: working men twice daily, or materials and mechanical parts, let us say twice a week? As Per-

cival and Paul Goodman so pertinently note in their book, 'Communities': 'The time of life of a piece of metal is not consumed while it waits for its truck; a piece of metal does not mind being compressed like a sardine.' What the Goodmans propose is production in 'bits and pieces' rather than integrated assembly."

Once the big units were set up and the mass of workers gotten into them, the engineers went to work to rationalize the labor process. We first come to Frederick W. Taylor, one of the major prophets of work efficiency at the turn of the century whose "stop watch was his bible." Up to his time, jobs were timed as an entity. Taylor broke down jobs into their smallest mechanical components, and rearranged the elements into the most efficient combination. Frank Gilbreth (1868-1924), another engineer, introduced the idea of abstract visualization. He broke down all human motion into eighteen basic patterns, from which analysis he proceeded to "functionalize" the natural movements of arms and legs to eliminate all waste motion. Charles Bedeaux completed the process by introducing his system of incentive pay—a complicated mathematical system of wage payments based upon work done and varying fractions of rest required in different operations.

IN the older, simpler division of labor, the worker still kept a measure of control over his own working conditions. Under the new work process, all possible brain work was drawn out of the shop and centered in the supervisory departments, which led to the creation of a new bloated managerial superstructure. In recent decades, utilizing "flow charts," Univacs, and other new complicated tools of analysis and calculation, the drive for scientific efficiency has reached unheard-of proportions. As a not untypical example in large-scale business, the Aluminum Corporation of America took three and a half years at a cost of \$500,000 to set wage differentials scientifically for 56,000 jobs. The final equation, three pages long, juggles fifty-nine separate variables; it took thirty-five hours of Univac time at a cost of \$10,000 to complete. According to the company, the formula is a "mathematical tool for resolving day-

to-day wage problems rationally and without dispute."

Bell calls our attention to the fact that people have accustomed themselves to living with this kind of factory regime. The literary revolt against the imposition of the engineered prison house upon humanity has long since become exhausted. "Such biting satire as Chaplin's *Modern Times* or René Clair's *A Nous la Liberté*, with their common motifs of factory and prison, is gone. . . . The factory is now the province of the sociologist and the psychologist." And they are interested in reconciling the worker to his prison existence, not in breaking down the bars.

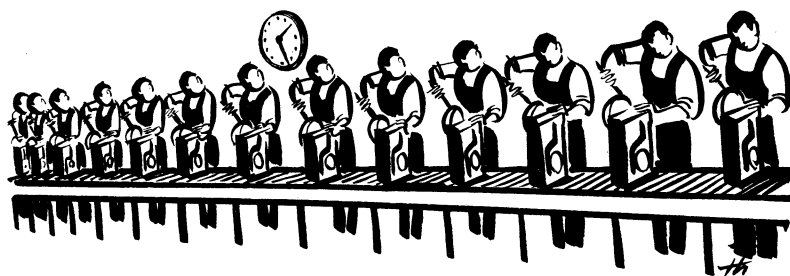
Bell is well advised in not wasting too much time on the new industrial psychology. He quotes one Harvard Business authority, who wrote, "Labor disputes are often stated in terms of wages, hours of work and physical conditions. Is it not possible that these demands are disguising, or in part are symptomatic expression of, much more deeply rooted human situations which we have not learned to recognize?" and concludes that "Such a statement suggests more about Harvard Business School than about the workers." To say that the American worker is not interested in money "contradicts the very motive power of the economic system. Why else would people subject themselves to such a work environment?"

Since the second World War, and especially with the greater influx of women into the work force, "emotional engineering" has become a growing adjunct of management. Bell thinks that acceptance of these psychological gimmicks represents a change in management's outlook "parallel to that which is occurring in the culture as a whole, from authority to manipulation as a means of exercising dominion." Which is an important observation, but one that should not be pushed too far. When manipulation doesn't serve their purposes, capitalists still rely on their brute power to force workers into submission. These reserve powers are no less potent because they are more charily employed than in the past.

