

# *The American* **Socialist**

NOVEMBER 1958

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## **Argentina After Peron**



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**The Life and Death of "Labor's Daily"**

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Socialist Incentives

Many socialists believe that until the American people are "ready for socialism" there is little point discussing the technical aspects of what a socialist administration would actually do. Our failure to elaborate on our concept of American socialism has left an open field for the anti-socialists to gain wide acceptance of their arguments designed to show why socialism *can't* and *won't* work.

One of the major arguments, and possibly the most effective one, used against socialism is that it destroys initiative and incentive. If we eliminate the profit system, what incentive is there for the development of new products, for efficient management of production, for working harder, for thrift, and other such virtues? As long as we fail to answer this question, people will continue to look on us as utopian dreamers or potential bureaucrats and tyrants. They will continue to believe that planned economy means assigning everybody to a particular job, at more or less equal pay, and exploitation of the people by a "new class" of leftist bureaucrats.

Unfortunately there have been very few articles on this subject in the various socialist publications. We do not, of course, have to agree at this time as to the exact method of providing socialist incentive. We must, however, make it clear to all that there *are* effective motivations other than profits, that the actual method of providing such incentives will be decided democratically after thorough discussion by the people, that socialism *can* provide every possible opportunity for advancement and freedom in selecting one's occupation.

In order to show that socialist incentive is possible, we must be prepared to at least present and discuss some of the possible methods of its accomplishment. Although there are innumerable alternatives, I would like to mention a few of my favorite approaches: We might extend our Civil Service system to include *all* occupations in *all* industries. Personal advancement could be on the basis of either written or performance examinations, depending on the nature of the particular occupation. Or, where output is the most important factor, employees would be promoted strictly on the basis of their productivity. Or, all supervisory positions in industry as well as government administration could be subject to regular elections. An impartial board would be set up to make known the factual record of achievement, experience, training, and capabilities of the candidates. This would assure us of an informed electorate. In turn, the desire for election to higher paying positions would give executives and foremen a motive for serving the public and treating their employees fairly. Free vocational schools, with fully paid subsistence, could be provided for those desirous of

changing their occupations or advancing themselves. Entrance examinations, aptitude tests, and other such limitations on admission could be devised to eliminate the obvious abuses that might arise.

Most readers of the *American Socialist* are undoubtedly familiar with Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward*. At any rate, Chapters VI and VII (pp. 44-57 Modern Library edition) should be required reading for every socialist. In these chapters, Bellamy attempts to describe a system under which there would be maximum opportunity for advancement under a socialist type of government. Whether or not we agree with his specific proposals, the fact remains that this is one of the few serious attempts ever made to answer one of the most common objections to socialism.

There are many people who can derive enough personal satisfaction out of knowing that they are doing something to serve their fellow men. They have little interest in personal advancement, and will give their all only because they want to do what's right. Most of those who are doing something to promote socialist ideas, or working for any other worthy cause, fall into this category. There are also those who would be satisfied with public approbation as their sole reward. Socialist education should serve to develop more such people. But in the meantime, since such people are few and far between, we must provide more material incentives.

I am sure there are dozens of other possible means of creating incentive under a socialist economy, and I would be interested in reading the proposals and suggestions of other socialists on this subject.

Don Harrison *Elmsford, N. Y.*

I believe it is important for your readers

to know that the Denver Smith Act case is slated for re-trial November 6.

Since the Supreme Court decision in the California (Yates) case, the Justice Department has itself dropped conspiracy proceedings in California, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Boston, Puerto Rico, and Michigan. In Hawaii, Seattle, Connecticut, and New York all defendants have been freed by Appeals Court decisions.

In Denver, Cleveland, and St. Louis decisions by the Appeals Courts left the way open for re-trial.

Since all Smith Act cases have been essentially the same, and since high-ranking leaders of the Communist Party have been freed under the standards of evidence set by the Supreme Court, it is impossible to see how the Justice Department can justify a re-trial in Denver, or elsewhere.

The chief purpose any re-trials could now serve would be to maintain a political atmosphere inflamed by anti-Communism. Or they might be undertaken as legal vivisection—making use of indicted defendants (most of whom have resigned from the Communist Party) to see if something can be put past the Supreme Court.

The American Civil Liberties Union in Colorado and many individuals have reacted to this situation by urging the Justice Department to drop the Denver case. Two prominent Denver attorneys, William A. Bryans III and Forrest C. O'Dell, have accepted court appointments for the second time as defense counsel.

Perhaps you and your readers will add your voices to stop this persecution.

Harold Zeppelin *Denver*  
For the defendants

I have just read your issue in which you debate writing "for a mass audience" with two correspondents in the letters column. I think you are both right. Few guys in the labor movement can pen interestingly enough to print, *but* you do have to have *more* labor news. Trade union stuff.

R. C. *Seattle*

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## The American Socialist

November 1958 Vol. 5, No. 11

Published monthly, except July and August, when bi-monthly, by American Socialist Publications, Room 306, 857 Broadway, New York 3, N. Y. Telephone: WAtkins 9-7739, Subscription rates: \$3.00 for one year; \$5.50 for two years. By first-class mail: \$5.00 for one year. Foreign \$3.50 for one year; \$6.50 for two years. Single copy: 35 cents. Second class postage paid at New York, N. Y.



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## How to Lick the Demagogues

IT is time to admit that the Southern school integration drive, which began with high hopes four years ago when the Supreme Court struck down the old "separate but equal" hypocrisy, has come to an impasse. For the moment, it is faced with obstacles which the Southern Negroes, together with their Northern and Southern friends, are not able to surmount. School integration has become a reality only in a number of border cities, foremost among which is Louisville, and in a few other exceptional cases. In the main arenas of contest, Arkansas, Virginia, Texas and Louisiana, there is little sign of progress. The University of Alabama, ordered to admit Negroes in 1955, succeeded by mob hysteria in evicting Autherine Lucy; the University of Florida Law School achieved the same end in the Virgil Hawkins case by delaying legal tactics. Specifics aside, and whatever happens in a number of contests on which public attention is now focused, the fact is that the states of the Deep South have maintained their racist defenses intact, while in most of the border areas, only spotty or token integration has been achieved. Although the Supreme Court has spoken repeatedly and unmistakably, the forces of progress have yet to find an answer to the massive resistance of Southern white supremacy.

Many have tended to forget or disregard the extent of the revolution which must be carried through in the South. For what else is it but a revolution that is implied in a drive to overturn an entire economic, social, and legal edifice? The Negro was imported from Africa to serve as the "mudsill" of servile labor upon which the South was founded. The abolition of slavery changed the form, but under other economic arrangements, the same functional order persisted. On the farm-

lands, semi-serf status was forced upon the newly freed Negroes through sharecropping and tenant farmer setups. In the cities and towns, the women of the Negro community were impressed, by dire necessity, into domestic household service, while the men were employed in only the most menial, onerous, or degrading occupations. Alongside the town bank, courthouse, or some other customary spot, there gathered a plentiful labor pool of Negro youths, in training for their life's occupation, who could be hired for cutting grass or carrying loads or suchlike tasks, for a few cents an hour.

This, as the white Southerner saw it, and as most still see it, was the natural "place" of the Negro in the economic structure. Charles S. Johnson, in *Patterns of Negro Segregation*, cites two upper-class whites. One said: "I explain it in this way. A mule is made to work; a horse is made for beauty. The Negro is the working man of the South. Plenty of Negroes here are much better than the whites. But as a class that is not true for white people about being the workers." And the other said quite frankly: "The Negro in his place is really an assistant in the South. He's what the Lord Almighty intended him to be, a servant of the people. We couldn't get along without him."

ON this poisonous ground there grew the deeply rooted interlocking vines of Southern white supremacy institutions, a social, legal, and psychological tangle that grips every reach and aspect of the society. It is this entire social structure which the Southern Negro is now beginning to challenge. It is no matter that good logicians among the Negro leaders reason persuasively that they are asking for justice only in this or that field, in

education, say, or transportation. The lords of the Southland feel each attack upon a vital link to be a threat to the entire chain. They cannot persuade themselves, as threatened rulers sometimes can, that this or that reform will stem the tide by appeasing the insurgents, for it is in the nature of this particular rebellion, whatever may be true in other cases, that concessions in one field will lead only to fresh demands for equality in others. There is a monolithism about the white supremacy dogma and practice, and like all such structures, it cannot be fractured without starting to crumble. The Negro people want education, not as an end in itself, but, obviously, as a leverage toward better jobs and social status. There is no reason for the Southern power oligarchs to assume that a Negro population which has won educational equality will thereby be more satisfied with its condition as the "mudsill" of society than in the past; quite the contrary.

Thus, where others see a reasonable request for fair play, they see flaming revolutionary manifestos; what looks like nine Negro schoolchildren to most of us looks like an army of enraged *sans-culottes* to them; Roy Wilkins and other moderates shape up as so many Robespierres and Lenins in their eyes. Insofar as their prejudices allow them to take sober thought, it is their reasoning that their entire economic structure and "way of life" are threatened—as indeed they are. So, they fight with every weapon at their command.

For the Negro people, the struggle for freedom and equality has always been shaped by certain major imperatives. The first of these is that, uprooted from their own continent and society centuries ago, and transported across the ocean to an entirely new milieu, they have been made an integral part of a society which they cannot escape and to which they have no possible alternative. Repeated attempts to enslave the American Indian failed because he was on native ground and could rejoin his tribal society by simple escape. For the Negro taken in the mass, escape was and is impossible. For that reason, all schemes of Negro colonization, or fantasies of a Black Belt Republic or a "forty-ninth state" were doomed to failure. Although one

or two of them gripped the emotions of large numbers of Negroes at one time or another, for all practical purposes these schemes broke on the rock of three centuries of Americanization of the enforced African immigrants, who have become a more intimate part of the United States than many of its other portions.

The second imperative of the Negro's fight for emancipation is that he is bound to permanent minority status. Any poor and oppressed population may aspire to win a majority and control over political power insofar as it can extend its brotherhood upward into other layers of the population. But a downtrodden minority which is at the same time circumscribed by bounds of race, as the American Negroes have been, cannot hope, as a group, to conquer in a struggle and attain control. The simple facts of population arithmetic assure that the Negro is and will remain a roughly one-tenth minority.

**F**ROM these two facts, which constrain the Negro to work out his emancipation within American society, but as a minority within it, it follows with iron logic that the Negro cannot win his major struggles without allies.

Can the Negro find allies? The entire political edifice of the South has been shaped to prevent it. The one-party totalitarianism of Southern politics is far from happenstance; it is an axiom of the region that sharp political divisions would soon stimulate bids for Negro support and open competitions between the political forces through which the Negro would sooner or later gain the franchise and political weight. The brief experience of Populism was enough to prove that, if proof were needed. Henry W. Grady, the post-Reconstruction leader of the middle class of the South, presented the reasoning as it persists to this day: "The whites understand that the slightest division on their part will revive those desperate days (of Reconstruction). . . . So that the whites have agreed everywhere to sink their differences on moral and economic issues, and present solid and unbroken ranks to this alien and dangerous element. This once done, the rest is easy."

Here we have the reason for the one-party dictatorship; for traditional



Southern politics which, even more so than in the rest of the country, stress personalities and not issues; for the fact that even the Democratic primaries, which in Southern legend are supposed to "take the place" of inter-party contests, are rarely genuine and often uncontested. Here we have the reason why latter-day Southern protest movements have almost invariably fallen into the hands of the sort of bastardized idiot's populism typified by demagogues like Huey Long; the real thing has been prevented by white-supremacy totalitarianism.

Nevertheless, the Negro has not been without allies. One fatal defect in the Southern system is that it is not an independent entity, but a subordinate part of a larger nation. Starting with Abolitionism, there have always been liberal, radical, humanitarian movements originating mainly in the North but spreading in time among elements of Southern society. More decisive historically, conflicts of interest among the major social strata of the nation have opened fissures and, from time to time, given the Negro allies against the Southern Bourbons. In the Civil War, for example, the Northern capitalists were forced to wave aside tempting Southern pleas to leave the old South intact as a conservative balance wheel in the nation—forced by their social and economic needs—and, together with the Northern farming classes formed a front against the extension of slavery which eventually led to its abolition. It was not many years before the Negro was shabbily deserted and left to his new-forged shackles by Northern capital, but in the irrepressible conflict between Northern and Southern economic interests the Negro made his first great stride towards freedom.

**I**N later years, and particularly during the Depression thirties, the idea of an alliance with labor, North and South, took hold. The earliest pro-

ponents of this solution to the Negro's search for allies were radicals, and they cast the idea in radical form. As the ultimate sources of race bigotry and oppression are in the economic and social system, what could be more logical than to make common cause with labor in destroying the system and building a new one based on economic cooperation and social brotherhood? In doing this, the Negro strikes at the very root of the trouble, and at the same time finds ready to hand an alliance with the most numerous class of Americans, the working population. It was this reasoning that inspired much of the critique leveled against the NAACP and other Negro organizations which limit themselves to partial solutions and legalistic actions.

