

*The American*  
**Socialist**

**REPORT ON  
THE BRITISH  
CAMPUS**

**The Next Generation  
of Radicals**

*Reflections on the Washington Youth March*



*The  
World  
of  
Work*

*JUNE 1959*

*35 CENTS*

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## "Left Holy Grail?"

Mr. Bert Cochran, in his article discussing C. Wright Mills' *The Causes of World War III*, May 1959, suggests that the criticism of "several nervous guardians of the Left Holy Grail" of Professor Mills' exclusive appeal to intellectuals is irrelevant. Since I am one of the few who voiced that criticism, I am writing to protest against Mr. Cochran's sneering, not to say smearing, characterization of some reviewers of Mills' book. I have no use for clichés, by whomsoever they may be employed.

I leave it to those who are familiar with my work and my position to decide whether I am a guardian of the "Left Holy Grail."

As far as the problem itself is concerned, I do not feel that my criticism was irrelevant. I do believe that, in the fight against war, we *must* appeal to the masses of the people everywhere. War is too serious a matter, and peace presently far too precarious, to be left to the intellectuals, who have failed the people again and again. The great majority of intellectuals do not exist in a vacuum, as Professor Mills and Mr. Cochran seem to believe. They are part of the society which feeds them and upon which their position depends.

That I have no illusions about the difficulties of reaching the masses of people, I have clearly stated in another place. But this should not prevent us from making every possible effort to reach them.

Otto Nathan, *New York*

## With Mighty Intellect

Our local "world's best newspaper," the Des Moines *Register*, recently contained an item to the effect that Senator Jackson (Dem., Wash.) will soon ask Congress to establish an "all-American group of thinkers

to plan prosecution of the cold war." The momentous news inspired me to pen the following little jingle:

With mighty spurts of intellect  
We'll plan war comprehensively—  
The foe's extermination we  
Will agitate extensively.

And if, by atom warfare  
Homo Sap we wipe out totally,  
As high priests of security  
We'll perish sacerdotally.

M. W. Iowa

## In Dubious Battle

William T. Gossett of the Ford Motor Company is quoted as being definitely distressed and critical at the activities and demands of our workingmen and working women and the "monopoly power" and "anti-democratic activities" of labor unions generally.

Now if I were Mr. Gossett, I would be just a little loath to discuss the activities and demands of anybody. Particularly I would consider myself in a very dubious position to attack any group of organized workers.

Let us examine in a most friendly manner something of the demands and "take"

of William T. Gossett. In 1953 Gossett was one of a handful of Ford executives who were permitted to buy a million and a half shares of company stock at \$21 per share. Less than three years later, ten million shares of this same stock were eagerly grabbed by the public at \$64.50 per share. At this price the Ford executives had a gross profit of well over sixty million dollars on their stock. Of this fantastic amount, Gossett's share was many, many millions. Not bad. Not bad at all.

It would seem that corporation executives who are not only paid fabulous salaries, bonuses, etc. but are also able to make untold millions on the side through stock option purchases, are in an exceedingly poor position to criticize the demands and activities of the not-too-well-paid workers of these corporations, and the unions they were forced to establish. And no corporation in America did more to force its employees to organize than did the Ford Motor Company.

There are an increasing number of thoughtful people in this country who are firmly convinced that the real threat to this nation's welfare and future progress comes not from the rank and file worker or his organizations, but comes very, very definitely from the insatiable greed and worldwide grabbing and exploitation of our giant corporations and their top management.

It might be an extremely healthy thing if Mr. Gossett and his crowd came down to earth long enough to give heed to this most challenging and disturbing opinion.

Charles C. Lockwood, *Detroit*

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### ULR SUBSCRIBERS PLEASE NOTE

The business manager of *Universities and Left Review* has written to notify us of two astonishing burglaries of their offices, in which the only things taken were subscription and distribution records. *ULR* is not able to mail out its next issue unless it can reconstruct its mailing lists, at least in part.

If you are a subscriber, you will not receive *ULR* unless you write at once to Mrs. Janet Hase, 7 Carlisle Street, London, W. 1., England. Besides your name and address, please send also the date of the issue your subscription began.

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## Reflections on the Washington Youth March:

# The Next Generation of Radicals

ON April 18, anywhere from 26,000 to 30,000 young men and women, colored and white, staged a march on Washington to present 400,000 petition signatures for integrated schools to President Eisenhower. It is worth examining various facets of this whole affair—this is our first chance to do so—as they cast a searching light on many of the problems of the day which we of the Left have to grapple with.

First should be mentioned the size of the march. We will not address our-

In England several years ago angry young men were lamenting that there were no more great causes to fight for. When a few people began to dramatize some of the great causes of today, tens of thousands abandoned their morbid introspections and began to write a new chapter of life for themselves and their country. We are a long way from duplicating England in this respect, as yet, but the Youth March proved that all life has not left *corpus Americana*; the pulse is mighty low, but the heart



selves to the question that some have raised, whether with better organization a far larger number might not have been assembled. On the face of it, it is an impressive feat when in this period of passivity a mass of young people of this quantity can be gathered to demonstrate for school integration. It shows that the spark of idealism is by no means extinguished in our young people; it was a complex amalgam of bewilderment and sense of helplessness which had gone into making this era of indifference and silence.

is still beating—and with proper therapy and luck, may revive in due course.

THE next thing worth remarking on is the treatment that the press and other propaganda media accorded the march: From one end of the country to the other, they ignored it. The *New York Times* and a few other leading newspapers gave it perfunctory mention. The bulk of the newspapers did not even bother to do that. A national youth march does not rate as news with them. What is even more telling, many

of the liberal commentators and spokesmen, who have made a profession in recent years of wringing their hands in anxiety and striking their foreheads in despair at the apathy and listlessness of our youth, similarly did not deign to notice this action and comment on its meaning—good, bad, or indifferent. The conduct of the commercial press—what the old populists used to call the “kept press”—is an old story. But one has the uneasy thought that much of the lamentation and devout posturing of many so-called liberals is a necessary and endemic feature of our many-hued yet integrated and purposefully functioning economic and social establishment. Just as some mothers, while goading their sons to get married, place innumerable stumbling blocks in their path the moment their urgings seem on the verge of fruition, so will many who weep today about our uncommitted youth be the first to discourage any signs of dedication when they seriously appear.

If we view the hostility or indifference of the propaganda media exclusively in terms of a challenge to be confronted and outwitted, then the leadership of the youth march will have to be held responsible, in part, at any rate, for the poor press. This leadership is a peculiar animal—a true product of these terror-laden and reactionary fifties. It was made up of the leading figures of the NAACP, and was endorsed by some of our advanced liberals and more progressive labor leaders. And here is the paradox of our time: Only this kind of an acceptable and respectable leadership, with its threads of connection with labor leaders, church leaders, and educators, could today rally large numbers of young people. On the other hand, this kind of leadership guaranteed that the affair would be sufficiently tame and uninspiring that it could be ignored with impunity by the politicians and press alike, and leave the participants themselves with a feeling of frustration and letdown.

The march did not appear as a break of the era of conformity, but a symbol of the helplessness of mere people to shake the huge impersonal institutions around them. The very organization of the affair itself, though managed by people who are indefatigable in their

professions of democracy and freedom, was—in the best tradition established by the Communists in the thirties—directed by a selected number of top manipulators, while the ranks were confined to carrying the banners and listening to the speeches.

**I**T is well to pause at this point, as the matter of leadership is pivotal to the present social atomization. With the discreditment of Communism—and with it, of all radicalism of the thirties—the political spectrum was abruptly shifted to the right so that what was conservative was rechristened liberal, and what was liberal became very advanced, with the old Left pushed clear out of the reckoning. Pretty nearly two decades have gone by in which the radical circles, isolated and shunned, have decomposed and disintegrated. They were probably due for the discard in any case, but the euphoria of the fifties buried all thought of reform, much less struggle.

If the sixties are due to introduce a new decade of social tension and strife—and many signs point that way—it is vain to imagine that the surviving radical grouplets can start again where they left off twenty years ago. They are in no shape, moral or physical, to stage a comeback. That play is finished. Leadership will inevitably come first from those sources that currently sit astride the labor, liberal, and Negro movements, and command the attention, if not the allegiance, of sizable segments of the nation.

But can this leadership, as it is presently constituted, give its potential following much satisfaction? The conduct of the youth march—as of the AFL-CIO unemployed rally—would indicate otherwise. The labor leaders settled for a Lyndon Johnson “investigation” of the unemployed problem. The Negro leaders could not even secure that much of a face-saver. They had to content themselves with a small committee presenting their plea to some clerk in the White House. Surely, it is neither irresponsible, nor fanciful, nor extremist, to suggest that in the light of the crumbling of the integration program, the organizers of a national youth march would try to dramatize the crisis by staging a determined effort to peacefully picket the White House or Capitol, and that they have

the responsibility of projecting in their speeches and press releases a more spirited program of effort than is conveyed by their reiterated emphasis concerning their respectability. The leaders of these imposing liberal institutions are so thoroughly under the spell of the fifties, and their attitudes have been so conditioned by the politics of the cold war, that it is safe to say that many readjustments of opinion and alterations of personnel will have to occur before they can talk to the youth of the nation with more than platitudes and tired pieties.

**T**HE labor and civil rights organizations have perfected imposing edifices. They provide representation and look after the affairs of their widespread constituencies within a mass society where the individual counts for little and where his voice cannot make itself heard above the general din. They also manipulate, discipline, and house-break their masses to keep within the prescribed and permitted tolerances of complaint and dissent. The mass-man has his institutions, but his institutions make it very difficult for new ideas or alternative policies to break through the well-knit bureaucratic mesh. Even under the pressure of social discontents—unless these assume apocalyptic proportions—the immense bureaucracies react slowly and with a marked conservative bias. But the British experience previously referred to has applicability to this country. Alongside the slow-moving unions and Labor Party, more energetic ginger formations like the peace movement, the *Tribune* and Victory for Socialism groups, the publications of the Left intelligentsia, are attracting the allegiances of significant numbers, and are slowly affecting the political climate which in the past decade has markedly resembled our own.

We have quite a way to go to catch up with the British, despite the considerable similarity in our respective welfare states. The efforts over the past two years of the remaining radical grouplets to get themselves reshaped to make a new appeal broke down because of their own inadequacies and the lack of outside response. It is by now very clear, if it has not been for some time, that when the general atmosphere eases, the light will come from fresh and authentic representa-

tives of the new generation. To the extent that some of us of the old Left understand the needs of the times, and talk sense, will the new movement benefit from the best traditions and lessons of the past.

**I**N any case, great social questions are again coming to the fore of public attention. With this, we believe, will come the cry for answers that promise to ameliorate, if not solve, the desperate maladjustments of our times. We will not romanticize with Shelly and say, “If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?” We will say—we hope with more realism if less poetry—“If Winter is ebbing, can Spring be far behind?”

### *Getting Tougher*

**N**ATIONAL Guardsmen in battle garb patrol mines in eastern Kentucky's coal-fields around the “Bloody Harlan” of the 1930's, now tense from a labor dispute that flares into violence.

In Henderson, N.C., 20 miles south of the Virginia line on U.S. 1, more than a hundred state police reinforce the town's small protective force. The six-month strike against Henderson's most important textile mills has been angry and at times explosive.

Even north of Mason and Dixon's line, in industrial centers where organized labor is older and disciplined, picket line disorders are becoming more common. They've caused trouble for police in the recent rubber strike in Naugatuck, Conn., and in upstate New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and other states.

These are small and scattered events. But they are the visible signs of a major change that is coming over the whole field of labor-management relations.

Bluntly, labor disputes are getting tougher. And they will continue to get tougher—reversing a trend toward fewer and milder strikes that has been under way, with some interruptions, since the early forties. For strong unions this means harder bargaining, fewer gains, longer strikes. For weak unions it can mean disaster—plants operating right through a strike, lost strikes, even broken unions. For management, the changed climate puts a premium on tough resistance to union demands.

—*Business Week*, May 9



Intellectual moods and trends in British universities, it will be seen from this report, have not been too different from those among American students and their instructors. But in the last few years, there have been changes, and a new Left is taking shape.

# Report on the British Campus

by Norman Birnbaum

**T**HE political pulse inside the universities has quickened appreciably since Hungary and Suez—but the academic body politic, as a whole, is still half-comatose. Nuclear weapons and colonialism are the political issues which evoke most student interest; but it is often expressed in non-political ways, through the churches or the Liberal Party.

