The American Socialist

MAY 1958 35 CENTS

Anti-Labor Inquisition:

THE McCLELLAN COMMITTEE OVERPLAYS ITS HAND

THE REAL CHALLENGE OF RUSSIA

A Program for America by Irving H. Flamm

MARX IN THE MODERN WORLD

Socialist Economics Reviewed

LUMBER WORKERS' LONG BATTLE

Saga of Northwest Unionism

THE PROPER PLUTOCRATS

A Picture-in-Depth of Our Rulers

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Lopsided Approach?

A lopsided approach towards the American working-class and union movement is causing articles in Left publications to be invariably weak with respect to this most vital area of American society.

Nine-tenths of the articles simply reply to pronouncements of leading unionists like Walter Reuther. These leaders are either roundly criticized or gently damned with faint praise. In many of these, one smells odors of jealousy and vested interests, hoping somehow, sometime, to replace by the Left our present leadership.

Where in socialist publications are the articles describing the intimate, day-to-day problems and attitudes of production and skilled workers? A pervasive side-line mentality exists, which omits pictures of unemployed families and how they fight to survive—their hopes and despairs; is numb to the overwhelming problems of unemployed minority groups and how they struggle to scrape together food and lodging; skips over the details of life-sucking speed-up and the struggles it engenders.

The mesmerizing by the union leadership and its pronouncements fosters an unbalanced, carping, factional attitude and dulls interest and participation by the Left in day-to-day struggles. Yet only by this down-to-earth participation can the Left build its reputation among workers and eventually be voted into union office.

Deep, persistent problems affecting workers cause mental thirst for fundamental solutions in addition to the everyday treadmill of struggle and limited tactics. How to gain the workers' ears for socialist answers, what these answers are specifically, how to struggle for them: these also require detailed familiarity with the problems and workers' frame of mind, as well as their respect for us.

When the current lopsided approach is righted, one result should be a sustained effort to secure worker correspondents and then devote a section of each issue to their reports.

Detroiter

Your magazine is often interesting—*but*—why don't you write for a mass audience? You seem to go in for scholarly analysis of books, learned debates, etc., but you certainly don't seem to be writing for the working man. I know that support from college students and those who consider themselves intellectuals is necessary. But I can't imagine you people leading unemployment demonstrations or stirring labor to form a party of its own. While it is about time that we had a working-class league to inspire the unions and a future labor party, you'll have to write much more simply to do your part.

J. G. *New York*

[Editors' Note: The problem of building up a network of effective labor correspondents is the problem of creating a socialist movement and educating a body of labor socialists who will help organize among other things an effective socialist press. It cannot be done in the present depressed state of the Left by simply assigning a number of well-meaning people around the country the job of sending in shop reports. We used to read in the old Communist press a lot of this type of "workers' correspondence," and nine times out of ten, if not oftener, it was writing that lacked authenticity, judgment and perspective, it was boring—and it was not read by workers.

[We are always in the market for articles which probe into the lives, problems and thinking of working people, and we have published some good ones over the years, but wishing them and receiving them are not always one and the same thing. We would be more than pleased to get articles of the kind suggested, and urge all readers who might have something worth while along that line to work it up and send it in.

[Our correspondent from New York may be surprised to learn that the editors of the *American Socialist* participated in and led many strikes and other labor actions in the thirties and forties. We think he is wrong in assuming that this magazine is written for and read only by "intellectuals." We have a very good labor circulation in the most important labor centers, and many interested readers among unionists. It is true that we have a mixed readership, and try to publish contents of variegated interest. He is correct, however, in stating that we do not write for a mass audience today, for the simple reason that there is no mass audience for socialism as yet. Trying to write a socialist magazine for a mass audience at present would be no more realistic than hiring Madison Square Garden for a socialist forum lecture. Every vegetable has its season, and the current season calls for education, not agitation.]

Juvenile Delinquency

What is the approach to juvenile delinquency? Top-notch sociologists are hired to make detailed studies. Plans and suggestions are drawn up. The whole thing is built up into good news copy. Reputations are built overnight by "crusaders." Then, the information is filed into various compartments—and forgotten. Or a few experiments are carried on; some timid efforts are made to assuage the public conscience.

In the meantime, Hollywood and TV hire writers to capture the "thrills" of the social problem in question. And the public spends millions of dollars, not to eradicate the evil, but to savor it vicariously. It's not that the public is hard-hearted, but it is made soft-headed by the mass media.

R. K. *Milwaukee*

I have been a Republican, until 1934, then a Democrat till 1948, then a Progressive voting for Wallace. Since then I've been disgusted, but I try to find which is the candidate most likely to vote and work for the general good. But to be honest, I'm disgusted with both old parties. If a socialist party gets a chance to run candidates and they are able, upstanding people, I would vote for a socialist. It could not be any worse than what we have.

I'm especially sick and tired of the big giveaways of this administration. Talk about "treason"—what do you call what they're doing?

L. F. K. *Los Angeles*

Congratulations on your specially timely article "Marching Orders from the Power Elite" [February 1958]. It is too bad this can't be reprinted and then distributed—on some wide basis—by some group or other.

H. E. B. *Chicago*

The American Socialist
May 1958 Vol. 5, No. 5

Published 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 mail privileges authorized at New York, N. Y. 357

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The McClellan Committee Overplays its Hand

IF we had any doubts about it before, the Kohler phase of the McClellan Senatorial committee hearings was convincing evidence that ruling classes are not omniscient even where their own vested interests are concerned. If ever there was a case where the National Association of Manufacturers queered its own game and discredited its own political mouthpieces, this was it. The sheer ineptitude of the performance and the manifest misreading of the public mind makes us wonder about the big brains in the big country estates that are making the big decisions.

Here was a situation that was a setup for them. They couldn't have had a better one if they ordered it tailor-made. The McClellan committee, augustly garbed in judicial robes, was bringing out day after day unimpeachable evidence of racketeering in unions, hoodlums worming their way into high positions, important officials rifling union treasuries, acceptance of bribes and payoffs, intimidation of members, collusion with management, signing of inferior "sweetheart agreements." The labor unions were rocking under the assault and public sentiment was turning sharply against them. The labor leaders' feeble protests that only half a dozen unions out of 140 were found tainted, or that other institutions of American life are even more corrupt, fell on deaf ears, as the half dozen unions encompass a membership of over two million and the committee had just got started turning up the dirt.

There was another thing: Even a people which accepts the mores of our business society gags at the thought that the practices of a pastor or judge are no different than those of the shifty tax attorney or grasping money lender. So, a nation which unthinkingly accepts the concepts of business unionism was shocked at the sight of labor leaders with no more idealism or honesty than the businessmen with whom they negotiate. Even the known anti-labor record of most of the Senate committee members was of no avail in mitigating the blow. The committee members were insisting on their honorable intentions and sticking to a devastating exposé of unsavory goings-on, the accuracy of which no one could challenge. For most of last year they had the labor movement on the ropes. The Meany-Reuther policy was predicated on the proposition that the labor leaders were so discredited they had better fall all over themselves in a show of cooperation with the committee. They proceeded to throw the most compromised in their midst to the wolves and went so far as to expel from the federation the Teamsters, Bakers and several other recalcitrant unions which wouldn't comply with the clean-up instructions. The McClellan committee was well started to disembowel the AFL unions as the Taft-Hartley campaign had done a decade earlier to the CIO. The union movement was split, the leaders were demoralized and in bad repute, organization work had ground to a stop and NLRB elections were more frequently being lost. The stage was set perfectly for jamming through new punitive laws against the unions.

AT this point some evil little genie whispered malevolent advice into the ears of our corporation-statesmen, with the result that they played the bum Kohler card and with this one throw lost possibly half of last year's lush winnings. It is true that the Goldwater-Mundt-Curtis team, as their mentor, the late unlamented McCarthy himself, had been itching from the first to steer the hearings onto Reuther and the Kohler strike, and that McClellan and his Democratic colleagues tried their best to dissuade them. But a word from their masters would have redirected these gladiators. Instead they were egged on. The NAM thought this was going to be the kill. Their executive officers signed a contract with Dumont to foot the bill of a TV kinescopic daily summary of the Kohler hearings which was then shipped free of charge to stations all over the country. But after the March 21 hearing, Dumont's Washington station cancelled the live program. The show was a flop, and before it was over, the problem for the McClellan committee was to fend off its own discreditment. A well-nigh perfectly conceived, semi-masked anti-union assault had with one stroke been turned into a stereotype, ham-handed, anti-labor attack whose obvious purpose was the destruction of unionism. Instead of punitive legislative recommendations coming as a climax to the scandalization of the labor movement, they came amidst the committee's internal bickerings and the resignation of one of its members. It generally doesn't pay to overplay a hand; neither at cards nor in politics.

The vast distance back that this country has traveled in the decade of the cold war is measured by the very attempt that was made to smear a union and its leaders on such an issue as the Kohler strike. Twenty years ago, and even fifty years ago, it would have been the company executives who were squirming and straining on the witness stand to explain away their malefactions.

HERE is a company run like a feudal kingdom by one of the holdouts of the industrial iron age. The Kohlers operate their plumbing concern as a family enterprise and have been accustomed to ruling the adjacent town of Sheboygan as their private fief. Between owning the local law, and their own private police force, it was simplicity itself to keep their workers terrorized. *Life* magazine in a full-scale study printed last year said the Kohlers brought to Sheboygan the peasant-landlord relationship they had

known in old Germany. In 1934, when their workers organized into an AFL union, the Wisconsin National Guard was called out, and the strike was finally crushed in a bloody way when the private Kohler police fired into a crowd of strikers killing two and injuring 47 others.

The Kohlers then set up a company union and resumed their old way of doing business. Almost twenty years later, their workers succeeded again in breaking through the spy system and blacklist and organized in 1952, this time into Local 833 of the United Auto Workers. After winning an NLRB election, the union signed a sub-standard contract in an attempt to gain a foothold. But the Kohler officials utilized the first year to prepare for a new war of annihilation. The company secretly purchased and illegally cached away in the plant a sizable arsenal of weapons. It stocked up on cots, blankets, food and provisions. At the earliest date legally possible, it served notice terminating the contract. Nor was this all. Under pretext of readying itself for civilian defense, the company erected on the premises gun emplacement watch towers with intricate telephone systems, high-powered searchlights, and barricades at strategic points. When the union could no longer ignore these and other provocations, and finally struck, the company set its private army loose to wreak terror in the community while its hireling spies infiltrated the union ranks (even spying on government officials) to sow dissension and violence.

As the strike dragged on for months, the union, in a desperate bid for settlement, drastically reduced its demands. Kohler, thereupon, to rule out any possibility of compromise, fired on March 1, 1955, ninety strikers making up the whole leadership of Local 833, and has contemptuously turned down since every suggestion, no matter from what quarter, to arbitrate the issue. The NLRB trial examiner who conducted extensive hearings issued an interim decision last year which found that the company "was bargaining not to reach but to avoid agreement," "that it was seeking the union's complete capitulation," and that Kohler "envisioned a settlement which would bring the company 20 years of labor peace as had the 1934 strike." It was this ruthless industrial tyrant then that the Republican Senators hoped to convert into a knight in shining armor, and to portray the organizer of a reign of terror as its innocent victim.

THE general feeling among newspapermen is that Walter Reuther handled himself ably on the witness stand and came out ahead of his opponents—an opinion we share. He put the question in proper perspective when he stated in his prepared statement: "It would be foolish to deny that there has been violence and vandalism in this dispute. The facts show that there have been some unfortunate incidents committed by individuals on both sides. In view of the long history of violence and provocations by this arrogant company, both at the bargaining table and outside the plant, it is a tribute to the self-control of the Kohler workers and their families, as well as a minor miracle, that the number of serious incidents in this bitter and emotional dispute have been so few." This statement is right as far as it goes; but the long decade of reaction has not only thrust labor back into defensive postures, but has all but effaced some of its own cherished traditions. Here is what we mean.

