

# *The American* **Socialist**

Special Analysis:

## **THE NASSER REVOLUTION**

### **Our Bankrupt Foreign Policy**

- **Berlin Crisis**
- **Failure of  
Military "Realism"**



### **Anatomy of an Old-Line Union**

*JANUARY 1959*

*35 CENTS*

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## About a Filler

With reference to the filler in your November 1958 issue, quoting Herbert H. Lehman as saying of the Communists: "... who, in my judgment, are the most reactionary element of all," if you people believe this kind of nonsense I want no more of you—and if you don't, you have no business printing such rot.

What the Chinese are accomplishing for their hitherto starving millions, and what the Soviets have already accomplished (by whatever means) makes us armchair punks look pretty sick!

The greatest good for the greatest number means a socialist society, and they are far closer to that than we are—due to foggy thinking like Lehman's.

J. W. H. Florida

[This is a good opportunity to make it clear that we don't necessarily endorse every sentiment or idea we reprint in our boxes and other fillers. For example, what we quoted from Senator Lehman's article in the *Progressive* struck us as important because he attributed the "impoverishment" of present day liberalism in part to the "virtual disappearance of radicals from the American scene within the last twenty years." In the course of developing this point Lehman set down the above characterization of American Communists. We have made clear our opinion of the Communists on many occasions in these pages, and have also assessed developments in China and Russia from a democratic socialist point of view. Editorials and articles by the editors alone can be taken as reflecting the editors' viewpoint. However, we do not deem it our right to mangle or operate on another man's view. It seemed to us sufficiently striking that Senator Lehman, with all of his non-radical views, would pay such a tribute to radicalism and its importance for America. It is our further belief that a socialist press, especially today, should reflect varying viewpoints of Left and liberal opinion, and that editors and readers alike should display a tolerant and open-minded attitude.—The Editors.]

I have recently been talking with some local trade union leaders. They have a small group which is interested in working for greater influence for labor in politics, and eventually sees the formation of a labor party. Several of this group are friends of mine, though their leader as yet has some hesitation about involving himself with known socialists.

To what extent this reflects developments elsewhere I am not certain. But I myself think that a trade union party is the only possible "next step" for the American Left.

My talks of recent weeks convince me that (if trade unionists elsewhere are like

those locally) the only thing which now holds Reuther, Meany, and their like, back from having a great deal more political power than they have ever had before is their own inability to produce an ideology to serve as a basis for such political power.

If Left periodicals were to start expounding this, and start publicizing what trade union parties have meant to workers in England, Sweden, Israel, and all the countries which have trade union parties, then I think union leaders can be drawn into the thing.

I feel that if the *American Socialist* would systematically tie its own future and that of the American Left to the vision of building a trade union party, this would be a more important step than anyone else has yet taken toward a reunification of the American Left.

New England Reader

Just a note to congratulate you on a top-notch issue, that of October 1958. The ineffable battle of the millionaires was wonderfully portrayed, and Alexander Saxton had a fine review. I know how hard it is to keep a magazine up to a high level. . . .

Harvey O'Connor Rhode Island

## Nationalize Railroads?

So it comes to pass that one of our "free" enterprises wants to be "socialized"—the Iron Horse. ["The Iron Horse Slows Down," December 1958.] Yes, it is in the cards. All

of us can see that when labor merchants advise to nationalize the railroads they got the news right out of the horse's mouth; that the owners wish to get out from under the load. They had milked that horse long enough and they squeezed out juice now invested in the trucking and air transport industries; now they want to unload on Uncle Sam. Of course it's the history of all the nationalized industry in the world, except Russia.

Mr. Harry Braverman gave us a beautiful demonstration of the case in England ["Socialism and the Mixed Economy," February 1958]. But why is it that the same magazine which published Mr. Braverman's article publishes "The Iron Horse Slows Down"? Because it's in the cards? Is it the fate of socialists to serve as the high constable, to pick up all the dead dogs, cats, and horses off the streets, in order to save capitalism? What has that to do with socialism?

S. D. Pennsylvania

## Socialist Administration

I would like to state my agreement with the letter by Don Harrison in the November issue. I think much more attention should be paid to what a socialist administration will look like, and ideas on how to extend democracy and keep bureaucracy from flourishing. I think education will have a great deal to do with it. One of the benefits of automation under a socialized and planned economy is that it will enable the great masses of people to have time to educate themselves, this high degree of education in turn enabling society to function more harmoniously.

G. L. Pennsylvania

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## The American Socialist

January 1959

Vol. 6, No. 1

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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## Berlin Crisis

WE have certainly picked a gay time to live in! Threatening *démarches* . . . atom-bomb rattling . . . naval demonstrations . . . dispatch of troops. . . Thus, the second half of the twentieth century unrolls in all its glory and promise. In the summer, American and British soldiers poured into Lebanon and Jordan and the Near East was on the verge of a blowup. In the fall, the guns went off from the China mainland hurling death and destruction on the offshore islands and the United States sent its greatest naval armada to patrol the Chinese waters. Winter has brought us a new crisis over Berlin. The cold war goes on and on and on. If the incidents continue to multiply, it may soon be necessary to rechristen it the "lukewarm war."

If we try to determine responsibility for the "incidents" by the yardstick of "aggression," or "who fired the first shot?," it would appear that the United States and Britain were to blame for the Near East imbroglio, that Communist China was responsible for the "little war" in the Quemoy area, and that currently Russia is the guilty party for the tension over Berlin. Actually, as the most authoritative historians found in their investigations into the causes of the first World War, this criterion is worthless. To make head or tail of such a complex, devious, and in many ways, unprecedented conflict as the cold war, one has to cut away the outer layers of tendentious argumentation, the propaganda stereotypes and legalisms, the pot-and-kettle accusations, and go more deeply into the essentials of the world mess.

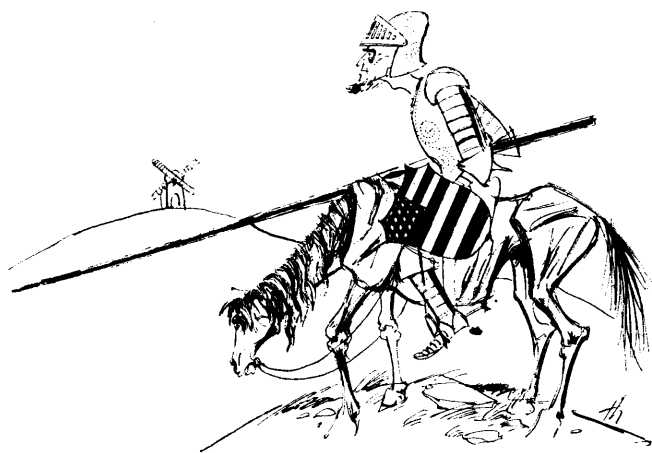
The Anglo-American war alliance with Russia was based on a miscalcula-

tion. The Americans and British thought a bled and disrupted Russia could be pressured in the international arena. They never dreamed it would stage a comeback so rapidly. World War II ended in August 1945. And by March of the next year—within seven months—Churchill was proclaiming on behalf of the allies that Russia was now the enemy. The rise of a new first-class power on the European continent would have excited the fears of Britain and the United States in any case. But ordinarily, their different interests could have been com-

posed for a generation, if not longer. The anti-capitalist nature of Russian power added the fuels of a social and ideological conflict to the flames of divergent strategic interests. That is why, a few months after the Potsdam Conference, the wartime allies found themselves completely deadlocked over the disposition of Germany and the organization of Europe—and each began

arming and building up strength against the other.

THE Potsdam terms—the stripping of about a fifth of German territories east of the Oder and Neisse rivers, with the northern half of East Prussia absorbed by Russia, and the remainder appropriated by Poland; the imposition of four-power military rule; the dismantling of German industry; the exaction of huge reparations—were in many ways even harsher than those of the Versailles Treaty. They guaranteed new disasters: Either the eventual re-emergence of a *revanchist* Germany seeking to regain its lost territories and power; or the decay of Germany along with much of Europe leaving the continent a prey to anarchy and violence. As an assertion of the time-honored conqueror's peace settlements based on the motto: "Woe to the Vanquished!" the Potsdam declaration was one of a long tradition of man's wars, inhumanities, and follies. As a program, in the words of the Potsdam statement, for "the eventual reconstruction of German life on a democratic basis and for the eventual peaceful co-operation in international life by Germany," it was a mockery found-



ed on hypocrisy, or ignorance, or both.

The Potsdam machinery started to break down before the ink had dried on the sonorous proclamation. The Americans and British in their occupation zone made some half-hearted attempts at "denazification" and breaking up the business cartels, syndicates and trusts. But they quickly found out that to seriously "denazify" a country

in which the whole business class had backed Hitler was equivalent to tearing down the capitalist leadership and structure. Hence, they began to soft-pedal this aspect of the Potsdam program, and "denazification" became one of those lofty precepts, highly honored—but more in the breach than in the observance.

The other Potsdam brainstorm didn't pan out either. To "decartelize" industry and place "primary emphasis" on agriculture and local industry in a highly advanced industrial country like Germany was to condemn at least half of the population to slow death—as critics of Morgenthau's "pastoral economy" plan had pointed out two years earlier. As it was, America and Britain had to pour in half a billion dollars annually between 1945 and 1948 to keep the German population on a subsistence level. So this too washed out. And the same crowd—replenished with some new names of sons, nephews, cousins, and front men—that had run German industry before climbed back into the drivers' seats.

**T**HE Russians were carrying through in their zone their general East-European policy: They expropriated the landowners and turned the land over to the peasants; they undermined the existing parties and capitalist organizations and established the political climate for the eventual statification of the economy. This social revolutionary overturn might have won them considerable support among the people but for an additional fact: the anti-capitalist policy was wrapped up in a package that included dictatorship and plunder. Under Stalin's evil inspiration, the Russians were dismantling industries and shipping them as well as raw materials to the East. They demanded, in addition, their pound of flesh in reparations from the Western zones (all in strict accordance, incidentally, with the provisions of the Potsdam Agreement).

The temptation to drain the utmost out of Germany can easily be understood. Russia had been ravished by Hitler's armies, and this seemed its best chance to kill two birds with one stone: rapidly rebuild its own economy; at the same time disembowel its hereditary enemy and block the re-emerg-

ence of a strong Germany. The temptation and the provocation were there. Nevertheless, it was a short-sighted policy, like a lot of Stalin's *realpolitik*, and the Soviets have paid, and are paying today, a heavy price for their decade of plundering. To the German people it appeared as if the West afforded them the only chance of living as a nation, whereas from the Russians they could expect neither consideration nor mercy. Small wonder that the Soviets enjoy so little support today among the German people of either zone, and that the capitalists rule the roost again in Western Germany.

The Communists originally tried to break out of this vicious circle of nationalist hatreds and recurring wars of revenge. Their watchword in 1917 was: "No reparations and no indemnities." Stalin changed this to "All the reparations and all the indemnities we can grab." His decision to play the imperialist game has brought Russia not only the benefits but also the liabilities: the hatred of the peoples whose countries have been pillaged. His successors eased the pressure after the Polish and Hungarian warnings. But sons have to bear the sins of their fathers. And the Soviet Note of November 27 which proposes to convert West Berlin into a demilitarized free city, still carries echoes of this adventurist line.

The divergent pulling and hauling of the Anglo-Americans and Russians paralyzed the Allied Control Council, and the Potsdam provision to administer Germany as one economic unit was stillborn. With the deadlock complete, the United States embarked on its fateful policy of re-building a strong capitalist Germany and incorporating it in a new anti-Soviet military coalition. One event began to follow the next with all the inevitability of a Greek tragedy.

**B**Y the summer of 1946, the Americans and British started negotiations to fuse their two occupation zones. At the same time, public discussions were initiated about revising the Potsdam Agreement on Germany's eastern frontiers. A year later came the Marshall Plan. Molotov arrived in Paris with eighty experts and assistants to talk about Russian participation. Six days later he broke off discussions

and returned to Moscow. On July 8, Masaryk, the foreign minister of Czechoslovakia, announced that his country would participate in the plan. The West promptly hailed the move as a break with the Soviet Union. Two days later, the Czechoslovakian government announced its withdrawal from the plan. Seven months later it was replaced with a Communist government. Communist governments also took over in the other Soviet-occupied countries of Eastern Europe. In March 1948, General Sokolovsky walked out of the Allied Control Council in Berlin, stating that the Western Powers had abandoned the attempt at four-power rule of Germany. By the summer, the French were pressured into merging their zone into the common Western zone; Western Germany was to participate in the Marshall Plan; the three Western Powers introduced a new currency in their area and the Western parts of Berlin. Stalin retaliated by sealing off Berlin. The well-known Berlin airlift succeeded after ten months in breaking the blockade.