There is, however, a vigorous university Left, and it is strategically placed. It supplies the leadership for many official Labor student clubs; on teaching staffs, it includes some talented and influential voices. Yet the Left is small; the vast majority of students, and no small proportion of their teachers, are indifferent or passive in political attitude and, therefore, conformist in behavior.

This situation is, in general, a consequence of the political situation and, in particular, of the peculiar post-war social role of the universities.

A generation ago the British universities played a leading part in the struggle for socialism. Today they lead no one: they stumble on in the ruck of that race for status (and money), which is contemporary Britain's gift to culture. The characteristic figure of academic life today,

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*This article is reprinted from the left-wing British weekly, Tribune, with the permission of its editors.*

amongst teachers and students alike, is the man moving from beer and sherry to double whiskies and double gins; a TV aerial has been affixed to the Ivory Tower.

This is not simply a matter of the replacement of socialist thinkers by conservative ones; the universities these days have few thinkers of any kind. They have become giant training schools for bright young boys and girls about to enter the managerial hierarchies that dominate our society.

Many teachers have met this situation as gracefully (and as profitably) as they can; they are the mechanics who keep the bureaucratic machinery in repair, the compères who grinningly assure us that what we see is necessary and, therefore, right.

These tendencies are at least as visible amongst those of Labor affiliations as amongst Tories, in working-class students as well as middle-class ones.

The 1944 Education Act has altered the social composition of university student bodies. At Oxbridge 11 per cent of the students are working class; at London 21 per cent; elsewhere (England and Wales) 31 per cent.

As usual, the middle classes are the chief beneficiaries of the welfare state they complain so much about. The Education Act has opened the better-paid and more influential jobs to a small group of working-class children and to a larger group of lower-middle-class ones.

These students are pre-occupied with their careers. Their energies are absorbed by examinations (not by studies) and by the meaningless club activities preferred by many prospective employers. (Incidentally, the Civil Service and other employers ask—and university registrars supply—all the details of a student's undergraduate activities.)

These thoroughly domesticated students take no political risks. They don't, in any case, see the connection between politics and their individual lives.

The Labor Party leadership has, unwittingly, contributed to the neutralization of university political opinion, because it makes no appeal to youth's idealism. Each party claims to offer to the young the successful pursuit of "opportunity"—but the pursuit of "opportunity" in this society means the acceptance of values which are implicitly Conservative.

**W**ITHIN the Labor Clubs the more active students are almost uniformly critical of the party's leadership; they regard it, especially on the issues of foreign policy, nuclear disarmament and colonialism, as at best pusillanimous, at worst, dishonest.

These are precisely the immediate and dramatic issues on which a large number of hitherto uncommitted students could be won for Labor. It is customary to defend "moderate" Labor policies on the grounds that militant ones would drive people away; here is a case where things work the other way.

In general, the student Left (whether in the Labor Clubs or outside them) takes the view that the resemblance between Labor policies and socialist politics is growing more, and not less, coincidental. These students see no future in *The Future Labor Offers You*; they have been influenced most of all by *Universities and Left Review*, and occasionally by the *New Reasoner*. The mindless militancy of the *Newsletter* group had a short period of influence about nine months ago; this appears to have declined, especially where *Newsletter's* editors have made personal visits to the universities.

The student Left is much less clear about the economic problems of British socialism (nationalization and workers' control) than about foreign policy and colonial issues; but the students know what they don't want—the official party line. And if unclear on these questions they are not more so than the rest of us.

The Labor Club leaders and other Left students are frequently middle-class in origin. (Perhaps this is why economic questions strike them as less immediate.) There are working-class students active on the Left, but far fewer of them than we might think.

They are either so desperately anxious to get on that they renounce their class loyalties (a process repeated often enough on university teaching staffs), or they develop rather rigid party loyalties to counter-balance the many pressures, in a new and difficult environment, which tend to drive them away from Labor.

They frequently take a simple view of socialism (equating it to whatever Morgan Phillips says it is), and they are often suspicious of the middle-class intellectuals who are so critical of the party.

This, of course, enables them to identify with the middle class the intellectuals at its top. Not all working-class students react in this way, but enough do to represent a problem; closer contacts between University Labor Clubs and the Labor movement generally might help. The situation will also change when more working-class students are given university places.

The Left is not all of the student Labor movement, although it is a significant part of it. And the movement as a whole is but a fraction of the student population.

**H**ERE are some figures for membership of Labor Clubs: Manchester 82, Durham 40, Liverpool 21, Bristol 35; and these universities have thousands of students apiece. The presence of a combined Socialist Society instead of a Labor Party Club, seems to make little difference in numbers.

The non-party clubs have this sort of membership: Birmingham 50, Nottingham 74, Hull 45, Leicester 25, Imperial College of Science and Technology 60.

The traditionally strong Labor Club at Oxford, under a pronouncedly Left leadership, numbers one thousand; there are 500 at Cambridge (again with a somewhat Leftist policy, but facing competition from a lively independent Socialist Society), and 200 at the London School of Economics (again with a Left policy).

Labor, and the Left, seem to recruit mainly from the arts faculties and the social sciences; the natural scientists seem untouched, despite the political activities of many graduate scientists; and some students apparently think that a demonstration of anti-socialist opinions will ensure them occupational success: accountants, engineers, and medical students.

On the other side, many in the larger Labor Clubs see Labor politics as an asset in their careers: this inhibits their criticism of official policy.

What about the influence exerted on students by university teachers with socialist views? Our numbers have been growing over the past five years, particularly amongst the junior staff; and the imbecilic behavior of the Communist Party towards its former academic adherents has added to our strength a number of valuable recruits.

In some places, socialist teachers do reach and influence the minds of their students; but if the situation is better than it has been, it is still (on balance) depressing.

The striking Conservative bias of much academic teaching and research (particularly in the social sciences) is the result of a number of things. It is the convenient ideological result of conventional notions of academic neutrality; of the pressures, not least financial, which drive university teachers to undertake commissions from all the going concerns of our society; and of the hierarchical and bureaucratic structure of the universities themselves which make advancement easy for cautious mediocrities.

Moreover, in the world of the party machine and television, many simply doubt that anything anyone thinks is going to affect events; they become academic in the worst sense of the word and retreat (as have the political philosophers) into pedantic ritualism.

And university teachers may not be *more* likely to fool themselves than other mortals, but they are not *less* likely

to do so. How many lectures on "the British political tradition" were delivered, I wonder, during the week in which the Tory Government allowed the African massacres? It is clear that university teachers cannot make their students think twice, if they find it difficult themselves to think once.

**N**ONETHELESS, socialist voices amongst teaching staff are beginning to be heard more loudly, more insistently, and more effectively. They are at least as critical of Labor's Establishment as of the original one; and they are disinclined to allow their colleagues, by default, to deliver the Conservative ideologies designed to prop up the rotten timbers of capitalism's falling house.

Our numerical weakness, therefore, may prove relatively unimportant. We propose to restore to the universities their classic function and make of them centers of continuous debate, thereby influencing far more students than we do now. And we have one inestimable advantage: our opponents tend to listen only to themselves.

At one university the economists have said so often that "disinflation"—i.e., unemployment—is a national good, that the students have begun to doubt this—and much else besides. At another, the historians spend half their time denouncing A. J. P. Taylor, and the other half pronouncing Chartism the work of "a few cranks." Their students have turned to both with increased curiosity.

There are signs, too, that the situation amongst the students is more fluid. Insofar as generalized political apathy

exists, it affects the Conservatives as well (their clubs are generally described as social centers). Apathy is implicitly Conservative, but the apathetic may not know this.

The cold war and the bomb do disturb many students; the church-influenced ones, for instance exhibit considerable reluctance to participate in a human and nuclear anticipation of the Last Judgment.

The Liberal groups often take positions to the left of Labor's leadership; a genuinely socialist policy could win over many who are attracted to Liberalism because it opposes the oligarchical and routinized party game.

And there are a large number of students who were shocked by recent events in Africa. At present they have no politics more complicated than the belief that Tory Colonial Secretaries are liars. But the crisis of British imperialism may well dominate the next decade; the Colonial students at the universities will hardly allow their classmates to overlook it.

Political feeling in the universities is, to a large extent, responsive to the political atmosphere outside. A revived and genuinely socialist Labor leadership would prove a great attraction to the young and would gain supporters from amongst staff as well.

At present, the most important task facing the university Left is to contest the claim of Mr. Gaitskell's young fogies to the intellectual leadership of British socialism. The more vigorously they contest it, the sooner socialist politics as a whole will be changed.

## *A Short Inventory of Labor's Share in the Nation's Budget*

by Frank Tuttle

**A**T least every 20 years, labor should take an inventory and know what it has gained and lost—how it stands. The Madison Avenue crowd is doing its utmost to confuse and becloud the situation. It claims that "Wages and Salaries are a greater proportion of National Income than ever before." At the same time, it claims that "Every wage boost is followed by greater price raises, leaving workers worse off than before."

The proportion of income paid in wages and salaries is higher, but only microscopically so. In 1945, National Income was \$181,730,000,000, of which Wages and Salaries was \$117,576,000,000—or 64.7 percent.

In 1957, income of \$363,951,000,000 paid Wages and Salaries of \$238,120,000,000 or 65.4 percent. In 12 years an increase of 7/10ths of 1 percent. Not much to write about.

The Census tells every year what National Income is, and just how much went to Wages and Salaries. But it carefully refrains from telling how many people got wages and salaries. However, my analysis of the Labor Department's "Occupational Groups" indicates that about 70 percent of gainfully employed people were on wages or salaries in 1945, and about 80 percent in 1957.

Simple proportion shows that if 70 percent of gainfully employed were entitled to 64.7 percent of income, then 80 percent should have 73.9 percent—instead of the 65.4 percent that they got in 1957.

Let us look at the claim that increases in labor income always cause greater increases in prices. In 1939, the per capita income in the U.S. was \$558. It is now \$2100, or 3.76 times as much.

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*Frank Tuttle is an auto-union pioneer now retired from Chrysler.*

In 1939, the average income of all gainfully employed people was \$1600. Right now it is \$5600, or 3.5 times as much.

The average hourly rate in manufacturing in 1939 is given by the Labor Department as 63.3¢; now it is \$2.14, or 3.38 times as much.

The auto workers, who have been accused of being the principal villain in the matter of raised wages, got \$1.02½ an hour in 1939 and are getting \$2.51 now, or 2.45 times as much.

But the cost of living, according to the price index, is just 2.08 times as much as in 1939.

The facts, established over a 20-year period, are that as income rose, prices rose less than half as much. This provided an improvement for most types of income receivers.

**H**OWEVER, the wage earners have not had as much increase in income as the nation as a whole. Instead of workers' wages forcing prices up, it was other kinds of income, Interest, Rent, Profit, Dividends, Fees, Commissions, Royalties and Annuities, that forced prices up.

The worker's share has constantly grown less, as the Bureau of Labor Statistics figures, which I quoted above, show. Unions have fought a very good delaying action, nothing more.

The daily press will not tell these facts, because that would explode their claims. The unions will not tell them either, because they do not want to admit the smallness of their gains to their members.

I do not know whether any one is interested in facts—people are guided by emotions, rather than reason. But these are facts—if any reader cares.

It is one-sided, in this writer's opinion, to think of our war budget solely as a prop to business. By polarizing wealth faster, it may hasten a bust.

# Arms Spending and the Boom

by Reuben Borough

SOME of the recent discussions of the war economy, which reached the conclusion that it is a prop to our economic prosperity, neglected the other side of the picture. It appears to me that if armaments production siphons income into the hands of large corporations and out of the pockets of consumers at a rate faster than is normal in the rest of the economy, the arms budget may also have the opposite effect. By speeding up huge capital accumulations at one end of the scale to the detriment of consumer buying power, it may be helping to set the stage for a bust in the economy.

It is important to realize at the start that what we have under observation here is no normal, independently sustained mechanism of profit extraction. A true parasite, the war contractor draws his sustenance entirely from his host, and his unparalleled appetite forces a rate of growth unachieved in the market economy, either by top monopolists or competing enterprisers.

The method of attachment is unique to the species. The war contractor—in the interest of national security—is fixed in his role by secret agreement. He is not governed by the ordinary procedures controlling the letting of contracts for public business via competitive bidding. The price schedules and terms of payment accepted by the Department of Defense are, it is true, subject to review for “scaling down” by the Renegotiations Board. But the board, whose members are financial figures in the industry, is years behind in its “scaling down” checkups. (See testimony of Roland Pagen, vice-president of Northrop Aviation, Inc., before the Subcommittee for Special Investigations, House Committee on Armed Services, February 16 to March 22, 1956.)