The committee's concentration on stray individual cases of vandalism and violence obscured the main forces in play and the main lines of action in this epic struggle. When the strike started in April 1954, the union answered Kohler's bristling display of armaments with massed picket lines. These kept the plant closed tight for 54 days, and the strike was on its way to victory. Then, on May 21 Kohler secured from the Wisconsin State Board orders for the discontinuance of mass picketing under the terms of the State "Little Taft-Hartley" law. Similar crises have occurred again and again in the long history of labor battles when employers seek to break a successful strike by getting legal sanction from the courts and the aid of the law-enforcement agencies for running strike-breakers into a plant—and the stand the union takes at this juncture more often than not spells the outcome of the struggle. The cold fact of the matter is that the UAW heads at this critical point retreated from the union's militant tradition of the Auto-Lite strike of 1934, the Chevrolet strike of 1935, the General Motors strike of 1936, and dozens of other crucial battles, and ordered mass picketing discontinued. Kohler was enabled to put the plant back into operation and right at that point the strike was, if not entirely lost, reduced to a harassment operation.

STRATEGY: Republican Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona confers with John McGovern, minority counsel for the Senate Rackets Committee, as sessions open on the Kohler strike.

Unable because of the union decision to employ effective mass action, and seeing their jobs and years of accumulated seniority slipping through their fingers, many of the unionists—only at this juncture—sought to save their strike by individual acts which here and there admittedly took on violent forms. The abandonment of past militant strike strategy likewise condemned the strike to an inconclusive nuisance campaign where the union has attempted to apply pressure by the organization of a national boycott of uncertain effectiveness—the AFL Plumbers have continued installing Kohler fixtures—with the prolonged endurance contest already draining the union treasury of $10 million.

THERE have been several attempts to stop Kohler production since the abandonment of the mass picket lines, the most important in the summer of 1955 when a freighter loaded with clay bound for Kohler docked in Sheboygan harbor. The mayor, who had been elected with labor backing, cooperated

with the union, and the ship, unable to load, had to sail for Milwaukee. The Wisconsin CIO thereupon threatened a city-wide strike and the ship moved on to Montreal where police broke up a small picket line and permitted the clay to be unloaded and shipped by rail to Sheboygan. But dramatic as these efforts were, they never had a chance. The strike, as a massive challenge of Kohler's open shop, ended sometime at the end of May or June of 1954 when the UAW abandoned its mass picket lines and the plant resumed production. It is ironical, in the light of this history, and the union officials' retreat before reaction in the cold war decade, that Walter Reuther had to defend himself before the committee against accusations of extremism. It is not the first time that labor leaders who gave a finger to reaction became its subsequent foils or victims.

With the Kohler hearings, the gingerly Meany-Reuther cooperation with the McClellan committee is apparently coming to a close. Inside the auto union there has been a certain amount of rumbling against the line of pseudo-statesmanship. It was echoed in a speech of Emil Mazey, UAW Secretary-Treasurer, delivered to a big meeting of Ford Local 600 members where he called for a more aggressive stand. As reported in the March 29 *Ford Facts*:

> *Mazey commented briefly on the McClellan committee hearings to which he had been summoned as a witness relative to the Kohler strike, stating that in designating this committee as a "Select Committee to investigate wrongdoings in management and labor," "select" was the proper word because it would be difficult to find a group as anti-labor and as backward in social thinking as the members of this committee, with a few exceptions. He felt that labor must take a second look at these committees inasmuch as these hearings were really inquisitions and designed primarily for headlines and not to determine whether legislation was needed. He felt that the union had made a mistake in supporting this committee without first making certain there were proper safeguards, proper procedures and rules; the union ought not to give any congressional committee a blank check.*
>
> *He stated that it must be recognized that unemployment was a built-in feature in our present economic system. Quoting Elliott Bell, editor and publisher of* Business Week, *speaking before an Economic Club recently, he said that in the past 25 years there had been a business slump every four years, each slump averaging two years. He felt there was something basically wrong with an economic system that breaks down as frequently as ours does, with these recurring periods of unemployment that breed frustration, fear, poverty and broken homes, and it was time that something was done to correct the things that were wrong.*

For his part, George Meany tore into the Senatorial commitee's recent report which had interlaced ritual criticisms of managements and bar associations into what was in effect a broadside on labor unions, and which tried to tie into one package an assortment of legislative recommendations varying from the innocuous to the generally acceptable to those which continue the Taft-Hartley game of trussing up unions and preparing for a system of government licensing and control.

The AFL-CIO leaders have been helped by the blundering of the McClellan committee and even more by the general shift in public sentiment as a result of the depression. But they are not out of the woods yet. The big employers had been all set for a lynching and they are not going to give up easily. Congressman Holland has stated: "In all the years I have served in the legislative halls of Pennsylvania and the nation's Capitol, I have never before seen the flood of anti-union propaganda that is pouring into the offices of elected public officials." Senator McClellan has decided to dump into the hopper his own bill which would have unions function under the sufferance of the Secretary of Labor; major contests for "Right to Work" laws are also shaping up in eight states including Ohio and California.

A LOT of people ask "What's wrong with the government regulating the affairs of the unions, since many of them have not shown an ability to manage their own affairs satisfactorily? Why shouldn't the government protect the individual worker from abuse?" Many liberals have joined this chorus, and even an old labor editor like J. B. S. Hardman, pointing out in a recent article that the state of union democracy leaves much to be desired, argued that "the legislative trend, on the whole, is not primarily inimical to unionism" and that labor leaders have to drop their old fears of government laws and controls. (*New Leader,* December 2, 1957.) Here is an illustration of the liberal theory of a neutral government, disinterestedly arbitrating differences between conflicting groups for the public welfare, breaking down the minute there is an attempt to apply it in practice, and especially, in such a sensitive field as labor-management relations.

Admittedly, there is plenty to improve in union practices, not only in the "bad" unions like the Teamsters or Operating Engineers, but in most of the "good" CIO unions, as well. But turning the job over to a set of government bureaucrats will take us a step closer, not to a more perfect democracy, but the corporative state, as the experiences of many of the Latin American countries illustrate. Government regulation of unions may purge them of some of their present evils, but they will at the same time purge them of such independence and such vitality as they presently possess. This is the case regardless of the intentions of the legislators and initial administrators of the law, because the class which dominates the thinking of the state and its bureaucracy is essentially hostile to labor unionism, and even where it tolerates and lives with the institution for extended periods of time, it invariably aims to cut it down to minimal effectiveness, it endemically seeks to erase militancy, and through social envelopment, patronage, or outright pressure, works unceasingly to domesticate its leadership. Even a government board like the NLRB, which initially was friendly to labor and helped its growth in the thirties, can, with a twist of the wrist, be converted into an institution inimical to labor's interests, as has been the case since a decade ago. In other words, the proposed cure would be worse than the disease.

OF course, we are not dealing with any labor idyll but a messed-up case of business unionism which baffles clearcut solutions. This is not a contest where on one side are arrayed the sterling, spotless unions headed by embattled proletarian leaders, and on the other, a homogenous reactionary governmental mass resolved to destroy with fire and sword the hosts of labor. Both protagonists are drawn on decidedly less heroic lines. There are plenty of peculators and punks posing as labor leaders, and even the men of integrity preside over bureaucrat-ridden structures. On the other side, there are numbers of liberals in the government who favor a mild unionism, but would like to see it divest itself of its embarrassing racketeering encumbrances.

Furthermore, even if the unions were spotless as the driven snow and led by anti-government syndicalists, they could not escape entering into numerous intricate relationships with government bodies and boards and would have to tolerate the regulation of some of their affairs. The labor leaders cannot be criticized for much of this unavoidable collaboration, but they can be criticized for having gone overboard since the New Deal, in their dependency on government agencies and the consequent surrender of an important part of their independence. And they can more strongly be condemned for permitting internal scandals in their midst which have left the unions exposed to their enemies.

Under the circumstances it would be scholastic to take a position that the unions should resist all government regulation regardless of the nature of the regulation; and especially is this ruled out for a union movement that has signed the Taft-Hartley affidavits and has now been revealed to be riddled with malfeasance. The AFL-CIO took the right stand in supporting the enactment of laws requiring full financial disclosure of all pension and welfare plans. (As a matter of fact, most of these plans are employer-run and the insurance and business lobbies have up to now blocked passage of such legislation.) A certain amount of tightening up on legal requirements of union financial and allied practice is also in order (although the filing of financial statements has been required for ten years since the passage of the Taft-Hartley law without any noticeable results in encouraging honesty among dishonest officials). Laws covering these and similar areas may have some limited value in cutting down on actual squandering of union funds, and regularization of administrative practices, but government action is worse than-useless in righting the most important union wrong of all, and the one which makes possible most of the other abuses —absence of union democracy, absence of rank-and-file participation and control of union affairs.

For one, governments are generally even less successful in practicing democracy than labor unions. At best it would be a case of the blind trying to guide the blind. At worst, it would be the reinforcement of the union bureaucracy with a government bureaucracy, which is what has heretofore occurred when unions became subservient to the state. Many of the labor academicians who delight in writing memoranda and model codes, and who exaggerate the worth of parchment constitutional guarantees, propose laws specifying that union elections must be held at certain stated intervals, provision of minimum ground rules, honest count of the ballots, etc. Yet the Miners Union, the Machinists, the Railroad Brotherhoods and many others are run as tight dictatorships while conforming comfortably to these formal precepts of democracy. Democracy in unions as in other institutions and walks of life depends, above constitutions, on the temper, alertness, intelligence and will of the people concerned, and the general climate and morale of a society. It cannot be arbitrarily legislated into being, especially by governments which are far more interested in taming unions than in democratizing them.

This aside is meant to examine a few aspects of the question of government regulation of unions. Of course, what the union leaders are going to face in the current Congress and State Legislatures will not be impractical meddling of bumbling well-wishers, but rubber-hose tactics of calculating foes.

THE AFL-CIO leaders are presently grinding out circulars and press data to counter the opposition arguments and defeat the hostile pieces of legislation. It is strictly fire-brigade work. As for confronting and reversing the reactionary trend, they seem as incapable as were the William Greens and Matthew Wolls in facing up to the company unionism and B & O plans of the twenties. With the aggressive adoption of the new codes of ethical practices and the expulsion of the worst of the offenders, the Meany-Reuther leadership is squared away to offer the traditional labor resistance, and aided by a changing public climate, they may deflect the worst of the blows. But labor is still very much on the defensive, and will probably remain so until it again becomes the carrier of some new ideas.

Walter Lippman wrote during the height of the sputnik hysteria that McCarthyism had cost us our leadership in science by cowing our scientists and frightening independence and initiative out of them. McCarthyism cost the labor movement more dearly. Under almost any other circumstances, the McClellan revelations would have led to a prairie fire of local union revolts with the members taking matters into their own hands, ousting compromised leaders and putting in new men at the head of revitalized organizations. But a decade of witch-hunt had demoralized and decimated radical ranks and as a consequence effectively disemboweled the unions. There was no initiative from below. The men and women who pay the dues were voiceless. The reform movement was limited to self-criticism and cleanup from the top. And, as Khrushchev's ethical practices codes showed in Russia, reforms are circumscribed and superficial when the ranks are not in on the decision-making.

People in unions are very much like people elsewhere: they are not primarily interested in democracy as an abstract right. They get excited about it only when they want other things and they need democracy to go about getting them. The CIO was a democratic movement when it was a crusade for industrial unionism to gain rights for the human cogs in the mass production industries. It got bureaucratized when it settled down to old-fashioned business unionism. The labor unions will have a vibrant internal life again with democracy observed in the practice rather than the breach when they start pushing forward toward new frontiers.