The West was now hell bent to organize its new military coalition which presumably would be sufficiently overwhelming to push Russia back to its pre-war frontiers if not beyond them. The Russians retaliated by militarizing the Eastern zone. In the summer of 1949, the West German Republic was organized. By October, Russia announced the creation of the German Democratic Republic in the East. At the end of the year, the British and American press carried reports of high-level plans to rearm West Germany. The Communists in East Germany were then reported to be reorganizing the People's Police into a military force. NATO, the full-fledged Western military alliance, was set up. Russia countered with the signing of the Warsaw Pact.

These war-like moves and counter-moves, this daring and double-daring of each other, have now been going on for ten years. German rearming is on its way, and Germany itself has risen like a phoenix from the ashes to become the most powerful country in Western Europe. But this display has not budged Russia or its allies. On the contrary, they are more self-confident than ever, and are applying their not inconsiderable abilities to pressure the

other side. While the Western diplomats are continuing to add story upon story to their military structure, two new factors have built up which have changed the contours of the East-West struggle and in some ways by-passed the German problem.

**T**HE post-war rise of the Soviet Union has been more spectacular than Germany's. Its seven-year plan envisages that by 1965 its industrial output will increase another four-fifths, its national income by two-thirds, its wage and farm income by two-fifths. Fifteen million new housing flats and seven million new rural homes are promised. The grain target—some 180 million tons—is roughly the same as the unfulfilled objective of two previous plans, but is backed this time by Khrushchev with his agricultural reforms and the promise of a million new tractors, 400,000 new harvesters, and a trebled supply of fertilizers. Total agricultural output is projected at a 70 percent increase.

Russia's phenomenal record of growth, symbolized by its quadrupling of steel production since the end of the second World War, has made most Western statesmen wary of pooh-pooh-

outlines of the plan will be realized. Even if the boast is excessive that by 1965 Soviet per capita output will occupy first place in Europe, and that by 1970, it will surpass present United States output—even if this is excessive, it is little consolation to the Western strategists if a few additional years are needed to make it come true. Harry Schwartz, the *New York Times* writer, goes as far as to say: "If the targets outlined by him [Khrushchev] for 1965 and 1970 are actually attained on schedule, then in the next decade or so the Communist world will clearly have won the economic competition with the West and, quite possibly, the political and propaganda contest for the allegiance of the uncommitted underdeveloped nations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America as well."

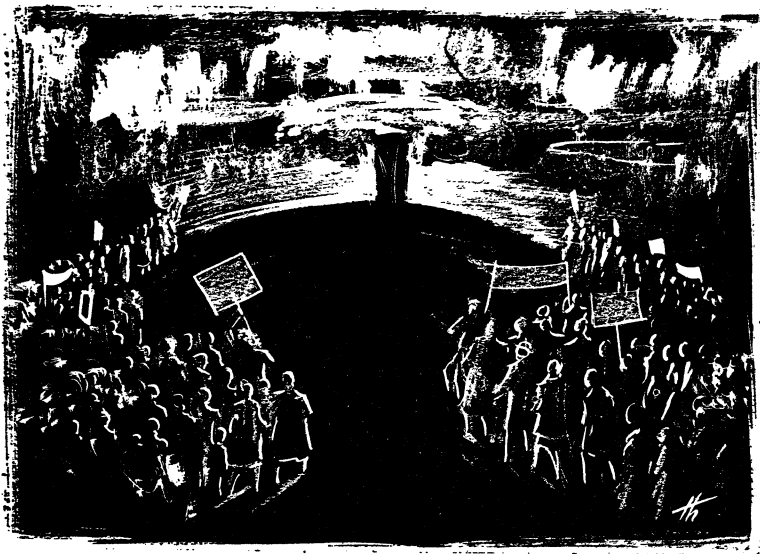
Khrushchev also predicted that by 1965 the Communist bloc will have more industrial production than the rest of the world put together. Here again—whether the proposition will prove accurate within several percentage points or not—we are listening to far more than an empty boast. After ten years of costly great-power nationalism, Russia has established more equitable economic relations with its satellite

its steel, and had more than trebled industrial production as against pre-war figures.

**A**S for China, it is no exaggeration to say that there is no parallel in the history of mankind for the bootstrap operation now going on there—and that includes Stalin's Russia of the thirties. As a matter of fact, the people are being driven and worked too hard. Reports talk of a ten-million-ton steel production (double that of a year ago!); industrial production as a whole is supposed to be half again as great as the previous year; extensive reclamation and irrigation projects have opened up enormous tracts of new farm lands; there are bumper harvests which in food grains are estimated from 265 to 330 million tons—a gain of anywhere from 40 to 100 percent over a year ago. (The figures vary a good deal.) Communist China a decade ago took over 16,000 miles of badly damaged railroad track. The old facilities have been repaired, the old lines double-tracked in Manchuria and Central China, and 18,000 miles of new track have been laid.

What do all these figures prove? Global comparisons, of course, are necessarily very general, and even more so when we are comparing economies operating on totally different principles. It is also very important to clearly establish what any set of statistics is designed to establish: relative economic strength for what end? To maintain a privileged class? To build tail-finned automobiles? To go to the moon? To make war? If we limit the comparison for just two propositions that are of immediate relevance: the ability to wage military war and the ability to wage economic war—it is our conclusion that the Communist bloc is right now roughly as strong as the capitalist bloc in the first department; that it will probably be as strong in the second instance within another fifteen years.

It is a truism that the revolution in the art of war has checkmated the two sides. Both have piled up enough lethal armaments to wipe each other out, and in the process, endanger the continuation of civilization, and possibly life, on the planet. With nuclear weapons, intermediate and soon, intercontinental, missiles, faster-than-sound jet aircraft, submarines that can serve as missile-



ing the announced targets. Whether this or that specific set of figures is fully realized, and regardless of the many social strains which the Soviet planners will confront, the Western competition is up against this overall proposition: On the basis of its previous record, it appears that the general

nations. A common market is now in existence, the other countries are dovetailed into Russian economic planning, and the semblance of an international division of labor has been inaugurated. In 1957, the East-European countries produced a quarter of the bloc's electricity, two-fifths of its coal, one-fifth of

launching sites, the United States can reduce Russia to ashes without having Germany; and conversely its alliance with Germany will not save it from a similar fate at the hands of Russia—if the two powers go to war.

**WE** can clear the boards of all considerations of morality, humanity, civilization, progress, human rights, etc., and simply consider the problem from the viewpoint of traditional cold-blooded diplomacy and power politics—and we would have to conclude that the State Department Acheson-Dulles NATO strategy is bankrupt, and what is worse, risky to the point of unreason. In ten years, it has not achieved any single part of its objective toward rolling back Russia. And neither Dulles nor Adenauer can point to one proposition on which to rest hope that it will be any different in the future. As a matter of fact, time is not working for them; the relationship of forces is slowly changing in their disfavor. That's what is at the bottom of all three recent crises.

Let us recall that the United States was the only power that emerged out of the second world holocaust unhurt. It stood at the pinnacle of its strength and thought that for the foreseeable future it was destined to be the overlord of the world. Humanity was to be organized under the dictate of *Pax Americana*. But with the Cyclopean growth of the Communist bloc and the burgeoning colonial revolution, many of the post-war positions of the American Empire no longer correspond to the power realities. When Mao took over a ruined and divided China in 1950, he had to tolerate seizure of China's offshore islands. But the maintenance of a mercenary force in Quemoy, Matsu, and Taiwan is untenable today. Even though the Chinese Communists have not dislodged the foe in the recent shooting, it is they who are now blockading the offshore islands, and not the other way around. And Dulles' policy of provocation in Chinese waters is every day getting more difficult to pursue. Similarly, the presence of four foreign armies in Berlin, and the maintenance in the Western part of the city of an espionage center against the East is "abnormal," to quote Walter Lippman. Even if the Western powers manage to hang on in

Berlin in the immediate future, their position has already been undermined. And continued occupation of the city that is one hundred miles within the borders of East Germany is an anomaly that cannot go on indefinitely.

**WE** are now up against what Tammany Hall politicians used to call a condition, not a theory. The Soviet bloc is there. It is strong and it is armed as the Western world is. It cannot be conjured away. The Western statesmen have to decide that as they cannot go to war, they have to negotiate a settlement. To do neither one nor the other, but utter wild imprecations, is not policy, or strategy, but a tantrum. Their answer to the latest crisis over Germany is typical. Eisenhower looks up between rounds of golf to announce that the West stands firm. Dulles, like a high-pressure salesman, is roaming around Europe trying to sell "Honest Johns" to unenthusiastic customers. Adenauer (another of the Free World's leaders) tells the press that it is not yet time to talk with the Russians.

The Eastern leaders, truth to tell, are the only ones with a practical solution to the impasse. We are not referring to Khrushchev's proposal to convert Western Berlin into an open city—the proposal was part of a chess play.

We are talking of the Rapacki Plan and the proposal to neutralize Germany. Taking for granted the existence of the two war blocs, they say, let us create a nuclear-free area in central Europe; and let the two Germanys be federated and neutralized. Both proposals would ease tensions and dangers while leaving the existing balance of power intact. But the United States rejected the Soviet offer made in 1952 to have a united and neutralized Germany, and remains adamant in its stance, now that the price for a federated neutralized Germany has apparently gone up to include a setup under which the social arrangements of the Eastern sector will remain undisturbed. Our State Department is so obsessed with the "falling dominoes" image of its coalition that it fears any change is liable to set its whole rickety structure toppling. If the house that is NATO is that rickety, it will never stand up through the storms of the next decade, in any case.

There is an old Latin saying, "Fate leads the willing, drags the unwilling." The American elite cannot grapple with their dilemma, and the people are too lethargic to give them a push. But great impersonal events from the outside are administering shoves and cuffs. One of these days we are due for a kick that will wake us to our senses.

### *The American Teenager*

**A**CCORDING to *The American Teenager* by H. H. Remmers and D. H. Radler, a book which sums up 15 years of poll-taking among 8,000 to 18,000 high school students between grades 9 and 12, more than half of our teenage students "think the large mass of us in the United States simply aren't capable of deciding for ourselves what's right and what's wrong." In line with that finding, many of the youngsters have a leaning against traditional American freedoms.

Among the generation that grew up in the cold-war era, almost half are "ready to dispense with freedom of the press." A fourth "think police should be free to search your home and person without a warrant." A third of them "believe American free speech should be denied certain people if convenient." A shocking 83 percent approve of wiretapping, and sixty percent agree to the startling proposition that censorship of books, newspapers, and magazines is alright. Fifty-eight percent have no objection to police use of the third degree, and more than half are either ready to toss out the Constitutional guarantee against self-incrimination or are uncertain about it. Thirty-seven percent are ready to abolish the right to strike by some groups of workers. And the answers to other questions show that a great, almost overriding, value is placed on conformity and acceptance by their group. Finally, some 13 percent "would restrict by law religious belief and worship."

The findings, coming from the Purdue Opinion Polls of Purdue University's Division of Educational Reference, moved the *United Mine Workers Journal* to editorialize: "These statistics are frightening! They are a reflection on our whole system of education, on our churches, our clergymen, our schools, our school teachers. But most of all they are a reflection on American parents whose biases and prejudices and hatreds are passed on to their children. What we need in this country are more radical young teenagers. And we mean radical persons in the true sense, as defined by Webster: Of or pertaining to the root; proceeding directly from the root. . . ."

Long known as the Dark Continent, Africa will stay that way if imperialism keeps its grip. But here, from one of Africa's darkest spots, is another sign that the days of the white overlord are numbered.

## Awakening Of the Congo

**T**HE maturing of the African nationalist movement was evident in the All-African People's Conference during December held at Accra, capital of newly independent Ghana. Representatives of nations all over Africa, from South Africa to the United Arab Republic (Egypt-Syria), including notable anti-imperialist movements such as the Algerian National Liberation Front, the Kenya Africans, and from the Belgian Congo, Somaliland, Zanzibar, Tunisia, Portuguese Angola, and many others assembled to deliberate on a program of freedom for their continent.