Nevertheless, the Negro did not become radicalized in the socialist sense of the word. If he was not able to disprove the socialist thesis, or propound a more cogent alternative, he did have an irrefutable practical reply to the argument. In a series of memoranda to Gunnar Myrdal in 1941 and 1942 when the latter was working on his monumental study, *An American Dilemma*, Roy Wilkins of the NAACP wrote:

*I feel very strongly that critics of the Association are not being reasonable where they maintain, in the light of the known American public opinion, and the known shackled condition of the Negro in the country, that an organization for his improvement should embark upon a political and economic revolutionary program.*

*These organizations, if you will, must be somewhat opportunistic in their operation. The identification of the Negro's cause prominently and predominantly with a political and economic revolutionary program would be suicidal. The dangers inherent in such a procedure are but demonstrated by the fact that no racial group in America has adopted such a program.*

*Indeed, it may be questioned whether the white masses have accepted such a philosophy as the way out of their obvious difficulties. Only an infinitesimal minority of persons in this country subscribes openly to and works actively in such a program. To ask the Negro, the most vulner-*

able, the poorest, the one most at the mercy of the majority, to embark upon this is asking more than is practicable or sensible.

. . . The white masses of America are not radical, to say nothing of the black masses. They are radical only with respect to the status of the Negro; on all other matters they are as conservative as the average American.

While Mr. Wilkins does not here deny that a political and economic revolutionary program may offer the way out for both Negro and white working people, his contention that, in the America of recent decades, the Negro would find no allies by adopting such a program but would only isolate himself hopelessly, is beyond argument. There is little question that a mass socialist trend among white workers would find ready allies among the Negro people; in the complete absence of such a trend it is bizarre to think that Negroes as a mass will blaze the way under the influence of any theory, no matter how correct.

**W**HAT other alliances, then, can the Negro form? In recent years, a new fissure has appeared in the array of social forces standing for the status quo. The rise of this nation to the standing of a world power—indeed a power which hopes and strives to shape and dominate the world to its most remote corners—has raised a host of new problems and issues in American life, and has brought to the fore with unprecedented urgency the status of the Negro. Wendell Willkie was a forerunner of current trends when, speaking in July 1942 to the NAACP conference in Los Angeles, he said:

*Today it is becoming increasingly apparent to thoughtful Americans that we cannot fight the forces and ideas of imperialism abroad and maintain a form of imperialism at home. The war has done this to our thinking. . . . So we are finding under the pressures of this present conflict that long-standing barriers and prejudices are breaking down. The defense of our democracy against the forces that threaten it from without has made some of its failures to function at home glaringly apparent. Our very proclamations of what we*

*are fighting for have rendered our own inequities self-evident. When we talk of freedom and opportunity for all nations the mocking paradoxes in our own society become so clear they can no longer be ignored.*

Not only has this thought become commonplace in the present cold war epoch, but it has been reinforced tremendously by the revolts among the colonial nations since World War II. In truth, the American Negroes have found their most forceful allies in a century not inside but outside of America, among the dark-skinned people of the world who are now striking out for their own independence. And the adamant stand taken by a unanimous Supreme Court on the issue of school segregation testifies that there is in high places, at least on the part of some section of the ruling class, a determination to get America better squared away for its world-wide competition with the Soviet bloc of nations.

But the colonial world is far away, and the Supreme Court edicts are little better than promises so long as they are not enforced. Four years of experience is proof of the fact that, neither in the administration nor in the Democratic Party, is there sufficient will to enforce obedience. If there is a sentiment in the ruling class, as we have postulated above, to drag a kicking and screaming South at least part way into the twentieth century, it is not strong enough nor widespread enough to overcome the traditional drift, inertia, and conservatism of our political machinery. The Negro in the South is still fighting almost alone without significant help.

**W**E spoke of the labor alliance which has been repeatedly proposed for the Negro. But we spoke of it in its most radical form, as a union of forces directed against the foundations of the capitalist system. In that form, an alliance with labor has been, as we said, impossible and is still impossible. Yet the labor movement, even in its present shape, has an immediate and selfish interest in the struggle of the Negro people. The South is the low-wage haven for runaway shops, and it can be expected to remain that way until its present socio-economic structure is altered. And no campaign to unionize the South, it is an axiom,

can succeed without attacking and beating back the miasma of racial bigotry in which the region is now sunk, and without enlisting the devotion and energies of Negro and white labor making common cause. Where previous efforts to do this have failed, or succeeded in small measure only, there is an increasing hope that it can be done as the progressive urbanization and industrialization of the South breaks down barriers, throws Negro and white into close association of interests, and creates new conditions that each day weaken the old Southland.

If the union movement is not prepared to open an organizing drive in the South today, it must prepare to do so at some near day in the future, for the industrialization of the South makes the region a growing threat to labor standards in the rest of the country. In the light of this, it is hard to understand how the union officialdom can take as lackadaisical an attitude towards the Negro campaign for school integration as it does. Surely this is the time to throw in effort, time, money, forces to help tip the scales. Surely the labor movement ought to be the most active ally of the Southern Negro in the present school crisis. Instead, help has been limited to a few ritual pronouncements, and labor has taken a back seat to the liberals who do not have the social weight or resources to substitute for the union movement.

As to the causes for this sorry showing, we have written many times in these pages. Labor's timidity in the integration crisis is of a piece with its overall conservatism, its failure of vision, its slothful ebb of militancy in this era of business unionism. We remain nevertheless convinced that labor is the Negro's best hope for an ally that can help to revolutionize the South and make it fit to live in for the many. Default though it may today, the labor movement in America has a role that is shaped far more by broad social needs which cannot be forever gainsaid, than by short-sighted leaders. What James Weldon Johnson wrote in 1934 still points the way towards the future: "Organized labor holds the main gate of our industrial and economical corral; and on the day that it throws open that gate . . . there will be a crack in the wall of racial discrimination that will be heard round the world."

What's back of racism? Most of all, says America's outstanding personal journalist, an economic and social caste system.

# Bilbos in Gray Flannel

by Harry Golden

**T**HE racial problem is not strictly a Southern problem. You may sum it up in a bit of folklore which some of you may have heard. In the North, the white man says: "Nigger, go as high as you can, but don't come close," and in the South, the white man says: "Nigger, come as close as you can, but don't go up."

The problem, of course, is caste: it is a matter of caste more than anything else. At the Dan River Mills, one of the largest in the world, about three years ago, there was a strike, an unauthorized strike. The spinners were white women. They also have what are called lap-haulers, Negro women. A lap-hauler is one who hands the raw material to the spinner. They touch hands constantly. They work very closely together. The relationship has always been good. Then management wanted some new spinners, so they picked a few of these lap-haulers who had been there twenty years and who knew more about the machines than anyone else, and they wanted to make spinners out of them, and the white spinners went out on strike. And they used all the legends, such as body odor and all of that business. As spinners, mind you, these Negro women would have been in a building a quarter of a mile away. The white spinners would have never seen them again; they were completely segregated, but they went out on strike. As lap-haulers, working body-to-body, it was all right, but as spinners—equal status—it was evil.

Caste is the most important part of the racial problem of the South. There was a speech recorded by the leader of the strikers, who stated the matter correctly: "I am a member of the Pythian Auxiliary, and I am a spinner, and here comes this big, fat Negro woman, and she is a

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*Harry Golden is the editor and publisher of the Carolina Israelite, issued weekly from Charlotte, North Carolina, and author of the best-selling Only in America. This article is adapted, with Mr. Golden's permission, from a speech last spring to the third national trade union conference on civil rights of the Jewish Labor Committee.*

spinner, too." An interesting thing is that they are always referred to as "big, fat Negro women." You will find the same reference to the men. They are always referred to as "that big buck nigger." Always "big buck." And, of course, we know what bothers the Southern whites. A myth, of course: the sexual prowess of the Negro. Caste is first, but sex also plays its part in this human drama.

The white man has slept with the Negro woman for two or three hundred years, and now he fears retaliation. This is a great tragedy, and it is also a great insult to the white women of the South. I cannot understand why they stand for it—this idea of their men worrying about the matter. But no one seems to get the point. No one seems to be insulted by this thing. If you let the Negro vote and give him equal job opportunity and equal educational facilities, why should the white woman fall for him? Why should she? I believe this is nonsense and an insult of the first order.

And here is the greatest tragedy of all. The South has produced some of the most creative minds of the American civilization, but right now all creativity has come to a halt. This great civilization is preoccupied with this thing in human relations—this nonsense about inter-racial sex, this resistance to a Supreme Court decision, this determination not to grant first-class citizenship to 26 percent of its population. This great civilization with many of its brilliant and warm-hearted people is not thinking about foreign affairs. It is not thinking of the expansion of its educational and health facilities. It is not thinking of the basic strategy of the free world against statism and totalitarianism. No, it is completely preoccupied with the project of trying to keep a fifteen-year-old Negro girl from going to a public school. All creativity has been postponed indefinitely. And this is the crux of the entire problem. It is not what racial segregation has done to the Negro, but what it has done to the white man, and this is a problem which he refuses to acknowledge. He has paid a bigger price for this segregation than the Negro.

**L**ET us look at the response of the Negro race to this emotional controversy. It is fantastic that the Negro has not done a single thing wrong. Over eleven million people, half of whom are illiterate, another third of whom are semi-literate, a civilization of sharecroppers, truck drivers and janitors, and they have not done a single thing wrong. **This will be recorded eventually as one of the most noble stories of the human spirit.** They bomb their houses, and the Negroes say, "Let's go to church and pray for the fellows who have bombed our houses." They burn a cross on their hills, and the Negroes roast marshmallows in the embers.

This story goes back to the 1930's, when it became evident that the Negroes of the South—second-class citizens by law—offered the greatest resistance to the blandishments of the Communist propagandists. This is all the more remarkable when we realize that the local Communist medicine men automatically promoted the Negro, no matter how unfit for the job, to positions of greatest honor within their individual cells, promotion that had nothing behind it but the color of a man's skin and therefore was as dehumanizing as legal segregation itself. And the Ne-

groes of the South who fell for this degradation through "honor" were not numerous enough to have filled a respectable telephone booth.

It was as if the Negroes had suddenly seen the same vision that had inspired the founding fathers of America and they became the greatest connoisseurs of the true American democracy, the process of going to the judge with a writ, and the judge says, "You have not exhausted all your means of possible relief," and the Negro says, "Thank you, I'll start all over again in the morning," and a year later he is back again with the writ, and his children march up to the public school, and they are stopped, and Americans all, of all races, creeds, and societies will one day rise up with pride and pay honor to this great phenomenon of the human story.

I have proposed a few solutions to the problem of segregation. Of course, they also contain a little humor. I appeared before the North Carolina state legislature to talk against school segregation, and I said: Here is the budget. It costs you 42 million dollars to maintain two school systems, and one of them is no good. Of course, they are now building beautiful high schools for Negroes in the cities, but they are a sham. Let me show you how to save money, I said. Vertical segregation has been eliminated. The Negro buys at the same supermarket, pays his rent at the same window, makes his deposit at the same bank, and he does this standing up. However, when he starts sitting down, everyone gets nervous. So I told the legislature that since there is no vertical segregation, the way to beat the school problem is to take the seats out of the classrooms. By giving each of the kids one of those stand-up desks, you have the matter solved. Unfortunately, the legislature would not do that.

**B**UT we are beginning to see a little ripple, and the vertical plan is now in force in many places. In Atlanta, the plan was distributed by the Negro community, and now in the Atlanta bus station, Negroes buy their tickets at the segregated section and walk right out on the platform, where there is no segregation. No one sits down in the Negro section any more, and the coke machines and juke boxes there are not getting any business.

The Golden "out of order" plan came about this way: I told a local merchant, a friend of mine, who had the usual colored and white water fountains, to knock out the white one and put a sign on it, "out of order." The first day the whites looked at the sign and drank sheepishly from the Negro fountain. After two or three days, every one was drinking the black water. Now, one of the largest retailers in the world has put the Golden "out of order" plan into effect in all Southern branches. They put the "out of order" sign on the white fountain. I checked with their regional manager. I thought they would have had to keep the sign up about a year in order to get the whites used to drinking from the Negro fountain, but he told me that in six weeks he took the white and Negro signs off, and that was the end of it.

A friend of mine, a Shakespearean scholar and a teacher of English literature at the Negro university, wanted to see *Othello* in Charlotte, but the movie house did not admit Negroes. I said: I will show you how to get in. And



I persuaded a friend of mine to lend her a baby, a white baby. When they went up to the window to buy a ticket, the cashier looked at the baby, and she went in. So I advised the NAACP to build a factory to make dolls, blond, curly-headed dolls, and every time a Negro wants to go to the movies or the opera, he should get a doll with blond curls and go.

What are they talking about when Senator Harry Byrd of Virginia and Governor Marvin Griffin of Georgia demand that racial segregation remain part of the American culture? What do they mean by this? Is it a matter of whether a Negro child may or may not go to a free public school? That is only part of it, and a very small part of it. What are they talking about when they speak of racial segregation? They are talking about human degradation and death. Because of the entire system of racial segregation, seven Negro women die in childbirth to one white woman. Because of the system of racial segregation, tuberculosis, which is eighth as the cause of death among the white race, is second as a cause of death among the Negroes. And because of racial segregation, you have that deadening sense of hopelessness among millions of young people who were born to share and contribute to the creativity and the glory of America.

**Y**OU are fifteen years old, and you have never seen your father in anything but overalls, and you have never seen your mother in anything but a uniform on the way to another woman's home. A car pulls up in your filth-littered yard, and a man shouts to you, "Boy, tell Jim to come at seven o'clock tomorrow instead of eight," and Jim is your father. Or the occupant of the car says, "Boy, tell Nettie not to come tomorrow," and Nettie is your mother. So you take a carton of cigarettes off a truck or get behind the wheel of a car that is not yours, because of the degradation, the lack of self-esteem, the uselessness of trying to prove your individual worth, because you know by instinct that a record of even four juvenile arrests will not disqualify you from that job of janitor which is waiting for you.