More dangerous than Russia or sputniks is an economy that hampers its own growth. We cannot save our best institutions nor meet the Russian challenge unless we knock off old shackles and meet urgent public needs.

Russia's Real Challenge

by Irving H. Flamm

A VARIETY of social systems in the world now compete for the mind of man. Heretofore, such rivalry led to war. But from here on, competition will have to be peaceful. For war means mutual destruction. Death is so final. It can never be a better choice than co-existence. In the end, the social system that offers higher living standards, better cultural facilities, more freedom, will win out. In the competition, our best selling point will always be the simple display of a thriving economy and a free, happy people. If we can improve our product constantly in keeping with the march of science, our security is assured.

The cold war, in any case, must now end. Whoever deserves credit or blame for starting it (and the Russians certainly deserve a share), the cold war has turned out to be a most profitable investment for our power elite. It has justified militarization and the expenditure of billions for armaments, creating more employment and the illusion of prosperity, and in Russia it has kept millions out of socially useful production, retarding growth. It provided a rationale for the witch-hunt to keep radical and liberal elements in line. It gave the Russian regime an excuse to prolong its own forms of repression. (Anti-Russian crusaders may publicly deplore the absence of civil liberties and democracy in Russia, but they would be chagrined to lose that campaign issue.)

President Wilson once observed that "the seed of war in the modern world is industrial and commercial rivalry." More recently President Eisenhower gave credence to this view when, during the 1952 campaign, he refuted Democratic boasts of prosperity by pointing out that from 1929 to 1939 our economy showed no real growth, despite New Deal doctoring, and that 9½ million workers were still out of work just before the war. Unemployment disappeared only when production soared under the stimulus of the second World War and the subsequent war-created shortages and savings; and when the shortages began to disappear along came the Korean War to prop the economy. Mr. Eisenhower could have cited *U.S. News and World Report,* an ultra conservative journal, to back his claim. In the spring of 1950 this magazine reported:

The formula [for prosperity] *as the planners figure it, can work this way: Rising money supply, rising population are ingredients of good times. Cold war is the catalyst. Cold war is the automatic pump primer. Turn a spigot and the public clamors for more arms spending. Turn another, the clamor eases. A little deflation, unemployment, signs of harder times, and the spigot is turned to the left—a little inflation, signs of shortages, speculation, and the spigot is turned to the right. Cold war talk is eased. Economy is proposed.—That's a formula in use.*

Yes, the cold war was a lucky investment for our big boys. But the time has come when it must be ended. For accident or miscalculation can turn it into a suicidal hot war. The peoples of the world are showing that they are fed up with fears and tensions. And they want an end to the criminal waste of resources and labor on military programs that can lead only to annihilation. The Russians, sensing this growing resentment, have been making the most of the peace issue. They seem confident that they can catch up and pass us in a decade or so. I thought their boast wildly over-optimistic until I read about a survey in *Lloyd's Bank Review* (London) which showed that in five years, 1950-55, the Soviet Union increased industrial output by 75 percent as against our 24 percent, moving up from one-third of our output to one-half. The report added that this was an abnormally rapid growth period for us and that if our tempo should slow down (as is now happening) the Russians could catch up with us in less than a decade.

WE have had ample warning that the Russians are out to capture first place in world influence. But if their plans really call for an industrial and living-standards race, our persistence on a policy of military concentration can be disastrous for us, for we can put ourselves out of the race which is really decisive. At the moment, our economy is still far in the lead. But if the cold war should thaw out, a combination of three new forces will be loosed upon the world simultaneously: peace, atomic energy, and automation. A far higher rate of growth than any we have mustered in recent years, ranging from a minimum of five up to ten percent a year, would be needed.

In 15 to 20 years, we can at least double and perhaps triple our industrial capacity. Paul A. Just, executive vice-president of Television Shares Management Corporation, surveying the many new developments in electronic brains and tireless automatic factories, sums up in the *Commercial and Financial Chronicle*:

Given the appropriate economic conditions, the electronic age could come upon us with the impact of water bursting a dam—so potent is the magic of the electron that scientists place no limit on the inventions and contrivances that ultimately will come into existence. In a very real sense the electron is our modern genie. It is our slave in a much more fabulous way than the imaginative author of "The Arabian Nights" could conceive for his fanciful slave of Aladdin's Lamp.

Mr. Flamm, a retired lawyer with extensive experience in the business world, is the author of "An Economic Program for a Living Democracy," published by Liveright in 1942, of which the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* said: "Every now and then, someone generates enough courage to tell the world the unvarnished truth. The author of this book has done just that, and done it magnificently."

We are at the beginning of a second Industrial Revolution. It can add more to our productive capacity in the next twenty years than our first one did in the last two hundred years. But will this great new force be on our side or against us? That depends on our approach to the new problems it will create. An unrealistic approach will set in motion pressures that will inevitably topple us from our position of leadership; for when our productive pace is stepped up, it will not be easy to avoid stumbling over that man-made block that has so often tripped us in the past—what some call "overproduction" and others "underconsumption."

Already there are dark clouds: production cutbacks, rising unemployment, cars piling up, growing stockpiles of food products, low farm incomes, vacant apartments and stores, tougher foreign competition, a rise in bankruptcies. Even before these symptoms of recession, a deficiency of mass buying power threatening the economy was manifest from the rapid rise of installment credit to four times the 1929 peak.

Many assume that the protective cushions built into our economy since 1929 will prevent a debacle. That may be, but they will not ward off the *new* danger, which is that of standing still, or of not advancing fast enough to keep in step with the rapid march of science and technology. With our factories, machines, and workers steadily increasing in number and efficiency, we have to advance each year. If we cannot make use of our productive potential, if we again fall back and slow down to avoid "overproduction," we are indeed headed for trouble. The cold truth is that we can no longer afford to confine our industrial machine within the mold of current marketing concepts. Instead of limiting the creative pace to fit our distribution methods, we must now utilize our productive plant to its maximum, enlarging the distributive system to fit the pace.

THE Russian economy, for all its shortcomings, is not constricted by marketing boundaries. Under its planned economic organization, it cannot be bothered by a shortage of customers, even if its productive capacity should expand ten-fold. Our handicap in this respect is the major threat to our competitive position. Unless we overcome that handicap, we cannot maintain our lead. If the Russians continue to adopt the latest industrial techniques, hitch them to atomic energy and electronics, and remain unhampered by our type of digestive bottleneck, we will have plenty to worry about; for their system may then have an irresistible appeal to the uncommitted peoples of the world. Unless we make plans now for an improved digestive system suited to conditions of peace, our industrialists may lose their best selling point, their widely advertised comparison of our high living standards with the meager Russian ones.

The business of balancing production and consumption was no serious problem in the theoretical free economy of classical conception. Industry would produce at full speed and free competition would be the stabilizer to keep prices in line with costs and consumption in harmony with production. A glut would set off a rush to unload, and price slashing would soon cut down the excess. But in practice, particularly today, things are quite different. The competition regulator is ineffective because of monopoly growth. Our capitalists avoid risk, but the social result is a form of calculated scarcity to maintain prices and profits.

Employers, seeking to escape high labor costs, are speeding the mechanization process. Before long efficient, obedient machines will render large numbers of workers useful mainly for consumption. Not so long ago, man's muscular power was his main asset, his wants regarded as his liability. Today it is the reverse. Were it not for their utility as consumers, workers could, like plow horses, be allowed to become almost extinct. Abundance has reversed the order of things. Waste, once abhorred, is now encouraged. Shoddy goods, quick obsolescence, featherbedding, arms production, are all part of the setup that keeps our factories from being choked by unsalable goods.

But why should we be harassed by plenty? Perhaps the answer is that material abundance is a new phenomenon, hard for an over-commercialized society conditioned by predatory habits and centuries of scarcity to become adjusted to. The transition to an age of plenty requires a new outlook, new attitudes. The great need of our time is a second Magna Carta, guaranteeing to the peoples of the world that the fruits of modern science and technology will be fully used for the general welfare, and that they will never again be dissipated in willful destruction or contrived waste.

An economic report to the President showed that in the last ten years, when our productive capacity increased 42 percent, *real* income to working people increased only 9 percent. Today the average worker gets twice as many dollars as he did before the war. But his take-home buying power is little greater, though productive capacity has doubled. To bring consumption into balance we will have to do better from here on out. How are we to expand mass buying power to keep up with rapidly growing output? To socialists the answer seems simple. But social ownership of the means of production and distribution, whatever its merits, has no present chance of being accepted here. The American Left will have all it can do to prevent the gradual adoption of a Hitlerian type of coercive system. To remain steadfast for the perfect world we envision, to reject compromise and let nature take its course, is to play into the hands of the demagogues of the extreme Right.

IN view of the necessities of our time, the writer proposes that we equip our economy with a device that will do for us what free competition once did, namely, serve as a stabilizer to keep production and consumption in balance. This stabilizer can function like the kind now attached to large vessels, not altogether eliminating the rocking motion, but keeping it within tolerable bounds. A long-range trillion-dollar modernization program could very well be such a stabilizer. A showcase of blueprints for socially useful undertakings, from which appropriate projects could be selected and gotten under way on a few months' notice, would be a good way to even the flow of buying power, steady private industry, prevent log-jams of unsold goods, and give us at the same time the benefits

of modernized cities and the best in health and cultural facilities.

Clearly, our outstanding need in this regard is for city redevelopment. This would include slum clearance, widened traffic arteries, better airports, harbors, terminal and other transport facilities, improved sewer, water, and drainage systems, added trees, parks, playgrounds, schoolrooms, libraries, auditorium and other cultural facilities, homes for the aged, more hospitals and health centers, projects to reduce accidents, crime, juvenile delinquency, fires, noise, smoke, smog, physical and mental diseases, and to promote better human relations. In such an enterprise to modernize our cities, there is need for hundreds of billions of dollars.

Beyond the cities there is the pressing need for a modern super-highway system reaching into every section of the country, conservation projects for reducing soil erosion, replanting denuded forests, fertilizing and irrigating lands, reclaiming swamps, building flood control, re-stocking lakes, adding pipelines, tunnels, bridges, and the like. No, it would not be difficult to invest a trillion dollars to good advantage. Such investments are doubly sound if they make for happier living and at the same time keep the economy going and growing.

A peaceful adventure in social reconstruction, democratically planned and dramatized, could serve as the "moral equivalent of war," a natural way of attracting the energy and talents of all walks of life the way a war sometimes does. A war on poverty, disease, waste, injustice, provides better opportunity for achievement for those moved by altruism or patriotism. And a huge social enterprise of this kind would enable us to meet the Communist challenge far more effectively than war or militarization. We must face up to the fact that Communism and socialism in varying stages of development are in vogue in many parts of the world ranging from democratic Britain to totalitarian Russia. War will not destroy or reverse the leftward trend. More likely it would do the opposite. But peaceful co-existence and competition should make it less harsh, less intolerant of human values. If calculated risks must be taken, the kind of co-existence described above is the safest.

How would the costs of such a national modernization program be paid? Would it mean more public debt, bigger deficits, more taxes, more inflation? The questions rate careful consideration. In view of space limitations, we can say here only that money is not wasted if it converts what would otherwise be unemployed manpower and unused resources to useful public improvements. The really important waste and extravagance is in making less than full use of our resources. We have the ingenuity to finance

hookups between unemployed men and machines, and a record of successful experience in wartime, in post-war housing, to guide us. It is easier than financing military production, which increases only the debit side of the ledger, and it can be done without hurt to any class, except perhaps the tiny minority whose gains are derived from speculative and parasitical adventures.