**W**HY do people put up with these monotonous, repetitive, soul-destroying jobs? Max Weber and the dis-

ciples of his theory of the Protestant Ethic see man endlessly accepting deprivation and pitting himself against a

from the view of time-and-motion study—and cost—the gain in workers' satisfaction is the fact we should consider."



harsh environment because of his need to prove himself before God. But Bell doubts that there is any of that among workers. What drove workers to work was hunger, and in our own day there is the "new hunger" for goods, the urge to participate in our consumption society—all aided and abetted by advertising and the installment plan. Since work seems to be necessarily hateful, and since it cannot be evaded (the study of occupational mobility by Bendix and Lipset showed that "between those who work with their hands and those who do not, there is . . . relatively little shifting")—even unions have become part of "the control system of management"—the flight away from work has taken the form of a "desperate drive" for leisure. David Reisman, who cheerfully tries to see the beneficent side of all modern trends, says that there is no point in trying to introduce "joy and meaning" into modern industrialism, that "it makes more sense to work with rather than against the grain of impersonality in modern industry" and that we ought to seek in play "the sphere for the development of skill and competence in the art of living." But Bell is doubtful that play can be divorced from work, thinks that our recreation has been bought at the "high cost" of "the loss of satisfaction in work" and sees in the passivity of our recreation and amusement—the dominant themes in our culture today—"the seeds of decay."

He throws out as one solution a rotation of jobs, which was suggested to him by an important American sociological study, "The Man On The Assembly Line" by Charles Walker and Robert Guest, and goes on to declare that "Whatever the losses this entails

This is an old idea of Marx's (indeed of Fourier's) which Bell acknowledges in this aside:

*In reading Marx's description of modern industry it is striking to see how he grasped simple distinctions which have eluded generations of sociologists. His solution for the deadening effects of machine work was variety. "It becomes a question of life and death for society . . . to replace the detail worker of today, crippled by life-long repetition of one and the same trivial operation, and thus reduced to the mere fragment of a man, by the fully developed individual, fit for a variety of labors, ready to face any change of production, and to whom the different social functions he performs are but so many modes of giving free scope to his own natural and acquired powers."*

Marx in this section of "Capital" quotes the account of a French worker who recounted his experiences when he came to San Francisco: "I was firmly convinced that I was fit for nothing but letter-press printing. . . . Once in the midst of this world of adventurers who change their occupation as often as they do their shirt, I did as the others. As mining did not turn out remunerative enough, I left for town where in succession I became a typographer, slater, plumber, etc. As a consequence of thus finding out that I am fit for any sort of work I feel less of a mollusk and more of a man."

**T**HE study concludes with some rambling thoughts on automation, with a somewhat generalized specula-

tion tossed out about a "new manorial society" that may be in the making.

All in all, this essay is probably the best piece of writing that Bell has done up to now. He displays a new capacity for surmounting the obscurantism and rationalizations of many current social analysts and evaluating his data critically. Whenever he gets onto socialism or laborism, however, his comments continue to go awry along lines familiar to readers of his previous writings. It must be presumed that on these subjects the Luce poison has entered into his bloodstream.

Here is his observation on the tamed American worker: "In American radical folklore, the auto worker was considered the seedling of the indigenous class conscious radical—if there was ever to be one in America. Uninhibited, rootless (many were recruited from the Ozark hills), with his almost nihilistic temper he was the raw stuff for revolutionary sentiment—once he realized (or so the Marxists thought) that he was trapped by his job. Few auto workers today have a future beyond their job.

Few have a chance of social advancement. But they are not radical. What has happened is that old goals have been displaced, and the American Dream has been given a new gloss." This is of the common garden variety of myopia of our present social commentators: their inability to consider anything historically. They take the conditions of the past decade and extrapolate them into a timeless reality.

Later on in discussing nationalizations of industries put through by the British Labor government, he repeats the sloppy performance of so many of his fellow essayists in urging that the lack of improvements stems from the Laborites also "accepting the norms of efficiency." If he delved a little more deeply into the matter, he probably would find that what is actually involved is the Laborites' lack of courage in challenging the capitalist powers-that-be, and in fitting nationalization within the norms and economic machinery of a Britain that is still very much capitalist. Truth to tell, in the field of pure ideology, no one talks

more about cherishing "human values" than the official British Labor theoreticians.