And what about the effect on the white Southern children growing up in an atmosphere of evasion? Children pick up the paper every morning and see big headlines:



We have a new scheme to "beat" the law. Our Attorney General thought up something new to "beat" the Supreme Court decision. Education takes place at many levels: in the school, in the home, in the church, on the street, in the newspaper accounts of the work of the State legislatures, and in the speeches of the Governor. How can they tell the children on Monday that to obey the law is the highest point to which an American boy may aspire, and on Tuesday maneuver and connive to get around the law?

There was a great calm over the South after the Supreme Court decision. The South was waiting for leadership which never came, waiting for some word from the White House or some word from the State capitals. There was no leadership in the State capitals because the politicians saw an opportunity to ride this issue for another twenty years. In Virginia, Harry Byrd was playing his last card, and he knew it, and the State of Virginia knew it. Harry Byrd rules Virginia like Trujillo rules the Dominican Republic. A quarter of a century ago, we had Cotton Ed Smith, Mr. Heflin and Senator Bilbo. The fellows today are no different. Their approach is a little fancier, but they are really nothing more than Bilbos in gray flannel pants.

And what is this resistance all about? Why should an old aristocrat like Senator Byrd of Virginia talk like a barber of a mill village when he discusses the problem of one-third of the citizens of his state? Why? Why did the entire upper middle class turn on the Negro after the Supreme Court decision? The Negro had every reason in the world to believe that the upper middle class in the South would be for him. In the past, they have organized betterment leagues, and if a Negro ran for public office the only white votes he got were from the best residential sections. There was a large area of paternalism involved, but there was also fellowship, friendship, and perhaps even understanding. This, perhaps, is a phenomenon in human relations. You may be surprised to



know that in the 1830's, many fellows with goatees, sipping mint juleps on their verandas, made fine speeches against slavery. "Slavery—that's no good. Man is created in God's image." When a reform is not imminent, when there does not appear to be any chance of change, they say good things. But these same fellows, thirty years later, put on a gray uniform and were willing to destroy an entire section of the country to protect slavery.

AND the same thing happened with Jim Crow. A lot of people made speeches about how terrible it is, but when the Supreme Court handed down its decision, this was different. To the poor whites in the South, the Negro stands between them and social oblivion. The Negro gives them some degree of caste and self-esteem. Subconsciously they know the hopelessness of their position, and if you take the Negro away from them, where will they find self-esteem? They may start voting and joining labor unions, and that is why the upper middle class turned the Negro down. Without the Negro, the Southern white worker would have to get caste in trade unions. You cannot organize in the South except in some industries which have come from the North and are oriented to a different way of life. In the South, the first thing the boss tells you when the union is trying to organize is: "Do you want to have a Negro working beside you?" Then he shows you a picture of a white working beside a Negro. Always a white woman and a Negro man. And if, in addition, they start voting, maybe their children will go to Congress instead of Harry Byrd. Trade unions and voting for the millions would make the South an entirely different world. That is why the upper middle class turned the Negro down.

All of this relates to the statement of a woman recorded by a reporter for *Life* magazine outside the Central High School of Little Rock as the nine Negro children finally went through the door. This woman gasped: "My God, the niggers are in!" Why should this woman have felt that her world had suddenly come to an end? Actually this woman has been brought up in an atmosphere which tried to give her caste the easy way. While the Negroes were going to the back of the bus and to separate schools and filling the jobs of janitors, this woman had status-without-money, status without the necessity of voting, and without the need to join a labor union. She felt secure with this caste because the Negro stood between her and complete social oblivion. You take the Negro away from her and she must seek self-esteem elsewhere, and where will she find it if not in the voting booth and in social legislation, and where will she find this if not in an accelerated attempt to catch up with all the benefits of our industrial age. She will now look to another kind of caste—the caste of economic and political security.

The white woman says: "The Negroes are very happy; they do not want to end racial segregation, my maid told me so." She calls in her maid and says: "Nettie, what do you think of this Supreme Court decision?" and the maid says: "Lordy, Miz Emily, we never sees the paper," and that night the maid goes home and says to her husband: "Jim, get a move on you with that supper; we'll be late for the NAACP meeting and let's try to put some life into that integration committee of ours."



**T**HERE is no communication. What the Southerner does not know is that the Negro has intruded himself upon his life. He has intruded himself at every level of his culture. When you set up laws to segregate anyone, you are the one who is enslaved. Booker T. Washington was right when he said, "If you want to keep a man in the gutter, you have got to get down in the gutter and hold him."

Immigrants came to America from Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean, and they settled in the North. The Italians built tunnels, the Jews went into the sewing shops, the Czechs went into the coal mines and the Poles went into the steel mills. They sent their sons to Cornell University, the University of Michigan and the University of Pennsylvania. They entered the middle class. In the South, they had the black man, and there are huge segments of white Southerners who have done nothing all their lives on account of the Negro. On the East Side we used to call them "leidig gehers." If he lacked the talent or the capital or the skill, he did nothing. He would not do anything that Negroes did because he would lose status. Instead, he hung around the courthouse all his life, running errands for the Commissioner. He dabbled a little in rural politics. He would say, "My wife has a piece of property," and he would draw up new plans, look at them and tear them up. This did terrible harm to the Southern white man.

In my state, we have a white high school which has had a linotype machine and other printing facilities to teach the children this highly skilled trade. There is no Negro school with any such facilities. And so when the white men get together they talk about how the Negroes want to go to bed with white women, and when the Negroes get together they talk about a linotype machine. I have heard about that linotype machine a thousand times at a hun-

dred meetings. And I have yet to hear a Negro, even by the most remote innuendo, even during a thousand unguarded moments, express "desire" for a white woman. This is utter nonsense. In the first place, the Negro has all the "white" women he needs. The white man of the South "gave" them to him. The white man can choose only a white woman; the Negro can pick from a dozen different shades among his own people, all the way from red-heads with freckles down to the very blackest of the black. Secondly, we have learned that as a race or ethnic group rises in self-esteem there is not only less crime but much less sex promiscuity. If she knows she can some day be a nurse, or a dental technician, or a stenographer, the day when you can take her to the hay stack is over, gone forever. And self-esteem leads to pride of race. As the Negro enters first-class citizenship in our country and takes his rightful place in the industrial society, this so-called "mongrelization" which has been part of the culture will finally come to a grinding halt. Exactly opposite to what the white man fears will take place..

With the end of racial segregation in the South, it not only means that we will have eleven million new allies for democracy, but that we will have over thirty million new allies. Your next great liberal movement in America will have the Negro for its vital center. He will want things: things such as better housing, and better clothing, and the best for his children, and so will the white Southerner. Once that artificial caste has been taken away from him, he will seek self-esteem elsewhere, and he will ask for social legislation. This is your next liberal movement in America, the white and the Negro of the South, and they will eventually take up where the Roosevelt New Deal left off. This will be an entirely different kind of liberalism, and perhaps even the unanswerable liberalism.

### *His Father was White . . .*

**I**N 1947, shortly after my graduation from Oberlin College, I was in Tennessee for a couple of days and had stopped in McMinnville for a few hours. I stood at the station awaiting the bus for Knoxville. When it arrived I was surprised to see that a white schoolmate, Dick Sanders, was a passenger. Sanders, a native Tennessean, and I had been good friends in school. We had been allies in many a card game, and had split many high-low poker pots.

McMinnville is one of two major rest-stops between Nashville and Knoxville, and new passengers do not board until old passengers have returned to their seats. As I stood in line for those ten or fifteen minutes while the passengers were snacking, I wondered what Sanders would do. Would he want to ride with me? Was he sufficiently conscious of law and custom? I would find it a bit humiliating if he offered me a seat beside him near the front of the bus. If he did, should I accept it and await the rebuke that would certainly come from the driver? Or should I explain that I couldn't sit beside him, and then humbly move to "where I belonged"?

I entered the bus and found Sanders standing in the aisle. Apparently he had given up his seat beside someone, for no double seats were empty. To sit with me, Sanders would have to move to the rear. That is what he did.

As we made small talk about college days and plans for the future, I kept an eye toward the front of the bus. The driver got in, looked the passengers over. His eyes paused momentarily on Sanders, but he said nothing. During the first forty

miles of the trip, however, I noticed that a white woman who sat just behind the driver kept turning uneasily to observe us. After forty miles of fidgeting, she said something to the driver. Immediately, the driver glanced into his rear-view mirror and swerved the bus to the side of the road. "Here it comes," I thought, as the driver walked toward us.

"You can't sit there, fellow. You know whites and colored can't sit together on this bus. That seat is for colored," the driver told Sanders.

With a look of great embarrassment, which I had learned to recognize in Sanders only after he had succeeded in a gigantic poker-bluff, my friend whispered in tones of confession: "My father was white." Both the driver and I quickly got the implication, and the driver, looking flustered, replied: "Oh, oh, oh." He returned to his seat and apparently satisfied the complaining passenger by describing my companion as a mulatto.

I wiped the stunned look from my face, smiled, and continued to chat, now more comfortably, with Sanders. When we reached Knoxville, we stood waiting for the driver to get our bags out of the trunk. As Sanders took his, he said to the driver: "Say, I forgot to tell you back there that my mother was white, too."

First the driver appeared embarrassed, but he quickly smiled, then burst into laughter as Sanders winked and the two of us walked away.—Carl T. Rowan, *South of Freedom*

(Knopf, New York, 1952.)

Labor's only recent experiment in a daily paper had hard sledding, chiefly because of indifference on the part of most unions.

# The Life and Death of "Labor's Daily"

by Dennis Anderson

**T**HE silence of union leaders in the face of *Labor's Daily's* final appeal for support early this year was the newspaper's death warrant. Its demise on March 28 proved one thing: that most labor chiefs will not sponsor an independent voice in their midst. After publishing the paper for over four years the International Typographical Union had offered to sell or lease it to the AFL-CIO or any group of affiliated unions. Another year was required by the merged federation just to set up the machinery to solicit the union's views. When their answers were in, only seven unions out of more than 130 had agreed to assume co-ownership of the publication. *Labor's Daily* died because it had tried to be honest.

Generally no crusader, *Labor's Daily* differed from most union publications because it was also nobody's house organ. In the years before the merger it opened its columns to news of AFL, CIO, and independent unions. AFL Upholsterers President Sal Hoffmann once protested violently that the daily was giving too much coverage to the "Communist-dominated" CIO Furniture Workers. An inch-by-inch investigation showed that the two unions had received almost identical space. The Upholsterers International later became one of the seven unions willing to sponsor *Labor's Daily*, largely because the paper had reported the arguments of those unions (including the Upholsterers) which voted to oppose expulsion of the Teamsters from the AFL-CIO.

**U**NLIKE the official union publications, *Labor's Daily* did not hide or distort the unpleasant facts of labor life. Jurisdictional disputes were treated objectively. Even as the AFL and CIO were merging, *Labor's Daily* reported Teamster crossings of IUE picket lines at Westinghouse. Corruption came under attack before the McClellan Committee was conceived. *Labor's Daily* was first in

the labor press to turn its attention to the dictatorship exercised by William DeKoning, Jr., over the Operating Engineers on Long Island. It set a pattern of reporting labor corruption later followed by the *AFL-CIO News*, earning the praise of *Newsweek* for its "straight" coverage. *Newsweek* quoted *Labor's Daily* Editor Ralph Scoop White as saying: "We have no desire to cover up for (rotten) labor leadership." For this attitude the paper was accused by one union official of "muckraking internally."

A particularly sensitive area into which the ITU-sponsored paper ventured was internal political opposition within unions. Extensive coverage was, for example, given the dues protest movement directed against President David McDonald of the Steelworkers. It came therefore as no surprise when McDonald replied to the final appeal for support with a one-sentence letter saying the Steelworkers had "decided to do nothing."

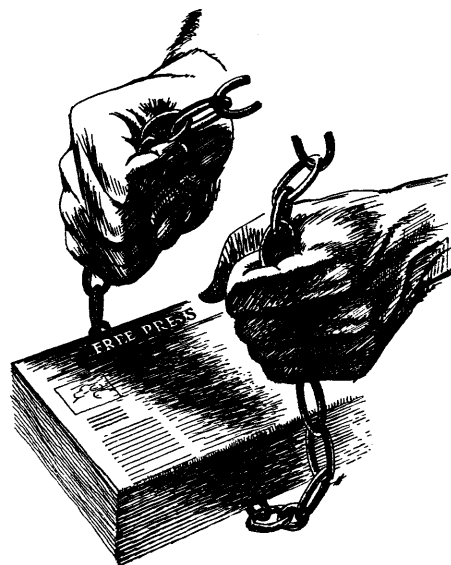
Among some labor editors there was hostility based on resentment of the relative freedom enjoyed by *Labor's Daily*. Staff members of AFL-CIO publications exerted themselves to convince the federation's leadership that this kind of unguided reporting was dangerous to the movement. Their efforts continued until that moment of disillusion when some of them joined the 100 AFL-CIO organizers who were laid off for "economy" reasons.