The Subcommittee's voluminous records disclose that the war contractors have garnered unprecedented profit gains on their investments in the form of dividends and undistributed earnings. The high rate of return is aside from the highly lucrative profit-escape loopholes, among the more open of which are large salary and “incentive” diversions of corporate income into the hands of management's “insiders.” For example, for the years 1953 to 1955 inclusive (while the company was increasing its net worth from \$57,440,750 to \$94,686,484) the five top executives of

North American Aviation received salaries and incentive rewards totaling \$2,615,560.

THE growth of company-owned assets for five typical aircraft contractors (assets accumulated from undistributed profits only) was shown by the Subcommittee to be:

Douglas Aircraft: \$10 million in 1949 to \$168 million in 1955—a nearly 17-fold increase for the six-year period.

North American Aviation: \$6.5 million in 1934 to \$90 million in 1954—a nearly 14-fold increase for the 20-year period.

Northrop Aircraft: \$9.5 million in 1952 to \$25 million in 1955—a 2.6-fold increase for the three-year period.

Lockheed Aircraft: \$55 million in 1952 to \$98 million in 1955—a nearly 1.8-fold increase for the three-year period.

Boeing Airplane: \$67.5 million in 1952 to \$119 million in 1955—more than a 1.7-fold increase for the three-year period.

Edgar Snow in his *Journey to the Beginning* presents this striking sketch of the performance of General Dynamics Corporation: “Parent stock in that company enriched its promoters by 17 times from 1939 to 1956; today it is worth more than thirty to one on the original investment. That is even better than the nineteen firms which operated the government-owned shipyards during the war, to make \$356 million on a capital investment of \$22 million.

The 1958 Report on Administered Prices (Automobiles) by the Subcommittee on Antitrust and Monopoly, U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, pages 37 to 40, from which this sample is excerpted, fills in more of this story:

*If the Government contract requires an expansion of production facilities, incentives are offered which are not normally available in contracts between private parties. The United States Government may itself construct the additional facilities, lease them to the manufacturer for a period, and then, when the emergency is over, sell the properties to the lessee at a fraction of the original cost. In this manner the manufacturer makes satisfactory profits during the time of the lease and receives an extra bonus at the end of the period. Or, if the contractor himself constructs the additional facilities, he can often obtain rapid tax amortization and depreciate the total investment over a period of five years.*

IT may be urged that the plethora of profits from the manufacture of military planes is no longer of consequence, as this type of weapon is on the way out. But it is a practical certainty that the bomber's successor, the intermediate range and intercontinental ballistic missiles, will yield an even higher rate of return to the contractors in view of the absence of restraining cost standards in the exploratory work and the greater concentration in control of production.

If the tax money now going to the war contractors went instead to competing enterprisers for housing, schools, dams, roads, etc., return on investment (withdrawal from total receipts both for dividends and capital accumulation)



would be less. Furthermore, the war economy trend would be checked. Or one step better: profit could be eliminated from major portions of welfare spending, with expenditures going entirely for materials and productive labor. Two examples:

(1) A program of public housing in the construction of which the Government would directly employ management and workers (with rewards to private enterprise eliminated). The government would directly rent the housing units on the basis of cost of maintenance and service (with no rentals to private landlords).

(2) A nation-wide conservation program (power generation, flood control, stream-flow regulation, irrigation, expansion of recreational areas and facilities, forestation, preservation of wild life) in which the key structures, the multiple-purpose dams, would be constructed and operated directly by the government (with no payoffs to construction contractors or power trust owners). It would be reasonable, in such a program, for the government, for instance, to produce a major materials requirement, cement, in its own mills, thus eliminating the gouge of cement trust profits. (This is not untried ground, as any student of public ownership in the United States knows.) Government spending of this type would be translated into increased purchasing power and employment.

**T**HE sole source of the war economy's spending is taxes—current or, in the case of borrowing, deferred. But whose taxes? It makes a vital difference. If the taxes reach in and appropriate the capital accumulations of the well-to-do, the economic result, whatever the moral consequences, will be beneficial to the nation: spending capacity and employment will be increased. There are, of course, limits in a capitalist system to the application of this remedy: beyond certain confines the owners will strike, refuse to operate the productive and distributive plant. Then, too, in time of deep depression, as in the thirties, when the capitalist plant is devastatingly idle, this type of taxation would be obviously sterile—the only quick remedy left is government action joining idle land and idle factories with idle labor—some sort of Upton Sinclair EPIC plan.

The point on taxation which cannot be ignored or evaded is that current levies to feed the war contractors do not importantly cut into capital savings. They are primarily a raid upon the nation's purchasing power. They fall on the low-income groups who have no choice but to spend. A closeup of the federal budget for 1958-1959 makes this clear.

As presented by President Eisenhower, the budget called for an expenditure of \$74 billion, nearly two-thirds of which (more than \$40 billion) was for direct defense expenditures. Here, in percentages, is where the money was to

come from: excise taxes, 13 percent; customs and other receipts, 8 percent; corporation income taxes, 27 percent; individual income taxes, 52 percent. Excise and customs taxes are, of course, levies against consumption. Contrary to some opinions, both corporation and individual income taxes are predominantly in this same category.

The corporation income tax is anticipated by organized business and is offset, or covered, in its "administered" (arbitrarily fixed, not determined by competitive supply and demand) price schedules. The cost is passed on to the consumers. The monopolists dominating today's market often pass on more than the tax cost. General Motors, an outstanding example, made a higher rate of after-taxes return on its average stockholders' investment in 1950 (after federal legislation had added a 22 percent surtax to the then 30 percent normal tax) than in 1929 (before the tax addition): 37.5 percent as against 36.2 percent. This was achieved by upping the 1929 before-taxes profit of 38.5 percent to 77.4 percent in 1950. Whatever the superficial appearance, the corporation income tax is significantly a levy against consumption.

**A**S to the individual income tax:

The upper ten percent group, from which the nation's economy received 83 percent of its capital accumulations for the four-year period, 1947-1950 inclusive, is scandalously shielded especially in its higher reaches by a perverted "broad base" individual income tax system shot through with loopholes. Latest available government figures on income tax returns show that in 1954 this group paid only around \$14 billion out of a national total of \$26.6 billion—52 percent. The real "savers" paid much less, as the tax reached heavily into consumer purchasing power in the annual income brackets of \$7,000 to \$20,000, where prestige social living makes ruthless spending demands. In view of the fact that the lower income groups do not save much, this meant that some 48 percent of the income tax was extracted from potential current purchases.

A report on "War Economics," the Stein-Backman study, makes my point clearly in its discussion of a public debt "largely owned by the well-to-do" and serviced through "regressive taxation":

*As a result [of such a public debt] we might expect a decline in the demand for consumers' goods on the one hand and an increase in the rate of savings on the other. This in turn will cause changes in the structure and volume of national production. It may even carry within itself the seeds of grave economic dislocations, especially in so far as the balance between investments and consumption is concerned.*

It seems clear to me that, while an arms budget may help keep things going at top speed for a while, its special features in the form of super-profits and a sharper-than-usual shift of income from consumer to investor, will tell in the long run. It all spells a speeding-up of capitalism's "boom-and-bust" cycle. The way of avoidance is two-fold: elimination of the war economy, and a steady, uncompromising advance into the planned production and distribution of socialism.



Electoral laws: How the rules are rigged  
against third-party efforts in the U.S.

# Do Third Parties Have a Chance?

by Ralph Nader and Theodore Jacobs

After our recent publication of a book review on third parties, a reader called our attention to an article on ballot-access for new political groups that appeared in the *Harvard Law Record* of October 9, 1958. As it surveys the subject more fully than any brief article we have seen, we are reprinting it here in somewhat shortened form with permission of the editors of the *Harvard Law Record*.

—THE EDITORS



**I**N state after state there is a practical monopoly of the ballot by the Democratic and Republican parties. The perpetuation of this monopoly is insured by laws which subject the entry of new or minority party slates to the ballot to almost impossible burdens, and by judicial interpretations of these laws which ignore their prejudicial effect on small parties.

The fact that this problem is still with us is evidenced by a long line of decisions upholding state requirements for small parties, the most recent being one handed down in November 1957, by the California Supreme Court. In that decision, the primary law was upheld despite pleas by the Socialist Party and the Christian Nationalist Party that it would cost each party up to \$400,000 to qualify under that state's petition requirements.

It must be made clear that reference is not being made to *political success*, but rather to *ballot access*. Political success is impeded by deeper political patterns such as the election system of "plurality-take-all." Our emphasis here, however, is on the nature, operation, and rationale of laws preventing minority parties from merely *placing* the names of their candidates on the election ticket.

What requirements must a small party or independent group meet in order to place its candidates on the ballot? There are 49 different answers to this question. Each state has its distinctive statutes, ranging from liberal to harsh, with the least populous more often in the former and the more heavily populated in the latter category. It is possible, however, to give a brief survey of the present statutory situation.

Established political parties nominate their candidates in most states through a party primary which permits a direct expression by the voter of his preferences for party nominations. But minority groups are not permitted to nominate by means of party primaries unless they have received a certain percentage or number of votes cast in the preceding gubernatorial election. The minimum percentages stretch from 1 percent in Connecticut to 25 percent in Virginia, while the minimum figures range from 500 in Delaware to 50,000 in New York.

If the small party does not qualify for the primary, it may resort to the use of the independent nominating petition, which is essentially a device that allows a group to place its candidates on the ballot if a sufficient number of signatures is obtained. While the independent nominating petition is the most widely used, it also confronts the small party with its most onerous burdens.

Without taking into account all the minor variations in the several states, three main aspects of the independent nominating petition may be treated:

- 1) The number of signatures required;
- 2) Apportionment of these signatures throughout the state;
- 3) Stipulations concerning authentication of signatures and restrictions on persons who sign petitions.

In its Model Election Law, the American Civil Liberties Union urged that minor parties be required to accumulate signatures equivalent to only one-tenth of one percent of the total vote cast in the preceding gubernatorial election, with a maximum limit of 10,000 signatures. Compare this standard with the requirements of 2 percent in Missouri (36,000 votes), 3 percent in Massachusetts (71,643 votes), 5 percent in California (259,000 votes), and 7 percent in Ohio (259,000 votes). Other states exact flat numerical minimums.

New York, Illinois, Massachusetts, and Ohio demand that the signatures obtained on nominating petitions represent a prescribed number of residents in a specified number of counties throughout the state. Apportionment requirements often result in giving disproportionate power to rural areas and discourages urban and, in some cases, rural centered groups from availing themselves of the election process.

**F**OR example, the Illinois statute states that a petition to nominate candidates for a new political party must be signed by at least 25,000 qualified voters, including at least 200 from each of at least 50 of the 102 counties in the state.

The New York statute compels even greater omnipres-

ence. It reads: "An independent nominating petition for candidates to be voted for by all the voters of the state must be signed by at least 12,000 signatures of whom at least 50 shall reside in each county of the state. . . ."

The Illinois law was challenged by the Progressive Party just before the 1948 elections. The case reached the U. S. Supreme Court where it was argued that the statute's disproportionate favoring of rural counties violated the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment. In a 6-3 decision, the Court disagreed and upheld the law. Writing the dissent, Justice Douglas stated: "The notion that one group can be granted greater voting strength than another is hostile to our standards for popular representative government." He was referring to the fact that 25,000 signatures from 50 of the least populous counties could form a new party while the same number from 49 counties with 87 percent of the registered voters could not.

Regulations pertaining to authentication of signatures, even in states with liberal signature and apportionment legislation, provide further hurdles for small parties to overcome. Six states require individual notarization of every signature on a nominating petition.

In Missouri, each of the 36,000 names needed must be certified by a notary who personally knows the signer or by two witnesses who can swear to his identity.

Early filing dates, often four to six months before the election, effectively bar eleventh hour protest or splinter parties and force the gathering of signatures before the acme of the public's political consciousness. In other states, the period within which signatures may be obtained is severely restricted. Pennsylvania, for example, requires that the total number of necessary signatures be obtained within a 20-day period.

The potential group from which signers may be solicited is even limited in many states. Prevented from signing an independent nominating petition are those who voted in a contemporary party primary as well as voters affiliated with another party within a specified previous period.

Such state action has the effect of preventing voters from changing party connections during a campaign after the primary elections or during the prescribed pre-election period.

One of the characteristics of an inflexible standard is the facility with which it can be abused in its enforcement. Thus, even when a minority party complies with all the major regulations there remains a fair possibility that the petition will be totally negated by a technical defect or omission often due to ambiguities in the election law.

As a final resort for the politically frustrated, the write-in vote is available in 47 states, and would probably be implied as a constitutional right in the absence of any express provision.