Tom Mboya, leader of the African members of the Kenya legislature, came to the conference fresh from a bout with the British colonial office in London, where he had demanded a new constitution for his country in place of the fake charter which gives 60,000 Europeans as many seats in the Legislative council as 6 million Africans. He had placed before the British a sensational affidavit by one of the witnesses who had helped convict Kenya African leader Jomo Kenyatta, admitting that his testimony was false from beginning to end. Mboya, who chaired the conference, told the delegates: "We are determined to free Africa, whether the colonial powers like it or not. . . . To win our struggle, the people must be organized into mass, militant organizations." And Prime Minister Nkrumah, of Ghana, emphasized in his welcome speech that Africa is not an extension of Europe "or any other continent" but "a continent on its own."

We are pleased to be able to bring to our readers this voice from one of the least-known of nationalist movements in Africa, that in the Belgian Congo. The author is a Congolese student now traveling abroad, who is active in the embryonic nationalist movement in his land.

**U**NTIL recently it was practically impossible to learn how the residents of the Congo really felt about the problems of their country, for the country was as hard to get into as a hermetically sealed jar, and the number of Congolese who were able to leave it was closely limited.

But the Belgian Congo is a part of a great continent which is changing at a dizzying speed, and no one can deny the Congolese their right and their duty to be a part of this young and vital African family which is waking up.

In fact, Black Africa—that part of Africa which is south of the Sahara—seems more like a huge country than like a continent. In spite of the artificial administrative frontiers set up by the colonial powers, and the different characteristics and distinctive traits of the numerous black tribes of

Africa, there is everywhere in Africa a striking similarity in the existing social problems.

These social problems are the key to the problems of Black Africa. For the "social" element is present, either prominently or in the background, in all possible problems. And thus these problems are closely related to the economic, technical, psychological, cultural, religious, and even racial problems of the land. The intensity of these problems—and the solutions adopted for dealing with them—varies from one country to another, from one colonial power to another, but practically the same problems remain almost everywhere where the colonial situation exists.

Now colonialism, whether English, French, Belgian, or Portuguese, is everywhere the same in certain respects. This can be called the colonial "common denominator."

To colonize a country—any country—is to revolutionize it; not only with regard to the country's natural resources, its policies, administration, and economy, but also its culture, society, and psychology.

The arrival and installation of the colonialists in a country carries with it the collision of the two civilizations, creating an inevitable head-on collision of two different mentalities and ways of life. Colonialism brings with it subjection—the result of the submission of one people to another—and the prejudices and other consequences which result from that subjection.

Colonization creates the colonial situation, establishing two communities on the same soil, without their being a real interpenetration of peoples. Instead there is a sort of "coexistence" without any real integration. One might say, expressing it a bit differently, that the colonial situation establishes and preserves two parallel societies.

But two parallel lines never meet: this geometrical theorem may be applied to such a social situation. Since this parallel life cannot last very long, sooner or later the colonial situation ends either in a painful separation or an integration achieved painfully or violently.

**O**THER peoples, including the Europeans and the Americans, experienced this before the Africans. Nationalism was not invented by the Africans; they inherited





it from the Europeans and the Americans. To blame them is to be ignorant of and insensitive to history.

No people in the world likes to submit to another. And if submission was so unbearable elsewhere in the world, it is no less so to the colored peoples of Africa, for we too are men, we have the same hopes as other men, we are called to the same destiny. No one can stop the growth of nationalism in a dependent land whose people live in subjection to another people. The growth and evolution of freedom in the colonies and for the natives is comparable to the current of a river; no one can stop a river from flowing, or send its waters back to their source.

The Belgian Congo, formerly called a "zone of political silence," will not escape this dynamism of history. This country, one of the largest and richest parts of Africa, cannot much longer remain a precious stone enclosed in impenetrable walls. The Belgian Congo is five times larger than France, three times larger than Germany, nine times larger than Italy, ten times larger than Great Britain, and eighty times larger than Belgium, the European country on which it is dependent, and to which it has been subject for three-quarters of a century.

It has a population of twelve millions, of whom 100,000 are Europeans, largely Belgians. These Europeans control in a most energetic fashion the natural resources of the Congo: diamonds, uranium, radium, tin, gold, copper, iron, aluminum, and also cotton, coffee, and rubber. The Congo is an incomparable source of economic opportunities for Belgium; it assures her of a huge market, and acts as a valuable complement to her own economy. The economic and social achievements of Belgium in the Congo are worthy of praise. They have done immensely more than the other European powers did in their colonies. But when one considers the needs of the country, the Belgian accomplishment is sadly deficient.

**O**NE of the areas in which Belgian achievement is certainly laudable is that of education. The percentage of Congolese who can read and write is far and away the highest of all the African countries. Unfortunately, the natives have been educated in their own regional dialects. Thus the Belgians' work in educating the natives has not been as useful as it is commonly regarded to be. In fact, the great majority of the native people, though literate, cannot be reached by the mainstream of modern thought and modern events because they have been deliberately



deprived by their "education" of the knowledge of the languages in which these ideas and events are set down.

The Belgians have protected their own interests very cleverly. The Belgian colonial policy has been to create great numbers of unskilled workers, but very few technicians. At the same time they have prevented the Congolese from leaving the Congo to study elsewhere.

Profiting by the example of the other African colonies, the Belgians have spent huge sums of money on two universities, one Catholic, and one state-supported. With these universities in the Congo, the Belgians can prevent the Congolese from asking for scholarships to go to Europe to study, in the hope of preventing external influences from affecting the students, and stirring them to nationalism and political action. But such a policy can only delay, not prevent, the eventual birth of an independence movement.

The standard of living of the Congolese is very high in comparison with that of the natives of the other colonies. But in comparison with that of the whites in the Congo, it is deplorably low. One might say that the ratio is one to three, and in certain parts of the Congo it is one to ten.

As for political rights, the Belgians, under the liberal administration of M. Buisseret, have just granted suffrage to some Congolese. But the elections in which they can vote are only on the local level, and the right is limited to residents of certain large cities.

The place of woman in the Belgian Congo is as yet undefined. But her status is far from being equal to men. The education of young girls has, up to the present, been left in the hands of Catholic nuns and missionaries, both of whom seek to prepare their students to be good mothers, to know how to cook, sew, clean the house, and care for their children. The primary goal has been to make them into Christian mothers, not to make them aware of the problems of their country.

The influence of religion, especially of the Roman Catholic religion, has been very great. Catholicism is the state religion both in Belgium and the Congo. Catholic power is so strong that there can be no change in Belgian politics unless that change is brought about by the Social-Christian party, which is Roman Catholic in its religious affiliation. Both the colonial administration and the Belgian business and financial world are, for the greatest part, in the hands of the Catholics. At the same time, if Catholic opinion is often the deciding factor in Belgian political life it must be emphasized that, in the colonial realm, the Catholic point of view has similarities to the approach of the Socialists and the Liberals.

**A**T the present time it is impossible to judge when the Congo will achieve its independence. Perhaps "interdependence within interdependence," a sort of commonwealth arrangement, will be the best solution. But the difficulty is that the colonists like to discuss "interdependence" before giving their former colonies independence, whereas the colonized want first to obtain the total liberation of their country from the European imperialists. Once they have achieved independence, they can consider renewing and improving their ties to their former protector. Let us hope that all these steps can be taken without great violence in the Belgian Congo.



Dulles' foreign policy is not only immoral, it doesn't even work. Repeated failure has forced some of our global thinkers to review and revise some earlier dogmas.

# Failure of Military "Realism"

by Jeanne Riha

**M**ILITARY "realism" has dominated American foreign policy for a decade. It has proved not only immoral but also unrealistic.

America's failures in foreign policy are obvious enough. Less obvious but equally significant is the way the school of power politicians has been proved wrong or has been forced by events to revise its theories. Many of these theories represented faulty judgements of events by traditionalists too steeped in nineteenth century diplomacy to recognize new elements in world affairs.

International power politicians have dominated American thinking in government and in much of education and the press. Foreign policy, they say, need not be moral. It need only be successful. They echo a professor of international relations who said of questionable alliances: "Only the irresponsible idealist should be blind to the possibility that the ultimate purchase of sheer continued national existence could make it necessary to 'ally with Beelzebub to drive out the devil.'"

But America's "realistic" foreign policy based primarily on military alliances has not been successful even in terms of power. In becoming or acting strong, America has alienated allies, brought its enemies closer together and caused neutrals to emerge as mediators or the centers of hope for peace. Differing, even antagonistic aims of the U.S. and its allies have resulted from American failure to recognize needs and aspirations abroad in the postwar era.

American foreign policy in the postwar years was based on certain theories: 1) an overwhelming reliance on Western Europe in terms of strategy; 2) disparagement of the importance of the uncommitted countries; 3) adoption of an inflexible two-camp world view; 4) acceptance of amorality as a code of foreign policy; 5) myth of a changeless Soviet Union; and 6) a mania for geopolitics.

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The first three points are closely linked. Western Europe was seen not only as an important area to be kept out of Soviet hands but as the key to containment of world Communism. If that region were safe, no one would have to worry much about the uncommitted nations. The world would fall neatly into two camps. Stragglers were insignificant or could be brought in at will.

Ross N. Berkes, chairman of the international relations department, University of Southern California, wrote:

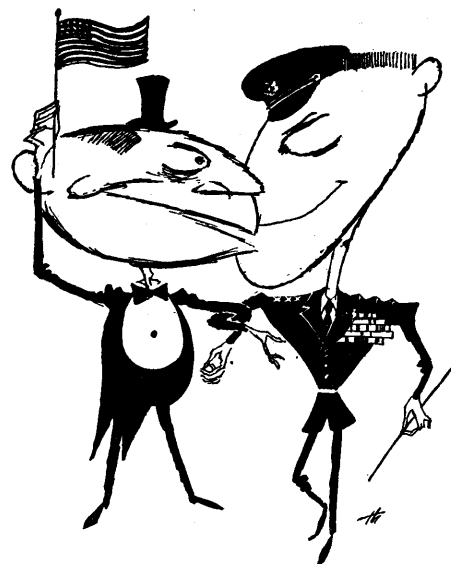
*Notwithstanding yesterday's crises in Indonesia and China, today's crisis in Korea, and perhaps tomorrow's crisis in Indo-China, Malaya or the Philippines, our stake in Asia is less vital to security than is our stake in Europe. . . . without Western Europe, the Soviet empire simply cannot attain that preponderance of power with which it could undermine whatever remained of America's position and influence, whether at home or abroad.*

*The key to the containment of Soviet-communist power, therefore, lies largely in the North Atlantic community, and the critical area of that nucleus is Western Europe. (Current History, January 1951.)*

He approved a 1950 foreign policy statement of Senator Connally that "a strong Europe is a barrier, not only to Soviet ambitions in the West but to the Kremlin's freedom of action in the Middle East and the Far East as well."

**H**ANSON Baldwin contended in his 1947 book, *The Price of Power*, that Europe comes first. He failed to foresee strong governments, including Communist governments, taking control in Asia, as he predicted decades of strife, famine and bloodshed for that area. The strife exists but the implied ineffectiveness of Asia is decidedly inaccurate.

Hans J. Morgenthau, of the power-politician school, changed his outlook on the rigidity of the two-camp world lineup, the importance of the uncommitted nations and



the independence of the superpowers, between 1949 and 1956.

In a 1951 work, *In Defense of the National Interest*, he asserted:

*The power of the United States and of the Soviet Union in comparison with the power of their actual or prospective allies has become so overwhelming that through their own preponderant weight they determine the balance of power between them. That balance cannot be decisively affected by changes in the alignments of their allies, at least in the foreseeable future.*

*All the players that count have taken sides, and in the foreseeable future no switch from one side to the other is likely to take place, nor, if it were to take place, would it be very likely to upset the existing balance.*

By 1956 Morgenthau was forced to take another look at the players who did not count. To the second, revised edition of his *Politics among Nations* he added new sections on "the uncommitted nations" and "the problem of a 'third force.'" He now said:

*The development of the world balance of power in the immediate future will largely depend upon the course these and other uncommitted nations will take. Only a more distant future can answer the question as to whether political and technological conditions will allow the development of new centers of power which can again move independently from one side to the other.*

While it is gratifying that students of power politics can learn from the times, it is unfortunate that their early superficial analyses helped form unsuccessful policy that continues to be implemented. Morgenthau and others now say the uncommitted nations may wield the new world balance of power, but U.S. policy and most leaders continue to operate on the old theories.

Dean Acheson not only clings to outdated concepts but, in his *Power and Diplomacy* published this year, he appears to lack even the modest insight of his earlier years. The official who publicly had affirmed the "reality" of moral values in "our free society" now advocates U.S. violation of the U.N. charter if it is expedient. The man who insisted "our purpose is to maintain the peace" in earlier years now comes close to accepting a nation's "vital interests" as legitimate cause for aggression.