In reality, the *Labor's Daily* staff sometimes had to work under severe editorial fetters. ITU President Woodruff Randolph and his fellow officers almost never visited the site of their half-million-dollar investment, but they did issue an occasional fiat on policy matters. An early taboo, which had little practical pertinence, was directed against recognition of Communist China. Of more immediate concern was the obligation to print, in full and just before the merger, the ITU's tradition-bound, legalistic arguments in favor of unrestricted autonomy for AFL-CIO affiliates. It is safe to assume that few unionists read the four-page ITU brief which was then inserted in *Labor's Daily*, but this offered little consolation to the editors. A few years later the latter were embarrassed by having to publish a one-sided ITU account of a secession movement of Detroit newspaper mailers. In fairness it should be said that these were almost the only instances of ITU's use of its daily for its own narrow ends.

**P**OLICY clashes between the editors and the ITU officers occurred, however, over broader issues like desegregation. An old craft union with few Negro members, the ITU became skittish about the prominence given to integration stories by *Labor's Daily* when opposition locals in the South called for a boycott of the paper as a means of embarrassing the Randolph administration. A series of letters from ITU headquarters warned Louisiana-born Editor White to stop "diverting" the publication from pure and simple labor news. White and his small staff of young editors continued to treat as news the integration stories sent in by correspondents. Then, in August 1956, the ITU officers, who formed the paper's board of directors, ordered the editors to "eliminate the tendency to make *Labor's Daily* a propaganda medium for certain reform groups outside organized labor." The ITU leaders made clear they had the NAACP in mind.

This directive applied the brakes to news of the civil rights struggle, but as the paper added feature pages devoted to entertainment, sports and women's interests, the subject matter in *Labor's Daily* steadily moved into new fields. Before it died America's only daily labor paper had covered such diverse ground as radioactive fallout hazards, the campaign for a national center of performing arts, coexistence, and the politics of Midwest farmers. The editors' policy that a labor paper must treat more than bargaining-table matters succeeded in winning a wider audience for *Labor's Daily* in its last years. It also succeeded in one instance in provoking the most sweeping editorial injunction ever issued by the owners.

When columnist Victor Riesel was blinded by an acid-hurling assailant in 1956, the *Labor's Daily* staff was as shocked as all other members of the newspaper fraternity. He had not been their ideal of a labor reporter, but being blinded for something he had written or broadcast was something else again. As reports filtered in that the motive behind the acid-maiming might have been personal, the editors began to wonder about Riesel's declarations that he had been victimized by underworld enemies. The newspaper received and published a story from a reliable source that Riesel had used an air credit card belonging to racketeer Johnny Dio on a flight from Miami to New York a



few months before the attack. Asked to confirm or deny the story before it was published, Riesel replied that he would not "dignify" it with an answer.

Deciding that there were too many unanswered questions, *Labor's Daily* dispatched one of the editors to New York to do some probing. He is reported to have uncovered what he considered very important evidence.

It was then reported that Riesel discovered that a *Labor's Daily* man was in town to do a story on him and had called Woodruff Randolph in Indianapolis and threatened ITU with a libel suit of the "exposé" appeared. Since Riesel could not have known the contents of this unwritten story, his alleged behavior would seem to indicate an intense desire to keep his secrets secret. Easily intimidated by the threat of a lawsuit, Randolph is supposed to have assured Riesel that nothing at all would be printed about

him and that if the blinded columnist ever wanted to send an article to *Labor's Daily*, it would be published without so much as a change in punctuation. In conveying this directive to Editor White, Randolph is said to have added that in the future nothing derogatory was to be written "about anybody." So vast was the scope of this reported restriction that it was unwittingly violated almost daily thereafter.

**T**HESSE irritants, combined with the frustrations of having to work with a maddeningly obstructionist ITU business manager, culminated in a half-day sitdown strike by the editorial staff which almost closed down the paper two years before its time. The picture was further muddied by ITU's insistence that the combined editorial employees of *Labor's Daily* and its local edition in the Quad Cities area of Iowa-Illinois join the printers union rather than the Newspaper Guild. The employees finally joined ITU, with what they thought was an understanding that they would enjoy bargaining rights. When they discovered that the printers union had no intention of dealing collectively with its own employees, they quit in a body. Until the end, *Labor's Daily* was not a 100 percent union-made product.

Internal conflicts of this kind did not find their way into the pages of *Labor's Daily*, but they did convince the staff members that a national daily labor paper would have to be a multi-union proposition. On their own, they visited and called leaders of the more enlightened unions, urging discussions with ITU about joint ownership. The United Auto Workers actually discussed the matter with the printers, but nothing happened.

In the end, it was the crushing financial burden of operating the paper which obliged ITU to approach the AFL-CIO in January 1957, with the offer of making its total assets available at book value (\$500,000). In order merely to win permission to appear before the Executive Council with this proposition, ITU Secretary-Treasurer Don Hurd had to overcome the strenuous opposition of William Schnitzler, the federation's second-in-command. Almost a year later, after the issue had bounced from Executive Council to AFL-CIO Public Relations Committee and back again, Schnitzler found himself in charge of a discussion on *Labor's Daily's* future at the Atlantic City convention. After listening to pledges of support from the UAW, International Union of Electrical Workers, Packinghouse Workers, Insurance Workers, Newspaper Guild, and State, County and Municipal Employees, Schnitzler proved that he could measure which way the wind was blowing. At the end of the meeting, which set up a committee under President Arnold Zander of the public employee union, he concluded: "We haven't been doing all of the things that we've talked about. The question before us now is: Are we going to stop talking and get down to do some real hard work?"

The Zander committee did some real hard work. It drafted a stock plan to permit the AFL-CIO affiliates to assume control of the publication. When the response proved sparse, the committee circularized the labor movement with the ITU's generous final offer: purchase of the paper's name, good will, and circulation list for only

\$50,000, including a lease on the plant in Bettendorf, Iowa, on the western bank of the Mississippi. Then the ITU would publish the paper for the new owners at a cost of \$250,000 a year, plus about \$150,000 in editorial costs.

**O**F the group of supporters in Atlantic City, UAW participation was lost to the mass layoffs and resulting financial strain of the 1958 recession. The Newspaper Guild and the Insurance Workers decided they could take bloc subscriptions but could not become co-owners. The Upholsterers, Paperworkers and Papermakers, Hosiery Workers, and Pulp, Sulphite and Paper Mill Workers agreed to joint sponsorship. Of the seven unions ready to assume the risks, the 400,000-member IUE was the largest. The nearly bankrupt Hosiery Workers were willing to put in a hard-to-find \$1,000. The little unions knew the value of *Labor's Daily*. They had used it to help organize in the South, in strike situations, to supplement their education programs. So had many of the larger unions, but they had an arsenal of other weapons at their disposal. As a result, not even the \$50,000 could be raised. An appeal by eight senators and 16 congressmen to Walter Reuther did not change the situation.

So *Labor's Daily* died, with only 10,000 subscriptions, 7,000 of which had been subsidized by ITU. Launched without previous consultation by an isolated union, rarely promoted by its owners, *Labor's Daily* was doomed unless the very people it sometimes criticized would come to its aid. There was some truth to Fulton Lewis, Jr.'s charge that *Labor's Daily* was a "tabloid publication which represents the liberal-intellectual element of union staff bureauc-

racy." And this element wields little power in the labor movement. Yet, the paper had an influence far beyond its small circulation. Respected in Congress, where every member received a complimentary copy, perused by groups in print shops and union halls, the paper generated some strong loyalties.

One reader summed up its fate with these bitter words: "From now on let a blushing silence fall over those union leaders who for years have pretentiously clamored against the distortions of the commercial press and called on heaven to witness the need for labor's own newspaper. Here was their chance to turn rhetoric into reality, but inertia carried the day. The evidence would seem to indicate that *Labor's Daily* was too good for union leaders who prefer adulterary house organs to a free, militant newspaper."

It may also be useful to mention a few other factors which contributed to the relative impoverishment of present-day liberalism.

I believe that one factor lies in the virtual disappearance of radicals from the American scene within the last twenty years. The New Deal converted most radicals into liberals and Democrats. Radicalism has classically served as a source for liberalism. Liberalism usually absorbed and refined radical ideas, and translated them into practical programs of action. Unfortunately, the political spectrum of the past two decades has been occupied on the left solely by liberals, in the center by conservatives, and on the right by extreme reactionaries and by the Communists, who, in my judgment, are the most reactionary element of all. Thus, the upward flotation of new and constructive ideas in American politics has been curtailed.

—Herbert H. Lehman  
*The Progressive*, July 1958

## ***Threatened "Disturbance" Fails to Cancel Concert***

**T**HE Detroit Labor Forum won an important civil liberties victory early in October when a circuit judge ruled that the Detroit Arts Commission had no right to refuse to rent the Art Institute Auditorium for a concert by folk singer Pete Seeger. The Forum, which is chaired by Ernest Mazey, a contributing editor of the *American Socialist*, had earlier submitted a rental application for the Auditorium for a concert the evening of October 18. The Arts Commission, which is headed by K. T. Keller, former chairman of the board of Chrysler Corporation, refused to rent, claiming that Seeger's appearance in the Auditorium several years ago had resulted in a "disturbance," and that Seeger is a "controversial figure."

The Metropolitan Detroit Branch of the American Civil Liberties Union associated itself with the case, and Harold Norris, chairman of the Detroit ACLU participated as co-counsel with Rolland O'Hare on behalf of the Detroit Labor Forum. The case was heard by Judge Thomas J. Murphy, whose ruling and opinion supported the ACLU and the Forum on every point. He found no ground for the claim that a "disturbance" might result and added: "If some hoodlums call up and threaten to create a disturbance if somebody sings or somebody acts in a play, the proper thing to do is call the police and have them arrested. We can not prevent a citizen from exercising his rights under our form of government because somebody threatens to create a disturbance."

The judge's opinion was a firm statement on behalf of equal treatment under the law. "The Art Museum," he said,

"is a public institution provided by the Charter of the City of Detroit and is supported by public funds, and it is the court's impression that it is unlawful for the Arts Commission to refuse to rent the auditorium to somebody who wishes to use it for a cultural event in keeping with the aims and purposes of the Art Museum, without a proper reason. In other words, they do not have to rent it, but if they do rent it to the public then the public must be treated alike. If you have any legitimate reasons for refusing it, all right, but the mere fact that a man is a controversial figure and there may be a disturbance is not enough. The Arts Commission cannot decide who they want and who they don't want when the institution is supported by public funds. All of the public must have an equal right to its use. . . ."

The case was prominently reported in the Detroit press, and in the Michigan *AFL-CIO News*, which called the ruling a "civil liberties victory." And the ACLU, in a press release, expressed pleasure in having had "the opportunity to assist in obtaining adjudication of the important issues involved in this case," adding: "The Detroit Labor Forum should be commended for initiating this action which has resulted in a decision that reaffirms the right of Detroit citizens to freedom of expression and assembly and fair and reasonable access to the public facilities of our community."

To assure Seeger's appearance in case of drawn-out legal proceedings, the Forum had hired a different hall for this concert. But the outcome of the case establishes a clear legal position for future applications.

The Peron era, authoritarian though it was, left a tradition of social benefits and an awakening of labor aspirations. The next stage of Argentine politics turns on the question: Which political group will inherit Peron's labor backing?

# Argentina After Peron

by Irving L. Horowitz

*To close the cycle of Argentine fascism, a cycle of twenty five years of bitterness, political thought began showing sufficient maturity to perceive that there are always hidden alternatives in politics.*

—José Luis Romero, *Las ideas políticas en Argentina*

AN old Spanish proverb says that "in the land of the blind, the one-eyed is king." In many ways, Argentina, by virtue of its enigmatic politics and ambiguous economics, is a land of the blind, where even one-eyed prophets may be considered kings. The notorious partisanship of Argentine politics often prevents the committed man, particularly if he happens to be a member of a minority movement, whether of a rightist (Cívico Independiente) or super-leftist (Praxis) type, from looking at the situation with even his one good eye. Parties ranging in size from 600 to 600,000 claim to be the sole inheritors of the Marxian mantle. Analogous situations are the case for the factions vying for leadership of Peronist and Nationalist elements. The extent of Argentine democracy today can in some measure be gauged by the number of political parties, no less than the hilarious criticisms made of all and sundry politicians by the popular weeklies. It is a situation believers in Mill's canon of minority conscience might approve, were it not for the fact that political pronunciamientos are a far cry from political power.

Now in the first place it is time to stop viewing Peron, much less the movement he led, in terms which are applicable to Hitler and Nazism. If we simply note the absence of religious, racial, or political genocide under Peron, this would by itself be sufficient cause to ponder the meaning of Argentine fascism as distinct from the European models. A huge gap exists between imprisonment and even torture, and the outright execution of political enemies; a gap reflecting the character of Peron's era more profoundly than abstract parallels.

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The word "authoritarianism" takes on a rightfully suspicious cast if it disguises beneath a platitude real differences in forms of political rule, in forms of coercion. I suspect that this verbal camouflage is in no small measure responsible for the American's easy identification of Peronism with European fascist models. In truth, Argentina under Peron represented in economics, a variety of Italian corporatism; in politics, a typical Latin American innovation—the strong man regime employing various parties and power factions to keep dissident and potentially opposition elements in line; in intellectual affairs, Peronism reverted to clericalism and anti-scientific perspectives, from an undefined "personalism" to an unrefined "existentialism."