Bell tries to forestall criticism of his study by explaining in a preface that what he has written are "notes," that he has "no thesis" and "no answers," that only "a mood" ties the notes together, and that knowledge is often gained by varying the questions. These are all reasonable explanations, but they do not gainsay the fact that Bell, while tackling one of the most important problems of sociology and modern life, has been content to nibble at it, and has not driven through his studies to sufficient depth. The book is 56 pages in length and many of the chapters are scarcely more than introductory remarks to the matter at hand, or a rough outline for a labor of analysis that should follow. If Bell cannot do it, somebody else should. The embryonic materials are here for the erection of a noble structure of lasting worth. They are a challenge to our sociologists—as well as to our socialist thinkers.



### *Unproven Thesis*

*THE NEW CLASS*, by Milovan Djilas.  
Frederick A. Praeger, New York, 1957,  
\$3.95.

**T**HIS is one of those books whose importance lies not in its contents but its authorship and the circumstances of its publication. The writing is water-logged and its main thesis has been worked up ten times more cogently by other authors. But none of these possessed his prominence or heroic background. Djilas was Vice President of Yugoslavia before breaking with Communism and his book is issued while he sits in Tito's jail because of his courage in speaking out against the evils of Communist dictatorship. As a man and revolutionary fighter, Djilas is deserving of our highest admiration. As a political theorist, we can't see him for smoke.

The book adduces no new evidence of any kind, nor does it rest on any personal experiences of the author. He simply repeats the well known litany about police rule, bureaucratism and waste in the So-

viet countries to argue that this spells the consolidation of a new exploiting class.

It would be a thankless and pointless proposition to follow Djilas in all his disorganized peregrinations, to call attention to his various pathetic fumbles, or to polemicize with all his fugitive observations. It isn't that Djilas has constructed a poor case, or an inadequate or unpersuasive case, for his thesis; he hasn't constructed any, and seems blissfully unaware that assertion, even vehement assertion, is not a substitute for proof or analysis. Tautology has never had such a field day as in this book. Why is water wet? Because its quintessential quality is one of wetness. Such is the structure of his explanation why Communism is totalitarian.

Djilas believes that the new exploiting class emerged in Russia from the beginning with Lenin (who was not conscious of the true drift of things). Does this mean that collectivization inevitably creates a new exploiting class? Or was it due to special circumstances, or wrong policies, or methods? Is socialism still valid? One will seek in vain answers to these questions in the Djilas book. He deems it sufficient to make some sweeping assertion employing the terminology of Western pro-capitalist apologists—and then airily pass on to other matters.

**I**T is reported that Djilas had in recent years become friendly with Aneurin Bevan and was much influenced by him. Maybe so, but his book leaves one with

the impression of an unstable anarchist-type of intellectual who in bitter disappointment with the repugnant reality of the Communist state as contrasted with the radiant vision that he and his comrades struggled for in the heroic days, is flinging himself headlong into the arms of Western middle class liberalism which he so roundly denounced in the past. His last chapter, and particularly the dribble about the growing nationalization and planning in the United States (this will be news in this country), and the whole rigamarole of the separation of economic administration from ownership, the "managerial revolution" and the new "mixed economy," will make even right wing British laborites turn away in embarrassment.

The theory of the Soviet bureaucracy constituting a new class has been propounded for the past twenty-five years by a number of ex-communist writers, the Yugoslav, Anton Ciliga, the Italian, Bruno, and finally, Burnham, in "The Managerial Revolution," which borrows heavily from Bruno's "La Bureaucratization du Monde." On almost any theory of sociology, it is understood that a social class is not an arbitrary or fortuitous equation, but arises out of certain necessities of a given society. If one sees the bureaucracy as the entrenchment of a new historic social class, one can make out a good case that collectivization or statification of the economy inevitably leads to the creation of a new exploiting elite, more oppressive even than the one it replaced, because it has concentrated both

economic and political power in its hands. Since, despite the evolution of the Communist world, the most advanced socialists in Western Europe continue to advocate nationalization, collectivism and planning as the basic solution for the capitalist impasse, it would appear that modern civilization has come to an intellectual dead end, facing either the continuation of Western imperialism—which has already engulfed mankind in two world wars and brought it to the brink of a third—or a world-wide Stalinist ice age under collectivism.

The true state of affairs would seem to be encompassed far more faithfully by viewing the Soviet bureaucracy as a transient mutation produced by the frightful difficulties of introducing a system of the socialist type into primitive pre-capitalist societies; that there is no inevitable marriage between collectivism and dictatorship; that as industrialization progresses and material and cultural levels rise, police state excrescences will in time be removed; that the introduction of a necessary collectivism into the advanced Western countries can be accomplished with far lesser bureaucratic disfiguration and without the dictatorial blotches.