If we can double or triple our national income pie (as we doubtless can), the problem of dividing it between haves and have-nots will be infinitely easier. With less public expense for relief, subsidies, militarization, our tax income would be sufficient to carry a large program of the kind sketched, spread over the next dozen or more years. And the greater flow of useful goods instead of guns would insure against the danger of inflation.

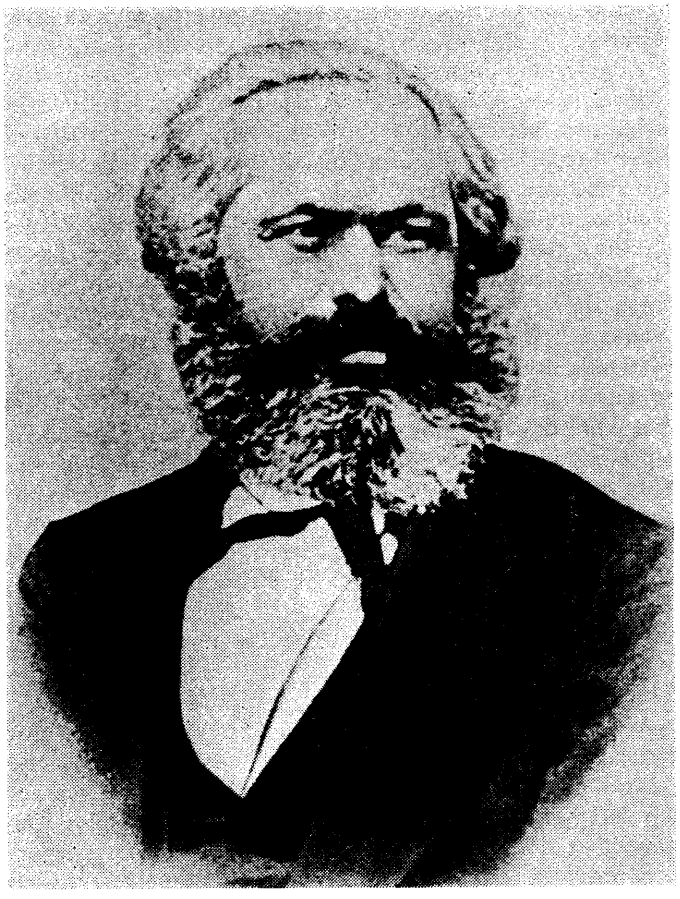
THE economy that survives the coming competition is the one that makes use of all its resources for the benefit of the citizenry, turning out useful goods and services at high speed and distributing them as far as possible in accordance with individual preferences and contributions to the productive effort. That will, from here on, be the vital test for the efficient democracy. At present we come closest to meeting that test. Luck has been with us. Blessed with an abundance of natural resources and a large free-trade area, we were able to expand our economy at an accelerated pace, while two world wars wrecked rivals. This facilitated our rise at great speeds to a great height. We can descend just as fast if we fail to keep up with changes taking place in the atomic age. If we take the road of intensified militarization, repressions and witch-hunts, economic stagnation or recessions, further concentration of economic power in the hands of monopoly corporations, we are sure to decline.

As never before, the world is in a state of ferment. Established orders are breaking up. Everywhere the people are rebelling against economic arrangements that do not allow free play to science and technology. As of now, none of the social systems in operation has solved satisfactorily the economic problems. But some are taking closer notice of the potentialities, experimenting with new forms, new methods. The world is a big enough laboratory for each nation to experiment in its own way, and make its own mistakes and discoveries. In the search for a happy civilization some nations with a strong bias for public enterprise will gradually learn about the advantages of competition in some spheres. Others, starting from the opposite end, will increasingly resort to planning and public action to complement private enterprise. Given an era of peace, we need, in this age of rapid motion, but a single generation to produce fabulous results. In my opinion, the competing nations will very likely be drawn together in a synthesis of capitalism and socialism, a blending of civilizations as each society, profiting by good and bad experiences, preserves those institutions that proved useful and discards those which were not. The end result in our own country is likely to be a society in which both public and private enterprise will operate, each in those areas where it can best supply the physical and cultural needs of the people. To reach that goal by peaceful means is mankind's best hope.

Repeated technological revolutions and consequent higher living standards have raised new issues in socialist economics: Should Marxism be defended as a dogma, scrapped as a failure, or brought up to date as a viable economic theory?

Marx in the Modern World

by Harry Braverman



"IT is certain," wrote British economist Joan Robinson in a letter to a French periodical a year and a half ago, "that Marx did not believe capitalism could continue to flourish more than a hundred years after the publication of the 'Communist Manifesto.' The task of scientific Marxism ought to be to apply itself to attempt to find out why Marx's prediction was not realized." This challenge puts in a nutshell the issue around which a considerable discussion has been going on in European left-wing journals for many months, a discussion which will be outlined in this article along with some views.

As a pointer to the main problem, Mrs. Robinson's remark has a limited value, in my opinion. It is not just capitalism's prolonged life, but the new conditions that have grown up in a century which have posed the real challenge. So far as explaining the unexpected longevity is concerned, Marxists have not been altogether remiss. While no single piece of work has supplied the massive answer the problem deserves, many important considerations have been adduced: Marx's expectation of decline and crisis was overfulfilled in the first World War and the subsequent economic collapse, but the socialist movement proved inadequate; a good part of the longevity derived from imperialism which exported the worst of Marx's predicted misery to the colonies; as imperialism went into decline a permanent semi-war economy took over, sublimating capitalist economic crisis into potentially more dangerous forms; better living standards won by intensive struggle helped alleviate discontent, etc.

While these explanations are subject to modification and improvement, or amplification, in their total impact they go a long way to explaining the mechanics of capitalism's prolongation. But the problem begins just where the explanation ends.

For, having made our explanations, it remains a fact that the world has altered greatly. How to apply Marxist thinking and socialist answers to the current scene is all the more pressing in view of the fact that, as is common to such turns of history, many parts of the movement cling to outmoded approaches, stale formulas, repetitions of old verbiage to meet new problems, ikons and incantations that were good enough for their fathers, why not for them? On the other hand, there are quite a few who are ready to throw away every tested mode of thinking and reduce their outlook to an inconclusive blur. In the European discussion, there is an abundance of examples of both tendencies.

In 1956, John Strachey published "Contemporary Capitalism," the first volume in a projected series on modern socialism. In the thirties, Mr. Strachey had been among the most effective of Communist writers. His "Coming Struggle for Power" won him note as a scholarly and persuasive author who tried to use Marxism analytically, instead of freezing it into a ceremonial dogma. Strachey broke with Communism at the start of World War II, and later served as Secretary of State for war in the Labor Government.

"Contemporary Capitalism" is an ambitious attempt to give a new basis to socialist thinking about economics. Marx was right, Strachey said, in his purely economic diagnosis that capitalism tends towards a polarization of wealth and poverty. But he failed to include in his reckoning the counter-effectiveness of trade unionism and political democracy. These forces, by dint of unremitting struggle, have softened capitalism's worst features. The workers have held their share of the national income and of the rising productivity of industry. As the pie got larger, the working class got a larger piece, if not a larger share. Marx's "theory of increasing misery" and "subsistence theory of wages" have thus turned out false in practice. The capitalist system has become more stable instead of less so, as rising labor incomes took the edge off popular discontent, and as the spread of purchasing power, plus other reforms, made the system less prone to depression. If this progress can be continued—and Mr. Strachey, while pointing to major obstacles, seems to think it can—capitalism can be modified through a number of stages into democratic socialism. Upon this economic foundation, which challenges the relevancy of Marxist economics to current conditions, Mr. Strachey proposes to erect a theory of transition to socialism in his coming volumes.

SHORTLY after publishing his book, Strachey visited Poland, where he presented the above thesis in a lecture. He was answered by Polish government economist Oscar Lange, who, while admitting a rise in working-class living standards, doubted any *relative* gain (that is, he thought the sharing between capitalists and wage workers is still at least as unequal as it used to be, despite rising standards), and argued: "The internal stability of the capitalist system is not greater, much to the contrary, it is today much weaker than before the second World War, although the forms of its instability are today different." Both sides of this debate were published in the Polish daily *Zycie Warszawy*. In December 1956, the French monthly *Cahiers Internationaux* republished these essays. This started a discussion which continued through most of 1957 in that magazine, featuring contributions by G. D. H. Cole, Italian Socialist leader Lelio Basso, French left-wing economist Charles Bettelheim, and many others.

In the spring of 1957, the new British quarterly *Universities and Left Review* printed in its first issue G. D. H. Cole's article that had appeared in *Cahiers*. Its second number carried two contributions by young writers; one by Gordon Henderson (the pen-name of a Southeast Asian research student) argues in a detailed technical fashion the important theme that capitalism, even if it averts depression, is in for "a low rate of investment and the slowing down of economic progress." In its third number, *ULR* printed an advance chapter from Strachey's next book. Elsewhere, the more orthodox British Marxist economist Maurice Dobb published an article entitled "Some Economic Revaluations" (reprinted in this country in *Political Affairs*) in which he rejected and proposed to abandon the so-called "Law of Absolute Impoverishment."

In the United States, there has been as yet hardly any direct participation in this discussion, despite the fact that much of the controversy in the Polish, British, and French periodicals has revolved around American capitalism as the prime example. Strachey's book was published here by Random House, but none of the reviewers took the opportunity to probe the matter deeply, and the book has had little apparent impact on Left thinking and discussions. A new magazine, *Prospectus* (launched as a bimonthly, but which has not appeared since its first issue last November), provided an excellent introduction to the controversy by printing three new articles, by Strachey, Dobb, and Joan Robinson. None of the three, it is noteworthy, was by an American. The only American to make a serious foray into the field thus far is Earl Browder, in a series of four lectures at Rutgers University late in 1957, which he has published in mimeographed form.

Those participants in the discussion who are in agreement with Strachey have added little to his presentation of the subject matter. Cole follows Strachey's line of argument quite closely, almost up to the end. He does, however, diverge sharply when he comes to socialism, as his understanding of the shift in social power needed to get a new society is very different from Strachey's. Marx, he agrees, has been proved wrong on the "theory of increasing misery," and the capitalist system, contrary to predictions, is not heading for collapse. But, if we don't wind up in a war, the best we are likely to get from the new trends is more welfare-statism on the Americanized model, and that, Cole insists, is nothing like socialism. Britain, however, he amends at this point, may not be able to sustain such a welfare state because it lacks America's independent riches and resources. In that country, a welfare-statist solution may fail, and socialism can get its chance. While Cole mentions only Britain, it is hard to see why his amendment does not apply in equal measure to Germany, and in even greater measure to France, Italy, and Japan, thus taking in most of the capitalist world outside of the United States.

Browder also follows Strachey closely, bearing down most heavily on the alleged failure of Marx's "subsistence theory" of wages, and developing as a corollary to Strachey's thesis the idea that America occupies an exceptional position which has confounded Marx's predictions here even more sharply than abroad.

OBVIOUSLY, the above line of criticism of Marxism is at its most effective when launched against those dogmatic interpreters who handle Marx's ideas in a wooden and inflexible way. This latter variety of Marxism has dominated the field throughout the Stalinist period, and, unfortunately, is very much in evidence in the present debate. The habit of closing one's eyes to refractory realities and stubborn facts, which got a heavy blow recently in the field of analysis of the Soviet-bloc countries, has yielded even less to science and realism when it comes to analyzing the capitalist countries. Thus, in opposition to Strachey, there continue to be many who not only insist that Marx propounded a universal law of falling wages and that such an interpretation is essential to his economics, but who also believe that, given enough time with the figures, they can prove this is what has been happening.