SOCIALLY, Peronism is quite another phenomenon. We may list as its primary achievements: (a) what Gino Germani (Argentina's leading sociologist) describes as the political and ideological integration of the masses; (b) the first large-scale break-through of trade unionism as the primary means of workers' organization; (c) the first concentrated effort at the emancipation of peasant, domestic, and factory women; (d) the socialization of health and welfare; and finally (e) the continuation and strengthening of nationalist tendencies clearly etched a hundred years ago in "la era Criolla"; the effort to create a strong Argentine State of expansionist tendencies and a self-sustaining economic system.

When we consider the impact of these social changes initiated during the Peron era, it becomes clearer (whether we agree with their reasoning or not) why proletarians fought so bitterly on behalf of Peron, and why politics is today still faced with the specter of Peronism as the one outstanding example of "anti-official" ideology. In this connection, it might be mentioned that Argentina is by no means an illustration of the possibility of overthrowing a modern dictatorship whose power in large measure rests on popular support. For it was only at that point when popular support for Peron became fragmented—by the adoption of an anti-nationalist oil policy, ideological and physical attacks on the Roman Catholic Church (to which many Peronists still felt deep personal attachments), and a failure to keep pace with the demands of the trade-union movement—only at that point was it possible to successfully achieve a military palace revolt. True, this revolt could also claim wide support: from business interests tired of "paying off" for everything from import licenses to being left alone; clergymen unhappy about their diminishing role in State affairs, especially education; intellectuals stifling under a decade of a tyranny over ideas and ideals; and of course, the military itself, particularly the Navy and Air Force which had a thousand reasons to hope for an end to the monopoly of Army officer control. Given such tensions and conflicting interests, Peron found himself in an impossible position. But as every Argentine commentator has noted, even at the end, Peron still had the option of surviving by the risky expedient of arming the shock-workers still very much aligned with him. But this calculated risk Peron did not take, in the first place because it would have absolutely and qualitatively changed the structure of the power basis in Peronism, from the

military to the workers; and second, because Peron had no stomach for leading a revolutionary movement divested of a Prussianized military base.

From the moment Peron fell in 1955, Peron and Peronism became increasingly divergent in attitudes and ambitions. As Amado Olmos, a tough union leader of the New Peronism recently said: "We want him back (from exile), but as a sort of party hero, not as President. Peron is not a revolutionary." In that last sentence is precisely the crux of the difference between man and movement.

**I**T is precisely Peronism as a revolutionary force of workers that Arturo Frondizi, the present legally elected President of Argentina (the first since 1930) has responded to. The recently enacted Labor Organization Law which will re-establish a General Labor Confederation, something which the "liberal" military regime of General Aramburu tried desperately to destroy, will probably be under the aegis of the New Peronism. Frondizi is extremely clever. He is not playing off a "paper tiger"—Peron—against the very real strength of the military force of Isaac Rojas, Pedro Aramburu and Roberto Huerta. He is indeed compelled to secure an anchor amongst Peronists, or jeopardize his regime entirely. Peronism, precisely because it is as yet the one mass element that remains in fact (not in posters), leaderless and fragmented at the top, offers wider possibilities of a reliable support than the military élite. It is the natural target of Frondizi's affections.

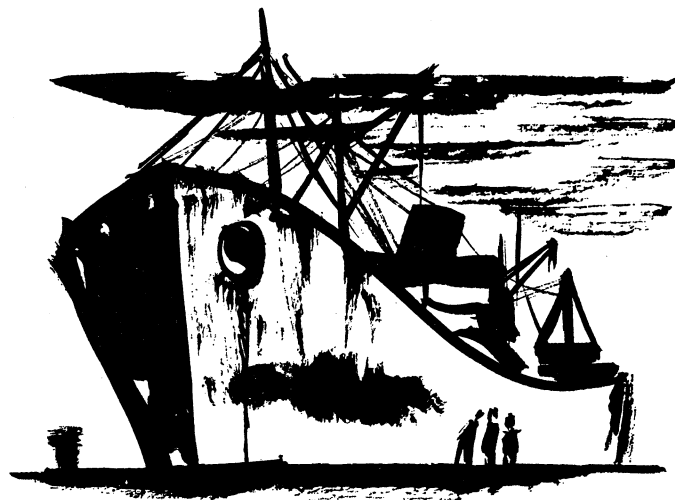
A popular saying is that Frondizi is the most unpopular man ever popularly elected to office. What this means in political terms is that his electoral support reflects only the divisions amongst the power elements in Argentine society, and not any real support at the roots for Frondizi. Had Balbín, Frondizi's forgotten opponent in the February elections, been victorious, one could have anticipated wide support for the former from land-holding interests, still the most powerful single voice in the country. But neither the economic conservatism or political vacuity of Balbín attracted the mass. Frondizi offered the only other possibility, for fascists and Communists, no less than for liberals and Peronists.

Frondizi's first task upon assuming office was the consolidation of state power. He achieved this in amazingly short order. For in the first place, no single power group was in a position to cancel Frondizi's electoral strength; and second, he consolidated power by carefully and accurately judging the might of each segment of the populace, and responding in kind. Thus, in the pre-election period, the socialist elements counted for much more than they did after the election, for the simple reason that socialists (and Communists) boasted numbers but no significant organizational strength. Likewise, Frondizi assumed the unlikely posture of a Catholic moralist before the election, while his efforts on behalf of the high clergy after the election have been minimal enough to start raising eyebrows as to just how much power the clergy commands.

**A**T present, Frondizi is at an entirely different stage. Now he must find an economic anchor for his policies. The only mass uncommitted element are the workers, whose sentiments are Peronist. It is in this direction that

Frondizi is drawn to seek support, even if it means violating his own intellectualist desire for constitutional liberalism. His legal training compels him to believe that, in Argentina at least, behind constitutionalism is a mass base willing to defend it, and behind law is the power of enforcement and coercion.

It is scarcely an accident that Frondizi has raised the slogan "libertad con poder" (liberty with power). It represents not just a policy decision, but the basis of survival of the state apparatus he has constructed. There is no escaping neo-Peronism as the basic political orientation of the workers. It is an ineluctable fact that Frondizi of the Radical Intransigents, Palacios of the Socialists, Ghioldi of the Communists are beginning to realize. However, it is the really European type of fascists and falangists, the Alianza movement, that recognized this at a much earlier date, and in more intimate terms, as a branch of Peronism itself. The future of Argentine politics, of even the minimal liberal democracy that Frondizi has erected, depends in large measure on just which of these aforementioned political shadings comes to lead the proletarian bête-machine. The basis of the reorganization of the Peronist movement, now taking place under the amnesty decree, will reveal more about the prospects of Frondizi living out his six-year term in office than any and all doses of foreign capital.



It is not sentimental nationalism which alone conditions the Argentine to look suspiciously at "foreign capital." Those who see the dilemma of Argentina in the absence of large scale capital investment miss the point. Capital investment is not an issue, except in propaganda leaflets, but the forms of such investment are. There are three basic observable forms of capital investment in present-day Argentina. There is first the investment of the classic imperialist type: A corporation sets up operations in its field, imports the machinery from the home country, uses domestic raw materials and labor, and exports the profits. Many of the U.S. pharmaceutical giants operate in such a fashion.

A second type is the extension of cash grants for either part interest or part exploitation of the item or mineral. While these grants stabilize the currency temporarily, they



have a long run inflationary pull because loans have to be repaid, and with interest. If the yield for which the loan is originally given is not great enough, catastrophic consequences may flow. The oil arrangements recently concluded by Frondizi have this essential nature. The fervent hope in government circles is that YPF (the national oil monopoly) will increase its yield sufficiently to offset the interest element.

The third form, and the one held to be most desirable in terms of Argentine national interests, is the establishment of factories in Argentina with joint ownership, manufacturing heavy and light equipment of commercial or consumer need, and payable in domestic currency. Increasingly, Argentine industrialists and government agencies are fighting for such arrangements. It is precisely the material wealth which accrues to Argentina in the third form of investment procedure that causes friction between imperialist countries and Argentina.

**T**O be sure, the risks are multiplied for Argentina in the last two methods of accepting foreign assistance. But the risks are far greater on the other side. For one thing, straight concessions to foreign economies would jeopardize the Frondizi regime from two sides: First, the foreign assistance could be employed to bludgeon or oust the constitutional regime (something hardly unknown in Latin American affairs); second, such deals would create the seeds for revolution from below and revolt from above. It is no secret that Frondizi is counting on increasing dilemmas for the West, particularly the United States, in its economic struggles with the Soviet Union. A shrinking world market is counted on to reveal the wisdom in smaller profits and a greater sharing of rewards no less than risks. If Peron could be beaten by a short range policy of money-now through extra-territorial concessions, how long could Frondizi hope to exist with a far shakier state apparatus?

Then there is yet another aspect involved that foreign investors rarely consider; but that the Argentine always does. Argentina is a rich nation with a potentially diversified economy. It possesses everything from basic foods and basic minerals to a technologically productive industrial force. The ideal of a self-sustaining economy is entertained in many powerful quarters, from industrialists to workers. The proletariat in particular has the least to gain from an economy oriented around investment capital from abroad. It has the most to gain from an economy internally organized and controlled. True, the lower classes would be sacrificing velocity, the rate of industrial growth, while muddling through to a higher level of existence. But in the meanwhile they have the comfort of knowing that beef and potatoes can still be had by all. The sacrifice in velocity yields a feeling that the refrigerator, phonograph, and automobile will be his own. This psychological-economic complex is far more operative in the lower classes, in the Peronist strata, than in the portions of society that can afford to import its household goods and personal transportation now. Frondizi's early moves to curb imports on non-essential goods, equipment manufactured by Argentine industry, is an indication that there is indeed an alternative to the commercial hue and cry

for more foreign capital; albeit a painful alternative in terms of immediate material desires.

**I**F Frondizi chooses the slow, internal road to economic stability, instead of the fast, foreign road, assuming he has such an option, the one section of society he could count upon for undeviating support would be the workers. Important in the calculations of Frondizistas and the presently fractured socialist movement alike, is that the *obreros* conception of Peronism would necessarily become infused with the values of a planned economy. Peron's huge error was in preparing the material and human ground for a diversified economy, centering on the export of raw materials and foodstuffs, in exchange for the import of industrial equipment; and then in a time of crisis capitulating to commercial interests and the military clique interested only in extracting and exporting the monetary fat. Few Peronists are not bitter over maneuvers to regain power through foreign aid influence. Peron might be forgiven his ghastly plundering of the national treasury were he shrewd enough to stave off the cry for foreign concessions emanating from the embassies and piped to government agents. The exaggerated nationalism everywhere present in Argentine society is as much a response to the sense of betrayal of Peron's leadership, as it is a rejection of foreign assistance. It is not Frondizi's authorship of a nationalist tract, *Petroleum and Politics*, that prevents him from adopting a carefree manner with the budding oil industry, but his keen sense of political survival.

A large advantage for the Frondizi regime in responding to nationalism, is that in addition to setting the stage for proletarian support, he undermines the provincial character of traditional Argentine politics. It is a fact of logistics that revolutions, palace or factory inspired, are a lot harder to carry off in an advancing economy, than in a strictly agrarian society. Already, there are signs which point to a lessening of the ordinary *porteños* zeal for direct action. The enormous activity in the building industries, hydroelectric power projects, increased activity in the manufacture of consumer goods, and the growth of industrial centers outside of Greater Buenos Aires, make the running of society a much more complicated enterprise than it is in almost every other part of Latin America. National pride and the national economy both work in favor of Frondizi. His task now is to raise productivity and control the forms of foreign capital expenditure. Only then will the mounting inflationary pressures be curbed.

**O**F course, the factors operating to undermine Frondizi's position are not to be ignored: The need of Argentine industry to keep pace with the Brazilian neighbor to the North—a neighbor committed far more to the American economic chariot and thus to a high velocity of economic expansion; the virtual bankruptcy of the national treasury which tends to undermine Argentina's bargaining position; pressures from North American and West European capital, through cartel arrangements and underselling Argentine manufacturers on the open market; finally, there is the general pressure from the more comfortable elements for a free consumer market. Against these factors of economic



dis-equilibrium, Frondizi's hand is considerably strengthened by the troubles of United States foreign aid programs, specifically the collapse of the Middle East oil development program; the growing need of Europe for Argentine meat products; and the upsurge of interest in a Latin American economic union, independent of United States control.

The real big tests are as yet in the future; as indeed, all Argentina is a past and future, with not much to show in the present. Frondizi is apparently convinced that he must integrate the masses behind a program not too distant from Peronist socio-economic reform demands, and yet not so close as to require political integration of the

masses at the expense of constitutional guarantees. The denial of these reforms would surely result in yet another reign of terror, and greater changes in the social structure than the present regime offers. It also seems to be the case that Frondizi is relying upon the steady radicalization of the New Peronism to allow him to enlarge the scope of his efforts to extricate Argentina from its present economic morass. The New Peronism can also be employed as a warning to other sections of society that they face a far more drastic alternative unless Frondizi receives the sanction to carry out his program of liberty with power, industrialization without terrorism.

## *The Weakness in the General Motors Contract*

**A** WEAKNESS imbedded in the auto union has been brought to light during the past several months of negotiations with the Big Three automobile manufacturers. The seed of this weakness was planted in the General Motors Agreement of August 1937. When the UAW first struck this giant of the industry, the union probably had no more than 20,000 members in GM plants. The contract won gave the union bargaining rights in plants affected by the strike, elimination of piece work and seniority rights. Representation was limited and bargaining procedures were not clearly defined. One of the most serious grievances, that of speedup, could not be settled in the top negotiations, but was supposed to be worked out between the union and management on a local level. The union officials promised the delegates to the conference that ratified the first contract the full support of the union in the fight to humanize production standards.