In practice, the write-in vote is a somewhat illusory privilege. No party has ever won an election in this manner, though an occasional independent has been elected this way. The experience of the Socialist Party is that most states, finding the write-in unwieldy, simply disregard them in submitting their count of the vote.

**S**INCE 1948, when Henry Wallace's Progressive Party conducted a national campaign, minor parties, by their

diminished activity, have not provided the underlying impetus for further state restrictions along the line of number, apportionment and authentication. Indeed, there was hardly any need to increase already severe requirements. But it is more than sheer happenstance that periods of minor party activity have been paralleled by a rash of restrictive enactments from the two-party-dominated legislatures. The thirties and early forties were such periods. In 1932 the Socialist Party made the North Carolina ballot with a petition of 10,000 signatures. Immediately thereafter the legislature enacted more stringent requirements. Only the Democratic and Republican Parties appeared on the election ticket in 1936.

Added to these legal obstacles have been a variety of pressures in the form of discriminatory judicial and administrative enforcement, and harassing, intimidating tactics by vigilante groups. The latter pressure has been expressed in the past by publishing petitions in newspapers to embarrass or black-list signers and even by physical violence against small-party workers.

The constitutionality of even the harshest statutes has been maintained against claims of deprivation of due process, equal protection of the laws, and the right to vote. If the restrictions on access do not constitute an absolute bar and if the particular court gives weight to the write-in as an available alternative, these laws are deemed reasonable and therefore valid. Otherwise judicial review is as broad as judicial discretion which thus far has taken the form of a "hands off the legislature" policy.

What is constitutional may still be unwise. This is revealed by an examination of the evils which these restrictions are allegedly designed to prevent.

It is contended that the signature requirements prevent the ballot from becoming the size of a blanket and thereby confusing the voter.

The "blanket size ballot" argument has some validity, but is attributed to the wrong cause. Rather than arising from an excess of parties, the long ballot has been due to a plethora of elective offices all the way from Governor to the county surveyor and the total listing of a state's presidential electors. With the replacement of the electors column by the names of the presidential and vice presidential candidates and the partial reduction of elective offices in many states, the problem of the long ballot has greatly diminished.

It has also been asserted that ballot requirements have not unreasonably inhibited or actually kept minority parties off the election ticket. Rather, it is believed, the historical failure of third parties is due to non-legal factors rooted deeply in the American political system.

This position is untenable. First, it is historically false: there are numerous instances where parties have been kept off the ballot by onerous conditions or by technical disqualifications. Even the Republican Party was not spared in the 1918 Florida elections. Second, the fact that through great effort and expense minor parties have surmounted formidable obstacles does not reflect on the reasonableness of such barriers. On the contrary, they have forced parties to exhaust their financial and human energies in qualifying rather than in the conduct of a political campaign.

The "industrial sociologists" have pecked at the problem, with little success. Few others seem interested. But one of the crucial questions ahead for humanity is: How can work be made a satisfactory part of life instead of a theft of hours away from living? Not until that is done can man rise to the heights of which he is biologically capable.

# The World of Work

by Harry Braverman

**T**HE last decade has seen the growth of a critical literature about many of our ways of life. Regimentation, conformity, mass culture, commercialism, shoddy values, mental and emotional immaturity, maniacal advertising, deteriorating cities and traffic conditions, evil-eye television, keep-up-with-the-gadgets living, inadequate medical care, declining schools and communities—all of these and more have come in for their share of lumps, often expertly administered. The Luce Syndrome, a pattern of smug semi-blindness so common in the earlier fifties, is definitely being weakened.

While much of the criticism is effective, and some of it brilliant and devastating, the overall impression created by it is far from hopeful. On the whole, the critics take a deeply pessimistic view of the trend of what they call "industrial civilization" or "mass society." Implicitly or explicitly, they favor personal solutions rather than social or political changes. Their faith in reform is severely curtailed in advance by their evident conviction that the evils of the day are inherent in modern society. Terms like "socialism" and "capitalism," most of them plainly feel, have largely lost their meaning, and the conflict between them is little more than a semantic argument. The over-riding reality is the "mass society," which has the same basic defects regardless of labels or institutional manipulations. Economic solutions strike them as vain, chiefly because they accept, by and large, the prevailing dogma that our economic problems are already solved.

To one profoundly in sympathy with the recent criticisms and hopeful that they will encourage dissident political thinking, it is disturbing to see them attached to this glib and superficial framework of analysis. It is typical of the fright and disorientation of the intellectual in these cold-war days that the capacity for hard-headed rationalism has been swallowed up in murky fetishisms. He goes for all the old chestnuts, like the "coming dominance of the machine," "the destruction of art and culture by science and industry," and the like. He is a sucker for the polemical sharks who tell him that the socialist interpretation of history says that a man earning \$1.05 an hour is precisely five percent happier than a man earning \$1 an hour, and rejects it with fitting indignation. He has little idea, at any point in his thinking, whether he is being critical of industrialism, or the social matrix within which it is currently shaped and contained, and he thinks it unfair pedantry to insist upon a separation of the two; he has learned from experience that the hazy attack is not only less of a strain on the critical faculties, but safer as well when it comes to such things as publication, sales, tenure, and promotion.

**N**EVERTHELESS, the investigations of writers like Spectorsky, Packard, Keats, Whyte, Galbraith, Lynes, and many others have pioneered in a number of substantial new fields. Grouping them all together, we may say that there is a new concern with the "quality of life" in our society—mental, moral, aesthetic, physical. The joy in the American celebration has been tempered by the knowledge that a society must be judged, in the last analysis, not merely by the level of production it can sustain, but by its end product—the quality of life it offers its people. The fact that our level of production is high and our quality of life low has led many of them to discount the commanding role played by economic institutions in shaping the totality of any society. But the withering fire that has been directed at national habits, goals, and patterns of life reflects a shaken confidence in our entire social system, regardless of the clever stratagems used by the various authors to avoid this conclusion. I think it would be extremely rewarding to follow these critics into the spheres they have opened up, and to take a fresh look at the quality of modern life as it has been shaped by industrialism and by capitalism.

In making a start along these lines, it seems best to begin with a subject that has been little touched upon in recent years. In the twenties and thirties, Robert and Helen Lynd found, in their two Middletown volumes, that the natural starting point for any broad sociological exploration is the *job*, the process of getting a living. With due apologies to the devastating critics who have repeatedly destroyed "economic man," that still seems to me a good idea. It is all the more compelling as a starting point because the trend of modern life that is under analysis centers naturally around the factory and the factory worker: Factory and industrial workers are not only the largest single grouping in the country, but the type of job long thought typical for that group has been spreading throughout the whole economy. More and more Americans have lost their self-employed or semi-independent status, and are working at jobs involving a fraction of a subdivided routine which fails to engage their interest or absorb their capacities.

IT is amazing the extent to which this pervasive world of work is *terra incognita* among the intellectual classes of America. There used to be an interest, strong in the pre-World War I days, and flaring up again in the thirties, in the daily life-round of workers. It was reflected in the writings of social workers, novelists, personal memoirs, even magazines and popular literature. Whether because the industrial experience is now so common, or because it has lost much of its high drama of conflict, or for whatever reasons, working class life is less described the more it has become widespread.

The quantity of fiction dealing with labor, unions, and the like, never large, has declined to an almost invisible trickle. Few writers now try to illumine the lives and feelings of this largest single contingent of Americans. Since the flurry of "proletarian literature" in the thirties, the number of novels and short stories with a working-class setting is, to my knowledge, miniscule. It is not even common for works of fiction designed to give a cross-sectional view of the nation to include a slice of factory life. From the point of view of the reader and writer of fiction, the most common work experience of Americans is the least explored.

In sociology and social work, the tradition has changed completely. In place of the investigator who made it a part of his job to live among workers, immigrant poor, slum dwellers, the ideal today is the Olympian academician, for whom people are not fellow human beings, but insects impaled for study and microscopic examination. Charles Rumford Walker, right after the first World War, found it natural to go to work in a steel mill, twelve hours a day and seven days a week, in order to produce an acute book of observation and sympathetic understanding. Today, the sole source of information most sociologists have about workers is the questionnaire—that ubiquitous tool of modern social science which enables a foundation-supported team to work up a facsimile of scientific results remotely connected with the truth. Mechanical procedures are substituted for association and communication with one's fellow man, leading to results like this one, from the writings of an Australian sociologist:

*An extreme example of the combination of the two difficulties may be taken from the replies of an Australian factory process worker to certain questions about social classes. When asked: "What do you think might be the main classes in Australia?" he replied: "Bugged if I know." Following this, when asked: "To which class do you belong?" he replied: "The booze class, I s'pose." (Social Structure and Personality in the Factory, by Paul Lafitte.)*

This sociologist's conclusion that his efforts were thwarted by the worker's "lack of skill in the use of words" shows a typical insensibility to the currents that flow between men. But even at its most successful, the present method of study—from the outside, from above, and chiefly by formal and mechanical procedures—produces flat and one-sided appreciations, lacking in life, dimension, or real understanding.

With all their limitations, however, the sociologists have

made the most sustained effort to attack the modern problem of work over the past thirty years. A new school of "industrial sociology" has arisen in the last three decades, and its ideas, scattered abroad from a number of university centers, have furnished the largest body of thinking that exists on this subject.

INDUSTRIAL sociology had its forerunners in such "scientific management" experts as Frederick W. Taylor, who were interested in increasing output by studying and subdividing the operations required of a worker. Taylor set the stage for industrial research by proving to management that it pays to use specialized techniques for selecting and training workers, and for ferreting out the most effective ways of applying energy to work. But the new branch of sociology didn't try to set up as a separate discipline claiming status as a scientific sociology of work, until Elton Mayo. Mayo, of the Harvard School of Business, claimed to have discovered generalizations of objective validity about work and workers.

It started with the famous "Hawthorne experiments" in the mid-twenties and the thirties. Mayo and his associates were called in to the Hawthorne plant of Western Electric, just south of Chicago, to help in a series of tests designed to discover the effects of lighting on productivity. They found production increasing both in the group with better lighting and also in the group with unchanged lighting; they found production continuing to increase no matter what they did to the lighting; and they were soon able to reach the not surprising conclusion that their lighting test was being thrown out of kilter by an overpowering factor—the simple fact that the workers were under close observation and knew it. A prolonged experiment with a group of six girls, removed from the main workroom, placed under close observation at all times, and subjected to a series of changes in working conditions, including rest periods, lunch hours, duration of day, refreshments, and the like, enabled them to verify this conclusion. Output climbed with each innovation, but it continued to climb when all the improvements were taken away, indicating to the experimenters that the girls were working harder and "more contentedly" simply because they were the center of attention and observation.

Mayo and his associates rapidly built an imposing edifice of conclusions. They hastened to announce the gladsome tidings that the worker was not so much interested in money as had been previously thought; that he was a creature of moods and sentiments; that the factory was not primarily the economic institution it had been thought to be, but more of a social system; that by proper manipulation of symbols of "status" and marks of appreciation, by encouraging social spirit and teamwork, and by other such means and methods, the workers' productivity could be raised and their gratification in their work could be increased in a manner not possible through mere money.

The new gospel of "human relations" spread rapidly from the Western Electric plant and from the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration. Within a few years, a number of universities had similar centers, the most important being those at the University of Chicago, where Burleigh Gardner and W. Lloyd Warner organized the

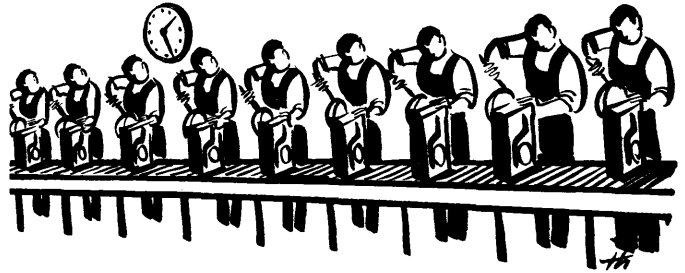
Committee on Human Relations in Industry; E. Wight Bakke's Labor Management Center at Yale; and the New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell, where the best-known practitioner of the new art was William Foote Whyte.

An imposing literature was soon added to Elton Mayo's founding *Human Problems of an Industrial Civilization* (1933) and the Hawthorne studies. Stuart Chase was enlisted at the beginning of the forties, and he produced a popularization in breathless journalese, about this new discovery that had made the professors "swoon at their desks." W. Lloyd Warner did an exhaustive psychoanalysis on a New England town (Yankee City), and came up with the conclusion that a general shoe strike (to which he devoted one volume) only seemed to be over wages, working conditions and the rest of that stuff; it was really impelled by powerful psychological status disturbances, stemming from the changing nature of the town, its owners, the workers, and their relations to one another.