The Russian political economy textbooks have continued

to hold to a "Law of Absolute Impoverishment." Communist writers in most countries have continued to intone this "law," and to cast into outer darkness all violators. In 1955, the Communists dominating the French union federation, the CGT, solemnly affirmed the dogma and condemned those unionists who protested that union action could effect a substantial rise in living standards. Four or five of the contributors to the discussion in *Cahiers Internationaux* defended, each after his own fashion, some version of "the law of increasing misery." The most ambitious effort was made by Charles Bettelheim who pours figures, index numbers, and percentages energetically through a fine sieve for many pages, and comes up with the conclusion: "These facts indicate that in the American economy too, today's privileged economy in the capitalist world by reason of the dominant role it plays, the condition of workers' wages doesn't tend to fundamental improvement, neither in an absolute nor in a relative fashion." To get this result he has to splice an old index of living costs, prepared by the United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers union, onto the government statistics, and even then he shows a rise in real wages of 11 percent between 1939 and 1955. (If he had stuck to government figures only, the rise would be 56 percent.) The trouble with this misplaced statistical zeal is that, even where it can be shown that recent gains in living standards are not so big as they are often made out to be, what is under discussion is not just the last five years, or fifteen years, but the trend of a century, which is undeniably upward even though it may be hard to pinpoint the precise figures.

If labor's real income has been on the rise, how about labor's relative position? Have the workers been falling behind in their share of rising productivity and national output, or in other words suffering a "relative impoverishment"? As this question is raised, Earl Browder interposes that "relative impoverishment" is "not in Marx's writings," and that "Marx himself would have been contemptuous of any effort to water down the issue, and would have, with ferocious glee, torn to pieces any 'relative impoverisher' who might have appeared in his day."

Browder's sarcasms do not appear to be well taken. When Marx proceeded, in "Capital," to illustrate his "general law of capitalist accumulation" (from which modern writers have extracted the "law of increasing misery"), he quotes Gladstone as saying "While the rich have been growing richer, the poor have been growing less poor." He comments: "What an anticlimax! If the working class has remained 'poor,' only 'less poor,' in proportion as it produces for the propertied class an 'intoxicating augmentation of wealth and power,' then, from the relative point of view, it has remained just as poor." But Browder is off base in a more fundamental way. From the point of view of economic science, it is relative positions and relative proportions that count most of all in the working of the economic machinery. Absolute figures that are decisive for one country and epoch lose all meaning if an attempt is made to transfer them to another country or day and age, when all other parts of the economy are of a different size. Trends in a capitalist economy have to be judged, by Keynesians no less than Marxists, by the evolution of different parts of the system in relation to each other.

STRACHEY, working from figures furnished by several economic statisticians (chiefly the Australian economist Colin Clark), concludes that the share of the national income received by wage earners in Britain and the United States held its own, without declining or rising during most of the last century, but then rose during World War II by about ten percentage points. From this he concludes that Marx's diagnosis was extremely acute, as it took great labor and democratic efforts to thus modify the trend he had foreseen. But, he insists, Marxists must now admit that the "polarization" tendency has been countered and reversed.

It appears that Strachey makes some errors in approaching his figures. For one thing, he fails to take into account that the working class has been a rising proportion of the population. For example, using American figures, wage and salary receivers were getting 58.2 percent of the national income in 1929, and 69.1 percent in 1954, a considerable jump. But the number of wage and salary employees went up from about 63 percent of the employed population in 1929 to about 77 percent in 1954, an even bigger jump. Judging by these figures, the relative returns of the wage and salary group were declining; its share in the national income hadn't grown enough to keep up with its own growth in the population.

Again, one is not always sure that Mr. Strachey wants to face the data in his own tables squarely. For example, where he presents figures showing the share of wages in British national income for seven selected years between 1911 and 1944, the unmistakable trend is one of decline, with 1944 showing the *lowest* percentage for any year in his table. But, according to Mr. Strachey himself, the improvement in labor's relative share was already supposed to be pretty much accomplished by 1944. He gets around this by throwing into labor's share for that year the pay of the armed forces, *in toto*. It is hard to see any warrant for this, either in economics or statistics.

In my opinion, Strachey does not succeed in proving his case of a long-term relative stand-off or a recent relative rise in the position of the working class. Many well-known facts clash glaringly with the thesis. For in-

stance, Strachey quotes Colin Clark as estimating a three-and-a-half-fold increase for real wages in the United States in the past century. But, in the same period, the real income per capita of the whole population has gone up better than four-and-a-half-fold, according to the Woytinskys in their massive Twentieth Century Fund study on "World Population and Production." And the recent report by the Special Studies panel of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Inc., states that output per capita has been multiplied better than five times since 1870. If these estimates of four- and five-fold increases in per capita income and production are right, workers, with their three-and-a-half-fold gain in real wages, have fallen behind over the past century.

Admittedly, all of these figures are open to serious question on account of the unreliability of estimates for early years. And recent figures for the United States, although far more reliable, present a serious problem in the lumping of wages and salaries into a single category, although a part of the latter, especially corporate emoluments, are clearly nothing but shares in profits put into another form. A full assessment of the whole matter will require better studies than have yet been made. In any case, even Mr. Strachey's claims for a rise in labor's relative share are very modest, and apply to a very brief period. He admits, moreover, that in Britain in recent years the trend has again been slightly in the other direction, with labor losing to propertied interests. Given the admitted tenuousness of his claims, and the doubts that surround them, there appears to be very little on which to base a reversal of capitalism's long-term trend to the concentration of wealth and income.

BUT, as I pointed out earlier, if it is hard to prove a relative gain for labor as compared with capital, there is no doubt at all that labor, in the advanced capitalist countries, has enjoyed a great rise in living standards over the past century. It is this fact more than any other which has inspired the disputes among socialists, which have been recurring for more than half a century, about Marx's so-called "law of increasing misery" and "subsistence" wage theory. The background for these disputes is as follows:

Marx concluded the first volume of his major work with a five-chapter treatise on the accumulation of capital, where he fits together the simpler elements he had abstracted earlier. Within this part, there is a chapter called "General Law of Capitalist Accumulation," and within that chapter there is formulated a law of polarization of weath, increase of capital balanced by increase of misery, from which the controversial "theory of increasing misery" has been lifted. Friend and foe alike have generally interpreted this as a theory that wages must tend to fall, and disputed it accordingly.

Marx did at one time clearly state a "law" that wages must tend to fall, in his series of 1847 lectures published as "Wage Labor and Capital." Here he gave the opinion that, as the worker loses his specialized craft skills, competition between workers would force wage rates to decline. Within a few years, however, he was rejecting this generalization, and condemning Lassalle for accepting the "iron law of wages" which Ricardo had taken over from Malthus. When he sat down, in the fullness of developed thought, to discuss the fate of the worker in modern capitalist industry, in the chapter on capitalist accumulation mentioned above, he appeared to exclude falling wages from the galaxy of evils which he predicted, saying: "The result is that, in proportion as capital accumulates, the condition of the worker, *be his wages high or low,* necessarily grows worse."

Marx's careful reservation, which I have italicized above, has quite naturally escaped wide notice, as the pounding of his artillery on the theme of "growing misery" drowned it out. It must strike us today, after we have seen to what extent real wages can rise, as unnecessarily grudging. But, grudging though it may have been, his concern with this point of his theory was real enough, as was shown in 1875, several years after the publication of "Capital," when he turned the rough side of his tongue on the program elaborated by the German Social Democrats at the Gotha congress. Lassalle's followers had inserted therein the "iron law of wages." Marx called this "a truly revolting retrogression." He again repeats that his condemnation of "wage slavery" does not depend on whether the laborer's pay is "better or worse," and adds: "It is just as if among slaves who had at last penetrated the mystery of slavery, and had risen in rebellion, a slave, imbued with superannuated notions, inscribed on the program of the rebellion: 'Slavery must be abolished, because under the system of slavery the slaves' food can never exceed a certain low maximum.' "

This anxiety that his theory not be hinged to any particular level of wages shown by Marx was probably intensified by the rise in real wages which could be observed in his own lifetime.

On the purely theoretical level, Marx's analysis was built of ratios, comparisons, and proportions, not absolutes. The massive development in the general theory of capitalist accumulation is based entirely upon the relationship between paid and unpaid labor. It is from this that Marx develops his economic conclusions, and most important of all, it is from this that he draws the class structure of his day—the "polarization of wealth and poverty" at the core of his thought.

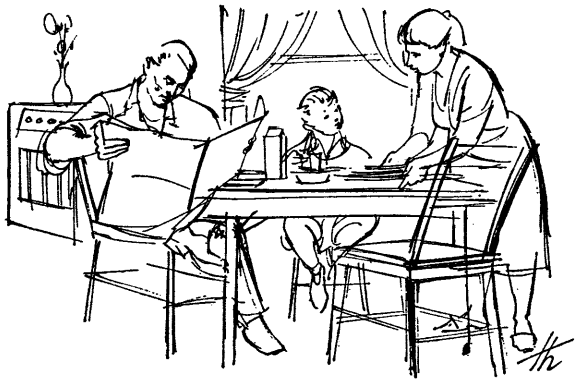
NONE of this is intended to demonstrate that Marx's analysis was either flawless or clairvoyant. On the contrary, it suffers badly from the obsolescence which attacks even the best of theories when they do not get the corrections called for by the passage of time and events. Marx cast the general law of capital accumulation in a rhetoric which was appropriate to the conditions of his day. In our day, as Strachey rightly maintains, many of these things are quite different. Engels, towards the end of his life, was to recognize that the capitalist system had "outgrown the juvenile state of exploitation described by me" fifty years previous, and expressed the hope that the workers would be more able to concentrate on opposing "the capitalist system itself," instead of merely specific early conditions. Today, we need that recognition far more than Engels was able to imagine.

While the relationships between paid and upaid labor still obtain, of the three major ways that Marx mentioned for an increase in unpaid labor—longer working day, increasing productivity, and increased intensity of exertion—it is chiefly the second which has come into play. The unions had a lot to do with this, as Strachey says, but regardless of the reason, increased profit has been extracted chiefly by increased productivity, thus allowing a great and unforeseen rise in wage levels, even while maintaining roughly similar proportions of paid and unpaid labor.

In a few countries at least, the standard of life of the working class has consequently been raised and is for long periods regularized. It is well above that of the classes it continues to supplant. The transformation of impoverished farmers into wage workers is no longer taken as *prima facie* evidence of immiseration. The brutalizing process by which the working class was formed has receded into history. Thus the class structure which Marx described with bitter intensity in his own day exists today in greatly altered conditions, and no attempt at presenting the general law of capitalist accumulation in traditional Marxist rhetoric can get across to the average person, who is, in a way, the best judge of the matter.

Judged in the light of Marx's total analysis and not in the form of a much-debated fragment of a paragraph, the trouble is not "original error but uncorrected obsolescence," to borrow the phrase of an economist from another school. To defend Marx's description of the conditions which this law brought about in his own day as a true description of present conditions would be nothing less than dogmatism raised to frenzy. But the operation of this law creates problems of a new kind in our own era. There is no more powerful way of analyzing the movement of a capitalist economy than the working out of a relationship between the accumulation of capital and the demand for labor, which is the way Marx attacked the problem. In recent years, orthodox economics has been able to regain some usefulness only by, through Keynes, approximating this method of analysis, although in a diluted and superficial form. There is no way of getting around the fact that, though standards of life have risen and the entire economy has moved to a higher plateau, it is Marx's "law of motion" of capitalism which explains most profoundly the system's repeated difficulties, and that the greatest of these crises came, not in Marx's day, but in our own.*

IF we apply this same approach to Marx's "subsistence wage" theory, we get much the same result. Marx had advised that wages fluctuate around a level sufficient to maintain, perpetuate, and train a working class. Strachey points out that real wages of British workers have doubled since Marx's day, and more than tripled in America; he therefore rejects the theory, calling it Marx's "original error" which drove "a great hole" into his entire system. Browder draws Strachey's view out to its most explicit, and, using simple arithmetic, finds that the American worker is now getting at least six times a "subsistence" wage. The reasoning: As Marx called the wage of the British mid-nineteenth century worker "subsistence," and as the American worker is today getting, according to the figures, more than six times that amount in real wages, the pay of the American worker is five parts "social increment" over and above subsistence. (Fortunately, Mr. Browder did not use the pay of the Chinese coolie at the time of the Opium Wars as his base, or we should find ourselves getting a pay a thousand times above subsistence.)