Four months later, in August 1937, the struggle to tackle the basic working conditions of the industry was given up. A "Letter of Responsibility" was signed by President Homer Martin and the entire Executive Board of the union, which recognized the right of the company to discharge workers who participated in or advocated unauthorized strikes. On the authority of this letter (in 1938 the substance of the letter was incorporated into the GM-UAW contract, and it has been a part of the Agreement ever since), literally thousands of union members have been discharged from General Motors plants. Local union officers and committeemen have been intimidated fearing that any efforts to resist speedup might well be construed as a violation of the contract. Since quickie strikes were the main method by which the ranks resisted the worst of the speedup, the effect of this union concession can easily be understood.

Paragraph 117 of the present contract states: "During the life of this Agreement, the Union will not cause or permit its members to cause, nor will any member of the Union take part in any sit-down, stay-in, or slow-down, in any plant of the Corporation, or any curtailment of work or restriction of production or interference with production of the Corporation. The Union will not cause or permit its members to cause nor will any member of the Union take part in any strike or stoppage of any of the Corporation's operations or picket any of the Corporation's plants or premises until all the bargaining procedure as outlined in this Agreement has been exhausted. . . . The Union will not cause or permit its members to cause nor will any member of the Union take part in any dispute or issue arising out of or based upon the provisions of the Pension Plan, Insurance Program, or Supplemental Unemployment Benefit Plan; nor will the Union authorize such a strike, stoppage, or picketing. In case a strike or stoppage of production shall occur, the Corporation has the option of cancelling the Agreement at any time between the tenth day after the strike occurs and the day of settlement. *The Corporation reserves the right to discipline any employe taking part in any violation of this Section of this Agreement.*" (emphasis added.)

During Homer Martin's administration, the corporation found in this paragraph a perfect formula for discharging his opponents. When Walter Reuther was fighting for complete control of the UAW, the company again used this clause to discharge, penalize, and intimidate dissenting elements. Penalty and discharge cases are not strikable issues under the GM contract. They must be processed to the umpire. Furthermore, the union itself has set up its own review board which can throw out any grievances that it believes do not merit submission to the umpire. Since it takes months to get a strike authorized by the International Union, and it may take up to two years to process a grievance to the umpire, management has been in a position to break down any opposition.

Management's "prerogatives" are construed in such a sweeping fashion as to cripple union bargaining on working conditions. Paragraph 8 of the contract reads: "The right to hire; promote; discharge or discipline for cause; and to maintain discipline and efficiency of employes, is the sole responsibility of the Corporation except that Union members shall not be discriminated against as such. In addition, the products to be manufactured, the location of plants, the schedules of production, the methods, processes and means of manufacturing are solely and exclusively the responsibility of the Corporation."

**T**HIS contract has become a model for every employer in the country as it spells out in such extensive detail the unfavorable relationship that exists between unions and employers.

In the early years of the union, there had been many attempts on the part of the more militant elements to introduce basic contract revisions. But with Reuther's victory at the 1947 Atlantic City convention, these forces declined. In 1950, the decisive sections of the GM contract were written into the Ford and Chrysler agreements, as well. Agreements with smaller employers followed suit. Since then, there have been innumerable unauthorized strikes in Chrysler and other plants against the introduction of GM production standards. These strikes go on intermittently, but with the International Union acting as a fire brigade for the companies, the workers are fighting a losing battle.

There can be little doubt that the GM system has paid off in huge super-profits for the stockholders averaging 20 percent net returns on investment in the past decade. During this time, the company has been putting the whip to its workers with the result that the internal condition and morale of the union are very bad. The working pace is so furious that only the younger workers can take it: The majority of GM workers have less than five years seniority, whereas in Ford and Chrysler, the majority of those now employed have ten years seniority. The basic clauses of the GM contract, beginning with Homer Martin's "Letter of Responsibility" and the continuation of this policy under the administration of Walter Reuther, have constituted an important link in this evolution.

GM Worker

The long, hard trail of lumber unionism finally resulted in a strong industrial union when the CIO came along, but the new union was plagued with inner fights from its formation.

# Lumber Workers in the CIO

by Kelly Hill

**W**HEN in 1937 the northwest lumber workers regrouped to form a strong industrial union under the CIO they still carried antagonistic political philosophies in the same packsack. Earlier, the battle had been between the anarcho-syndicalist Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) and the advocates of conservative trade unionism. In this later period the timber beasts were to split up, with the politically decaying IWW members backing the conservatives against the new and militant Communists. And with these two groups clawing into its back the new union had to face an AFL, furious at being left in the lurch.

From the first bang of the gavel at the Federation of Woodworkers' convention in July at Tacoma, the real issue for everyone (except the Shingle Weavers, who walked out) was not whether the organization should affiliate with the CIO, but granted affiliation, who would control the new union. Some former IWW members and other left wingers, chiefly Communists, veterans of the 1932 unemployed struggles and the big 1935 lumber strike, combined into a tightly knit, disciplined group to support the incumbent president Harold Pritchett. This group tied a militant union program to political ideas strongly colored by the Communist Party line.

In opposition was the faction which favored a struggle for labor's "fair" share of the lumber wealth and "stable" labor relations. Though it was a minority in terms of delegates and representation, it comprised some powerful Columbia River District Council leaders and certain leaders of the Puget Sound District Council. The intricacy of the lineups was underlined by the fact that the Columbia River leaders' power rested on locals loaded with old IWW

*A previous article ("Lumber Workers' Long Battle," May 1958) carried the story of lumber unionism from its beginnings up to the formation of the CIO. Kelly Hill is the pen name of a Northwest worker.*

members who spouted revolutionary slogans, rejected contracts with employers, revolted against any centralized control, damned the Communists, and favored running their affairs as though in a little kingdom of their own. The Pritchett forces carried the vote for immediate CIO affiliation at a stormy convention and were chartered as the International Woodworkers of America (IWA).

Meantime, the AFL Carpenters Union set out to tranquilize what it viewed as a temporary estrangement of its woods cats and their dues. Hutcheson roused his henchmen in the Central Labor and Building Trades Councils and the AFL in August refused to handle lumber produced in IWA-CIO plants. After two tests in Tacoma in which the National Labor Relations Board verified that the plants were truly represented by the IWA, the AFL concentrated on treeing one pack of cats at a time. It began by throwing picket lines around seven of Portland's largest sawmills and shutting them down. Because this most bitter of lumber jurisdictional battles determined whether the new union could maintain control of the lumberworkers, its moves and counter-moves deserve detailed examination.

**O**UT on a limb without their jobs, the lumber workers appealed to the NLRB for an election. The AFL balked. The NLRB then attempted mediation between the IWA, AFL, and the employers. The regional director found himself cursed for his pains by both AFL and the employers. He thereupon proposed a temporary truce. The AFL fought it. Finally, in September, some of the mills opened and the lumberworkers quickly filed for certification for their IWA. The AFL combed the skidroad for transients, gave them two bucks and a meal and sent them into picket lines. Most of them had never seen the inside of a sawmill.



The lumberworkers mopped the streets with them and their banners. The AFL countered with goon squads made up of pugs and ex-pugs who chewed hell out of an IWA man wherever they found him. They even worked-over some of the grocers who supplied the IWA men with food. The mills closed. The lumber workers out on expeditions to scrounge a little grub found themselves so terrorized that even their wives organized into squads armed with baseball bats to protect their husbands. Hutcheson also made a significant concession to the lumber workers to undercut the IWA. He called together an Oregon-Wash-

ington Council of Lumber and Sawmill Workers and chartered it as a permanent legal body.

Again, attempts were made to open the mills but this time with AFL scabs. The lumberworkers picketed. The police gave protection to the AFL scabs. A judge granted a restraining order against the picketing lumberworkers.

The NLRB compared union records with mill payrolls and determined that the mills ranged from 68 to 92 percent IWA. The AFL damned the findings. The lumber workers proposed an election supervised by the NLRB, the unions, or a committee of civic and religious groups. The AFL denounced it as propaganda. Conditions had become so bad that an ordinary citizen didn't dare venture out at night. The Portland Council of Churches proposed a truce. The AFL rejected it. The governor of Oregon supervised an election in one plant. When it voted overwhelmingly IWA, the AFL intensified its boycott of the other mills and the governor beat a disorderly retreat to the State House.

At this critical juncture, when the lumber workers had been jobless over two months, two incidents took place which turpented the opposition faction within the IWA. IWA men picketed an AFL lumber cargo and Harry Bridges' longshoremen then refused to handle the lumber. The Waterfront employers thereupon gave Harry Bridges an ultimatum that should his men continue to refuse to handle the lumber in violation of the waterfront contract, the entire port would be closed. Faced with the possibility of a Pacific Coast tie-up, Bridges appealed to the president of the IWA, and Pritchett in turn pulled the IWA men off the picket line. Naturally, the IWA pickets at Portland were clamoring mad at their own leader.

**I**N the end, after three to four months shutdown, the sawmills began running one by one with no union contracts. The battle between the AFL and IWA for control of the plants continued on a legal level with eventual NLRB elections. But a lot of the fur had been torn off the lumber workers in the Portland area. The obvious preference of the employers for the AFL, and above all, the bitter disunity within their own union, split them apart in confusion. Still licking their wounds, they voted the AFL into power again in five Portland mills.

Another defeat came at Westwood, California. The woodworkers there had long awaited an opportunity to stretch the pelt of the 4L company union dominated by the Red River Lumber Company. When the courts found the 4L unconstitutional under the Wagner Act, it quickly changed its name to the Industrial Employees Union, and arranged its affairs comfortably so that the employer no longer sat in its meetings.

Prodded by the lumber workers, the NLRB held an election in March 1938, but due to activity by company men the IEU won overwhelmingly. In July, the company announced a wage cut of 17½ cents an hour and in a confusion of signals, the IEU men, many of whom nervously hoped the IEU was a bona-fide union, voted against the wage cut. The head office of the IEU in horror quickly revoked the charter of this local. But before the lumber workers could consolidate behind the IWA, the estranged local IEU leadership quickly requested and received a charter from the AFL. Then the company men, now

blessed by the AFL, formed vigilante packs and forcibly ran IWA men, their families and sympathizers, out of the community. At the end of a year and a half, the lumber workers who managed to return, procured an NLRB election. But the violence, hazing, and company missionary work had insured their defeat. The bargaining rights for the plant passed to the AFL.

Had the AFL not been so reactionary at this time it is probable that it would have made great inroads into the IWA, for in 1939 the internal IWA fight grew intense over the "red" issue. Aberdeen, Washington became the scene of critical battles. The AFL had made inroads into Aberdeen mills by charging that shutdowns were due, not to the poor lumber market, but to IWA subversives who were making employers unwilling to produce lumber. Within the local IWA the Pritchett forces had already lost the backing of Harry Tucker, Aberdeen local president. The Tucker group set out to clean "reds" out of the Aberdeen 5,000-man local.

The Pritchett faction countered by procuring a recording of a conversation which supposedly tied the Tucker group to the Better Business Builders of Aberdeen, a vigilante outfit spiced with enemies of labor. Using the evidence of the recording, the Pritchett forces in the International attempted to expel the Tucker group from their local offices by an exposé in the IWA newspaper, the *Timberworker*, and the whole thing came to a head at the Centralia convention. After the convention, Tucker and his associates were again elected to office in the Aberdeen local where they carried the fight a step further by preferring charges against four of the Pritchett group.

**T**HE molten feelings that accompanied these moves can be better understood when one realizes that the opposition believed the left wingers to be a dangerous, disloyal group which dictatorially forced the organization along the exact lines of a foreign-dominated Communist Party. On the reverse side, the left wingers needed no very vivid memory to picture Aberdeen, Centralia, Bellingham and the rest of the area as it had been at the peak of a similar red hunt against the IWW during and after World War I. The railroad bridge where Wesley Everest was hanged, shot, and castrated, the meeting halls that had been wrecked, the skidroads where men had been beaten, all reminded them that vigilantes had not been punished for their part in these crimes, and were ready to attack them again. They believed their adversaries were establishing connections with the vigilantes through contact with the AFL sawmill leaders who openly worked with the vigilantes.

One battle centered around an organizing drive in 1940 in which the opposition insisted that the national CIO supervise the drive. The Pritchett forces asked the CIO to act in an advisory capacity only. In the end, the national CIO paid half the cost of the organizers and placed Adolph Germer, formerly organizer for the United Mine Workers, as director in full charge. Germer and the regional officers of the CIO, from this time on, swung behind the opposition. A good organizing job brought plants in Everett and Longview into the IWA but the internal battle continued.

The administration forces were accused of interfering

with the organizing drive. On the other hand, the Pritchett group claimed that Germer and the opposition were drawing known scab-herders, finks, and company men into the newly built locals in order to build up voting power against the International officers. The battle in Aberdeen continued to mount. Delegates to the Aberdeen convention ran into red hammer and sickle stickers reading, "The Communists are Coming." Union meetings invariably included at least one fist fight. Laura Law was brutally bludgeoned to death by a man apparently hiding in her house in wait for her husband, Richard Law, a member of the International Executive Board.