B. C.

## The End of Kaiser Bill

**KARL LIEBKNECHT: MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY** by Karl W. Meyer. Public Affairs Press, Washington, D.C., 1957, \$3.25.

**B**EFORE 1914, the path of world socialism seemed to be a smooth and broad highroad to working-class power. The attempts of reactionary governments to read socialism out of organized society had failed almost everywhere, and the socialist parties of Europe, united in a great International, were growing steadily. Broadly based upon massive working class support, backed by socialist-led trade union movements, with a ramified and variegated arsenal of sports, cultural and other such organizations at their disposal, sizably represented in the parliaments, well favored by middle-class and intellectual sympathy, and led by an elite corps of thinkers and organizers whose equal had never before (or since) been assembled in Europe, it seemed designed to guarantee the swift and relatively painless social transformation of the continent. Judged by its official pronouncements and theoretical output, it appeared to be Marxist and militant enough to do the job; most of those to whom it seemed stodgy and lacking in revolutionary elan consoled themselves that this failing was made up by steady and implacable tenacity.

Beneath its surface, of course, the core of the movement had been eaten away by the worms of opportunism and adaptation to the status quo, and in great majority the parties of the Second International cheered on their rulers in the bloody Golgotha that

crucified the continent. The collapse of the International in an orgy of jingoism was probably the greatest tragedy of our time, leading as it did to the failure of the German revolution, the isolation of Russian Communism from its natural industrial allies to the West, and the subsequent political degeneration of the Russian Revolution, a degeneration from which it is only now beginning to show signs of emerging.

Among the scattered revolutionaries who stood on their feet as European Socialism collapsed in ruins around them, none was more courageous or determined than Germany's Karl Liebknecht. The son of Wilhelm Liebknecht, who had been a friend of Marx and one of the leading founders of German Social Democracy, he was a lawyer and a Socialist parliamentarian. It can hardly be claimed that his later brilliant showing as a radical and "darling of the masses" was due in the main to heavy application to Marxist thought. His one theoretical work, drafted but not completed while he was in prison during the war, has not come to the attention of any save specialists and scholars.

**L**IEBKNECHT'S great advantage was that with the sure instinct of a revolutionist he had grasped the link of German capitalism which was most reactionary and which contained the seed of disaster for the nation. Germany, hemmed in by the earlier flowering of British, French, Dutch, and Belgian capitalism, was bursting the bounds of its economic arena, and consequently developing an aggressive foreign policy backed up by *Junker* militarism. It was this militarism that Liebknecht made his prime target. At a time when other German Socialists and unionists were basking in the apparent *gemütlich* flow of life towards a better future, Liebknecht was loudly sounding what they thought was a hysterical warning against the militarization of German life and German youth. From the time he began actively to take an initiative in Socialist politics, shortly after the turn of the century, he made the fight against militarism and the attempt to organize the youth against war his special province. The party heads and the union officials rejected his demands for the use of the mass strike against militarism, and frowned upon his agitation among the young people. He was regarded by them as a visionary who was blowing up a molehill into a mountain and trying to involve the party in fruitless fights which would cause it to lose its influence and reverse the march toward socialism.

When the cataclysm of 1914 burst, Liebknecht's view was fully redeemed, but the party was so far gone in opportunism and chauvinism that he stood against the war almost alone at the start. But stand he did. Rarely has there been another instance of personal courage and determination such as Liebknecht offered the world in the four years of war. After a few months of submission to party discipline in the Reichstag and Prussian Assembly, he began his cam-

paign of demonstrative votes against war credits and of speeches summoning the German people to revolution against the war. This was accompanied by the assiduous organization of an underground resistance movement, so that the forces of the radical Socialists slowly grew throughout the dark years, and their voice was heard ever more insistently. He culminated this with a demonstration in Potsdam Square, Berlin, on May 1, 1916, where thousands of sympathetic Berliners heard him denounce the war and call out: "Down with the government!" Liebknecht was arrested and spent the rest of the war, up to the outbreak of the German Revolution, in prison. When he left, he was escorted by a vast throng of the workers of Berlin to a waiting carriage filled with flowers; the soldiers carried him on their shoulders, and he became one of the leaders of the revolution.