The fact that all the budgets calculated, by U.S. government agencies or universities, to provide a "minimum of health and decency" are, year by year, regularly above the average of labor wages ought to warn us there is something faulty about the approach. Obviously, no working-class family can manage any kind of subsistence at all on one-sixth the present average wage, which would be only some $12-$13 a week. Marx took care of the riddle by explaining that "subsistence" varies with the place and the time, as wages include, "in contradistinction to the value of other commodities, a historical and moral factor." Obviously then, the term "subsistence" was not intended to convey any single level of wages, nor was it technically bound up with any special emotional content.

The point here is not to go over elementary tenets of Marx's economics, but to recall once more that the difficulties of the theory stem not from "original error but uncorrected obsolescence." Unquestionably, a class on the present level of the American workers cannot be expected to take literally the words of the traditional socialist anthem: "Arise, ye prisoners of starvation." In that sense, Marxism requires a modernization to suit the present world; Strachey is absolutely right in that general claim. But can we throw away economic concepts without which it is impossible to understand our present system? No theory of wages can be accurate if it excludes Marx's concept, regardless what words are used to encompass it, because it is the only way in which the division of our society into classes, one of which accumulates while the other returns each morning to the factory or office to renew the terms of its existence, can be explained. If we start to play at this late date with the notion that "wages

* A recent issue of *Business Week,* probing for the cause of the current recession, quotes Harvard economist Arthur Smithies: "The basic factor in the current recession is that the economy generates capacity faster than demand. . . . It's a persistent tendency of our economy." No one has ever traced this "inherent mechanism," as *Business Week* calls it, on a more fundamental level than Marx.

have climbed to six times subsistence," which is to say that the worker can earn in his first eight years of labor enough to support his family for an entire 48 even without investments, we will turn the world of capitalism into an inexplicable mystery.

IN the foregoing discussion, no attempt has been made to deal with the subject as a whole. One or two specific current quarrels, as they have come up in the European controversy described at the start of this article, have been considered in an effort to sketch out an approach to the problems of socialism in the advanced capitalist countries. Much discussion of a more comprehensive nature is plainly needed. Here there remains space only to outline the dimensions of the problem, which appear to me as follows:

All the above difficulties in Marxism obviously stem from the fact that the capitalist system has persisted, and restabilized itself repeatedly, over a much longer period than had been expected. The great expansion in labor productivity which has created such new and different conditions was not unexpected in the Marxian economic structure, a structure which, as no other before or since, focused on the technological revolutions which capitalism is forced to work continuously as a condition of its existence. What was unexpected was capitalism's length of life and its ability to expand. Marx and the movement he shaped operated on the basis of imminent crisis. If he never gave thought to the kind of living standard inherent in a capitalism that would continue to revolutionize science and industry for another hundred years, that was because he thought he was dealing with a system that was rapidly approaching its Armageddon. He thought the social wars that would usher in socialism would take place *under the social conditions he saw around him.* In that sense, the economic obsolescence we can easily find in him today is of a piece with his errors of political foreshortening.

Now we live in a day and age where socialism, while clearly on the order of the historical day, will shape up under conditions far different from those under which the socialist movement was originally given its stamp.

Every movement develops its own style, rhetoric, way of making itself heard. Socialism was cradled in the intolerable conditions of the primitive working class, and flamed with the barricades spirit of the revolutions of 1848 into which it was launched at its infancy. Instead of evolving with changed conditions, this tone and approach survived in frozen rigidity which sometimes even outbid Marx. One of the main reasons was that the first of the long-awaited revolutions broke out in a country whose condition was more appropriate to the Europe of the early nineteenth century than the early twentieth, and whose social struggles reflected that fact. Then, to compound the difficulty, that revolution got ossified and bureaucratized at the top, and insisted on imposing its every prejudice and dogma on the world socialist movement. The result was a Communist formation, the recognized repository of "Marxism," with a *Zeitgeist* from another century and a paralyzed mentality. Is it any wonder that the work of digging out Marxism and restoring it to usable form is so difficult?

If the thought is right that the trouble lies not in original error but uncorrected obsolescence, then the job is not to see where "Marx was wrong" so much as to make a fresh application of his theory to the world around us as it is, not as it once was. To borrow a comparison from the field of physics, we need socialist Faradays and Maxwells or if we are lucky, Einsteins and Plancks, not people who confine themselves to knocking Isaac Newton.

The New Middle Class

THE most important officer of United Auto Workers Local 7 just now is Mike Moresco, who is chairman of its Community Services Committee. It is to Mike Moresco that the Chrysler Jefferson losers come with their doctor's bills, and their garnishments, and then with their problems with the unemployment insurance system, and then with their threatened foreclosures and, at the very end, in the moment that they accept the fact that they are going on relief.

That last moment came yesterday for Martin Loftis, 50, assembly hand. . . .

He bought a house on the fringes of Grosse Pointe three years ago; and, when his daughters got married he had so much room that he built an apartment upstairs and took in a tenant and the $20 a week he got that way covered his whole mortgage.

"I guess I got $6,000 labor in that house. . . . Well, I ain't got no money and I'm laid off and I'm not working and I went to a bank to get a FHA loan, but of course they couldn't give it to me. The fellow who was living with me had a steady job at Cadillac Motors, and, with that $20 a week I'd be all right. But he moved and now I got this paper from the land contract woman and they tell me I'm going to lose the house. . . ."

His unemployment insurance had all been used up, and Mike Moresco told him that he would have to go on welfare. That may have saved the house for a little while and every two weeks he gets $17.84 all to himself just for food.

Martin Loftis sat and talked about these things absolutely without rancor. "When they get here," said Mike Moresco, "they don't fight any more. They are just beaten. We can get a little something for Martin every now and then. People die and they need pallbearers. . . . We can use Martin for that. Of course, he's the kind of fellow who would do it for nothing, but this way we give him $3 or so and it's not a handout."

Martin Loftis is, and he knows it, a piece of machinery in the boneyard. Chrysler Jefferson, whatever happens, will never call the 10-year men back again. He is an auto worker who has never been able to afford to buy a new car. And yet how much of the history of the American automobile is bound up in him and the fenders he tightened since 1928—a nation on wheels cluttering the great roads, free to wander as it pleases because Martin Loftis was on the line? . . .

The $6,000 he put in the house almost gone, the years under the hood all gone, the life junk and the junkyard its end. This is one of the men that people like myself were writing about just two years ago as members of some new middle class or other. It is no excuse to say that we did not know we were lying; if there is a God in heaven, He will pay us for that lie, and he will pay Martin Loftis for enduring it and all the other lies.

—Murray Kempton from Detroit,
N. Y. *Post,* April 10.

Union organization among lumber workers: The long, hard road from open shop to a measure of bargaining power. A fascinating saga of labor struggle and gains.

Lumber Workers' Long Battle

by Kelly Hill

IN the days before the bulldozer and logging truck revolutionized the industry, logging camps were installed far up the rivers and large creeks where timber could be cut and decked along the streams in readiness for the wild spring freshets which would carry the logs downstream to the sawmills. In some sections where rainfall persisted throughout the winter and spring, drives took place oftener or even continuously. Where lack of water made drives too difficult, the logging railroad drove into the backwoods.

Hiring through employment agency sharks in larger centers like Spokane, Missoula, Portland, or Seattle, the employer forced the lumberjacks to walk to jobs 15 to 50 miles over mountain passes or up rocky creek trails. This involved a one to three day trip, often through rain or snow, on which the lumberjack carried his heavy bedroll, a small supply of grub, his weighty calked boots, a change of clothes, and various personal effects. The workers wryly named this jackass load the "balloon." "We're members of the APA," they said, "American Pack Animals." Many times, after a day in camp a jack was fired because between the boss and the employment agency his job had been sold again, and he had gained blistered heels for nothing.

If he were lucky he might stay to pull the briar (crosscut saw for felling or bucking-up timber) or become a teamster skidding logs, or a swamper using an axe to trim limbs from logs, or cut out skid trail or handle one of the many jobs connected with the steam donkey and loading on flat car. All of it hard and dangerous work. Ten hours or more a day and six days a week for a dollar and fifty cents a day, from which board and commissary and fee to the agency would be subtracted. In 1907 they struck for $2.50 a day. In 1917 they were striking for eight hours a day and $60 a month and board. Even this does not accurately picture their income because the season did not average six months. Camp cookhouses fed mostly staples like beans, dried peas, and bread, with occasional treats of salt pork, dried prunes or apples.

In the evening, in company with thirty to fifty others, the lumberjack could hang his wet stagged pants and sweaty wool socks over the pot-bellied bunkhouse stove and play cribbage in the light of a kerosene lamp. The air turned blue from tobacco smoke and no ventilation. The floor was littered with burned matches and spotted with spit and so torn up by calked boots that if he set foot on it with socks on he spent an hour picking slivers out of the wool. He bedded down early in one of the double-decked beds that solidly lined the walls and turned his exhausted body into a feed bag for graybacks (lice) and bedbugs.

Sickness dogged the crowded bunkhouses. In winter it was colds and grippe. In summer the whole camp grew weak from diarrhea, caused by millions of flies which made unhindered pack trips from the stables and doorless cans to the cookshack. When a man sickened, he brewed up a physic from cascara bark or bought epsom salts from the commissary. When injured—and woods work was a killer—he might lay in his bunk for days with only the volunteer care from the bullcook or his fellows, though in some cases a kindhearted boss might let someone use a horse or longboat or speeder to take him to town.

He could be cheated or overcharged by the commissary which served as a side source of income to the timekeeper. If he roused the anger of the boss he could be fired without pay and blacklisted as a troublemaker. If he quit, his pay must wait till the spring log drive came in at which time the lumber company at the sawmill office might honor his order.

THE movies hadn't yet pictured him as a gay and romantic two-fisted giant who leaps on a log and rides off through a cloud of white spray into the sunset. Despite his descent from approved native American stock, he suffered social hostility. The lumberjack could not be forgiven for being a wifeless, voteless, propertyless drifter. Just as orange and red became known in the racial-discrimination South as "nigger" colors, so did the lumberjack's bright mackinaw, hat with unbashed crown and stagged-off pants (legs chopped off about boot height) become objects of derision in the middle-class streets above the city's skid row. The citizens shunned him. The cops pushed him around. If he drank—the saloon keepers rolled him.

The AFL, dominated by its craft psychology, disdained to pay any attention to these migratory workers, and they became natural recruits to the Industrial Workers of the World. The IWW, with its anarcho-syndicalist bias, its rejection of the status-quo, its antagonism to respectable society, fitted in perfectly for a while with the mood of these deprived and deeply exploited workers, and its tactics of direct action and organizing on the run suited the special conditions of the isolated logging camps.

The IWW successfully tackled the hated employment shark-boss combination in a number of bloody battles, the most noted of which was the so-called Spokane free speech fight of 1909. The free speech issue was the right of IWW speakers to stand in front of the employment offices and recite details of employment abuses. Whether logger,

Kelly Hill is the pen name of a Northwest worker whose family has been in lumber a long time. "I traced it back 120 years," he writes, "and before that they couldn't read or write."

miner or harvest hand, a new speaker mounted the soapbox every time a cop arrested the man speaking. Wobblies rolled in on freights from every direction to help pack the Spokane jail until it overflowed into a schoolhouse.