AS the field analyses piled up, a theoretical rationale also took shape. Elton Mayo and his associates were strongly influenced by the writings of Emile Durkheim, a French sociologist of the last part of the nineteenth century. Durkheim located the cause of social disruption, increasing suicides, and a number of other modern ills, in what he called *anomie*, a sense of anonymity, of social separateness, a weaker code linking man to man; the opposite, in a word, of group solidarity. Hasty readers, or those who know Durkheim only by reputation or by inference from the title of one of his major works (*Division of Labor in Society*) have spread it abroad that Durkheim laid the blame for all this at the door of modern industrialism. That is pretty far from the truth. As a matter of fact it was an earlier sociologist, August Comte, who held that the rise of modern industry was leading to social disunion, and Durkheim's *Division of Labor* was directed as a polemic against this view. The real culprit, as he saw it, was the breakdown of medieval institutional stability. Rising specialization and division of labor in modern society, he felt, would on the whole help to restore cooperation and social solidarity. He looked to large-scale industry to rebuild the network of connections between man and man, banish *anomie*, and revive, in new forms, the medieval corporation that he admired so much as an instrument of stability.

To the Mayo people, all this was profoundly sympathetic. It offered a rationale for demoting economic considerations in favor of sentiments, moods, attachments, and feelings in their analysis of the factory. It rationalized too their bent for avoiding the power structure of a factory in favor of a vague and insubstantial "status structure." It placed the factory, as presently organized, at the center of national life—an island of stability in a sea of anarchy, loosened human ties, lost and floating individuals. Durkheim's medieval-corporation-brought-up-to-date, they readily identified with the modern corporation. And finally, managerial activity inside the factory now became something more than merely getting the most work out of people; it became at the same time the source of human happiness, the salvation of the modern world, the basis for a restabilization of society.

The new "industrial sociology"—or "managerial sociology," as one of its unkinder critics called it—did not sweep the field as its proponents expected. Too crassly apologetic and too obviously oriented to serve the ends of a managerial elite, it was resisted by reputable scholars from the first. Robert S. Lynd, then fresh from his *Middletown* fame, met it at the threshold with the charge that it was



a plan for a fascist America. But what settled its fate was that, at the very moment of its formulation, the country was taking a different turn. Where in the twenties the mass production worker was a fair target for manipulation and confidence games, by the late thirties he was solidly organized into industrial unions and confronted management on an entirely new footing.

MORE than anything else, it was this that took the steam out of the "human relations" factory sociologists. The many expected management programs of research and application failed to materialize. In the colleges, the study of unions, strikes, collective bargaining, and labor-management relations dwarfed the human relations school, as the emphasis necessarily shifted away from psychological toying to power relationships. The Mayo followers and continuators shifted their ground quite a bit, went in for the study of union-management relations, modified their exclusive attachment to "management goals" by becoming partisans of something called "union-management goals," tried to homestead a piece of ground in the new country by explaining that workers join unions or go on strike for "status," and by such devices kept their school alive.

As the new shape of industrial America after the CIO gave an old-fashioned, Hooverian flavor to Elton Mayo's view of the factory, a strong segment of the sociological profession opened a trenchant offensive against his followers. Daniel Bell, C. Wright Mills, Harold Sheppard, Clark Kerr—to mention only a few—poured on a withering fire against the Mayo group, for its unrealistic playing down of economic and power motives and structures, for its avowed function as a management tool, for its Big Brotherish spirit of manipulation, group conformity, and feudalistic paternalism, and the like.

As is now widely recognized, the work of the Mayo school was badly corrupted by its view of itself as a management tool for increasing factory output, rather than as a true sociology of work. It disregarded all the tenets of common sense and common experience when it tried to duck the primary truth that what the worker wants and needs first of all from his job is economic security. But if, for purposes of pursuing this discussion, we step over these

obstacles and proceed to some of the concrete findings of the school, we will see that many of them have interest. Work is, after all, not merely an economic function, but a human and social relation as well. Here the trouble with the Mayo people is that they have taken their insights, which ought to be projected against the broad canvas of our total society and its structure, and trivialized them into the small change of foremen's smiles, home counseling, machine arrangement or work flow, and the like.

**B**ACK in 1951, a conference on "Creating an Industrial Civilization" was held at Corning, New York, under the initiative of the Corning Glass Works, which goes in quite a bit for sociological pondering and community functions. The roundtable discussions were published in a volume which make interesting reading. One chapter on "Work and Human Values in Industrial Civilization" reports the work of Roundtable A, which assembled several industrialists, human relations experts, personnel men, a union leader, and so forth, to give the problem a workout.

The baffling and inconclusive discussion that took place in this panel quickly found its vital center: what to do about the many workers who find their jobs "unimportant," "insignificant," who, in the words of A. J. Hayes, president of the International Association of Machinists, "are not convinced that they are making a worth-while contribution to society." No sooner was the problem posed than a professor from the University of Wisconsin dove in with the following:

*I worked some years ago with the Western Electric Company making telephone equipment, making parts and assembling parts. It struck me as I watched it years ago that there was dissatisfaction in that factory. In all too many cases, the product of one man's job went from him to a stockroom from which it was drawn, possibly a month or year later, to be assembled further. The people who were working on that kind of job didn't have quite as happy faces as the people who, having done their job, passed the product on to men at a neighboring bench to be worked on further.*

This provided the cue for James Worthy, of the Sears Roebuck personnel department and president of the Industrial Relations Association of Chicago, to give his talk on "work organization." He described "two alternative methods of organizing the processes of production," as follows: Suppose we call three different processes "A," "B," and "C." Process "A" might be punch press; process "B" might be another type of machine; process "C" might be assembly. One way to organize the shop would be to group together the "A" processes, the "B" processes, and the "C" processes. On the other hand, this work could be organized in an ABC, ABC, ABC pattern. The latter pattern of work will give the workers "a greater sense of the significance of their work," according to Mr. Worthy. Professor William F. Whyte, it developed, had already elucidated this problem in his discussion of "Tall vs. Flat Organization."

Here we have an excellent example of the trivialization

of a deep-going problem. It is certainly a fact that few workers take pride in their jobs, or feel a sense of importance in society. That the actual work function generally has something to do with this, cannot be denied. But let us change the approach, and consult the opinions of society at large, rather than the feelings of the individual worker.

**T**HE United States is, in mythology if not in fact, a middle-class country.\* Its newspapers, its magazines, its television and radio, its advertising, its motion pictures, all, typically, depict the middle- or upper-class mode of work and life as "average." By inference, even if hardly ever by direct statement, the worker is something of an outsider.

A man may be a "successful" dentist, lawyer, engineer, or salesman, but who ever heard of a "successful" welder, or pipefitter, or machinist? For that matter—and here we come to an important point in grasping the social psychology—who ever heard of an "unsuccessful" welder, pipefitter, or machinist? It is not that the worker is regarded as a failure, but rather that he is excluded, by the basic tenets of our national mythology, from the very scale of success or failure. The achievement of a high order of ability in a trade or industrial skill may indicate an admirable degree of mental and physical development of certain kinds. Despite this, there is no such thing as a "successful" mechanic because it is part of the nature of our society that manual wage labor is seen as a necessary evil offering no intrinsic rewards.

I think it ought to be self-evident that the greatest psychological disability under which the worker labors has little to do with the arrangement of his machine, but is simply the fact that it is a misfortune to be a worker in a middle-class country. To be sure, the matter is not so starkly posed as this: Workers live in working-class communities that surround them, to a degree, with standards and values differing from those officially accepted, and they measure each other on these scales. Those who have had both experiences know that there is a distinct difference between being a worker in a cosmopolitan community of overwhelmingly middle-class surface complexion, and in an industrial town where workers, by their mass and by the power of their unions, have altered the local tone to some degree. But in all these cases, there is no reason to believe that the values society flaunts do not break through and impress upon the worker the undeniable fact that his station in life is, if not quite a badge of shame, at any rate nothing to brag about.

The human relations school was quite right in emphasizing the fact that we are all social creatures, deeply dependent upon our fellows and their views of us for gratification in life, and even for our own image of ourselves. (That so commonplace a truism would, when applied to workers, strike sociologists as a great discovery testifies to the innate

\* The same mythology is typical, to greater or lesser degree, of all capitalist nations: Britain, "a nation of shopkeepers"; France, "the land of small proprietors"; Germany, populated chiefly by "solid burghers," as is also Holland; and so forth. Images developed among "the people who count" have a singular power to black out obvious facts.

biases of our society; it is as though they were saying: "Look, workers are humans, too.") Where the Mayo school collapsed and gave up its claim on our attention was in thinking that a massive social situation could be handled by baubles, manipulation, cajolery, diversions. What the Mayo people said in effect was: "Even though workers have no status, let us try to act as though they do; they have nothing to say about the way the factory is run, but perhaps we can give them the feeling that they have; they have no stake in the products of their labor, but perhaps we can kid them into thinking they have by information programs, work-flow arrangements, and such devices."

The fallacy in trying to treat workers like children is that, as a general rule, they are shrewder about matters of this kind than most of the college boys who have tried to give them the treatment. Harold L. Wilensky, a sociologist at the University of Michigan, grasped accurately the limited usefulness of fake participation-and-status schemes:

*First, while we may be in David Riesman's era of the glad hand, more and more people are catching on to the fact. "Participation" that means nothing more than the ritual affirmation of settled policy, "democratic leadership" that means nothing more than a set of charm school gimmicks—these are likely to be less and less effective as time goes on. I understand children in up-to-date orphanages run by well-trained social workers often use the phrase, "You're trying to psychology me." There is no reason to suppose that a mature worker who sees a studiously calculated "warm smile" on the face of his foreman fresh from a human relations training session will be any less suspicious. Even in the totalitarian state there are some hints that people develop propaganditis. In a free society, healthy skepticism is all the more likely to flourish. (Research in Industrial Human Relations, pp. 40-41.)*

**T**HE relations in the factory are, in microcosm, only the relations in society as a whole. The important thing, it seems to me, is to grasp the problem of work as a problem in relations between people and classes of people rather than to see it as a relation between the worker and his inanimate tools and materials of work.

To illustrate this point, we can turn to another of the catch-phrases which have become so firmly engrafted on this problem that people have lost sight of its meaning: the domination of the machine over man. The surface element of truth in the idea is obvious. Many machines, when once set in motion, dictate the operator's rhythm and motions of work. What is so often forgotten is that machines are designed, created, paced, started, and stopped by men. It is only another species of primitive fetishism to endow the machine with autonomy, dictatorial powers, or oppressive designs upon the human race. The tyranny felt by the machine operator or assembly line worker is, as he generally understands far better than the fanciful sociologists who coin these clichés, a tyranny of other men, not of an inanimate lump of steel.

The dictatorship of work which a worker feels throughout his years in a factory may be separated into two parts.

One is the pressure of the necessity to work which is imposed upon mankind as a purely natural law—the expression of man's mode of existence on this earth by fashioning his needs out of raw materials provided by nature, rather than merely seizing them ready made. The other is the specific form of his labor and the social conditions under which it takes place, or in other words, the dictatorship of the owners of the factory or their agents—and beyond them of the class of factory owners, whose monopoly over the tools of work leaves him no choice.



The factory is a true dictatorship, only slightly modified in recent years by the unions. For the term of hours during which the worker is within its walls, he is a prisoner. He may not leave, go to other departments, or move about in any way without permission from his superiors. He is expected to "obey orders." He has no discretionary power, but must perform his work exactly as he is told to perform it. Nor is he expected even to express an opinion on his methods of work. He is presumed to be a malingerer almost by definition, and is under necessity to prove otherwise every day. He is required to be busy at his work at all times, and even where that may prove impossible for some technical reason, is generally required to maintain a pretense of work, to "look busy." In brief, for the period of his daily employment, the worker is not under his own com-



mand, but is subject to the will of appointed superiors.

I am quite aware that not all these powers are fully exercised. But they are exercised to a degree which would surprise most of those who have never been subjected to them, and they are always present in the background. The disciplinary system of the factory, by and large, is similar to that of a barracks or prison. Apart from exceptions decreed from above, it makes no room for independence, initiative, or a mature sense of responsibility.

To my knowledge, there is no technical reason why factory work must be organized on this model. The reasons are primarily social, and reside in the antagonism between the owners and the employees, the absence of a community of purpose between workers and the organizers of the work process, what Marx called the "alienation" of the worker by virtue of his dispossession from ownership of the tools and products of his labor. To work as an unwilling tool of other men's purposes, under a demeaning and degrading regime of childish disciplinary conditions, is not inherent in the factory process itself, but in the social relations which surround it.