**A**CHESON once convinced liberals that a military "shield" of national power and alliances must protect the West. Behind this shield the "free world" would build its economic, political, and moral strength which were, ultimately, the only guarantees of Western triumph over Communism. Today, when even Morgenthau and George Kennan recognize the importance of the world battle for men's minds, Acheson limits his vision to the diplomatic table and the signed alliance. He rails at the U.S. administration for not supporting Britain and France at Suez:

*If primary importance must be given to strength and unity at the center of power—that is between us and those most closely associated with us—then what-*

*ever makes for that is especially desirable; and whatever weakens or divides us is especially undesirable.*

Now, the military shield which was to have given the West time to build its democratic and economic strength is its own reason for being. The "free nations" are not allied to protect certain forms of government and values but simply for survival. Any base on which concerted action may be achieved is acceptable.

**T**HE experts also have erred on how independent the superpowers, the U.S. and U.S.S.R., can be of their allies. Events forced Morgenthau to make significant changes on this subject between his 1949 and 1956 editions of *Politics among Nations*. Comparable sections follow:

1949 edition, p. 273:

*Today neither the United States nor the Soviet Union need look over its shoulder, as they still did during the Second World War, lest the defection of one major ally or the addition of one to the other side might upset the balance of power. Nor are they any longer constrained to accommodate their policies to the wishes of doubtful allies and exacting neutrals. No such fears and considerations need restrain their ambitions and actions; they are, as a pair of nations has rarely been before, masters of their own policies and of their own fates.*

1956 edition, p. 327:

*Today neither the United States nor the Soviet Union need look over its shoulder, as they still did during the Second World War, lest the defection of one major ally upset the balance of power. Gone is the era of ever shifting alliances and new combinations demanding constant vigilance, circumspection, and caution, which reached its culmination in the eighteenth century and came to an end only with the Second World War.*

*Yet this development does not mean that the superpowers have nothing at all to fear from their allies. Although those allies cannot leave their respective orbits at their own volition, they can stay there either as willing and effective supporters of the policies of the superpowers or as balking and unreliable captives. They may at best be able to move from the center of the orbit to its periphery, thereby loosening the control the superpower exerts within its orbit and impairing their own usefulness within it.*

*Within an inflexible balance of power, in so far as the alignments on either side are concerned, the superpowers can find in their allies a source of weakness or of strength. Before the Second World War, one of the principal questions before the great powers was: "How can we keep the allies we have?" In contrast, the main question that faces the superpowers today with regard to their allies is: "How can we make and keep them willing and efficient participants in our policies?" This concern requires flexible and accommodating policies on the part of the superpowers. Their power is overwhelming vis-à-vis their allies, but it is not without limits. They are, it is true, to an unprecedented degree masters*

of their own policies and of their own fate, but they are not complete masters.

A semanticist might ask if one who is not a complete master of his fate is master of his fate at all.

For years, observers cognizant of a third force have been ridiculed by the "realists" of world affairs. The world was split irrevocably into two camps, they were told; no nation could avoid taking sides. Those who hoped for a third camp were impractical dreamers or incipient traitors. After all, how many divisions did a third force have? Educator Dr. Taraknath Das wrote in *The American Mercury* in 1951: ". . . a hungry India, an India which produces less than two million tons of steel annually, and which has many and vast internal problems to solve, cannot become the mediating force in a world where political influence is measured by physical power." Frederick L. Schuman, speaking at University of Chicago in the 1940's, asserted: "For an indefinite future, Washington, Moscow, and London either will rule the world together or will ruin the world in a new rivalry among themselves for global hegemony."

In 1951 Morgenthau declared that America and Russia now had usurped the balance of power from their allies or prospective allies. Five years later in his revised *Politics among Nations* he suggested cautiously that the wild idea of a third force eventually might have something to it:

*While it would certainly be presumptuous to suggest that their [third force nations'] hopes to play a decisive role as a "Third Force" in the world balance of power can never be fulfilled, it is safe to say that they are bound to be disappointed in the foreseeable future.*

Judging from postwar experience, the foreseeable future is unduly brief for the power politicians. There lies the fatal error of basing foreign policy, as America has, largely upon their short-sighted or rear-view analyses. Excessive reliance on power concepts based only on military might ignores other forces in a nation, a region or the world that help determine trends. These forces are political, psychological, economic, sociological, intellectual. To study them and move them in a dynamic era is the only salvation for a nation's foreign policy. For they can topple a military alliance or reshift the world balance of power. They can even invalidate the neatest theories of the international power politicians. That is precisely what is happening.



JANUARY 1959

## II

WITH the cold war, geopolitics and military strength have marked the writings of foreign affairs experts. Many persons discovered power as a fact of life in world politics. The discovery overwhelmed some of them.

Experts have written on "strategic realism" without bothering to define the term. Strategic spots sprang up all over the world which owed their existence as much to the fertile imaginations and professional ambitions of the budding geopoliticians as they did to the realities of military situations.

In one university international relations class I attended, so many geopolitical strategic triangles covered the blackboard that a student who got into the wrong room stayed until the recess before realizing it was not a geometry course.

Since Russia, its satellites and potential satellites covered much territory, almost any part of the world could be proven strategically crucial by an imaginative geopolitician.

The heartland theory was sufficiently flexible to be a popular tool for strategists. One expert, writing on the Near East, called the Suez Canal area and the straits connecting the Black Sea with the Aegean "the locality that makes the geographer [Halford] Mackinder technically correct when he described the meeting place of the three continents as one huge island—the central unit of his 'heartland' thesis—from which the future Russian world empire is to rest." Since Soviet ambitions were limitless, the strategic hub easily could be expanded. C. C. Kochenderfer, writing on the Middle East in *World Affairs Interpreter* published by University of Southern California, in spring 1952, observed: "It is a well known fact that both Czarist Russia and Communist Russia have been seeking control over Turkey in the West, and from that position have hoped to reach eastward to Afghanistan, Sinkiang, and India."

France's Jacques Soustelle contributed his bit for Indo-China in *Foreign Affairs* of October 1950 by predicting:

*If the front held by France in Indo-China were destroyed, the position of opponents of Communism in Malaya and the Philippines would quickly become untenable. . . . Outside of Indo-China, it would sound the knell for all resistance to Communism in Asia. All the many "nationalists" who rallied to the Japanese after Pearl Harbor would rally to the new triumphant force in Asia. It would be an Asiatic Munich.*

That was the familiar row-of-dominoes theory, that if one "key" area fell to Communism, the rest were bound to go. The problem for non-strategists lay in knowing what were the "key" spots. Most experts admitted no such dilemma. They simply classified most areas as strategically crucial, knowing they would not be contradicted by the military.

America's Europe-first group, which fought a winning political battle most of these years, saw Germany as the crucial power. For some experts Germany was decisive for Western control not only of West Europe but of most of

the world. A writer in *The American Mercury* in 1950 contended: "If we lose Germany, we stand to lose Europe, the Middle East and Africa. We shall be forced back on the Western Hemisphere with the global balance of power heavily weighted against us. . . . Few Americans realize what is at stake in Germany, but the men in the Kremlin, masters of *Realpolitik*, do."

Africa and the Far East got less attention from world affairs experts these years, but were not wholly overlooked. French North Africa was hailed as "the gateway between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean" destined to play a "vital role in our Middle Eastern defense plans." Japan was lauded for shifting the American defense line from Hawaii "almost as far as to the coast of China and Siberia."

WHEN key spots seemed to have been exhausted, Joseph S. Roucek appeared with "The Geopolitics of Portugal" and "The Geopolitics of Albania" in *World Affairs Interpreter* in spring and autumn 1952. Of these he said in part:

*The importance of Portugal is no longer historical. It is due only to its geopolitical location, since the shipping lanes of the Mediterranean, Africa, and South America pass near its coast. To the west of Portugal, the Azores form a stepping stone to the United States and Central America. Lisbon remains the best harbor in Western Europe, and the past naval battles fought off the coast of Portugal—Lagos, St. Vincent, and Trafalgar—indicate the importance of Portugal coastal regions.*

*In spite of its small size and backwardness, Albania is geopolitically, one of the most important countries in Europe. The Soviets are pilfering the country, taking out oil, chrome, and other minerals. But what is even more important, Albania flanks Yugoslavia, Russia's bitter enemy, and also commands the narrow Strait of Otranto, which forms a bottleneck between the Adriatic and Mediterranean Seas.*

The strategists recited geopolitical advantages as if long-range missiles and nuclear weapons never existed or never would be used. As late as 1954 Sidney B. Fay writing in *Current History* rejoiced that American air and naval positions in North Africa and the Mediterranean "are beyond the reach of Soviet medium bombers."

With even greater indifference to foreign political conditions, some experts assumed indefinite Western use of overseas bases. Discussing Anglo-American naval control of the Mediterranean, Fay said: "They have secure bases at Gibraltar, Malta, and Cyprus, and are counted upon to afford safe access to the Suez Canal and the oil supplies in Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf."

The mental scope of the strategists did not allow for revolts against pro-Western governments as in Iraq; for a belligerent Nasser seizing Suez; for allies such as Saudi Arabia that declined to let the United States use its leased air base in the Lebanon crisis. Nor did the strategists allow for the power of world opinion which Hans J. Morgenthau blandly termed "an ideological shadow" but has dogged every American move.

The military strategists deny the power of public opinion, but it is doubtful that Hanson Baldwin would revive after the Lebanon crisis his proposal of 1947 that the United States deal thus with foreign coups:

*A simple declaration, before emergency occurs, that the United States will not tolerate arranged illegal coups or sponsored civil wars, but will support with arms, if necessary, the legitimate government so attacked would probably suffice to blunt this Communist technique. We must be firm.*

Hasty American use of force and long-term preoccupation with arms has wrought intense damage to American prestige. Morality is dismissed by the strategists as a phantom force, but French intransigence and atrocities are credited with turning a former moderate into premier of the new Algerian government in exile. This government, unforeseen by the strategists, probably will wield a great influence and not to the liking of the Western bloc.

IN 1955 Lorna H. Hahn, writing in *World Affairs Interpreter*, regretted that America could not support the "moderate and sensible" nationalist movements in Morocco and Tunisia because it would mean losing the certainty of French-leased bases. The writer conceded the Moroccans would lease America all the bases it wanted, but the French offer was immediate and therefore more desirable. Three years later an independent Morocco demands the U.S. evacuate its strategic air command bases there. The astute as well as moral American course would have been to cultivate Moroccan favor.

As something they cannot see and cannot shoot at, strategy-minded diplomats scoff at the idea of morality in international affairs. It is repudiated in varying degrees by Hans Morgenthau, George Kennan and Dean Acheson. The latter goes furthest when, in his *Power and Diplomacy*, he condones U.S. violation of the United Nations Charter if other nations violate it. He further asserts that "it would be a great and dangerous mistake to mould political or military policy or action out of a fancied necessity of 'reconciling' it with the United Nations Charter."

Yet Acheson was quick to urge the newly triumphant Chinese Communists in 1950 to eschew aggression because it would violate China's own interests, the United Nations charter and "the peace which the Charter was designed to preserve."

Kennan proposes in *Realities of American Foreign Policy*, that America make itself feared as well as loved, somewhat in the Soviet pattern, but he is forced to concede that a strictly military approach to the uncommitted nations will cause America to lose "on the political level more than we gain on the military one."

By their stress on military might the American power politicians alienated friends and potential friends. They tried to hold back change and found the rest of the world going on without them to new governments and new alignments of power. Unless they end their reigns and the lives of all in a nuclear sunset, the world may go on to more realistic policies.

When the smoke of the Egyptian revolution cleared away, it was easy to see who were the losers: the monarchy and the landed pashas. But who were the winners? What is the military regime doing inside the country, now that Egypt rules itself?