**T**HE major forces in the German Revolution which overthrew the Kaiser and pressed on for a time towards a socialist republic were the Left Socialists (a disunited array which consisted of Liebknecht's and Luxemburg's Spartacus League, the revolutionary shop stewards' organization, revolutionary detachments among the soldiers and sailors, and some parts of the new, in-between, Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany) and on the other side, the official majority Socialists who, having supported the reactionaries in the war now emerged as the chief prop of the old order. The majority Socialists, led by Ebert, Noske, and Scheidemann, gave lip service to the idea of a socialist government, but secretly worked against it. This conclusion need not be arrived at by astute mind-reading or devious political analysis; it has been substantiated in every detail that Liebknecht's charges of treachery were accurate beyond even his own worst suspicions. Ebert, the Social Democratic chief of state during the revolutionary upheaval, concluded an agreement by telephone on the night of November 9-10, 1918 with General Groener, who had succeeded Ludendorff as chief of the General Staff. Through this compact, the German Social Democracy conspired with the German General Staff and officer corps to crush the revolution by duplicity and terror. "We worked out a program," Groener later testified, "that, after the arrival of troops, provided for the cleansing of Berlin of the Spartacists."

Ebert's intentions were secret, but his actions were not, and it became increasingly apparent that although the Kaiser had gone, the generals intended to remain. The Left consequently gained in support for its program of a government of workers' and soldiers' councils that had spread across Germany. Against this background, the advanced revolutionary workers fought a series of bitter battles with the Social Democratic-Junker forces, culminating in the January 1919 uprising in which the revolution was drowned in blood, Liebknecht and Luxemburg assassinated, and the traditional Krupp-

Junker coalition restored to predominance, paving the way eventually for Hitlerism and the second World War.

The tactics and strategy of the Spartacus League (which by the time of the January showdown had organized itself into the Communist Party of Germany) have long been a subject of dispute and recriminations. Some have held that the Left still needed time to accumulate sufficient mass support to assure victory; yet the provocations of the government, reinforced by General Groener's officers and troops, were extreme. The sailors guarding the Royal palace were attacked by a regular army unit; Emil Eichhorn, a left-wing Independent who as head of the Berlin police force was preserving many of the advance posts of the revolution, was removed from his job; and in many other ways the government pushed for the showdown. On the other side, the Left was badly divided as to its intentions; Liebknecht didn't have the support of his own party, and anything resembling a strong central command was absent. But with all these handicaps, there were moments when it seemed as though the revolution would succeed. At one time, General Groener has testified, there were only 150 soldiers that the government could count on in Berlin, and the Supreme Command advised Ebert that it was about to evacuate the city. The Left failed to attack, a circumstance which has led some to the conclusion that the revolt might have won out despite all its handicaps had the leadership been more audacious once it was committed to action.

**T**HE author of this book does little to clarify this or other questions. As a biography of Liebknecht, it is lacking in personality, depth, and detail. As an analysis of the wartime Social Democracy and the Revolution of 1918, it is even less impressive. A bare factual narrative, often jumbled, it suffers badly from superficiality. Despite his grudging admiration for his subject, the writer's viewpoint is that of the orthodox and anti-revolutionary school of thought, but for some obscure reason such writers can't seem to resist the temptation every so often to grab a red banner and rush in to give super-revolutionary advice to a movement which they neither sympathize with nor understand. A straight hostile narrative, unimpaired by this confusion of standpoints, might work out better.

Liebknecht's example of courage, self-sacrifice, persistence, and vigor has never failed to inspire socialists the world over. Likewise, the events of the German Revolution have still not exhausted their importance as a laboratory of social dynamics. But we hope the time has come when American socialists can draw inspiration and understanding from such events without trying to slavishly imitate the approach or duplicate the rhetoric that brought European Czars and Kaisers crashing down. A simple enough thought, but one which has seemed quite difficult heretofore for many to grasp. H. B.

## A Courageous Voice

THE HISTORY OF A LITERARY RADICAL AND OTHER PAPERS, by Randolph Bourne. S. A. Russell, New York, 1956, \$3.75.