The woods workers, the AFL shingle weavers, and to a much lesser degree the sawmill workers, felt the Wobbly influence in the decade from 1905 to the war. But in 1916, when the agricultural section of the IWW sent organizers into the woods, the loggers soaked up the Wobbly experience gained in unionizing the migratory harvest hands, and developed original methods of organizing the migratory woods workers who also travelled by side-door pullman (box car) and jungled up with cans for cooking pots under railroad trestles. The traveling delegate rode the freights and carried the rigging (dues stamps and books) with him to sign up men on the fly, keeping constant contact with job delegates who hired out in the camps. When the job delegates were uncovered by the boss and run out, they either left an already operating nest of Wobblies in their wake or made arrangements through the traveling delegate to send in another organizer with the next batch of newly hired workers.

Always, wherever the Wobblies went, their flaming propaganda appeared, tacked to trees, bunkhouse doors, boxcars, railroad bridges or hilariously glued to the back of the boss's mackinaw. A picture of a mule with long teeth, "Join up You Damn Fool!" "Workers of the World Unite! You Have a World to Win and Nothing to Lose but Your Chains!" Derisive cartoons of bloated capitalists. Vigorous language and salty word combinations. The boss became the "Bull of the Woods," his cook a "gut robber" turning out sweatpads (hotcakes) and squeal and artillery (pork and beans). Logger street speakers, in competition with Salvation Army bass drums and tambourines for favorite street corners, needled the lads and lassies with lusty labor parodies of the better known hymns.

The woods Wobbly excelled in agitation and action on the pork chop level. He'd pound away on the need, let's say, for better chuck, organize the workers on the spot, call for a show of hands.

"How many want to hang 'er up till we get decent grub?"

At the next meal the crew might rise from the cookhouse table, carry plates of grub outside and throw them into the tin can dump. A committee took it up with the boss and either the workers were granted their demand or they struck the camp in a matter of minutes. Or if the boss was an extra tough one they waited till they caught him with his pants down, like when on a spring log drive and the water was running out. Even the toughest boss wrung his hands at the prospect of leaving several million feet of valuable logs roosting on sand bars throughout the summer at the mercy of the sun and bugs.

THE big strike of 1917 started on a Montana spring log drive and spread through the short-log country of Montana, Idaho, eastern Washington and eastern Oregon, and thence swiftly into the long-log country west of the Cascades in western Washington, western Oregon and nothern California. At the beginning of the strike roughly 3,000 workers were in the IWW and 2,500 others were distributed between the AFL Shingle Weavers and the AFL Timber Workers Union. The abysmal conditions which drove them to action can be reconstructed by the list of their modest strike demands: an 8-hour day as opposed to 10 and 12 hours, the abolition of the "balloon" and lice and over-crowded bunkhouses, for showers and washing facilities, for wholesome food on regular dishes, clean cookhouses with no crowding at the tables, no hiring through the employment sharks, free hospital services. In addition they asked for wages varying from $3 to $5 per day or $60 per month including board and room.

Backed by the majesty of a government fighting to make the world safe for democracy, the bosses countered with the blacklist, gunmen, federal troops, arrests, and raids on meeting halls. It is estimated that 20,000 men actively supported the strike with between 40,000 and 50,000 idled by it. In September the IWW woodsworkers, faced with dwindling strike funds and growing repression, changed tactics and took the strike back to the job. The AFL unions, lacking the elasticity of the Wobblies, continued on strike, yet allowed their members unofficially to go back to work, and as a consequence dwindled away.

The strike on the job proved to be a highly original and successful method of resisting police and federal troop repression. The workers worked the eight-hour day then blew their own whistles and quit. If the boss canned the crew they were simply replaced by another crew which might play "loyal" but would perform only eight hours work or less though they stayed on the job ten hours. The boss might boast a full apparently willing crew in his camp with the exception of timber fallers. This left him with wages to pay but no work to perform. He blacklisted the known Wobblies. They changed names and hired out at the next camp. Production went to pieces. In 1918 the loggers celebrated May Day by building bonfires and burning their blankets, lice, bedbugs, fleas and all as final notice to the employers that bedding had to be furnished hereafter.

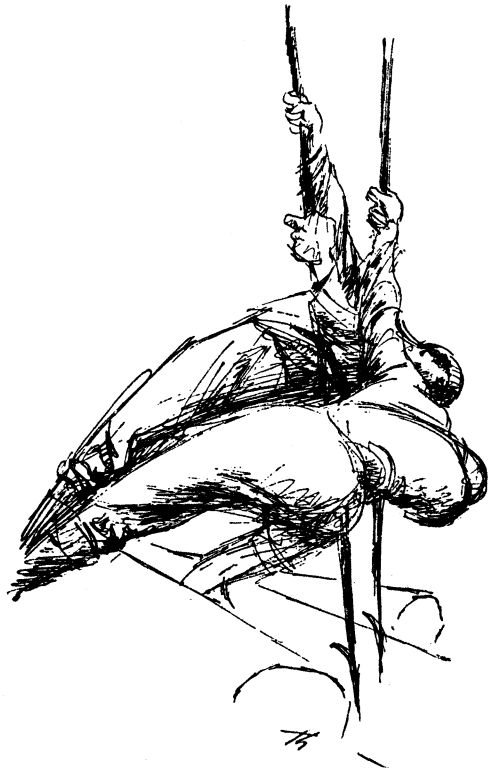
AS an answer to the Wobbly challenge, in October 1917 the government with the cooperation of the employers launched the 4L union under the leadership of Col. Disque of the Spruce Division of the United States Army Signal Corps. The Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen (cynical workers named it the Lousy Loggers and Lazy

Lumbermen, or in a ribald spirit, the Loyal Lovers of Ladies Legs) became a flag-waving industry-wide company union. It signed up over 100,000 workers under the watchful eyes of employers and armed soldiers, quickly enlisted employers' support for the dues check-off system, and in March 1918, taking credit for what was already largely an accomplished fact, put the lumber industry on an eight-hour day. An alleged shortage of labor in critical spots offered an excuse to place soldiers in the woods as laborers. This had the desired effect of dampening labor's militancy but—an unexpected turn—it also forced sanitary conditions into the camps since the government required decent living conditions for its soldiers. Loyal employees wore big pot-metal badges emblazoned with a plane and ship. The 4L campaigned with the slogan, "Spruce for the air. Fir for the sea." (It is doubtful if the entire amount of spruce used by the infant airplane industry during World War I would have busied a large logging camp for more than a few days.)

But the swift growth of the 4L in opposition to the IWW cannot be explained alone by employer and government coercion, nor by its taking credit for shorter hours, higher pay and better conditions. Even without flagpole ceremonies before breakfast and after sundown at the camps and at the mills, workers' sympathies would normally be with their country in time of war, particularly if it appeared that the government recognized and moved to alleviate some of their miseries. The army, as represented by Col. Disque of the 4L, the president's commission, and some of the governors of the states involved in the lumber strike, had appealed to the employers to retreat from their unyielding opposition to the eight-hour day, which had already been recognized in most other industries.

The workers had been willing to go along with an IWW-led strike to better their conditions and pay. But the unyielding IWW philosophy of class war by propertyless, voteless wage slaves against the boss, the banker and the plute, only had appeal when the woods worker was virtually an outcast. Now, he felt he could turn elsewhere for protection. More settled family workers of the mills leaned toward the peace and cooperation promised by the 4L. The Wobblies retaliated by scornfully labeling them "homeguards." The Wobblies regarded contracts, seniority, vacation pay, pensions, etc., as moves toward freezing the worker to his job and giving unions the status of supporting institutions of the capitalist system. A natural ally and part-time worker, the stump farmer, also turned to the stability of the 4L. Because of his reluctance to renounce his property rights and engage in never-ending battle, the Wobblies dubbed him "Scissorbill." In addition the "gliberals" of the lumber-town middle classes which historically furnish radical movements with many of their friends and staunchest leaders, found themselves rejected by the IWW and wooed by the flag-waving 4L which promised an end to struggles between capital and labor. The 4L presented an image of cooperation, discipline, orderliness and legality. The IWW offered continual class war, more quickie strikes, and an undercurrent of sabotage philosophy.

THREAT of further IWW strikes brought employers into hysterical action, as witness the arrests of 2,000



members and leaders of the IWW under anti-syndicalist and espionage laws and the brutal Centralia massacre. In the war and post-war open season on Wobblies, the employers clubbed and hunted them down as wild predators, casting laws and legalities to the winds.

At the same time, the joker concealed in equal representation by workers and employers throughout the 4L apparatus, with the army's Col. Disque serving as arbiter, never became apparent to the workers. The reason lay in the almost universal employer opposition to granting the workers any concessions however small, leaving Col. Disque, whose job was to keep industrial peace, no other recourse than to side time and again with the workers and to back their modest demands. After the war the 4L went into a state of hibernation, not because the workers rejected it but because the majority of employers saw no further need even for a company union which timidly recommended that wages be cut from 50 cents down to 37½ cents an hour.

After the period of the Centralia killings of Armistice Day 1919, labor in lumber made but few stirrings to recover its wartime strength. The erratic lumber market became sick on overproduction as early as the mid-twenties. Less than 20 percent of lumber capacity was being utilized in 1932 and only half of the workers employed, and these only part time. The official minimum wage as announced by the 4L at this time was $2.60 a day although wages slid far below this just before the adoption of the NIRA. The average in the West was less than 37 cents per hour, with $13.40 representing average weekly earnings.

The National Industrial Recovery Act, which brought good Baptist deacon and Catholic lumber employers to their knees in gratitude toward Roosevelt and God, promised to limit the production of lumber, establish a fair

market price and stabilize industry wages. Labor Section 7a of the Act called for collective bargaining with workers in unions of their own choice. Under the guiding hand of the 4L which was slapped awake and given a transfusion for the occasion by the Western Pine and West Coast Lumbermen's Associations, the minimum wage for western lumber workers was set at 42½ cents an hour with a maximum 40-hour week.

Although by December 1934 the employers had violated the fair price provisions of the NIRA code out of existence, the collective bargaining provisions had been seized by the workers to form a network of independent unions which proceeded to federate with the AFL or with the National Lumber Workers Union, this latter a union in which Communist leadership was strong, and which disbanded in 1935. While the 4L and the employers held the short-log country of Montana, Idaho, eastern Oregon, and eastern Washington, in subjection, the Oregon and Washington coast long-log country organized swiftly. In 1934 the AFL and Weyerhaeuser's 4L engaged in a battle for control at the giant Longview, Washington plant. By 1935 the west coast had become so well organized that the Northwest Council of Sawmill and Timber Workers, AFL, could serve a strike ultimatum for the following demands: that it be recognized as sole bargaining agent; that hours be six per day and thirty per week; that overtime and holiday pay be given, seniority recognized, vacation pay introduced; and that 75 cents an hour be the recognized minimum wage.

AT this time the AFL executive board turned the jurisdiction of the Sawmill and Timber Workers Unions over to the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America under the leadership of A. W. Muir. It was a move that was to have dire consequences. During the bitter struggles that followed the strike ultimatum, in which 90 percent of the 30,000 coast workers struck, the local leaders and members found themselves in increasing opposition to Muir and the settlements which he drew up and then dictated on threat of expulsion. His dictatorial attitude brought on a struggle between himself and the local leaders which led to overwhelming votes against acceptance of his agreements. The threats of expulsion by Muir, intimidation by troops, and the opposition of the 4L which led back-to-work movements, made it necessary to accept the compromise agreements. In the end the 1935 struggle was settled unevenly although the strikers successfully raised their wages to 50 cents an hour and obtained the 40-hour week. But Muir's arbitrary cut of their demands from 75 to 50 cents and his dictatorial pretensions left within the union ranks a fund of ill will that rivaled their feelings toward the mill owners and their bayonet backers.