# The Nasser Revolution

by Harry Braverman

HOW Egypt, one of the world's poorest and weakest countries, became a country of importance in half a decade is pretty well known. The army regime that deposed King Farouk had, at first, no other aim than to come to terms with the West in order to get arms—chiefly to threaten or use against Israel—and to get economic aid for industrializing the country. The protracted negotiations with Washington, however, always seemed to add up to one thing: Nothing but mouth-watering promises would be forthcoming until Egypt agreed to join the Western military bloc and to permit American bases and military missions on its soil. But the young officers in charge of the country were not disposed to imperil the independence they had just begun to establish. They thus started the triangular game of playing off the major cold-war antagonists against each other. In 1955, Nasser participated in the Bandung Conference, and later the same year announced the purchase of arms from the Soviet bloc. He negotiated with both sides for aid in building a high dam at Aswan, and while Washington reneged on its commitment, the Moscow string to Nasser's bow is now bringing results. In the meanwhile, the new regime answered Western withdrawal from its earlier commitment on the Aswan Dam by taking over the Suez Canal, and saved itself from imperialist wrath with the help of the Russian counter-balance. More recently, Egypt has joined with Syria and Yemen to form the United Arab Republic, has won a battle in Iraq, and in general, by a policy of impudent independence and bold maneuvers, has raised its own strength on the Middle Eastern chessboard far above its former rating as despised and ignominious pawn.

All of this has been told in the headlines of the last five years. But far less information has been forthcoming about the state of affairs in Egypt itself. Hard as it is for Western readers to piece together an accurate picture from the scraps and fragments of the daily and periodical press, it becomes well-nigh impossible in the present state of our informational services. As in so many other fields, the cold war has driven truth into hiding: Nasser is a "fascist-Hitlerite dictator" in pursuit of "foreign adventures" to distract his people from their poverty; he is the chief



"aggressor" in the Middle East. Or, on the other hand, he is a "peace-loving Nehruite" and a "colonial revolutionary." These Hollywoodized stereotypes of "good guy" and "bad guy" add very little to our knowledge of the complex forces at play in Egypt. We are thus fortunate in having a fine new book, *Egypt in Transition*,\* which gives an uncommonly complete and sensitive picture of the developments since the coup against the old regime in July 1952. The authors, a French couple, have supplemented their years of residence and observation in Egypt with exhaustive research, and have assembled the whole with careful objectivity, not to say skepticism. Although it carries the story up to as late as February 1958, it has already been published and acclaimed in France, and made available in this joint British-American edition. Anyone who can't get the details, problems, and policies of the new regime straight has only himself to blame, now that this book is on the market.

POST-World War II Egypt was in the all-too-common position of a nation whose social classes find it impossible to muster the strength to get out of their impasse. Of the peasantry, which embraces the vast majority of the population, there is hardly any need to speak; it was, and still remains, almost entirely sunk in the immemorial poverty, disease, and debility of the Nile Valley, mustering barely enough energy to keep alive, and all but dead to the national problems of Cairo and Alexandria. Even the hope of a solution to the land problem had been virtually extinguished by the peculiar Egyptian situation, in which the entire agricultural economy is concentrated in a thin strip of alluvial mud bordering the Nile, resulting in a rural overcrowding as bad as that to be found anywhere in the world. It was not the peasantry which took the lead for change; the ferment came chiefly among the city classes.

\**Egypt in Transition*, by Jean and Simone Lacouture, Criterion Books, New York, 1958, \$7.50.

Both World Wars put huge Western armies on Egyptian soil, and at the same time sharply reduced the import of foreign goods. As would be expected, the result was a considerable growth in Egyptian industry to meet the new market and the curtailed supplies. Where, before the first World War, Egypt seemed nothing but an immense cotton plantation for the benefit of the textile trade and a fascinating playground for archaeologists, it now began to take on a Western appearance. Egyptian industry and commerce, even on a small scale, meant inevitably the undermining of the feudal orders and the encroachment of a new social arrangement, with a middle and upper class of trade and manufacture, and a city working class. Along with this came the usual accompaniment: nationalism, radicalism, strivings of independence and social reform. Revolts in the inter-war period won a measure of independence, including even the evacuation of British troops from Egyptian territory outside the Canal Zone, but Britain retained the final say in all major matters of foreign and domestic policy, both by formal agreement and informal pressures.

After the second World War, an increasing popular pressure, from the working class which had increased in size by 35-40 percent during the war, from the nationalistic capitalists, from the students, and from the vast miscellaneous throngs of the major cities—so hard to describe in social terms but so important to the popular politics of the Middle East—made the status quo ever harder to maintain. Demonstrations shook the regime, but even when relative calm prevailed, the internal rot, weakness, and loss of confidence of all the major forces in the ruling structure pointed to doom. The Wafd, an all-national party which ran the parliamentary system, managing to combine pashas and nationalist capitalists in one coalition, had lost much of its popular aura by its capitulation to the British during the war. The king, Farouk, had transformed his entourage into a Florentine hotbed of nepotism, sybaritism, and pimping. The British, the third element in the power structure, were on the defensive throughout their colonial empire, the object of universal detestation in Egypt, and badly weakened by the war.

**T**HE outburst of the Cairo masses on January 26, 1952, in which the entire center of the city was burned to the ground, including most of the foreign and fashionable structures, brought matters to a head. In October of the preceding year, Mustafa Nahas, head of the Wafd ministry, had submitted a project for abrogating the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936, in order to satisfy the universal popular demand to be free of any form of occupation. Soon thereafter, Egyptian partisans began guerilla attacks on the British forces in the Canal Zone, attacks which culminated on January 19, 1952, in an almost frontal daylight assault on the garrison at Tel El Kebir, the largest British munitions depot in the Middle East. As the Egyptian auxiliary police were standing idly by or even siding with the insurgents, the British commander sought revenge by an attack on the police barracks, massacring about fifty in the process. It was this which brought on the rising excitement, the union boycotts, the student demonstrations, and finally

the burning of Cairo. While the Lacoutures bring much evidence to bear of provocation by the monarchy, the fascist "Green Shirts," and the Moslem Brotherhood, there is little doubt that, whatever the forces at work behind the scenes, the explosion in Cairo on January 26 was the first day of a popular revolution. On July 26, Farouk was forced to abdicate.

With the burning of Cairo, the old regime went up in smoke, but it took six months for a new force to come forward. For the truth was that no social class had the strength, the leadership, or the organization to take over on its own. The capitalists were too few, too timid, too much tied up with the discredited Wafd and with the old regime itself, to constitute themselves as an independent political force. The peasantry—despite its four uprisings on several of the largest estates during 1951, put down with much bloodshed—was completely without organization or political consciousness beyond the most rudimentary.

Among the workers, while strikes flared throughout the preceding period and radicalism had been growing since the middle of the war, there were only weak unions and a Communist movement split into no fewer than ten competing grouplets, none of which had been able to find a clear star of policy to steer by in the fast-moving and complicated events. Besides, the working class itself is still an amorphous grouping, embracing a small number employed in the few huge vertical trusts and a large number of employees in tiny scattered shops. So recent is the class that it consists in considerable part of peasants whose families still live on the land, and who have hardly been assimilated to city life. For all these reasons, the infant working class could hardly have been expected to make the decisive challenge to the old government.

**A**LL of this goes to explain why Egypt is today ruled by a "party" of some hundreds of army officers. The Bonapartist regime has been forced, by the absence of any decisive solution to the tensions, to straddle the contending social forces and provide an interim barracks order to a land that could no longer live in its old pit but hadn't the strength to climb out of it.

The officers' movement which was to furnish the new structure of government can be traced back two decades. The Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936 which gave Egypt a limited political independence at the price of an indefinitely prolonged British occupation, left many of the younger generation deeply dissatisfied; a dissatisfaction which was increased by repeated demonstrations of the weakness of the monarchy and the Wafd in the contests with the British. A Wafd government decree of 1936 had unwittingly sown a seed for the future by opening the Military Academy at Abbassieh to young men regardless of class or wealth. The young officers of the newly formed army were thus recruited in large measure from among the sons of the peasantry and of lower grade civil servants, a great many of whom chose the military profession as a way of seeking revenge against the British occupiers. The army thus had a peculiarly nineteenth-century, Garibaldiesque appearance, staffed as it was by patriotic Julien Sorels who had chosen the wearing of the "red" as their path from poverty to a career, by nationalist officers who



devoured books by Laski, Marx, Engels, Nehru, Bevan—or Hitler!—and who met on hilltops to swear oaths of revenge against the British and to make plans for recruiting other officers to the groups that started to form as soon as the first graduating class was posted to its assignments in 1938. The most prominent among these rebellious young lieutenants of the class of '38 was Gamal Abdel Nasser. By the late forties his connections extended throughout the army, and by 1950 he had founded a paper for the movement, *The Voice of the Free Officers*.

When the guerilla-campaign for the Canal began in 1951, the officers' movement became a seething hive of excitement, forming commandos, helping the partisans, and supplying arms. Up to this time the officers considered themselves little different from the Wafd nationalists, but after the burning of Cairo, and as it became obvious that the Wafd was neither willing nor able to take action, the officers' "party," for that is what it in effect was, made plans for its long-prepared coup, which went off successfully at the end of July 1952. General Mohamed Neguib was selected as flag-bearer of the new regime, and for the first two years served as chief of state, after which he was ousted in an internal disagreement. But from the beginning the strongest man in the regime was the lieutenant-colonel who had founded the Free Officers' Movement years before, Nasser.

**T**HE losers are easy to name: the monarchy and the feudal pashas. But who had won? The khaki-colored regime, despite its early protestations of democracy and parliamentarianism, soon showed that it intended to impose its will on all sections of the population, and by balancing itself above the classes, carry out a national program that would presumably benefit all. Blows were dealt against Left and Right, against workers and land-owners. Within a month, a strike at a big spinning mill owned by the major Egyptian trust, the Misr Company,

broke out. When the police opened fire on the strikers, the enraged workers burned two of the factory buildings, shouting: "Long live the army's revolution, the people's revolution." But the "people's revolution" sent troops who killed eight workers and wounded 20, arrested 200 workers, and sentenced two of their leaders to death. These were the first victims of the revolution.

Then within a few months, a rich and powerful land-owner who refused to bow to the new regime, firing on and setting his dogs upon the surveyors who had come to measure how much land he would have to hand out to his fellahs under the agrarian reform, was dragged to Cairo in chains, where he too was sentenced to die, a sentence which was in his case softened to life imprisonment. The officers could point to a blow against the Right to balance the blow against the Left. And so it continued. The military police arrested 43 worthies of the old regime, and at the same time suppressed all parties, including those of the Left, and created a "National Liberation Rally" to supplant them. The aristocratic former Regent, Colonel Rashid Mehanna, was placed on trial as a counter-revolutionary with two dozen of his subalterns. At the same time, the long series of Communist trials, which processed radicals in groups of fifty, was begun, and the unions, deprived of the right to strike, were placed under government supervision. A careful boxscore might show that the large capitalists were hardly getting their share of lumps from the new regime and that the workers and the Left were getting more than their share. Yet even the big capitalists had been reduced in power, could no longer bribe and manipulate with the same ease, and waited impatiently for the army "wolves" to slink back to their barracks. But the army kept a tight rein, and the country settled down to life under a council of a dozen officers, which rested upon a larger base, the Society of Free Officers of about 250 members, which rested in turn upon the 2,000 officers of the Egyptian Army.



**N**O matter how absolute their power, the officers could not conjure away the set of problems which had created their crisis regime in the first place. Like many dictators, they are themselves dictated to by circumstances and pressures, from the semi-colonial position of the country, from the growth of population, from the poverty of the exploited. Forced to take measures, they have earned a measure of right to the title of revolutionaries. The Lacoutures comment that "perhaps the military government's most fundamental claim to be *revolutionary* is that at last, through them, Egypt was governed by Egyptians. . . In order to grasp the revolutionary importance of the changeover we have to remember that the old regime was led by a dynasty originating in Albania, with Turkish customs, French caprices, English interests, a Levantine notion of public morality, and an Italian background."

*A few months later men of an entirely different stamp were to be seen in the Abdin Palace. Broad-shouldered, heavy of gait, deeply bronzed, they trod gingerly across the carpets and knocked on the door before entering their own offices. At night they returned to their modest houses or their barracks at Helmieh or Manshiyat el*



*Bakri. Thicknecked, in their khaki shirts, they spoke in ringing tones, and brought bean sandwiches with them which they ate in between their reading of the files, and which they kept hidden in the drawers of their Empire desks. They were Egyptians who for the first time since the Assyrian invasion, that is to say for twenty-seven centuries, were the real masters of the lower Nile Valley.*

Of the regime's internal measures, the Agrarian Reform of 1952 is undoubtedly the most revolutionary. It limits the possession of land to 300 feddans (315 acres). In a land where only some three percent of the country is arable, this is quite large. Nevertheless, it made available 660,000 feddans of land for state purchase and distribution, apart from 180,000 feddans belonging to Farouk and 200 members of the royal family, which were confiscated outright. The transfer of estates involves about 13 percent of the arable land, and the beneficiaries constitute under ten percent of Egypt's 18 million fellahs. A couple of hundred agricultural cooperative societies, compulsory by law in the re-distributed areas, organize production and marketing and try to combine the advantages of large-scale operations with small-scale ownership. Limited though the reform may be, it unquestionably has given new life and increased income to a portion of Egypt's most exploited population. And, more important to the great mass of tenants, a compulsory decrease in land rents, which has cut the average rent approximately by half, has aided a far larger number of fellahs, about a third of the peasantry. Within a few years, according to the government's statistics, the income of small farmers had been increased by £30 million a year (\$84 million), enabling them to consume for the first time some of the poultry, eggs, and milk they produce.