**I**T is good that S. A. Russell has re-issued this volume of Bourne's essays. Bourne's works have been out of print for many years and it is high time that this prophet of an earlier age—all but forgotten by today's intelligentsia—should again assume his just place. Not that Bourne is more than a minor prophet; the interest of his essays is as much historical as for his probings of American culture. But in the vile, priggish atmosphere of today's literary and academic world, his voice of integrity—conjuring up an image of an intellectual who takes his vocation seriously as a leader of thought in the nation—conveys a note that is purifying and salutary. One has the sensation as if climbing out of a reeking backwater onto a windswept upland. His voice is not electrifying, it is not a big voice, but it is pure and hits true.

Randolph Bourne was not one of fortune's chosen. He was born with a curvature of the spine and a twisted face and grew up as a hunchback with a large head and asymmetrical features. His misfortune was aggravated when some adverse turn in the family position smashed his prospects of going to college and forced him, a crippled boy of 18 without a trade, to go out and earn a living. His humiliating experiences as a menial worker pushed his already rebellious spirit in the direction of radicalism and social protest. By a happy chance, after six years of struggle, he was able to get a scholarship at Columbia University, and at the age of 24 resumed his formal education.

Bourne revelled in the intellectual atmosphere and his latent powers began to bloom. While still an undergraduate, he had his articles accepted in the *Atlantic Monthly* and other periodicals, he became an honor student, a Phi Beta Kappa, and finally won a traveling fellowship which enabled him to spend a year in Europe. He came back just as war was starting and soon became an important contributor to *The New Republic* and the literary journals. He was now earning enough to live comfortably and became the center of an important intellectual circle of literary radicals who were in revolt against the "acquisitive life" and the "culture of industrialism."

**B**OURNE and his set can be said to have represented a culminating phase of that Progressivism of middle-class uplifters who after the turn of the century had gone out as muckrakers to expose the rotten substructure, and as reformers to erase the ugly blemishes on the face of America. Bourne was less naive and vapid, less tied to the world of power and privilege, than the earlier contingents of this motley army, and his outlook was leavened by a social-

istic sense which had been strengthened during his European sojourn, although his interests were more literary and cultural than political.

Because he was "a wanderer in the intellectual no-man's land"—as Veblen once in a camouflaged autobiographical allusion described the modern Jew—this Ishmael was extraordinarily sensitive to the intellectual nuances and flows of his time and for a brief spell became a virtuoso in articulating the shifting moods and soaring idealistic hopes of the avant-garde. His first book, "Youth and Life," published in 1913, adumbrated the theme that ran like a red thread through most of his writings. Addressing himself to the students, he appealed to them to band together into a kind of league of youth—to do what? As clear as one can make out, to rebel against the world of crude materialism and conformity and stand for a new world of democracy and beauty and culture. All this was somewhat nebulous, but the writing pulsed with intellectual passion and youthful intensity and expressed perfectly the pre-war mood that made Romain Rolland's "Jean Christophe" world famous—the feeling that culture and learning would sweep away the old narrow horizons and nationalistic bigotries and that life was moving on to higher, more humane, more civilized, more alluring pathways. As Van Wyck Brooks, a kindred spirit, said: "What attracted him was the common struggle and aspiration of youth and poverty and the creative spirit everywhere, the sense of a new socialized world groping its way upward. It was this rich ground-note in all his work that made him, not the critic merely, but the leader."

When the war came to America, Bourne showed the metal he was made of. Here was one intellectual who stood fast for his ideas and ideals; here was one critic who was not to be seduced by threadbare rationalizations or pressured out of his principles—even though the magazines closed their doors to him and he became an outcast. Paul Rosenfeld, the later music critic, who was a member of Bourne's circle, said: "Bourne was the great bearer of moral authority while America was at war. He was our banner man of values in the general collapse."

Bourne was mortified that the liberals and ex-socialists were out in front to engulf the country with the war madness, and led by none other than John Dewey, the philosophical god of his generation of rebels and free thinkers. Dewey, it must be recalled, had been more than an intellectual influence on Bourne and his generation. Instrumentalism had conditioned their thinking to the same degree that Marxist materialism had that of traditional socialists.