AT the convention the regional directors of the CIO for both Oregon and Washington spoke against Communism and the convention barely refrained from passing a resolution that the Communist Party "cease its interference in the affairs of the IWA." At this time President Harold Pritchett had been effectively fenced off in Canada by the Immigration Department. The opposition however, was no better pleased when the first vice president, Orton, stepped into Pritchett's place to fill his unexpired term.

A rump convention of the opposition met after the regular convention and demanded that John L. Lewis, head of the CIO, take over the IWA. They charged that its present officers were nurturing factionalism, attempting to purge those opposing the theory of Communism, showing discrimination against subordinate bodies which refused to vote with the "red" machine, and using the *Timberworker* to promote the "party program."

The lefts tried to unfasten Germer as organizational director, charging that he had refused to hire administration supporters as organizers. Germer was not removed and the CIO appointed a three-man committee to hold hearings into the internal dissension of the IWA.



During the 1937-1939 period the AFL and CIO unions had moved toward establishing uniformity of contracts throughout the industry but when they asked for increases in wages the employers countered with data on the poor lumber market. In some cases the employers had asked wage cuts of 12½ cents an hour and had succeeded in putting them over. With an improved market in 1940 the Twin Districts of the IWA (Northern Washington, Grays-Willapa Harbors) succeeded in establishing a base rate of 65 cents an hour. In a howling demonstration of disunity, the Columbia River District and part of the Grays Harbor group met with the AFL to form a common wage front for

negotiation with the employers and at the same time publicly condemned the gains made by the Twin Districts.

Generally the base rate rose to 67½ cents in the beginning of 1941 and later to 75 cents as the lumber industry prospered. Still, within the IWA the opposition steadily refused to formulate union demands jointly with the administration forces. Again, the Twin Districts took the lead by going on strike for union shop, vacation pay and an end to bushelling or piece work. (In an effort to prevent the IWA from obtaining a foothold, many employers had previously granted the AFL a union shop.) The strike spread to other districts.

With 52 plants shut down the dispute came before the National Defense Mediation Board. When the Board recommended a settlement identical to that which had been previously offered by the employers, President Orton publicly denounced the mediation board as a tool of the employers. President Philip Murray of the CIO publicly reprimanded Orton.

When the opposition Columbia River District moved to accept the employer and mediation board terms, the employers quickly demanded a referendum throughout the industry. It was a move calculated to unseat Orton. It failed only because Orton had influential labor friends who held him in high esteem and translated that esteem into pressure on Murray. Murray then called Orton to Washington for a conference with the Mediation Board. The Board altered its recommendations so drastically toward union shop that the employers balked. At this point the Soviet Union entered the war, the *Timberworker* shifted its stand overnight to support of the war, and the IWA went back to work.

With the IWA administration wing supporting the war, Murray called both factions to Washington where he established a unity committee to iron out the dissension within the organization. At the convention in Everett in October 1941 a slate of "unity" officers was elected and the IWA incorporated into its constitution a section barring from membership any member of the Communist, Fascist or Nazi parties.

WITH their militant wing practically de-fanged and self-muzzled the lumber cats entered the war period with little hiss or spit in their ranks. Had not large scale desertion from the industry into the shipyards and other fields made necessary the raising of lumber wages by the government, their wage scale might have remained stationary. Production of lumber suffered so badly due to loss of workers that in December 1942 the National War Labor Board froze manpower and awarded the lumber workers on the coast a minimum wage of 90 cents an hour. Inland (Eastern Washington, Eastern Oregon, Idaho and Montana), the rate was set from 80 to 87½ cents minimum. The freeze denied further wage increases. Thereafter, the lumber workers concentrated on legal channels to gain fringe benefits.

After the war the opposition found the witch hunt well noosed to the throats of their enemies. By urging compliance with the Taft-Hartley law and by refusing to come to the aid of their cornered members of the political left, the opposition managed between the end of World War

II and 1955 to haul all the militants, backwards and by the tail, out of not only all International offices, but district and local offices as well. During these years the booming lumber market played into the opposition hands, giving them gain after gain in wages, paid holidays, vacations with pay, health and welfare protection.

But this cat-on-the-hearth holiday came to an end in 1955. The union leadership had evolved what appeared a sure-fire routine for negotiation: The bargaining committee always entered the employer's office with a strike vote in its back pocket, a vote which the lumber workers cheerfully handed them ahead of time in the reasonable assurance that they would not be called upon to back it up. But this time, with a glutted lumber market and sagging prices, the employers abruptly rejected union demands for a 25-cents-an-hour package. When it was cut to 12½ cents, they rejected it with even greater feeling. The lumber workers of the entire Douglas fir region on the Oregon, Washington, and California coast found themselves on strike. The leadership had blithely miscalculated that, even in the unlikely case of a token strike, some mills would remain working to support the workers that hit the bricks.

Badly shaken, the inland lumber workers continued to work while stalling their negotiations to await the outcome of the coast strike. The years of bureaucratic control, of unattended union meetings, of rank and file confusion, now became apparent in the lack of will to fight. To compound the trouble, the leadership knew little of building morale for disheartened men out of work—soup kitchens, rallies, singing picket lines, food scrounging expeditions, women's auxiliaries.

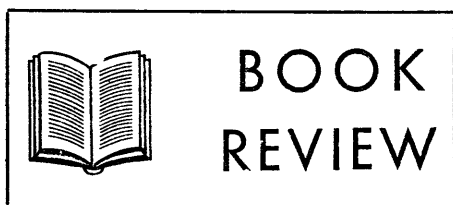
**W**HEN it became apparent that this would be a long struggle, the leadership in desperation beckoned to the surviving militants to come forward as picket captains and local strike leaders. This injected some spirit here and there but in most cases the old wounds still ached and the disillusionment had cut too deep. The strike lingered on in a condition of apathy.

After a shutdown of three months and more, the workers went back to work with a token settlement of from 5 to 7½ cents wage increase through the mediation efforts of the governors of Oregon and Washington.

Over the postwar years the AFL Sawmill and Timber Workers Union had gained through raids and employer preference until it roughly equalled the 90,000 member strength of the IWA. Its contracts roughly approximated the IWA's: 1.92½ cents an hour, plus six paid holidays, and health and welfare benefits equalling 7½ cents an hour. The industry, too, changed complexion. The employers, in competition with substitute building products, diversified into the production of plywood, pulp, and paper. Many of these plants became organized under the Pulp and Sulphite Workers and the Paper Workers, both AFL. Further, a wave of consolidations spread throughout the industry in 1955 and 1956, with the biggs swallowing the smalls and then merging to become giants.

In the spring of 1958 the lumber workers of both unions faced increased employer opposition at the bargaining table as the lumber market dived. This time the IWA leaders, in panic lest they lose the gains already achieved, proposed no increase but only a continuation of their contracts pending a rise in lumber demand. For a time many mills experimented by cutting back to seven hours a day and demanding and getting eight hours production. At the same time the mills set about installing more labor-saving machinery and shucking off their extra vice-presidents and good-time departments in readiness for the developing depression. The IWA workers by referendum vote supported their leaders' stand against striking for wage increases. However, as the lumber market grew stronger with the increase of house construction under the new FHA five-percent-down regulations for civilians and nothing down for war veterans, the AFL placed the IWA in a bad light by scattered strikes and gains.

There is at present some stirring among lumber workers to seek consolidation in one big union of all workers in lumber and allied industries—the Pulp and Sulphite union, the Paper Workers, the International Woodworkers of America, and the Lumber and Sawmill Workers.



### *The People Versus the Owners*

*THE AFFLUENT SOCIETY* by John  
Kenneth Galbraith. Houghton Mifflin  
Co., Boston, 1958, \$5.

**A**S an observer of the economic scene, Professor Galbraith has repeatedly proved himself acute in perception and witty in telling what he has perceived. As

a theorist, however, he strains hard for novelty, especially nomenclatural novelty, with little regard for a scrupulous and enduring thought pattern. This is an enjoyable book, with a lot of fine insights and telling irony, but the best way to enjoy it is not to take the theory too seriously.

*The Affluent Society*, despite its ultra-innovationist air, is actually concerned with one of the oldest questions in economics: In a society powered by the quest for privately appropriated gain, how is the welfare of society served? Adam Smith saw no clash; each man's pursuit of his private gain redounds to the benefit of all. The marginal utility school which supplanted classical economics gave essentially the same answer in its own jargon: Capitalist competition brings a maximization of utility, or satisfactions, for the entire populace. The critics who denied this rosy interpretation saw, in the manner of Veblen, an irreconcil-

able antagonism between the business interest and the social weal. Marx, characteristically, gave the question an historical answer, portraying capitalism as a mighty engine that had raised society out of medieval mire, but was now coming increasingly into conflict with its needs.

Galbraith doesn't approach this question so much as back into it by a circumspect route the reasons for which he alone can explain. We are, he tells us, still feverishly concerned with production for its own sake, although production is no longer the problem, having been thoroughly mastered. But our single-minded goal of more and more output is pursued in a highly irrational way. Many measures that would increase output are neglected in favor of "stylized" traditional means "which were relevant a century ago." We lose a great deal of production during recessions without especially bemoaning the fact. Finally and most im-

portant, it is privately produced production which, nearly alone, is regarded as important, while public services are looked upon as a burden on the country's output, to be kept to a minimum.

Galbraith has little difficulty in establishing that this pattern of our economic behavior is irrational, but his explanation of the causes is weak, patchy, and glaringly deficient in explaining anything. Plainly, our economy is dominated by a drive to increase factory output that is not the result of consumer wants, and relies upon a gigantic advertising machine to stimulate or create consumer demand where possible. But is this because economists, dominated by outmoded theories, are still in love with ever more production for its own sake, as Galbraith claims? He flatters his profession to attribute such power to it. Or is it because of other psychological hangovers from the past? One wonders at this ingenuity in dreaming up explanations for something the reason for which is perfectly plain and known to most thoughtful people. In our economy, production is not carried on for the satisfaction of human wants, but for the multiplication of capital, and there is no assured connection between the latter motive and the welfare of the nation. Take that great fact into account, and the entire picture of irrational behavior comes into focus; the psychopathology of our economic system is on the way to being understood. To leave it out is to play *Hamlet* without the Prince of Denmark. But, as Marx has been irretrievably exploded, and as no well-bred economist today repeats the musty criticisms of Victorian opponents of capitalism, Galbraith finds it necessary to contrive forty lame explanations for a pattern that has a single plain and solid one.

**T**HIS defect and irritant aside, there is much that is valuable—cleverly and even elegantly put—in this book. The atrophy of the public services, with education, sanitation, social security, and the like maintained on a starvation level, is becoming a scandal in the richest country on earth, and Galbraith makes it his business to throw some of his heaviest bricks in that direction: "In the general view it is privately produced production that is important, and that nearly alone. This adds to national well-being. Its increase measures the increase in national wealth. Public services, by comparison, are an incubus. They are necessary, and they may be necessary in considerable volume. But they are a burden which must, in effect, be carried by the private production."

*Such attitudes lead to some interesting contradictions. Automobiles have an importance greater than the roads on which they are driven. We welcome expansion of telephone services as improving the general well-being but accept curtailment of postal services as signifying necessary economy. We set great store by the increase in private wealth but regret the added outlays for the police force by which it is protected.*

*Vacuum cleaners to insure clean houses are praiseworthy and essential in our standard of living. Street cleaners to insure clean streets are an unfortunate expense. Partly as a result, our houses are generally clean and our streets filthy. . . . Even among economists and political philosophers, public services rarely lose their connotation of burden. Although they may be defended, their volume and quality are almost never a source of pride.*

We have heard every industry from comic books to missiles boast of the increasing volume of business, but who ever heard such a boast from the schools, or any other public service? Their boast, on the contrary, is how small their budgets have been kept. The reason for the startling contrast is pretty much apparent: The standards of our business community naturally favor the widest possible expansion of private production, which means the multiplication of capital, and frown severely on governmental expense, which means increased taxes and a deduction from capital. But the reader will have to formulate the cause for himself, without the benefit of Galbraith's lucid prose, for here again he limps along: "There are a number of reasons for these attitudes, but again tradition plays a dominant role." It seems that governments used to be unreliable, expensive, often rapacious. "Not surprisingly, modern economic ideas incorporated a strong suspicion of government."

Since production must be maintained, and if possible increased, at all costs, an intricate system of debt creation and consumer persuasion has come into being. The first, Galbraith treats soberly, as an immediate danger to economic stability. The second, he treats ironically: "In a society where virtuosity in persuasion must keep pace with virtuosity in production, one is tempted to wonder whether the first can forever keep ahead of the second. For while production does not clearly contain within itself the seed of its own disintegration, persuasion may. On some not distant day, the voice of each individual seller may well be lost in the collective roar of all together. Like injunctions to virtue and warnings of socialism, advertising will beat helplessly on ears that have been conditioned by previous assault to utter immunity. Diminishing returns will have operated to the point where the marginal effect of outlays for every kind of commercial persuasion will have brought the average effect to zero. It will be worth no one's while to speak, for since all speak none can hear. Silence, interrupted perhaps by brief, demoniacal, outbursts of salesmanship, will ensue."