But the most important result of the shakeup on the land is not economic but political. The age-old feudal rule of the landed pashas has been broken. The regional land-owner-dominated principalities have given way to a central authority which, while jealously dictatorial, has no vested interest in the perpetuation of village poverty and miseries.

**D**ESPITE this, little has been accomplished in meeting the basic economic problems of the country. The workers, agricultural and city, are probably worse off than in the past, in terms of standards of wages. Industrialization proceeds at a snail's pace. No solution has been found to the desperate and growing over-population of the country in relation to its present productive resources.

The basic trouble is that which afflicts all colonial countries: for decades, as a result of imperialist domination and shaping of the economy, it has been a one-resource land, producing its major crop for export, in raw form, to the cotton mills of the capitalist nations. Cotton accounts for more than a third of the national revenue, and with rice, forms the speculative basis of the economy. Much of the effort of the peasantry is drained off in the form of wealth for the larger landowners and profits for the textile mills abroad. As in the other colonial countries, the nation is abjectly dependent upon the world market in its particular crop. In the years immediately following the of-

icers' revolution, this was emphatically brought home by a sharp drop in the world price of cotton, resulting in a severe depression on the countryside, and a fall of wages and incomes. The government fought back by increasing the rice acreage at the expense of cotton, and by opening new markets in the Soviet bloc, but none of this has changed the fact that the country is chiefly dependent on the fortunes of one or two major crops.

Nasser and his economic planners had hoped that much agricultural capital, freed by the compulsory sale of large estates, would be siphoned into industrial investment. The hope proved vain. Landowners preferred to invest abroad, or in the quick-turnover luxury trades; they had no faith in industry. Meanwhile, the compulsory reductions in upper incomes reduced the market for manufactured goods without creating a sufficient demand to compensate among the lower income groups: the fellahs, as we have seen, are "splurging" on food to supplement their bean diets, the workers are not gaining in income, and the middle class is growing far too slowly.

**I**N the final analysis, Egypt cannot industrialize without massive foreign help unless it can increase the amount of arable land. The whole nation is crowded into the pathetically thin ribbon of Nile-watered and -irrigated land. The food supply for the growing population and export surpluses for financing industrialization cannot be ensured from this tiny area by itself. Only a program of desert reclamation will reinvigorate the agricultural economy and give the cities a surplus to invest in industry, and even then, it is doubtful that the automatic pull of the market would do the job; some form of government planning would be required to ensure that the added wealth is kept in the country and applied to constructive tasks.

The Aswan Dam project is seen by the regime as the basic answer. Forty-five percent of the Nile water is wasted. There are fat years and lean, drought and flood. The proposed High Dam announced by Nasser in 1954 would create a catch basin of 23,000 square miles, providing enough water to increase the arable lands by 30 percent. The entire agricultural setup would moreover be steadied, taken out of the Nile's erratic mercies. By reducing the underground waters, drainage costs would be lowered by an estimated 24 percent. But the production of huge quantities of cheap electric power would be the most important consequence of the dam, making it possible to transform the face of Egypt. Egypt at present consumes only about a third of a million kilowatt hours, one of the lowest per capita supplies in the world. The Aswan Dam, fully electrified, would produce *ten thousand million* kilowatts an hour at a negligible cost. This in itself would provide the basis for an industrial revolution of great proportions. This project can raise the standard of living and end the disparity between the country's resources and its growing population. Egypt has few natural resources apart from the Nile, but, when harnessed, the Nile can change the face of a large part of North Africa. The total building costs for the dam would reach some £400 million (\$1,120 million) a sum which the nation, even with its revenues from the nationalized Suez Canal, cannot possibly raise without foreign aid. It is easy to see why for Egypt's new

rulers, foreign policy has taken precedence above all other aspects of government.

Important as the Aswan project is, it is hard to see a solution of the Egyptian problem by purely technical means. The hallmark of the present military regime is that, while sincerely seeking the industrialization and modernization of Egypt, it hopes to achieve that goal without breaking up the old social structure. Apart from the monarchy and the pashas, the power-structure remains intact. The dictatorship has little more authority over the direction of the economy than Nehru's democracy, and for the same reason: The economy is, by and large, still in the hands of the same possessing classes. When the experience of China is set against that of all those colonial countries which have tried to make progress without a basic social revolution, it is easy to see that technical expedients are not enough; barriers which look insuperable to a regime that has its hands tied by old social relations may be leaped or circumvented by a regime that is free to make a fresh economic start.

**G**ENERAL Neguib, when he was in office, told an Egyptian diplomat: "My dear ambassador, just explain to your friends that if we had not seized power, others would have otherthrown the monarchy and by other means." The Lacoutures write:

*In the collusion which was constantly offered by the British and Americans and which Nasser accepted, there was certainly an element of ideological understanding, a common determination to block the passage to a violent*

*social revolution by offsetting it with technical reform (the idea being less to bar the road to an imaginary Soviet invasion, than to nip in the bud some Mao of the Nile Valley).*

These are insights into the motives of the military revolutionists, but as the Lacoutures point out, they by no means define the entire process. In its foreign relations, a regime which started out to make the most of its ties with imperialism soon found that it was offered little independence in return for its collaboration, and broke violently to carry out some of the most striking anti-imperialist coups of recent years. The limited technical reforms of its internal policy have grown in implication, not because the changes have been so great, but because the awakening of the people has been furthered, and because they sit in judgment on the regime's actions, and make demands and exert pressures.

Nasser's regime is certainly a dictatorship masquerading as a revolution, but it is also a dictatorship fulfilling some of the obligations of a revolution, and initiating the trends and processes which will make for more revolution in Egypt. So long as the military can effectively substitute itself for the social struggle, keep the pot boiling, and give at least the impression of forward motion, it can hold sway. If it falters, the dispossessed nobles and landowners are on hand to take over again, with imperialist help, unless the Egyptian working class and peasantry have in the meantime so matured as to be able to make the Nile Valley the scene of Africa's first experiment in socialism.

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## OPINIONS

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### The Jewish Tradition

by A California Reader

**I**SAAC Deutscher's article "Message of the Non-Jewish Jew" in the September *American Socialist*, brings to mind the statement of the ancient Jewish sage Hillel: "If you are not for yourself, who will be for you? If you are for yourself alone, what are you?" The six "great revolutionaries of modern thought"—Spinoza, Heine, Marx, Rosa Luxemburg, Trotsky, and Freud—who went "beyond the boundaries of Jewry" recognized the profundity of the idea that a Jew must not be for himself alone. Marxists must agree that only "universal human emancipation"—world socialism—answers the "Jewish question," just as it is the only answer to the problems of any oppressed people.

However, it would seem that Deutscher neglects another aspect of the same question. It is not enough for a socialist to be against narrow nationalism which separates the Jew from the non-Jew. The struggle for the defense of the full economic, political and social equality of the Jewish people, and against all forms of anti-Semitism, is an integral part of the struggle in defense of democracy and

civilization. In other words a Jew must be "for himself," although "not for himself alone."

It is true, as Deutscher says, that "the world has compelled" some Jews "to embrace the nation-state as the way out." For the remnants of European Jewry who found themselves after the second World War in a worse plight than that of any other war-torn people of Europe, deprived of all earthly possessions, homeless, without means of livelihood, in most instances bereft of relatives, friends and even families, herded into Displaced Persons Camps, often little better than the concentration camps they survived, some "way out" was needed. Most Jews of Europe saw no future in their old homelands, which were haunted with memories of the misery of their past. Marxists are not called upon to oppose this right of self-determination (and of survival), even when it takes the form of emigration to Israel.

**W**E may argue that the national consciousness awakened in Jews by the Nazi persecutions is a long step back from the advanced internationalist consciousness and assimilationist aims that predominated among Jews in pre-Hitler Europe and that it therefore constitutes a political retrogression for the Jews. Nevertheless, the validity of the

struggles against national oppression cannot be denied. It is incumbent on present-day Marxists to approach the question in its new historical context. Deutscher says correctly that "decaying capitalism has overstayed its day and has morally dragged down mankind: and we, the Jews, have paid for it and may yet have to pay for it." It is this very situation which makes the past traditional Marxist position of assimilationism invalid.

There is no necessary conflict between a Jew adopting an internationalist ideology while at the same time recognizing the bond between American Jews and Israeli Jews. For a bond also exists between the Jewish worker in New York, the Jewish cave-dweller in Tripoli, the Jewish Falasha hunter in Abyssinia, and the Jewish farmer in Israel. This is so despite the fact that Jews do not constitute a race—since historically there has been a co-mingling of a variety of known as well as unknown ethnic strains in the Jewish people. And despite the fact that they are not a religious confraternity because there are as many unbelievers as believers among the Jewish people. And despite the fact that they are not a nation because for almost two thousand years they have been scattered over the earth, living as distinctive groups among the nations, yet differing widely from one another and lacking the homogeneity of a nation. For there are a thousand subtle threads, visible as well as invisible, that connect even the most assimilated Jew with other Jews. There are ethical values and social attitudes, folkways and folkwisdom, a Jewish folksong sung by a grandmother, a humorous anecdote told by a father. And if it isn't these positive signs of identification—there are the negative ones—the identification with the six million victims of Hitler's gas ovens. Moreover, American capitalism has never permitted the full and equal integration of the Jewish people in American life.

**T**HERE are two types of response to the historical situation in which the Jew finds himself: the bourgeois-nationalist and the internationalist. The Jewish nationalist

sees and shows the Jew invariably in physical and cultural isolation from the non-Jew. Such nationalism affirms the idea that Jews always have been and always will be apart from and at odds with the remainder of mankind. It denies that the cause of anti-Semitism resides in the class division of society in which a ruling class disorients the majority it oppresses by diverting popular wrath from itself onto the Jews. It regards anti-Semitism as some "eternal" products of the non-Jewish character. Bourgeois nationalists seek to prevent the development of the ties that bind Jew and non-Jew. It is against this form of Jewish nationalism that Deutscher's article strikes a well-deserved blow.

But there is another form of bourgeois ideology—that of the opportunist whose principal obsession has been to relieve himself of the encumbering baggage of his Jewishness. In a world where it is highly inconvenient to be born a Jew, where he cannot endure the finger of social scorn pointed at him, he tries hard to transform himself into his snobbish conception of an Anglo-Saxon Gentile. This philistine historically has also spread anti-Semitic slanders against his own people because he finds it a lot more pleasant to hunt with the hounds than to run with the hares. Any Jew who attempts to "transcend his Jewishness" by ignoring or denouncing it is of no aid in the struggle for "universal human emancipation."

Ilya Ehrenburg once said that "we are Jews not because of the blood that is in us, but because of that which has flowed out of us." I share Isaac Deutscher's hope that "together with other nations, the Jews will ultimately become aware. . . of the message of universal human emancipation." To help make this hope become a reality is the aim of a Jewish socialist who must transcend his Jewishness and embrace a world socialist solution. At the same time, by understanding his roots and appreciating his culture, he can use those positive traditions in his history to win other Jews to join together with their non-Jewish comrades in the movement for the emancipation of all men.

## A Review-Article

# Anatomy of an Old-Line Union

by Bert Cochran

*EMPIRE IN WOOD* by Robert A. Christie. Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, 1957, \$5.50.

**D**R. Robert A. Christie wrote this book for his doctorate and at the time of its publication, it was noticed mainly in the academic reviews. It

has recently figured in news stories because of its accidental connection with a court biography of William L. Hutcheson for which the Carpenters Union paid its author, one Maxwell C. Raddock, the tidy little sum of \$310,000. The Raddock book turned out to be largely a plagiarism of Dr.

Christie's and other works; and testimony before the McClellan Committee left a suspicion that the huge sum of money paid for it also covered costs of trying to blackmail AFL-CIO President George Meany into calling off his cleanup campaign. Dr. Christie got into the newspapers momentarily with his testimony before the Senate committee that the only expense which Mr. Raddock probably had in writing his book "was a pair of scissors and a piece of glue."