**I**N his disillusionment with his mentor, his pen went icy. "Twilight of Idols" was the title of his polemic written in October 1917. Referring to a number of Dewey's articles on the war appearing in *The New*

*Republic*, he commented acidly: "A philosopher who senses so little the sinister forces of war, who is so much more concerned over the excesses of the pacifists than over the excesses of military policy, who can feel only amusement at the idea that anyone should try to conscript thought, who assumes that the war-technique can be used without trailing along with it the mob-fanaticisms, the injustices and hatreds, that are organically bound up with it, is speaking to another element of the younger intelligentsia than that to which I belong." He cut through the feeble rationalizations with this blunt demand: "If the war is too strong for you to prevent, how is it going to be weak enough for you to control and mold to your liberal purposes?"

The renegade intellectuals provoked his contempt and scorn: They "have identified themselves with the least democratic forces in American life. . . . Never having felt responsibility for labor wars and oppressed masses and excluded races at home, they had a large fund of idle emotional capital to invest in the oppressed nationalities and ravaged villages of Europe . . . the socialist intellectuals did not have the grace of their German brothers and wait for the declaration of war before they broke for cover. . . ."

Bourne saw that more was at issue than Dewey's personal collapse; there was something wrong with a philosophy that showed up so poorly in time of crisis. "What I come to is a sense of suddenly being left in the lurch, of suddenly finding that a philosophy upon which I had relied to carry us through no longer works." As May Brodbeck wrote in her study of American philosophy, Dewey failed to supply the generation of World War I that looked to him for guidance with any set of standards. Dewey's philosophy that ends cannot be imposed from without but must arise out of the process of inquiry, that all moral judgments are an assertion of the best means to be employed for a particular end, breaks down, as all "engineering theories" do when applied to the social process, especially during crisis, because it ignores that society is an antagonistic structure containing within itself diverse and hostile interests (or ends), and the unfoldment or suppression of antagonisms breeds vested ideologies and even irrationalities and crimes.

Bourne attempted to get to the bottom of why the pragmatic intellectuals, with such ease, "moved out their philosophy, bag and baggage, from education to war." He wrote: "The young men in Belgium, the officers' training corps, the young men being sucked into the councils at Washington and into war-organization everywhere, have among them a definite element, upon whom Dewey, as veteran philosopher, might well bestow a papal blessing. . . . His disciples have learned all too literally the instrumental attitude toward life, and being immensely intelligent and energetic, they are making themselves instruments of the war-technique, accepting with little question the ends as announced from above. That those ends are largely negative does

not concern them, because they have never learned not to subordinate idea to technique. . . . The defect of any philosophy of 'adaptation' or 'adjustment' even when it means adjustment to changing, living experience, is that there is no provision for thought or experience getting beyond itself. . . . Our intellectuals have failed us as value-creators, even as value-emphasizers. The allure of the martial in war has passed only to be succeeded by the allure of the technical. The allure of fresh and true ideas, of free speculation, of artistic vigor, of cultural styles, of intelligence suffused by feeling, and feeling given fiber and outline by intelligence, has not come, and can hardly come, we see now, while our reigning philosophy is an instrumental one."

**H**E concluded that the new Jerusalem could only be built by "thorough malcontents" who couldn't "stomach the war," who are through with those "who let our cultural values die." "These malcontents will be more or less of the American tribe of talent who used to go immediately to Europe, or starved submissively at home." But he defiantly announced: "These people will neither go to Europe, nor starve submissively." Bourne died shortly afterwards of pneumonia at the age of 32 and his shining idealism and proud assertion of human progress quickly went out of fashion as the new "lost generation" started a new emigration abroad and nihilism and fatalism became dominant hallmarks of post-war intellectuals. Gertrude Stein wrote that "the future is not important any more." Scott Fitzgerald said, "We are tired of great causes." And Ezra Pound concluded that civilization is "an old bitch gone in the teeth."

Three decades have passed, a new war more terrible and destructive than the first has come and gone, and a new "beat generation" has come up, punch drunk and fatalistic, but without the artistic grace and intellectual verve of its predecessor. The radiant spirit of a Randolph Bourne seems more remote and out of place than ever. And yet, we must believe, that that spirit will like a phoenix from the ashes rise again, because the genius of man, no matter how abused and beaten down, has each time reasserted itself in its striving for justice, for freedom, for a richer and more satisfactory life.

A. S.

### *What's the Appeal?*

*AN ESSAY ON THE IMPACT OF MARXISM* by Joseph Macek. University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, \$5.