**I**N much the same spirit, Galbraith spits and roasts the educational system. Pointing out that in the case of a talented youngster, "his future employer can hardly be expected to invest in an asset that may materialize in the plant of a competitor or another industry," he proposes a kind of

Swiftian scheme: "Could it be legally arranged that youngsters were sorted out at an early age, possibly by their test scores in mathematics, and the promising then be indentured for life to a particular corporation, the flow of investment into human development might soon be placed on a rough parity with that into material capital. Firms would perceive the need for investing in their scientific and engineering stock much as major league baseball clubs have learned the wisdom of investing in their farm teams. Under ideal arrangements any surplus talent could be marketed. The cost of unsuccessfully trying to educate the inevitable errors of selection would be either written off or partially retrieved by using the individuals as salesmen."

In a more serious vein, Galbraith urges a strong effort to redress the social balance and break our present dependence on a cycle of production, debt creation, frantic advertising, and still more production of things that we would not miss, by a system of unemployment compensation that rises to nearly the level of wages as unemployment rises, by the much expanded use of the sales tax to finance increased government outlays, by broader education and investment in human beings as against material things, and by an expansion of that class of people whose life goals merge with their work, instead of standing apart in hostility to it. As a liberal program, it is pretty good, apart from the one typical Galbraithian twist of an expanded sales tax. It may come as a surprise to him, but there are millions of people in the affluent society who couldn't afford it. For one of the characteristics of the affluent society practically omitted from this book is that while the society is rich, most of the people are not.

H. B.

## Five Books on Labor

*AS UNIONS MATURE* by Richard A. Lester. Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1958, \$3.75.

*LABOR UNION THEORIES IN AMERICA* by Mark Perlman. Row, Peterson and Company, Evanston, 1958, \$6.

*LABOR AND THE NEW DEAL* edited by Milton Derber and Edwin Young. University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1957, \$6.

*A DECADE OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS RESEARCH 1946-1956* edited by Neil W. Chamberlain, Frank C. Pierson, Theresa Wolfson. Harper and Brothers, New York, 1958, \$3.50.

*LABOR IN A GROWING ECONOMY* by Melvin W. Reder. John Wiley and Sons, New York, 1957, \$6.50.

**M**OST of the literature on the labor movement coming off the presses these days is a product of the industrial relations institutes of the universities. By and large, it is a very unsatisfactory product. It is so excessively technical in its approach and written up in such exclusive academic



jargon as to preclude being of much interest to the ordinary reader. And as a contribution to science and an addition to the wisdom of the ages, the literature suffers from the failings of so much official present-day social science writing: an absence of an integrated viewpoint and a preoccupation with researches of small areas. The literature is increasingly one written by specialists and designed for the reading of other specialists—people who have been defined as knowing more and more about less and less. Consequently, most of these books are not the sort to recommend to one's friends for an afternoon's entertainment. Still, some of them contain a lot of important factual data, and are indispensable to the student seeking specific information.

Although there are probably a score or more of labor and industrial relations divisions in existence in various colleges and universities, there is less actual sympathy and feeling of kinship with the labor movement among its students than was true in John R. Commons' lone outpost in Wisconsin forty years ago. The modern graduate is not a labor sympathizer but a professional technician. It is in most cases a matter of indifference to him whether he works for labor, management, or government, just as the sixteenth-century mercenary cared nothing in which armies he fought so long as he received adequate compensation.

**C**ERTAINLY it is bizarre that a labor giant encompassing over a 17½-million-member movement should wield no greater weight in the intellectual community than did Gompers' relatively puny setup a half century ago. But the paradox disappears when we consider that the labor leaders have no distinctive social ideas or message of their own, and generally repeat the propositions emanating from the academic community itself. Consequently, they are not the authors or sponsors of any distinctive labor literature. Aside from commissioning on occasion court portraits of labor leaders, or subsidizing the production of canned biographies of their organizations, they remain content to have the unions' efforts in the publications field limited to the party line self-adulatory house-organ labor papers. Until a radical literature reappears in our country, much of our food for thought will necessarily continue coming from the academic farms.

As *Union Mature* is a project of the industrial relations section of Princeton University. It is presented as a theoretical "think piece," and "a pioneer attempt in an emotionally-charged area." But what Mr. Lester is pioneering is difficult to see since the book's essential argument had been formulated by Commons before the first World War, and is nowadays a cliché of the middle class world. The argument is the familiar one that unions are boisterous and aggressive when they are young and seeking recognition, and that they settle down to more pacific and statesmanlike behavior when they mature and get estab-



lished. As Mr. Lester formulates it for the present labor movement: "... the trend toward maturity is pronounced . . . increasing centralization and machine control, a shift from class struggle radicalism to moderation and accommodation with management, a decline in the rate of membership expansion and in pioneering and missionary zeal, and a significant decrease in the use of the strike weapon."

**W**HILE the author's exposition is not the bold innovation that he apparently imagines it to be, his summaries of the status of labor affairs and practices, both in this country and in England and Sweden, are both cogent and accurate. His predictions of events to come may be less so since they consist of an extrapolation of the present into the future based on the questionable assumptions of continuing boom and relative labor stagnation.

Of particular interest is Mr. Lester's discussion of union wage policies. Summarizing the conclusions of a number of investigators, he believes that generally speaking wage increases have been as great percentage-wise in non-union as in well-organized industries. Only in the mid-thirties does it appear that wages were rising more rapidly in the well-organized sectors. Unions have also not tampered materially with wage structures to correspond to their bargaining power in different lines. These two propositions, taken in conjunction with the stability in the share of the national income which labor has received since 1929 despite the material strengthening of its organizations, confirm for the author his thesis that unions behave like "sleepy monopolies"—at least after they settle down and the leadership becomes entrenched.

The same tendency has been displayed apparently in British and other European unions, although the process works itself out in different administrative forms in various countries. In Britain, for instance, there is a tremendous gap between workers' actual earnings and the wage rates negotiated by the national unions. The past decade has witnessed a surge of protesting unofficial local strikes which seem to have gotten good results. It has been calculated that one-fifth of the increase in hourly earnings from 1938 to 1955 is accounted for by the excess paid by employers above the nationally negotiated figures. The author concludes: "It would seem either that bargaining at the national level has not pushed wages up as much as the full employment, inflationary conditions would warrant or that bargaining power is sufficient at the local level to gain increases on the basis of

ability to pay."

The book is only 155 pages long, it reads easily, and can be completed in a sitting or two. It is well worth the effort.

*Labor Union Theories in America* by Mark Perlman of the political economy department at Johns Hopkins University is a very necessary volume. It goes into the origins and contributions of the various schools or tendencies of thought that have developed in connection with labor writing and research.

Richard T. Ely's pioneering work on the labor movement in 1886 paved the way for the study of labor problems in the academic world. Although he was a Christian welfarist and his book was written from a moral uplift point of view, the very subject matter was considered radical in many quarters in those years and Ely was subjected to a witch-hunt attack and his dismissal demanded some years later when he received an appointment at Wisconsin.

**E**LY had begun his labor studies in Johns Hopkins, but after his departure, interest in trade unionism waned. At the beginning of the century, however, a new systematic effort was begun under the guidance of Jacob Hollander and George E. Barnett. The Hollander-Barnett approach emphasized methodology and was responsible for much of the subsequent academic research on the structure, statistics, and administration of trade unions.

In 1904, Ely brought John R. Commons to Wisconsin. The latter with the help of a number of qualified assistants began an exhaustive history of the American labor movement. The resultant studies established the so-called Wisconsin school or approach toward American labor developments.

The author also discusses at length the contributions of Robert F. Hoxie, Carleton H. Parker, Frank Tannenbaum, as well as some of the socialist writers.

His division of the tendencies of thought into five theories is not especially instructive and his exposition of some of the contributions is at times garrulous and stumbling. Particularly in his discussion of the socialist writers does he display the greatest difficulty in following their line of thought. But he manages to pack into his volume a considerable amount of useful historical, biographical, and quotation material. This is the first attempt that has been made to describe and synthesize the various labor contributions, and it fills an important need.

*Labor and the New Deal* is a compilation of essays worked up as a joint product of various members of the economics department of the University of Wisconsin and the labor and industrial relations institute of the University of Illinois. Most of the pieces are valuable. Possibly the Wisconsin tradition of clear writing accounts for the fact that the authors do not stray into the semi-mysticism and statistical obscurantism prevalent in some of the academic writing in the field. The book covers a wide range of subjects including studies of the Wagner Act, protective legislation, social security and so on.



TWO of the essays are particularly noteworthy. "Growth and Expansion" by Milton Derber is a good factual resumé of the extent and penetration of unionism from the New Deal to the present. "The Impact of the Political Left" by Bernard Karsh and Phillips L. Garman is a useful survey of the influence of the main radical groups in unions, strikes, unemployed movements, and organization campaigns during the thirties.

*A Decade of Industrial Research* consists of six essays which attempt to summarize the investigations that have been conducted over the past ten years in the fields of union government, collective bargaining, wage determination, economic effects of unionism, employee benefit plans, and labor movements abroad. This type of summary is clearly important, and the bibliographical references attached to each of the essays calls the reader's attention to the main pertinent writings of the decade. Unfortunately, the summation of the various researches impresses the reader forcibly not only with the vast amount of specific data that has been gathered but also the intellectual impasse and the utter disorientation of the enterprise. A few of the participants in the game have even taken to belaboring themselves and their colleagues and calling loudly for a theory that will bring some coherence out of the welter of disjointed facts. But since the atmosphere in the American intellectual community is no more conducive to social criticism than is the atmosphere around the Kremlin, the results are not likely to be any more productive than the results from the peremptory demand that has been made upon the artists in Russia to get busy and produce some masterpieces.

*Labor in a Growing Economy* is a textbook designed for a one-semester undergraduate course in labor economics. It is naturally a ready compendium of many of the governing prejudices of the day presented as timeless, self-evident truths. Nevertheless, Mr. Reder has produced a well-conceived, well-written, and skillfully organized text which will be found very useful by all labor students, whether they are taking undergraduate courses or not. Mr. Reder manages to include good running presentations of a great many of the important questions in the field and his outlines of the material are well developed and to the point.

B. C.

## Diversion of Mandarins

FROM A WRITER'S NOTEBOOK by Van Wyck Brooks. E. P. Dutton, New York, 1958, \$3.

OUR most distinguished historian of American letters has here assembled leaves from his notebook, ranging from occasional aphorisms to brief discussions of the art of the novel and the state of criticism in America today.

Necessarily, such a book is difficult to define, as its structure is furnished solely

by the warmth and incisiveness of the author's personality. In the case of Van Wyck Brooks that personality is well known to all students of American letters—it stands for a humanist, liberal approach to our cultural history somewhat in the tradition of V. L. Parrington. Brooks has always been a nationalist in literature and usually in the better sense of that term. The present volume reflects his continuing search for the permanent as opposed to the ephemeral qualities of American experience.

In one of the most interesting passages of the book he discusses the current plight of the avant-garde in our literature and, correctly, I think, ascribes its present sorry position to its withdrawal from any concern with extra-literary subject matter.

"Hence," he writes, "we have the well-known avant-garde 'party line' which advances, at one moment, this poet or that, at another moment 'going native,' with the master list of authors that is ordained from above by those whose tastes are imposed and never questioned. From one end of the country to another one recognizes this party line the moment one enters avant-garde circles, just as one recognizes the master list. Hearing the name 'John Donne' pronounced one knows what is to follow—James, Dante, Eliot, Melville, Joyce and so on. All other writers are excluded, and so are most readers. With the avant-garde, literature has become a 'mysterious diversion of mandarins' . . ."

This situation has arisen, Brooks feels, largely because the avant-garde has fallen into the hands of the editors of the academic "little reviews," the critics and the professors. "Since for them literature has ceased to be an expression of society, they too have ceased to be obliged to reflect the world; and they can play a sort of literary solitaire in which psychological puppets serve for real people. Young critics who have not won their spurs can become authorities over-night by analyzing in some new fashion a few lines of Dante, or they can destroy in the eyes of their students—thanks to the glamour that teaching has acquired—the life-work of serious writers who are outside the party. Why should they object to the central control that destroys their independence, inasmuch as they have won security by giving this up? 'Timid men,' as Jefferson said, 'prefer the calm of despotism to the boisterous sea of liberty,' and writers have many reasons to be timid in our time."

CORRECT as this picture is in general, there are fortunately signs that it will not forever remain true. Already among younger writers and literary experimentalists there are growing signs of revolt against the conservatism and aloofness from social questions of the past decade. The banners of rebellion are again being raised in "little magazines," whether by anarchists, socialists or pacifists, and one of the catchwords of West Coast poets such as Rexroth and Ferlinghetti has been that of counter-attack against academic conservatism. Whether this attack can do more than dent the

fortresses of academia is another question, but its mere presence is heartening. Voices of protest are being heard again among the avant-garde and while the language they speak is hardly that of Van Wyck Brooks, he should be encouraged to hope that the Season of Ice is nearing its end.

GEORGE HITCHCOCK

STATEMENT REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AS AMENDED BY THE ACTS OF MARCH 3, 1933, AND JULY 2, 1946 (Title 39, United States Code, Section 233) SHOWING THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION OF *The American Socialist*, published monthly at New York, N. Y. for October 1, 1958.

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/s/ Elaine Roseland  
Business Manager

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 8th day of September, 1958.

(Seal) /s/ Ethel Supnick

Notary Public, State of New York, No. 249250100, qualified in Kings County, certificate filed in Kings County, certificate filed in New York County, My commission expires March 30, 1960.

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**T**HIS is the time of year to remind our readers that the American Socialist makes a fine and much-appreciated Christmas gift.

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