At any rate, Dr. Christie's book is a scholarly proposition, quite penetrating and superior when tracing the economic and sociological influences on the evolution of the union, but lacking in feel when discussing the union's internal politics. The narrative starts off on the wrong foot with Dr. Christie

trying to portray the first period of the Carpenters Union as a contest between socialist class struggle philosophy exemplified by its foundation leader, Peter J. McGuire, and the business unionism of the emergent business agents who ran the local and regional bodies. That a careful scholar could have made such an egregious error can only be accounted for by the present climate in this country: Even a more or less typical trade union leader of the 1890's appears as a visionary radical figure compared to the current crop of labor leaders.

**A**CTUALLY, McGuire belonged to the same circle as Adolph Strasser and other close associates of Sam Gompers—men who had been active in various socialist groups in their youth, but who eventually dropped socialism in favor of straight-line trade unionism. He was one of the founders and leaders of the AFL and throughout the first decade stood shoulder to shoulder with Gompers in beating back the attacks of the socialists. His speech at the 1889 AFL convention opposing the collectivist resolution was typical of dozens of his addresses on this score: He declared that he had read books on socialism in French and German, as in English, but he was not concerned with the theoretical merits of issues of a speculative character. Trade unions, he held, had “many difficulties to contend with to convert men to trade union principles, and why should we load ourselves with more than we can carry.” In contrast to the facts, Dr. Christie's thesis supplies the early faction fights in the Carpenters Union with the dramatic intensity of an ideological war. Unfortunately, the thesis is not valid.

Peter J. McGuire began devoting himself to organizing the workers of his own trade, the carpenters, in 1880. It was a good time for organizing efforts, as the rationalizing process going on in the trade was introducing specialization and apprenticeship standards were collapsing. The argument was persuasive that local unions could no longer cope with these problems, that only a strong national organization could adequately protect the carpenter. After the national organization was set up in 1881, McGuire took to the road. He was an effective speaker and his visits were received as great events

among carpenters and the radical community in general. By sheer personal drive he managed to hold the struggling carpenter locals together and built an immense personal following in the trade. At the end of the first decade, the Carpenters Union had triumphed over all rivals in the field.



McGuire had been active in the eight-hour movement of 1886. He fought for a new eight-hour campaign at the 1888 AFL convention and directed the 1890 struggle which culminated in an enormous victory. Over 23,000 carpenters in 36 cities won the eight-hour day, and 32,000 more in 234 cities won the nine-hour day. At the 1890 Brotherhood convention, McGuire could boast that the Carpenters were the largest and most powerful trade union in the country.

**A**S the Brotherhood became a going institution, most of the economic power in the organization fell into the hands of the local and district full-time business agents who controlled the jobs, negotiated the wage agreements, and bossed the working conditions. The McGuire brand of personal,

evangelical leadership was not as necessary any longer to them. Opposition necessarily began growing because of his adamant refusal to create a more comprehensive administration in the national office, which was becoming a necessity with the union's enlarged responsibilities. Under his personalized regime, the national office in 1890 still had no regional representatives, no full-time officers outside of himself, no organizers. But it was difficult to reorganize anything against his wishes since McGuire enjoyed overwhelming support from the rank and file. And he would not budge from his accustomed routine of running the organization, and entered upon a ten-year struggle which finally destroyed him.

By 1896, the opposition captured the convention, transferred a whole series of powers from the hands of General Secretary McGuire to those of the President, made the latter a full-time officer and empowered him to appoint paid organizers. Again McGuire's strong personal popularity confounded the insurgents: The referendum vote reversed the convention decisions. But the opposition continued to chip away at McGuire's powers, and finally they scandalized him when a shortage was discovered in the national finances. They relentlessly pressed their advantage and at the 1902 convention expelled him by a narrow vote. Thus ended the long battle with McGuire that had split the union right down the middle. Thereupon, the victorious coalition split and battled it out for another ten years as to who would control the national office spoils. Finally, in 1912, an exhausted membership permitted the centralization of all authority in the union presidency, and the Carpenters slid into the one-party machine groove typical of most American unionism.

Most of the data of the Carpenters' internal struggle is brought out in Dr. Christie's book. The absence of any ideological issues should have warned him to re-examine his thesis of socialism vs. trade unionism. But he was apparently too enamored of it to let go. Once he has the McGuire period behind him, however, the narrative proceeds more satisfactorily, although the material is not well organized, forcing the reader to continually jump back and forth across the years and events.

**E**VEN more than other building trade unions, the Carpenters needed a strong national office to protect their jurisdiction amid the constant changes being wrought by the introduction of new machinery and more efficient construction methods. Jurisdictional disputes with other unions had already reared their ugly head during McGuire's administration. But with 1902, the union abandoned all inhibitions and entered into an era of unrestrained jungle warfare. To list all the unions with which the Carpenters battled at one or another time would be like reading off a roster of the leading AFL affiliates. The Carpenters' history points up that jurisdictional warfare which played such a big part in demoralizing the whole AFL was not simply the result of the cupidity of business unionists, but was propelled by the technological revolution. Craft unionism, the organization of the skilled mechanics, was the inevitable starting point of modern unionism. But as the industrial revolution advanced, it was necessary to modify policies in the direction of industrial unionism. The vested interests of both the craft union bureaucracies and craft-minded mechanics thwarted any easy transition. Hence, the officials began to practice an unrestrained cannibalism to protect the jobs of their members, lest their organization get dissolved from under them.

The national Carpenters Union was organized as a response to the danger represented by machine inventions to the craft. The introduction of the "green hand"—a woman, an immigrant, or a child—displaced carpenters. Windows, doors, and other parts of a building could now be run off the machine ready for installation. The steady stream of ready-made parts also made possible the piecework system and speedup. But the rationalization process did not stop at this point. By 1900, structural steel had replaced cast iron in modern construction; the electrically powered elevator combined with new riveting processes made possible tall buildings and the skyscraper. The effect on the trade was to give birth to the specialist—the carpenter skilled in only one simple task. This, in turn, produced a spate of specialist carpenter unions. By 1904, new unions appeared among locomotive wood workers, millwrights, shinglers, dock, wharf and bridge build-

ers, wood workers, carpenters' helpers. Besides, new crafts were created such as sheet metal workers, electricians, plumbers, many of whom worked on materials which had replaced wood. Finally, more and more of the carpenters' traditional work disappeared into the planing mills.

**T**HE Carpenters' officials first went to war with the Amalgamated Wood Workers International Union which had jurisdiction over machine wood workers and furniture workers. They broke an earlier agreement that McGuire had made, repudiated in 1902 an arbitrator's award to which they had agreed to submit, and ruthlessly began using their ability to boycott all building trim turned out in Amalgamated mills. The Amalgamated reeled under these hammer blows, and finally in 1912, with its membership reduced to 4,000 from the 30,000 it had once led, the officials bowed to the inevitable and agreed to merge with the Carpenters. It should be noted that neither this, nor the many other mergers and absorptions by the Carpenters and other building trades unions changed them into industrial unions.

Dr. Christie calls the Carpenters a craft-industrial union. The old term of an amalgamated craft union is more accurate, because new members were recruited and held hostage, as it were, primarily to defend the interests and for the benefit of the skilled mechanics. This was shown in the settlement with the Amalgamated. The latter's officials accused the Carpenters of wanting only those few factory workers they felt compelled to organize for the carpenters' protection while strewing the unwanted members to the wind. This is exactly what happened. Even when those few mill men who were in the Carpenters tried to get autonomy to look after their own interests, the Carpenter leaders met the demand by segregating them into so-called auxiliary locals. Their purpose was explained by the union convention's Constitution Committee: "We would give them a charter from the Brotherhood, but it does not give them the right to voice in our District Councils or anywhere else. But they are under our authority, and must obey the mandates of our General Constitution." Quite an arrangement! The Car-

penters claimed jurisdiction over all woodworking not because it was interested in unionizing the industry, but in order to pick off the skilled workers and to police the industry on behalf of the building trades carpenters.

**B**EFORE they had brought the mill workers to heel, the Carpenters found themselves in a bitter dispute with the sheet metal workers, brought on by a New York City ordinance in 1908 which prohibited the use of wood in the construction of any building higher than 59 feet. The next year, the Carpenters claimed all sheet metal work and another jurisdictional battle was launched on its checkered 20-year career. A few years later, the Carpenters began to brawl with the Machinists Union over millwright work, a contest which similarly went on for years and years. As these were by no means isolated instances, the time and energies of most AFL unions increasingly were spent on battling out their competing jurisdiction claims. Dr. Christie, who apparently follows a fatalistic school of sociology, declares: "Although the Carpenters' free-for-all method of settling their jurisdictional troubles hardly redounded to their credit, it is difficult to see how, under the circumstances, they could have done otherwise. They were pressured by the force of economic events on one hand, and on the other by an unyielding AFL policy which not only ignored economic facts, but flew in their face. In the absence of a guiding policy which should have emanated from the AFL in these times of economic transition, the Carpenters were forced to plot their own course."

Dr. Christie is mistaken. It is not difficult to see at all. The AFL was not some separate body, but the creature of the Carpenters and officials of other similar craft organizations. The economic facts dictated, if not the amalgamation of their organizations into industrial unions, at least a federation of the building trades with a compulsory arbitration setup to resolve all conflicting jurisdiction claims. But these grasping, small-minded bureaucrats could not compose their differences, and their irresponsible wars contributed in no small measure to the later passage of punitive legislation which outlawed the secondary boycott

even for legitimate union objectives. To try to subdivide the precise percentage of responsibility that ought to be pinned on Gompers, Hutcheson or others for the unholy mess is a profitless business.

**J**UST as craft unionism bred jurisdictional wars, so business unionism inevitably produced corruption and racketeering in the building trades unions. The building market was and remains primarily a local one; the industry is chaotic, competitive and speculative, with most subcontractors employing small numbers of workers. As early as the 1880's, the contractors started making exclusive arrangements and price-fixing deals with materials dealers and with each other in order to build a monopolistic wall around their particular area preserve. When the unions entered the field, they took over the functions of overseeing the training of a labor force through their union apprenticeship systems, and provided recruitment agencies through the closed shop—a boon for employers with small capital investments, constantly changing scenes of production, and shifting demands for personnel. Moreover, with its unique ability to keep unwanted building materials out of local markets, to harass the contractor who was out of the cartel, to standardize wage costs, and in general, to police the industry, the union became a well-nigh indispensable cog in the various restrictive arrangements “. . . organized into building trades councils, business agents provided extensive services for the contractors. It took but little time for the organized business agents to look down from their well-fortified position and see that payments for services rendered could easily be extracted from disorganized and unprotected employers. Union racketeering thus came to pass in all of the larger cities during the mid-1890s.”

Periodically, the contractors would set up a howl against “racketeering,” or, more commonly, business associations outside the building trades industry would set afoot government investigations or court proceedings. But it was never a case of virtue battling against vice. The building entrepreneurs were not interested in cleansing the moral atmosphere in America or their trade, or even of dumping their

labor partners in their cartels. What they wanted was to cut them down to smaller size in order to reduce their exactions. The outside battlers for clean unionism and morality were generally interested in breaking up the monopolistic cartels in order to reduce the exorbitant costs of building construction, where they were not involved in overall open-shop campaigns. That is why following each expose of labor racketeering, after a couple of crooked labor of-

ficials were carted off to jail for extortion, the building masters would immediately enter into new collusive arrangements with union business agents. The latter had presumably learned their lesson: to be more circumspect in the exercise of their power and to be content with lesser amounts of graft. Within a short time it was back to the status quo ante. As they said when Sam Parks was sent off to Sing Sing: His spirit goes marching on!



## BOOK REVIEW

### *Negro Leadership*

by Conrad Lynn

*STRIDE TOWARD FREEDOM: The Montgomery Story, by Martin Luther King Jr. Harper & Brothers, New York, 1958, \$2.95.*

**M**MARTIN Luther King represents a new, young leadership of the Negro people. Historically, as Gunnar Myrdal has observed, the Negro leader accommodates his role to the lengths to which his white patrons are willing for him to go. Since America is governed by an all-white ruling class, the advancement of the Negroes as a group has never been of major concern.