**B**UT, it may be objected at this point, can the discussion of the whole problem of work in an industrial society be restricted entirely to our social structure? Are there not many jobs that are undeniably dull, monotonous, repetitious, dirty, onerous in one way or another? And beyond that, is there not a problem of job satisfaction for the many, the problem of human self-fulfillment, which cannot be achieved in a job which mutilates a man to a fragment of self, offers little scope for the development of the faculties and potentialities that reside in all humans?

One of the unfortunate tendencies in discussions of this kind is the way issues that are actually completely separate get mixed up into a hopeless muddle—the immediately soluble with the long-range; the technical with the broadly philosophical—until most readers or listeners began to feel there is no way out of the labyrinth. Insofar as we talk about job conditions that are hard, physically harmful, dulling to the mind and body, we must keep in mind that all of these problems are susceptible to technical attack and eventual solution—and that's the only kind of attack they can yield to.

Auto plant assembly-line conditions are notoriously bad. The given justification is "efficiency." A body of men is worked to exhaustion so that a part of their number may be displaced and wander the streets in idleness. Obviously, there are innumerable technical solutions to the problems of fatigue and monotony on the assembly line, but they cannot be applied in a society with such a concept of "efficiency." A factory which is regarded as an instrument of its owners for extracting the largest possible profit out of the labor of a group of hired hands, will obviously be run far differently from a factory organized for the purposes of the people in it. Insofar as there is a will to solve a great many of these problems, they will give way to technical solutions. Conversely, in our present society there is no real will towards a solution; the factory is dominated by warped standards of efficiency—involving an economy of work largely to the detriment of its labor force and not to lighten its load—and our engineering staffs consequently

find these solutions "technically impossible." There is no need here to try to fill in solutions which are technically possible, and which the imaginative or practical person can conjecture for himself.

To elevate labor to the status of an accredited occupation in society rather than part of its sub-basement; to give the worker control over his conditions of work and a stake in the products of his labor; to extend every engineering method to relieve the tedium and oppressive physical conditions of factory jobs; to supplant the insulting and harassing disciplinary systems of today by conditions worthy of mature and responsible humans—none of these things nor all of them put together will solve the deeper problems of job satisfaction. They will not make Leonardo da Vinci's of us all; factory work will remain factory work. But I confess myself unable to follow the reasoning of some of the writers on this subject for whom no problem exists save the ultimate one of factory labor as such. To restore the worth and dignity of labor, and to create humane and satisfactory work environments would revolutionize industrial civilization as we know it today, and it is an effort immensely worthy of the efforts of thinking people. To argue that no change in our social structure is worth while, as it will not effect at one stroke a millennial transformation, seems to me a totally unreasonable approach to the problem. The curse of specialized and subdivided industrial work will obviously require protracted and complex efforts for its solution. But it seems to me that, rather than the jargonized and mystical approach which is so common, it would be better to get a firm grip on two basic tenets: 1) That no society can make a beginning on this problem which is not under the control of men and their rational plan, rather than the blind forces of private ownership and the market; and 2) That great and significant changes are possible in a relatively short time under such a rational plan, changes with immense consequence for the worker himself, even though their importance may not be understood by some intellectuals with little concrete grasp of the worker's life and what he wants.

**T**HE long-range problem of job satisfactions, of finding some way—in a society based upon a stringent division of labor and crippling specialization—for men to utilize the energies and capabilities of mind and imagination of which they are masters, has been attacked in a number of ways.

David Reisman throws his weight behind a "leisure and play" solution. He sees little hope of redeeming the world of work from its disabilities and discomforts, and making it a satisfactory mental and emotional experience for most people. Why not instead, he argues, multiply the means of leisure, the tools of play and relaxation, and so seek comfort in a sharp change of pace from the standardized activity of the day? Rather than fight the deficiencies of the job, ought we not to deepen the split between work and leisure by making leisure more relaxing and fulfilling than ever before?

Others think the best way to handle the working day in the common occupations is to get it over with as quickly as possible, to shorten it to the fewest number of hours, and the fewest number of years out of each worker's life, that can be managed. Thus, while little may be altered in

the nature of the job itself, its crippling and disfiguring features can be minimized by reducing its duration to the smallest possible proportion of the lifetime.

Still others, in the traditional socialist vein, look to the development of leisure-time activity far beyond Reisman's "play" into a second and more rewarding occupation, so that the worker who will some day spend only three or four hours a day in a factory will spend the rest of his working time—and all the years after his work-stint is done—as a chemist, architect, engineer, botanist, musicologist, or in some other chosen profession. What this actually envisages is the total professionalization of the working population, coupled with the sharing of the production and house-keeping chores of society on an equitable basis, assuming these chores to have been reduced to a minimum by the vast technological progress open to humanity.

Finally, the possibilities of automation have recently encouraged another school, which sees the possibility of an immense transformation in the worker's relation to the factory. The worker can eventually regain control over his tools and output—over the entire process of production. Just as a relatively small group of men at one time produced a product from start to finish by handicraft methods before the age of machinofacture, now a small group can gain total control over the operation and maintenance of a factory. With most of the dirty and arduous work removed, and what remains shared among the group, the operators of an automatic factory can win control of the entire process, comprehend and take pleasure in it as an engineering entity, and emerge once more as masters of the factory rather than its amputated "hands."

**O**BVIOUSLY, all the solutions have defects and impracticalities. Leisure which does not alter the conditions of work does not succeed in reconstituting a new and integrated human being, but sharpens the present division between the meaningful and meaningless hours of the worker's life; the same holds true of hours that are merely reduced without being altered in content. Even the best of solutions, which visualize a high degree of harmony between men and their work, suffer from the defect that one sees in people who are so exclusively attracted and occupied by their work that they build up unbroken tensions dangerous to their health and life-satisfactions, and display the very opposite of integrated and all-sided personalities.

But just as obviously, all the solutions contain elements of value, and each of them will enter into a solution of the industrial problem. The imaginative projections which we may today attempt can carry the discussion only a limited distance into the future. It will take the check of striving and experience to map out the actual steps by which man will rise to the full height of which he is biologically capable.

But, to conclude, what seems to me most important is the realization that the problem of work is, in the long run, not a technical but a social problem, and that man can only hope to solve it insofar as he wins control over his social environment along with his mastery of his natural surroundings. From that point of view, socialism, while it may not automatically provide the solution, provides the indispensable condition under which the solutions may be found.

## From a Union Paper: "Be Men and Rebels . . ."

*The following article, under the title "Solidarity? Why Did They Sing It in Washington?," was spread across the top of the front page of The Searchlight of May 7. The Searchlight is the official organ of Local 659, United Automobile Workers, at the Chevrolet plant in Flint, Michigan.*

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**A**CCORDING to news reports of the AFL-CIO unemployed "March on Washington," the delegations sang "Solidarity Forever" as they massed outside the armory . . . and then went in to demand stepped-up spending on the defense program to keep them busy!

Did the words mean nothing to the men who sang them?

"We can bring to birth a new world from the ashes of the old," says the song. But the song was written in 1914 before H-bombs were thought of . . . and from the ashes of World War III we can expect little except biological monstrosities.

"Solidarity" is a great song, the battle hymn of labor, because of the hope it expresses, the hope that the world's workers will some day realize that they are the creative force in the world, the world's Important People, and that by acting with unity they can end the irrationalities of history and make a world that will be a joy to leave to one's children.

Solidarity means we should stick together, and not stab each other in the back in wage disputes, or bomb hell out of each other's homes in the arguments our superfluous parasites get into.

The world over we are a class of hirelings who strive to

make a living by doing what we are told to do. We are one giant class of wage slaves from the man digging the ditch to the man feeding tape to an electronic brain, from the Detroit die-maker to the Chilean miner, from the Manchester textile worker to the varied wage slaves of Russia, for there too production is by wage workers making a living by doing what they are told to do.

**I**T has never been a disgrace to be a slave, only a misfortune. It has been a disgrace to be a willing slave, and this disgrace continues. It has become more than a shame on the individual . . . it has become a threat to the future of mankind. It is only because we do as we are told, and refrain from reaching a mutual understanding to do what will benefit us, that there is this threat of World War III.

We have to choose between using the resources of this Atomic Age for the well being of mankind, or getting blasted to pieces by these misused resources. To make the bad choice, we continue doing as we are told. To make the good choice requires that we be men and rebels and practice world wide solidarity among our kind. That is the meaning in 1959 of solidarity.

What more pathetic picture could human imagination contrive than this, that useful men, temporarily unused, should march to Washington to beseech useless politicians to keep them busy by having them make more things with which to destroy this world that instead they could make into an Earthly Paradise!—F.T.

## The Long View

by Bert Cochran

*THE COMMUNIST WORLD AND OURS* by Walter Lippmann. Atlantic-Little Brown, Boston, 1959, \$2.00.

IT is a pleasure to read Walter Lippmann. He is practically the only one of our high-echelon pundits who has the capacity for drawing back from the passions of the moment to take the long view. For the past several years, he has used what influence he has in high councils to hammer away at the need for a basic reorientation of America's foreign policy. Many of his proposals have been echoed and re-echoed in our most advanced liberal journals. But there is a difference in Lippmann's undertone and that of so many of his admirers. Unlike the latter, he does not indulge in wishful thinking, he never abstracts himself from the uncomfortable power realities of the international struggle, he refuses to pander to the popular misconception that such overworked reliables as "good will" or "flexibility" can carry us over the threshold of difficulties and dangers. He is that rare species of writer who cuts through the sloganeering underbrush of the contestants, and drives to the heart of the conflict. And this is done with urbanity, with an easy, flowing articulation, and with a fund of scholarship to temper judgment and light up the path of observation.

The present book is a slight affair so far as size goes. It consists of a reprint of four articles that were published by Lippmann upon his return from Russia in November 1958. The first two described an extended interview he had with Khrushchev; the latter two were an evaluation of the Russian-American conflict based upon both this interview and his discussions with other Russian officials and editors.

Despite their cursory nature, they outline with great lucidity the main propositions in Lippmann's diagnosis of the causes of the cold war and the strategy he would have this country pursue. If we take them in conjunction with some of his other recent writings on this question, we have a more or less finished and realistically motivated counter-analysis and counter-orientation to the official Acheson-Dulles master plan that has guided our fortunes since the promulgation of the Marshall Plan and the creation of NATO.

TO base the American policy on the theory that Russia and China can be crowded and harassed until they crack up from within and make possible a capitalist restoration is to pursue an anachronistic mirage. Mr. Lippmann is quite definite in considering the Soviet system, with all its imperfections and strains, a going concern, "and it would be rash to underestimate its power or to count upon any radical change of direction, much less on a counter-revolution." At the same time, he proceeds from the fact of an ineluctable conflict between what are at one and the same time rival empires and antipathetic social systems. During his interview with Khrushchev, the latter suggested that there should be a *détente* on the basis of the status quo. But as clearly as Lippmann could make out, it was Khrushchev's conception that the social and economic revolutions now in progress in Russia, China, and elsewhere in Asia and Africa, are part of the status quo, while opposition to these revolutions is an attempt to change the status quo.

On both sides there are enormous suspicions. The Soviet Union is now entering upon its climactic decade in which it means to surpass the United

States in per capita production. The Communists believe that as they achieve this goal, the underdeveloped peoples will rally to them. But the United States and its allies will never permit them to consummate this revolution unless they are compelled to do so by unbreakable Soviet strength. That is why the Russians are reluctant to negotiate any concession which would give the West even a slight tactical, much less strategic, advantage in case of war. On the Western side, there is the corresponding suspicion that as Russia and China gain in military power, they are bound to use it as an instrument of policy in order to complete their domination of the underdeveloped world.

Mr. Lippmann cannot see that these "profound and abiding" suspicions that now divide the East and West will be easily talked out of existence, because at the root of them is the fact that Russia and China are "well on their way to achieving the leadership of Asia and Africa," and that this naturally represents a basic challenge to the Western position.

MR. LIPPMAN therefore concludes that we have to keep up the arms race. But having done that, as he sees it, the most pressing issue is no longer in the military sphere, but in the Soviet economic and social challenge in the uncommitted world. If the challenge is to be met, this country must divest itself of illusions that it can reverse the revolutions in China and Russia, or that it can prevent the spread of Communism in the surrounding countries by establishing military bases there or giving armaments to the local military chieftains. The countries of Asia and Africa must be permitted to follow the neutral course that instinct tells them to take, and we have to materially change our aid policy if we are to demonstrate on a sufficiently large scale—preferably in a country like India—that there is a more humane way of overcoming immemorial poverty and weakness. Failing such a heroic effort of statesmanship, the Communist revolution is bound to expand.