**A**LTHOUGH Marx's theories and predictions are successfully refuted at least a hundred times a day in a score of languages, his central conclusion occupies a uniquely stubborn position that causes it to be little tampered with. At a time when there were very few socialists and Marxism was a word not yet minted, he forecast that the evolu-

tion of capitalism would produce a vast socialist movement among working people. His vision was so well redeemed that his own set of socialist theories has become the major axis of modern intellectual life; the subject of more attention and controversy than any other social theory.

In the light of this fact, any book on the impact of Marxism—whether written from a favorable or unfavorable standpoint—ought to be an interesting one. The first trouble with this book is that it is not at all about the subject its title indicates. Only a dozen or so pages are devoted to the impact of Marxism, and for the rest it is a threadbare recital of familiar quotations and arguments from the anti-Marxist arsenal. These few pages at the end ruminate, with some bitterness, as to the whys and wherefores of the appeal of Marxism. They clash glaringly with the full body of the book, according to which Marxism is a doctrine which ought to be laughed out of court by both workers and intellectuals, having no relation to the modern living conditions of the former and no rational appeal to the latter.

The three principal reasons given by the author for the impact of Marxism are the following:

"1. The wage-earning status of most employees is a lifelong one, and they are aware of it.

"2. The negative character of Marx's teaching without a positive program of social reforms.

"3. The refusal of the idea of justice, its substitution by revenge and victory in the class war."

The first point on this list is a palpable hit: the character of the modern working class is such that, whatever its momentary level of wages, it must, as a rule, remain dependent on wages for its livelihood. The second two points, that Marxism is popular because it offers "negative" instead of "positive" solutions and "revenge" instead of "justice"—Professor Macek explains soberly that the mass of people have a weakness for these two fallacies—are nothing more than a kindergarten explanation by the good little boy who is sure the bad boys are more popular because they appeal to the beast in the other common little children. As a piece of social thinking it is beneath contempt. The entire section on the impact of Marxism is so infantile as neither to be worth nor to compel any serious attention. From the conservative point of view, a lot better job has been done on this matter by such writers as Walter Lippmann.

The body of the book is a routine compilation of the sins and fallacies of Marx and the Marxists, not distinguished by fairness or accuracy, and lacking even the scholar's virtue of original research, as most of the quotations are culled from previous compilations.

H. B.

*The success of any great moral enterprise does not depend upon numbers.*

—William Lloyd Garrison

## Debates in the Midwest

THE forum season has opened. New York readers will notice from the announcement on this page that they will have an opportunity to hear Scott Nearing report on his recent world tour. And for Midwest readers, we are pleased to announce that Harry Braverman will make a trip to a number of cities in their area during the early part of November.

At this writing, we can report definitely only on the meeting plans in Detroit and Chicago. Important and interesting debates are being readied in both these cities.

In Detroit, Mr. Braverman will debate with Kenneth Boulding, nationally known economist and Professor of Economics at the University of Michigan, on the topic "Must the Boom Bust?" This debate will take place on Thursday, November 7, under the sponsorship of the Detroit Labor Forum.

In Chicago, a debate has been arranged with J. Bracken Lee, the Republican former Governor of Utah. The Eugene V. Debs Forum is preparing this unusual event for Tuesday, November 12, on the topic: "Socialism or Capitalism?: The Big Issue of the Twentieth Century."

Unfortunately, the halls for both debates had not yet been selected when we went to press, and

we will carry that information in our next issue. Meanwhile, readers may write to us for the details, which we will have very soon.

THIS may be the place for a word about the good work being done by these two forums in Detroit and Chicago. Both of them sponsored I. F. Stone this year, and the Chicago Debs Forum has organized a meeting for Thursday, October 3 (at the Fine Arts Building, 410 S. Michigan), on "Civil Liberties Today" at which the speakers will be the noted novelist Nelson Algren, Dr. John Lapp, and Clark Foreman. Both the Detroit and Chicago forums are working up an extensive program of interesting meetings and we urge all readers to attend them whenever they can.

### New York Readers

Scott Nearing, who has recently returned from a world tour, will speak in New York on Wednesday, October 23, at 8 P.M. at a meeting sponsored by the American Socialist. Mr. Nearing had the opportunity to observe conditions and discuss with numerous socialist groups and leaders in many countries, especially in Asia, and will share his experiences and information.

The meeting will take place at Academy Hall, 853 Broadway (corner 14th Street). Questions and discussion will be on the program; contribution: \$1.

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