True, the Abolitionist cause provided the ideals for the Union side in the Civil War. But modern scholarship has conclusively demonstrated that burgeoning American industrialism found slavery to be an anachronistic roadblock. At the present time Paul Butler can sincerely say that the struggle for equal rights for Negroes is the great moral issue facing the country. But that is necessarily so only because of the stance

Conrad Lynn, a contributing editor of this periodical, is a courageous Negro attorney who has fought many important civil rights and civil liberties cases during the past two decades. Mr. Lynn is at present fighting in the courts for two Monroe, North Carolina, Negro children who have been sentenced to indeterminate terms in the reformatory. The two boys, one eight and one nine years old, were grabbed by the police because six- and seven-year old white girl playmates had kissed them. They are charged with “molesting and assault upon a white female.” A trial held on one-half hour notice, behind locked doors which excluded a representative of the NAACP, ended with the judge telling the children that if they behaved themselves they might be released before they were 21. Mr. Lynn’s plea to the judge some weeks later for a reduction in sentence was refused, and he is preparing further legal action.

the governing group needs to present to a predominantly colored world.

The Negro leader has always been careful to keep the upsurge of his people within “respectable” limits. Sometimes that involved outright betrayal. Generally, it was possible to play on the desire of the Negro educated class for partial acceptance by white liberals to prevent any break outside the limits of what the latter would accept





as "orderly progress." So now the cry from both Negro and white liberal leaders to the Negroes is "go slow," "don't push too fast." In the four and a half years since the Supreme Court decreed that segregation is inherently discriminatory, six Southern states have fastened segregation and repression more savagely on the Negro than at any time since the promulgation of the Black Codes. In eleven other border states bare token recognition has been given to the



Court's edict. Yet the charge is made and widely believed that the NAACP and the Montgomery Movement are led by wild-eyed radicals who are causing well-meaning whites to desert their cause and encouraging the wool-hats to bellow for a fascist order.

IT is possible, however, that this time only the whites are fooled by this propaganda. The Negroes in Montgomery are well aware that the NAACP does not have radical leadership. They had to organize their own historic boycott of the buses to end segregation in local transportation despite the qualms of the National Office in New York about mass action. Martin Luther King was propelled into the leadership of that movement. However, when he agreed to pay his fine of \$500 in a deal on a so-called amnesty for white hoodlums who had bombed Negro churches and homes after the termination of the boycott, it may have been a sign that he was prepared to be "reasonable."

The lesson of King's *Stride Toward Freedom* may eventually turn out to be that the ruling circles of the South have been trying to find a new accepted basis for their authority, and that they can find it in the new Negro leadership just as surely as in the old. The book tells an heroic story because it recites the saga of poor, humble people who caught a vision of a better world and were

willing to make the ultimate sacrifice to attain it. But when King, Wilkins, Randolph and Granger went to the Great White Father in the White House and begged him to toss out a few crumbs of consolation—a familiar pattern began to repeat itself. They were lectured on the "limits," and ever since they have been trying to slow the drive for equal opportunity. Martin Luther King has been fortunate in that his stabbing preserved his martyr image. But he has a great deal of unfinished business to clean up with his Southern Christian Leadership Conference. "Bull" Connor of Birmingham and the other ruffians wearing sheriff's and police chief's badges in the South are hardly suffering any twinges of conscience yet over the new technique of pacifist action.

*Stride Toward Freedom* is a plea for the Gandhi technique. Within limits it has a future, chiefly in organizing the masses of Negroes. But the United States is not India; 350,000,000 Indians could present their bodies to a few thousand Englishmen for the latter to become sated with senseless slaughter. The Negro in America is a bare one-tenth of the population. Then, too little acknowledgment is paid to the three-million member Indian Army of 1946 which made it plain to its British officers that the time for Indian independence had come.

THE NAACP is correct in believing that non-violent direct action cannot alone win freedom for the Negro. But King is right in sensing that court actions alone cannot win freedom, either. The editors of *The American Socialist* are right, finally, in concluding that the onward march of the Negro can only succeed in alliance with a forward-moving labor movement. The labor movement will ignore its obligations in this area at its peril, for the one lesson that the twentieth century teaches is that social relations do not remain static. If resolution cannot be achieved in democracy, it will be found in totalitarianism.

## Decline of the Lincoln Ideal

ALTGELD'S AMERICA: *The Lincoln Ideal versus Changing Realities*, by Ray Ginger. Funk and Wagnall's, New York, 1958, \$4.95.

JOHN Peter Altgeld was a poor boy who made good, but failed to find satisfaction in having set his foot on the many bowed backs that it takes to make one rich man. From an Ohio farm he had made his way West to Missouri where, penniless, he supported himself at several kinds of hard labor while he read law. By 1871, at the age of 24, he had his law degree, and rose rapidly to a number of small-town public offices. Within a few years he had moved to Chicago, where, by shrewd and diligent application to his law practice, and, more important, by entering the real estate field in a fast-growing city, he was not long in becoming a wealthy man and eventually a millionaire.

Hidden springs of character and motivation made Altgeld one of the noted radicals of his day. When he re-entered politics in 1884, it is likely that he had already shaped some reform ideas in his mind, as his book of that year, *Our Penal Machinery and Its Victims*, demonstrates. On the other hand, he himself attributed his interest in politics to his childlessness ("Other men have their children. Politics is my recreation."); and his early political actions show more in the way of conventional ambition than reformer's zeal. Whatever the complex drives that urged him on, what is plain is that he reversed the more usual process by shedding opportunism and yielding to the attractions and compensations of probity and principle as he grew older.

The Haymarket Affair marked a crisis in his outlook and career. When he was elected governor of Illinois in 1892, he touched off a national furor by pardoning the three surviving defendants. Worse than the pardon itself, from the upper-class viewpoint, was the fact that Altgeld based it not on mercy, but on a bitter denunciation of the way the trial was conducted. His national reputation as a radical was fully established, to be reinforced in 1894 when he clashed with Democratic President Cleveland over the sending of federal troops to Chicago during the Pullman strike. Altgeld became the leader of the opposition to the Cleveland Democrats, and in 1896 dominated the party convention which kicked over the traces and nominated Bryan on a platform of anti-trust agitation and free silver. Until his death in 1902, he led the reform Democrats nationally, and fought for a variety of reform causes.

RAY Ginger thus chose wisely in putting Altgeld at the center of his canvas depicting Chicago, 1892-1905. The purpose of this volume by the author of the notable Debs biography is to place in perspective a changing America by focusing on the moment in our history when the battle was raging most furiously between the major antagonistic forces. In Chicago, where a raw and incredibly fast growing capitalism produced against itself an array of reformers and radicals, the fight was at its hottest, its most colorful, and its most instructive during the years chosen for this slice of American history. On one side were the great magnates: Swift, Armour, Marshall Field, George Pullman, Potter Palmer, and Charles Yerkes, the traction magnate who served as a model for Theodore Dreiser's novels about the world of high finance. On the other side, an array of rebels and idealistic malcontents saw how the wind was blowing, and did what they could to rally the people and change the trend, or to expose and alleviate the worst of the sufferings. Intellectual and political life was a lively brew, with Altgeld and Darrow at the center of a succession of political storms, Jane Addams, Florence Kelley, Julia Lathrop and others founding a tradition of social work at Hull-House, John Dewey and Thorstein Veblen stirring up the academic world, Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright



smashing old ways in architecture and city planning, and with Upton Sinclair, Theodore Dreiser, and others recording what they saw in their famous novels.

Although this is a book of history, carefully researched and transcribed in fascinating detail, the author's concern is far from purely historical. In an epilogue, he states the theme implied throughout the book, which is the decline and decay of the American conscience:

*It is the vitality of this past generation that contrasts so strongly with our own confusions and lethargy, and their vitality came from the intensity and exaltation of their purposes. Men like Altgeld and Darrow had some ambitions that were far from noble, and they had more conflicts than the typical man. But in most situations they ultimately faced up to the question: What is right? The question has gone out of style. Nowadays an effort to reach a decision is likely to begin and end with the query: Am I covered? In this shift lies the collapse of a civilization, and we still do not realize exactly what has happened or how.*

What has happened, of course, is that the traction magnates, the meat packers, the bankers, the Marshall Fields and George Pullmans have won the battle of the nineties. Not on their own terms; they have been forced to concede a place in the sun to the unions, to reform measures, and to many other things that the Darrow-Altgeld forces fought for. And they hold their power by a precarious and uncomfortable margin of tolerance. A suspicious population has been awakened en masse to the dangers of depression and insecurity that only political minorities saw in 1900, and the popular sufferance of corporation rule leaves little room for major failures in delivering the goods. But on the whole, the oligarchy that Altgeld fought took over completely in the years after his death, extending its sway into agriculture and every field of industry, and all but wiping out the "Lincoln ideal" that energized so many thinkers and movements of the past.

**N**UMEROUS historians, sociologists, and writers of fiction have tried to define the ways in which this transition to a corporate America has changed the climate of life. Mr. Ginger shows how the big organizations and the big market have narrowed the range of choices open to Americans, and how difficult it is for the thoughtful and conscientious to find satisfaction in serving the needs of one or another corporation. As all the more crucial questions of life have become taboo, intellectual life has dried up in its traditional milieu, the middle class. Among the broader classes of workers and farmers, the great adventures of this country, the frontier struggle and the immigrant's gamble, came to an end, and more recent excitements like the installment plan have proved pallid as substitutes.

What stands out in this book, exemplified

in Darrow, Altgeld, the women at Hull-House, and many others of Mr. Ginger's narrative, is how strong the impulsion is among some materially successful people to find causes larger than the selfish "I." The money-success stories of the nineties are not half so impressive, in human terms, as the stories of those whose greed and thirst for respectable approbation was curbed, tempered, and often defeated by their sense of justice. Now that, as Mr. Ginger points out, there are fewer crevices for the rebel and iconoclast, and the agencies for repression of the conscience have grown so strong as to virtually close off unconventional outlets, what happens to such people? That is a vital question that encompasses a lot of human waste and personal tragedy. We cannot measure degrees of happiness; neither Darrow nor Altgeld were notably happy men—Darrow often said as he grew older that he hadn't found life worth while. But what is certain is that they lived vigorously, they fought, kicked, and struggled their way through all of life's great questions and crises. It is hard to say for certain in these matters, but it seems to me that most men are so constituted that they prefer that kind of life to the evasive, tranquilized, petty, spineless, custard-bland existence of our middle classes today. What does seem to me certain is that once having tasted the former, men can never find full satisfaction in the latter.

Mr. Ginger has written another excellent book. While the writing falls below the exceptional standard set in his carefully wrought Debs biography, and while some of his literary and artistic judgments seemed to this reader to bear the stamp of amateurism, the book is a lively and engrossing narrative of a fascinating period in our history. Some events, such as Darrow's aggressive fight for municipal ownership of the Chicago transportation system, are related in detail that adds to previous accounts. While conventional historians may complain that Ginger has gone out of bounds by intruding "values" and "moral judgments" into his record, they would do better to reflect whether their own writing has not suffered of late from the absence of Mr. Ginger's kind of indignations and enthusiasms.

H. B.

### *Self Portrait*

*MORE IN ANGER* by Marya Mannes.  
J. B. Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1958,  
\$3.50.

**M**ISS Mannes is a former feature editor of *Vogue* who has for some years written television criticism and occasional essays for Max Ascoli's *Reporter*. She has gathered much of this material together, added additional essays and an introduction, and here presents her opinions in book form.

The result is interesting—not so much for the opinions themselves, for despite Miss Mannes' prediction that the reader "will find in this book . . . some painful

examinations, some impudent swipes, and some harsh indictments," there is not a line which would shock a reasonably literate fifteen-year-old—but as a self-portrait of the Old Liberal in the 1950's, ADA Division.

Miss Mannes valiantly assaults a number of symptoms of what she considers "the progressive blurring of American values, the sapping of American strength, the withering of American courage. "I think" she writes, "we have been suffering for some time from a sort of spiritual leukemia: an invasion by the white cells of complacency and accommodation; and I cannot mutely observe its dangerous course."

Her targets are varied: beer-cans on the highway, conformism, the impoliteness of young people on street cars, togetherness, modern dancers, advertising, commercial television, homosexual art dealers, the un-American activities committee, "Big Labor" and "Big Business," and the *New York Daily News*, to name but a few.

Some of these targets are eminently worth attacking and I should like to be able to report that Miss Mannes hits the bull's-eye with a fair degree of frequency. But her analysis in every case is only skin deep, her sense of humor corroded by television wit, and her style that of the most ephemeral journalism. Indeed, although Miss Mannes assuredly detests the *Reader's Digest* from the bottom of her liberal heart, most of these pieces sound as if they were written for that magazine on the day after a Democratic Party revolution had swept the present editor from his chair.

GEORGE HITCHCOCK

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