But even were such a Communist expansion to occur, it is a mistaken notion, in Mr. Lippmann's opinion, to conclude that Communism is then destined to conquer the whole world.

There is a common fallacy shared alike by the orthodox Leninist and his opposite Western dogmatician that one social order must either become the universal order of mankind or perish. But the truth is that there has never been one universal state or universal religion. The Communist revolution is acceptable in the backward countries, but it has no attractiveness to the Western countries. Even Soviet domination of Eastern Europe, which was imposed by outside military force, remains precarious and impermanent. (That is the reasoning which prompts Lippmann to insist time and again on the wisdom of working out an agreement for the gradual withdrawal of the Red Army behind the frontiers of the Soviet Union as part of the end of military occupation of Europe. Once the pressure of foreign troops is removed, he is convinced that the nationalist forces of Europe will in time assert themselves to re-establish their community with the West.) On another occasion, Lippmann gave the analogy of the long struggle between Christendom and Islam, both of whose apostles fervently believed that one or the other side must triumph. After a prolonged contest, it became clear to both antagonists that the conquest of the world was beyond their strength, and each settled down within his own sphere of influence.

Lippmann's thesis envelops one with its reasonableness, and there is a further temptation to embrace it as a number of its practical proposals coincide with our own, and because they furnish a theoretical groundwork for a desirable policy of coexistence. Nevertheless, the thesis is probably wrong in some of its implications and estimations.

**T**O begin with, I am not at all sure that Lippmann has correctly read Krushchev's mind on the question of the status quo. During Stalin's reign, Russian diplomacy was nationalist-minded *à la* *Voutrance*, and ruthlessly manipulated insurgent movements abroad in the cause of its own state interests. It is sufficient to recall French Communist support for a right-wing government after the signing of the Stalin-Laval pact, Stalin's handing over of Greece to Churchill, the reimposition of the monarchy upon Tito in Yugoslavia, etc. The Soviet Union has

broken out of its isolation since those days, and it is far more generous and venturesome in its proffers of aid to all sorts of revolutionary movements abroad. But Lippmann exaggerates if he thinks that the Soviet Union is now no longer amenable to shutting off support for this or that group and trying to freeze the local situation, in return for concessions which it considers of importance to itself. The status quo does not mean to Khrushchev what it meant to Stalin, but it is short of what Lippmann suggests it means.



WALTER LIPPMANN

Still, what Moscow and Washington decree or decide is just one aspect of the status quo. Another, as Lippmann recognizes, is that the revolutions sweeping over Asia—and now, Africa—stem not from the machinations of Communist agents, but reflect the aspirations of the peoples of these continents, into which the achievements of Communist Russia and China enter as unshakable facts of life. It is part of Soviet strength that it increasingly identifies itself with this revolution, or series of revolutions. It is part of Western weakness that it is the enemy of change. In any case, trying to build peace on freezing the status quo would be to build it on sand, as the status quo, certainly in Asia and Africa, is now being subjected to fearful pressures, which, unless provided with outlets of independence and economic progress, are destined to violently erupt.

Although he does not dwell on it, Lippmann is surely cognizant of the considerable alterations necessary within this country before any really massive aid program for India could be undertaken (and for that matter, the not inconsiderable social changes necessary inside India before that country could put huge capital imports to useful work). But he says in effect that even if this caliber of statesmanship is not available here, we should not panic and conclude that the world is lost to Communism if it manages to spread in Asia and Africa. There has never been one world state or social system, and given the irrelevance of Communism to the West, there will be none now. At this point it is well to pause, as it seems to me that a number of matters are slurred over in order to enunciate an abstractly correct thesis.

**L**ET us start with imperialism and its exploitation of its Asian and African outposts. This is no mere frosting on the Western capitalist cake, but an indispensable element of its present well-being. Take Asia and Africa (how about Latin America?) out of the sphere of influence of the West, and place them in the sphere of influence of the Soviets, and the balance of world power shifts heavily against American capitalism. That is why our elite—all the ignorant or irresponsible ballyhoo about isolationism to the contrary notwithstanding—has never accepted strategies to retreat behind "Fortress America." It knows enough about social dynamics to know that such a retreat is bound to be the prelude to still further retreats. Mr. Lippmann's vision of coming world history is well reasoned and in some respects profound, but he will never convince his friends in high places of this particular segment of his theory. It may be that the West will eventually be driven out of Asia and Africa, but it will resist by what means it can manage, as long and as hard as it knows how.

Mr. Lippmann is entirely correct in voicing skepticism of the "one world" idea, at least, for many generations to come. But it seems to me that the components of his world diversity are too statically conceived: "Asia and Africa, or much of it, may go Communist. Europe and North America will stay capitalist. The two will never

love each other or accept each other, but they will trade and co-exist." That's too pat. I see the coming evolution as something far more chaotic and displaying a larger array of distinctive patterns.

After denying for years that the Soviets were making significant gains, there has been a tendency of late among commentators in this country to rush to the other extreme and exaggerate the ease with which the Soviet system can triumph in other countries by sheer attractive force. Actually, for Sovietism to emerge victorious inside a country—unless it is imposed by outside military power, as it was in East Europe—manifold rearrangements of social and class influences are necessary, of which the example of Russian and Chinese accomplishment can be only one, and by itself, an insufficient contributory influence. Soviet aid to national revolutionary movements and leaders does not necessarily and automatically enhance Communist influence within those countries. Sometimes, the national revolutionaries take the aid to strengthen themselves, and when they feel more secure, turn with utter fury upon their erstwhile ally. That was Russia's experience in the twenties with Kemal Pasha in Turkey, with Chiang Kai-shek in China. The recent turn with Nasser of Egypt illustrates that even today when Russia is a first-rate military and economic power, and a dispenser of financial largesse, the alliance between middle class national revolutions and Communism remains one of convenience, not love, and is still subject to hostile disruptions.

**E**VEN were we to telescope the next half or three-quarters century, conclude that the regimes of Nehru, Sukarno, Nasser, Bourguiba, are all transient affairs due to give way to out-and-out Sovietized regimes, there would still be no Communist empire stretching from Peking to the Cape of Good Hope. A group of outcast Communists dependent upon the moral and sometimes financial support of Russia or China is one thing. That same group of outcasts is an entirely different category once it has taken over a government and has the treasury and army to play with. Soviet expansion since the second World War has already produced one partner of equal status with

Russia, one apostate breakaway, and at least one lukewarm adherent. Any further spread of Communism would aggravate the centrifugal forces operating within the system. Because, contrary to nineteenth-century socialist idealism, national interests and needs do not disappear all at once when a country has elevated a Communist leadership to power; big countries do not divest themselves all at once of the rapacity and greed that big powers have always displayed throughout history; and little countries still have to shield themselves and maneuver in order to protect their resources and maintain their national dignity. Actually, the traditions and problems of countries like India and Ghana, Algeria and Congo, Egypt and South Africa, differ so materially, it has to be assumed that there will be a considerable variation in their political manifestations as they seek to modernize via individual paths of nationalization and collectivism.

Thus far the discussion would seem to imply that the position of the West is if anything stronger than Lippmann imagines. But he assumes an internal stability for capitalism that is warranted neither by its past history nor future prospects. He says that Russian or Chinese Communism have neither attractiveness nor relevance for the West. Generally speaking, that has been true up to now. Why do they lack appeal? Obviously, because the Western peoples enjoy better living standards and have more political liberty than the peoples under Communism. But what if in thirty or forty years the Russians obtain at least as much political liberty as we have in the West, accompanied by greater opportunities in education, health and medical services, housing, cooperative and congenial living, pleasanter work regimen? All of this is certainly within the realm of possibility. Will the Russian experience continue to be irrelevant to the peoples of the West?

**M**OREOVER, capitalism has not been one harmonious, chastely wrought design even on its home grounds. Subversive anti-capitalist movements, far from being imported from Russia or China, erupted time and again from within the system. By

now, we have to remind ourselves that mass socialism originated in Paris, Berlin, London, Glasgow, Milan and Vienna—not Moscow or Peiping. It is true that capitalism has repulsed all challenges of the past, and that since the second World War, the system has been remarkably stable. But that is only a matter of fifteen years. Even if we assume, for the sake of argument, that this stability will be maintained for another fifteen or thirty years, will not the flagging socialism of the Western peoples revive when they see their Russian brethren doing better under another social system? It would appear to be a strong talking point. After all, by offering its people a rising standard of living, Western capitalism has tamed its indigenous labor movements, but except for brief dictatorial interludes, it has never been able to eliminate them.

If we do not anticipate a uniform state structure to issue out of the revolutions of Asia and Africa, certainly there is even less ground for imagining that the Russian-Chinese system will be the instrumentality for structural renovation of Western society. By and large, Western laborism has grown hostile to the Russian variety of Communism, in part at least because of the latter's barbaric methods and dictatorial traits. It has grown contemptuous of Western Communist movements because of their lack of independence from the Eastern fountainhead. Just as Christianity in its evolution from Judaism grew alien to the Jews, so Communism in its evolution from socialism has become alien to the Western workers. It is a reasonable anticipation that when the Western labor movements regain militancy and contend for state power (as distinct from contending for the right to administer existing governments), they will do so through political formations that will jealously guard their independence and specific national interests.

To conclude: I think Lippmann is right in asserting diversity in the social world. But I would alter the specific units that go to make up this diversity, and I would reintroduce the concept of tension and the factor of struggle which Lippmann would like to imagine has now disappeared for all time as a determinant from the affairs of the West.

# BOOKS

## Voice of Love

by Alexander Saxton

*THE BELL* by Iris Murdoch. Viking Press, New York, 1958, \$4.50.

THINGS have come to a pretty pass in the highest circles of the Anglican high church, if we are to believe Iris Murdoch (and I see no reason why we shouldn't) in her latest novel. *The Bell* recounts the story of the decline and fall of a lay community of would-be saints attached to a Benedictine (Anglican) nunnery. Here a group of British intellectuals have taken refuge to practice primitive Christian virtue through simple living and manual toil. With an unfailingly light touch, the author records the sequence of sodomy, jealousy, betrayal, and suicide which brings this community to its demise. That the serpent should so rapidly worm his way inside the golden apple occasions Miss Murdoch little surprise, and she clearly does not expect her readers to be startled either. All this kind of thing can rather be taken for granted; there are more important matters to hand. Thus the fortunes and misfortunes of her characters, while containing genuine tragedy, are stated with that half smile and ironic inflection which invites the reader to place himself at a slight distance. Herein lies one of the several perfections (and perhaps also a weakness) of Iris Murdoch's performance.

*The Bell* is an intricate fabrication. Comedy, melodrama of a muted variety, as well as a good deal of philosophical speculation or statement, are offered. The reader can digest these elements singly, seriatim, or collectively, depending on his tastes and energies; but there is no reason why he should not enjoy the repast. For the parts are skillfully harmonized. It seems to be part of the style of British writers, far more than of American, that they concern themselves with the novel as a form in itself requiring balance and precision, and requiring subordination of the material to a pattern pre-determined by the author.

MISS MURDOCH displays a sizable gallery of characters. Her primary focus fixes upon two. One is a rather empty-headed young wife, named, appropriately, Dora, who has linked herself, for reasons not made altogether clear, to an obsessive, bad-tempered, suspicious husband—almost a heavy out of a Restoration comedy. At the opening, Dora is returning to her husband after an affair with another man. At the end, she has again left her husband, not for the other man, but in an effort to establish her own individuality. The second major

Alexander Saxton's novel *Bright Web* in the *Darkness* has just been published by St. Martin's Press.

character, Michael Meade, is the leader of the lay community. Meade is, without doubt, the central and most deeply developed character of the book. His problem is that he is homosexual, but in deference to his hopes for entering the clergy, has forbidden himself expression of this tendency. The unkind hand of the Almighty, however, persists in leading him into temptation. He finds long-lashed young public school boys irresistible; and from this stems his own ruin, as well as the destruction of the community he has been trying to build.

It is worth noting that just as Miss Murdoch does not elaborate on why Dora happened to hitch herself to her outrageous husband, neither does she explain how Meade became homosexual. We are told merely that he was seduced in school, and at the age of twenty-five, "had already know for some while that he was what the world calls perverted." Such reticence is all to the good. We are spared the psychiatric case studies. The novelist can proceed at once to the central problem: here is the situation, what will the characters do about it?

As the answers to this question unfold, a good deal of the activity (and there is plenty of activity) turns out to center around a lost bell—an ancient bronze casting encrusted with mud, legend and Latin inscription, which has, since Elizabethan times, lain dormant at the bottom of a small lake. The title role properly suggests that the bell will play a key part in the story. And indeed it does: it provides the symbol through which the several personal narratives are to be unified. Engraved in Latin upon the rim of the bell appear the words: "I am the voice of love. I am called Gabriel." The author's analogy now becomes apparent. Love is the only voice of the human being. A bell, once rung, rings with its own voice and no other. Miss Murdoch's characters can be seen struggling to achieve realization through ringing with their own characteristic accent of love.

THUS Michael Meade, so long as he attempts to suppress his urge to love, plunges toward destruction. But at the end, we see him groping for some kind of self-realization through recognizing and accepting what he is (homosexual). As he turns away, defeated, from the defunct community upon which he had based so many hopes (it was to have been his road to the priesthood), he carries with him the words of the abbess of the nunnery: "—We can only learn to love by loving. Remember that all our failures are ultimately failures in love. Imperfect love must not be condemned and rejected, but made perfect." What the abbess may have intended by these remarks is not significant. The important thing is the interpretation placed upon them by Meade. God made me what I am, he concludes, and I do not think he would have made me a monster.

The rattle-brained Dora, too, through her rebellions against her husband and her ludicrous adventures in the lay community, is engaged in a search for her own identity.

This becomes manifest to her at the end, though whether she will succeed in her search (or whether anyone succeeds) Miss Murdoch does not inform us. But to Dora is reserved one final revelation of the author's view of life and here again we return to the bell as key.

A bell must be rung. If it is silent, it is nothing. It's existence is to be what it is, to speak with its own voice. The bell peals out, it rings through the darkness. And having spoken, it has raised itself from oblivion, though it may lie silent for an eternity before and after. The closing pages of the book, like the opening pages, deal with Dora. As she idles away the last afternoon before her departure from the lay community, she paddles about in a skiff on the small lake under which the ancient bell had lain hidden for so many centuries. "The mist was becoming golden. Now it began to clear away, and she saw the Court and the high walls of the Abbey . . . Behind the Court the clouds were in perpetual motion, but the sky was clear at the zenith and the sun began to warm her. She kicked off her sandals and trailed one foot in the water . . . The depths below affrighted her no longer." Why not? Because Dora has at last set forth consciously seeking her own voice. For every human being, Miss Murdoch seems to be telling us, as for a bell, to be silent is to be nothing. But to ring out (with love) even once, is to exist, and in a sense to exist forever.

IRIS MURDOCH seems to be in the height of fashion among intellectuals. "The only interesting English novelist to arise since the end of the war," declares the *New Republic*. Lewis Gannett finds her "enchanted, bewildering, relentless, comic." A reviewer in *The Nation* writes, "—So far each of Miss Murdoch's novels has been better than its predecessor. This means that the latest, *The Bell*, has to be good. It is . . ."

One reason, possibly, for these cries of enthusiasm, is that her philosophical view is akin to the viewpoints of Sartre and Camus—both very much on the fashionable list these days. Her novel itself, however, affords plenty of solid ground for enthusiasm. It is well written, intensely thought-out, and precisely executed.

Oddly enough, what strikes me as the chief defect of this book is closely related to its outstanding successes. It is a shade too precise, too neat. Let me offer one example: the lost bell has just been dragged from the lake by Dora, with the aid of a young man named Toby, who has borrowed the community's tractor for the purpose. This enterprise, for reasons we need not investigate here, is being carried out at night. Toby, fresh from an episode with Michael Meade, is desirous of feeling himself attracted by Dora to reassure himself as to his own sexual normalcy. He throws his arms around Dora. They sink to the ground. In doing so, they nudge the bell, which gives forth with a sonorous boom. I suppose it might be quibbling to point out that the clapper of a bell which had lain buried in mud for

three centuries, would probably need a jackhammer to set it in motion. But let us come to the main point. Remember the inscription on the bell: "I am the voice of love." When one adds that the stroke of the bell simultaneously fulfills a medieval legend, duplicates an earlier nightmare of Michael Meade's, and by rousing various members of the community, triggers the catastrophe to follow, one can conclude, I think, that Miss Murdoch has carried her geometry one step too far. Perhaps she is laughing at us. The half smile, the ironic inflection has become the dominant note.

And this, in a larger sense, is the point at which the novel falters. Despite its perfections, one can lay it aside almost with a shrug of the shoulders. It is not that the characters fail to convince. One easily believes in them; but somehow we are not involved in them. Their fate is not our fate. We hear the bell but are not certain it is tolling for us. Beneath the mask of the ironic inflection, Miss Murdoch has not acquired the power of forcing the reader to become flesh and blood with her characters. When she does, she will indeed have reached a height of perfection.

### *New York's Left Bank*

*THE IMPROPER BOHEMIANS* by Allen Churchill. E. P. Dutton, New York, 1959, \$5.

*Where now the tide of traffic beats,  
There was a maze of crooked streets;  
The noisy waves of enterprise,  
Swift-hurrying to their destinies,  
Swept past this island paradise:  
Here life went to a gentler pace,  
And dreams and dreamers found a place.*

Floyd Dell

EVER since the triumph of industrialism, cultural Bohemias have cropped up in the metropolitan centers of the West. They have a fascination for the intelligentsia. They have even brought bourgeois thrill-seekers attracted by morbid curiosity or thinly disguised envy. Bohemia has been described as a middle-class personal revolt against the bleakness, brutality, and boredom of the commercial world; an attempt to create an oasis of beauty within the desert of bourgeois conformity, to find in commitment to art, culture, and personal and sexual freedom, a purpose more significant and a satisfaction generally unattainable in a society dedicated to money-making and dominated by the hypocrisies of middle-class strife and convention.

The dominant mood of Bohemia has usually been thought to be of an "art for art's sake" character. That was the banner under which Théophile Gautier rallied the Left Bank against the philistinism of bourgeois society away back in the thirties of the last century. With countless variations, it has been reiterated again and again: Art is the only pursuit worthy of the superior person. All else—politics, official careers, business affairs—are either sordid, or a swindle, or both. The contempt for the bourgeois

was matched by an equal contempt for the underdog. Bohemia expected even less redemption from the great unwashed than it did from the world of official respectability. When it was demanded of the poet that he improve social conditions by means of his writing, Alexander Pushkin gave this rude but classic reply in his poem, *The Mob*:

*Begone, begone! What common feelings  
Can e'er exist 'twixt ye and me?  
Go on, your souls in vices steeling;  
The lyre's sweet voice is dumb to ye.*

ITS preoccupation with culture led to contempt for the uncultured proletariat and indifference to his revolts and aspirations. And its natural sybaritic traits repeatedly led its more successful denizens to a reconciliation with the very society it had earlier revolted against. The capitalists, no less than the aristocracy that had preceded them, proved fully capable of absorbing the more talented artists and craftsmen into its own establishment. Those who departed for greener pastures were occasionally looked on as renegades by the remaining community; but the Bohemian revolt was of too flimsy and episodic a nature for such a posture to be strenuously maintained. Bohemia was invariably condemned to a fast population turnover. Besides, its more determined ways of vagabondia could generally be sustained only by the very young.

Though Bohemia turned its back on society, it did not thereby win immunity from the economic and social influences coursing through society, any more than do artistic endeavors in general, although the influences are refracted in highly specialized, unusual and even perverse manners, and are molded and refined by innumerable cultural precedents and pressures. If Plekhanov is correct in his theory, an art for art's sake attitude arises when there exists a hopeless break between artists and the social environment; while, the tendency to regard art as a judgment on life accompanied by a readiness to participate in social affairs occurs when a mutual bond of sympathy exists between a considerable section of society and those engaged in artistic creation. At any rate, it is a fact that Greenwich Village, the American Left Bank, had its golden era from 1912 to the early twenties, not when the Village was flaunting an ivory tower aestheticism, but when it was a haven of "causes": socialism, anarchism, feminism, IWW industrial unionism.

THE atmosphere in the country was pregnant with social change. Progressivism was at its high point, climaxed with the split in the Republican Party; and Socialism seemed on the verge of becoming a political power. The artistic community that gathered in Greenwich Village in this halcyon period—producing the most significant body of artistic creation emanating from the Village, and the source of most of its later shimmering legends—was imbued with the faith in progress, the passionate interest in social questions, and the hope of a better world that was characteristic of

the pre-World War I intelligentsia. After the war, it was washed, like other formations, by the bitter waves of disillusionment. Although its fame or notoriety around the country spread in the twenties, the best period of the Village was already over. It began succumbing to the general nihilism sweeping parts of middle-class America, symbolized by jazz, sex promiscuity, and heavy drinking. Speakeasies and tourist dives began to crowd out the authentic Bohemianism of the past. With the thirties, a new political radicalism affected many of the Villagers, but Communism was too bigoted and fanatical to be congenial to the artistic mode of existence. The Village continued—as it does today—as an oasis of informality, tolerance, and cultural interest, but it has never revived as the cultural creator that it was in its heyday.

LEST this extended foreword give the reader the false impression that Mr. Churchill's book is a sociological dissertation on Greenwich Village, full of charts and depth analysis, I hasten to explain that it is not that at all. It is a breezy and utterly delightful account of the Village from 1912 to 1930, full of juicy gossip, nostalgia-laden anecdotes, and unforgettable little portraits, sketches of some of its better known inhabitants. Mr. Churchill understands the social influences that went to create the Village and how they affected its changing fortunes. But he does not permit his passing discussions of these to shift attention from the smooth and absorbing flow of narrative.

You turn the pages and there again is the story, by now buried in forgotten memoirs, of Mabel Dodge's glittering *salon* at 23 Fifth Avenue where you could listen to discussions on socialism between Max Eastman and Walter Lippmann, or Henrietta Rodman holding forth on women's rights, or Margaret Sanger on birth control, or Frank Tannenbaum on prison reform, and where you could even rub shoulders with "Big Bill" Haywood or Emma Goldman, who used to participate in many of the Evenings. There is the saga again of John Reed, the Golden Boy of the Village, starting as a playboy and poet, then a successful journalist, the organizer of the fabulous Madison Square Garden pageant about the 1913 Patterson textile strike, who got caught up in Communism and the Russian Revolution and died of typhus in Moscow at the age of 33. There is the story of the two greatest achievements of the Village of this era: the *Masses*, with its galaxy of writers, poets, and artists, who fired a whole generation of intellectuals to social passion; and the Provincetown Players who gave the American theater Eugene O'Neill.

How much time has smoothed out the furrows and lent magical colors to the old design is hard to say. At any rate, there is a lift in reading about days when artists and men of letters seemed to be more interesting, more alive, more alert, more civilized, and life itself possessed a purposefulness and zest that has since been steadily drained away by two world wars. B.C.

# What "Surprise?"

HERE is the first paragraph of a "New York Times" dispatch by Russell Baker from the Sunday Review of the Week section, May 10:

Washington, May 9—The big surprise so far in this exceedingly dull Congressional session is how little the Democratic conquest of last November has changed the political status quo established here since 1953.

But here's what "American Socialist" subscribers were reading within a few weeks after the election, in our December 1958 issue:

One would imagine that the phenomenal sweep which has piled up for the Democrats staggering majorities in both houses of Congress, 34 out of the 48 governorships, and landslide victories in leading state legislatures, would signalize as a matter of course the end of the repudiated Eisenhower policies and the introduction of a new program. But even the most optimistic and glib doubt that this is the meaning of the Democratic victory. It will take far more to dislodge the planned confusion, organ-

ized stalemate, and entrenched reaction in our government. . . . It's all but impossible to visualize anything beyond marginal shifts in Washington's course in the next two years.

"The big surprise" Russell Baker discovered this May is the forecast "American Socialist" readers were getting last December. And that's the way it is in a lot of instances. Take a look at the box in our editorial space this issue, quoting from "Business Week" about how "labor disputes are getting tougher," and citing a number of recent strikes as proof. Now, if you have your file handy, turn back five months to our February issue, and read our editorial predictions: "premonitory rumblings of stormy weather ahead," "attitudes hardening on the employer side of the table," and so forth.

How do we manage to bring you "news before the news" so often? No special pipelines, no armies of pollsters. It's just that we resolved in the beginning to use socialist methodology as a tool of careful analysis, rather than as a source of jargon and slogans. The latter may be read contentedly by a few devoted old-timers, but it is the former, we have found, which attracts new people to socialist ideas—and is most satisfactory to the thinking old-timers as well.

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