A year later the short-log country east of the Cascades burst into a violent though much smaller strike in the center of Weyerhaeuser's white pine empire at Headquarters, Idaho. Led by the Wobblies in a fight for decent food, clean blankets, and better conditions—no wage issue was involved—the strike brought out vigilantes, the National Guard, and company gunmen. Officially the strike was lost. Actually, though the Wobblies were shot, deported and blacklisted from the woods, conditions became much better. This was the only important flareup of the Wobblies' influence after their split in 1924.

The struggle between the local organizations and the AFL leadership continued throughout 1936. Given the Wobbly tradition of the Northwest, and the increasing activity of local Communists and other radical unionists repeatedly clashing with an AFL officialdom who had little sympathy and less understanding of the new industrial unions, a break was inevitable. It was therefore no surprise that the lumber workers turned to the CIO when the latter appeared on the scene. The IWW was too extreme to build a stable organization even among the lumber workers. But the AFL was too conservative and tame.

Matthew Smith

THIS is a belated note in memory of Matthew Smith, for twenty-five years the National Secretary of the Mechanics Educational Society of America. I was immensely saddened to read recently of his death. They don't come that way these days in the American labor movement. He was a unionist of the old stamp—a socialist and a hard fighter, a man who disdained high salaries and ostentatious living just as he was uninterested in being accorded status or approbation of puny men in high places.

I was associated—for a short while, rather closely—with Matthew Smith over twenty years ago when I was General Organizer of the MESA. We debated and even quarreled over my proposal to hook up with the CIO auto union. I concluded finally that I would never convince him, and I led a secession movement of the Cleveland organization into the United Auto Workers. Matt Smith was not the kind of person whose friendship you could retain after doing a thing like that, and I had no contact with him after that time, although every now and then we would inquire of friends about each other.

Matt Smith used to rationalize his stand on the CIO by adopting an ultra-pure socialist pose, but I always suspected that a large measure of vanity and illusion went into making his decision to stay independent. (He finally secured a separate CIO charter about two years ago.) For years, he lived in the false hope that both the MESA and Matthew Smith would come back to the positions they enjoyed in 1934. (Most people are unaware of it today, but the MESA was the first organization to win bargaining rights in a number of auto plants during the NRA period and up until 1935 was the most effective union in the auto industry.)

I always thought it was a pity that Matt Smith, with his splendid organizing and negotiating abilities, and his talent as a speaker and mass worker, decided to stay out of the big stream. But Matt Smith knew exactly how he wanted to live his life and he wasn't prepared to let anybody kid him out of his own standards and beliefs.

The press had never been a friend of Smith's when he was alive, and yet it was understood all over at his death that here was not the passing of just another business agent parading as a labor statesman; that here, a real man had died. The *Detroit News* said: "He feared no opponent, be it the big labor federations, the Communists, or the U.S. government. Born a Briton, he dropped out of the naturalization process when his enemies sought to 'badger' him into U.S. citizenship. A leftist and a pacifist, he refused to abandon these convictions when they became unfashionable. We are poorer for having one less of such men. Our culture is no longer geared to produce them."

Bert Cochran

OPINIONS

Approaches to Socialism

by David Herreshoff

JOSEPH Starobin asserts that "It will be in the common interests of humanity for the evolution of capitalism in the West to be prolonged, to find its easiest transitions toward socialism, to make the change as little explosive as possible for everybody concerned for the very reason that hydrogen annihilation is the alternative."

I agree with this statement in part. It is certainly desirable for capitalism in the West (and not only the West) "to find its easiest transitions to socialism." It is equally desirable "to make the change as little explosive as possible for everybody concerned."

But I cannot agree that "It will be in the common interests of humanity for the evolution of capitalism in the West to be prolonged"; nor can I agree that the alternative to such prolongation is hydrogen annihilation. Here are my reasons for questioning the wisdom of this conception.

We live in a sick society under the sway of an irrational ruling class. Our rulers are ridden by grandiose delusions about their historical mission. They are terribly frustrated by the continual miscarriage of their policies and plans. The rise of a mass socialist movement within the gates of "Fortress America" would undoubtedly agitate them. The socialist movement might try to calm them down, but no pledges of gradualist restraint offered by the socialists would be likely to soothe the ruling class. American capitalists, as we have learned in recent years, can get just as hysterical about "creeping socialism" as about any other kind.

The prolonged survival of American capitalism is not an alternative to, but could be a virtual guarantee of, hydrogen annihilation. Capitalism has been an outlived social order for at least a generation. As it becomes superannuated, it becomes more irrational. We should face the fact that as long as this outlived, irrational social order lasts, we shall dwell on the brink of chaos. The therapy which a new socialist movement will be called into being to perform is not the calming of capitalist nerves (a truly utopian task) but the transformation of capitalism into socialism with all deliberate speed.

A socialist movement which banks on the reasonableness of the ruling class and the possibilities of achieving socialism by piecemeal modifications of capitalism can erect gradualism into a new dogma. But if it does it is asking for terrible trouble. Such a movement is bound to respond to a social crisis with stunned surprise and with floundering, irresolute tactics. For every crisis there exist two kinds

Report on a Trip to the Midwest

by Bert Cochran

THE fourth anniversary banquet of the *American Socialist,* organized by Chicago supporters, came off in first-class style. About 150 friends gathered to celebrate the event, and raised several hundred dollars for our fund. It was probably the most representative gathering of the Left that Chicago has seen in recent days, and is a tribute to the hard work of our local supporters, and to the widening recognition of the *American Socialist.* I was glad to get a chance to discuss things with our Midwest contributing editors, Kermit Eby and William Appleman Williams (Harvey O'Connor is in Europe gathering material for a new book on the oil industry), as well as with a number of old-time rebels of the Windy City.

During my stay, I participated in a symposium attended by well over a hundred at the University of Chicago on "The Recession: Causes and Cures" along with Carl Christ, Associate Professor of Economics at Chicago and Robert Eisner, Associate Professor of Economics at Northwestern University. Both men seemed to be considerably sobered by the current recession and Mr. Eisner volunteered that if his Keynesian program of massive public works were not validated, the socialist solution would unquestionably get a wide hearing.

I participated in a similar symposium at the University of Minnesota attended by roughly the same size audience with Leo Marx, Associate Professor of English, and Mr. Noble, Associate Professor of History, on whether the Marxist critique of capitalism applies to the United States. Later in the evening, I was interviewed for an hour on the Night Beat program of station WDGY; for the first half-hour discussing the outlook and program of socialism for this country, for the remaining half-hour, answering questions that listeners were calling in. Not surprisingly, many wanted to know how we are going to make socialism "work" when there are no profit incentives; an equal number were bothered how we can have socialism without dictatorship.

On my return trip to New York, I stopped off at Yellow Springs, Ohio, where some local friends at Antioch College had arranged for me to debate Charles P. Taft, former mayor of Cincinnati and candidate for Ohio governor in the coming Republican primaries, on "Capitalism or Socialism: Which Way for America?" The debate was attended by better than 250 students and faculty members, representing, I was told, over a third of the college enrollment. Because of the prominence of my opponent, the debate got a considerable press coverage in the papers of the area.

In a hasty tour of this kind, one cannot do more than gather up a number of impressions. For whatever it is worth, I am inclined to agree with those who see a quickening of intellectual interest in student circles. It is still quite restricted, and of an amorphous character, but it is palpable nonetheless, and is an augury, let us hope, of better things to come.

* * *

Among the greetings sent to our Chicago banquet was the following from Michael Foot, editor of the British *Tribune*: "I am glad to send you my best wishes for your fourth anniversary dinner. I hope the *American Socialist* has a most successful future." Carey McWilliams, editor of the *Nation,* wrote: "By all means convey my best wishes for . . . long life for the *American Socialist.*" Leo Huberman and Paul M. Sweezy, editors of *Monthly Review,* wrote: "Heartiest greetings to both the *American Socialist* and to its contributing editors from Chicago. We think the magazine is first-rate, its editors men of integrity and excellent judgment."

James Aronson, editor of the *National Guardian,* wrote: "The *American Socialist* is an eminently readable radical journal with respect for its content, its craft, and its readers." More greetings came from G. D. H. Cole, Royal W. France, Conrad Lynn, George Hitchcock, George H. Shoaf, Arthur K. Davis, David Herreshoff, Michael Baker, and many others.

of solutions. But in many countries, particularly in the West, a dogmatic gradualism has inhibited the socialist movements from finding a progressive way out of the crises of our time. Socialist failure caused by Fabian hesitation has usually opened the door for conservative social forces to provide a reactionary solution. This happened in Germany under the Weimar Republic and it appears to be happening in France today. Would it not be unwise to assume that it can't happen here?

NATURALLY no society is permanently in a state of crisis. The gradualist approach to social problems is often useful and indispensable. Yet hydrogen fusion, automation, economic progress in the Soviet Union and China, and the world-wide revolt of the colonies are factors which are drawing us toward a period of rapid social change. The old locomotive of history has been bucking a steep grade in this country; one day it will make the grade and begin to pick up speed. But whether the tempo is fast or slow at a given juncture, the role of the radicals is to make social change as humane as it can be. This end will sometimes require moderation and at other times audacity.

Our perspective on the American future ought to be broad enough to include a number of variant paths of development. Let us hope that the path toward the future proves to be a happy and easy one. But let us remember with Victor Berger that "The possibilities of human *unreason* are indeed vast, and the social question . . . is greater and farther reaching than any that humanity has hitherto encountered." Berger called socialism "the name given to the next stage of civilization, if civilization is to survive." The sense of urgency pervading this definition is not less appropriate today than it was when Berger uttered it fifty-five years ago.

The Proper Plutocrats

PHILADELPHIA GENTLEMEN: The Making of a National Upper Class, by E. Digby Baltzell. The Free Press, Glencoe, Ill., 1958, $5.75.

TIME was when our national upper class stood out sharply; heads of giant family firms, robber barons of broad repute and disrepute, flamboyant spenders and buccaneer tycoons. Those types have receded in importance on the American scene, although a spotty sprinkling of new tycoons, mostly 27½-percent-depletion-allowance oil babies, has appeared again in recent years. Just so we don't lose our bearings and go cavorting through the streets in mad equalitarian glee, Dr. Baltzell has tossed us this sober portrait of our ruling class today. Less colorful, with much of the sectional variation squeezed out and a national pattern emerging, the matured American elite rests solidly, as the poet said of the Church, like a hippopotamus in the mud. While most of the material used here comes from Philadelphia, you may be sure that essentials are not too different in any major city.

Since we have to start somewhere, we may as well begin with the filthy lucre, which seems to have some connection with our upper class. A number of sociologists who specialize in class stratification have combed their index cards to pounce with cries of glee upon any example of an elite family that outranks some richer neighbors in community esteem, hoping to show thereby that "class" is not primarily an economic concept. To his credit, Mr. Baltzell doesn't bother with that game. In his book, "inherited wealth is always and everywhere the basis of gentility." And he quotes Cleveland Amory's crisp judgment: "All through Boston history, when a family loses its financial stability, it has a way of beginning to disappear." The concrete footing for the Philadelphia elite, Baltzell establishes in the following few words: "It has been estimated that the Proper Philadelphia lady and gentleman have between three and four billion dollars invested in various forms of trusts."

Collecting income from trusts is a relatively quiet form of activity, generally secretive. How, then, does this class manifest itself in public? Dr. Baltzell has subjected to an exhaustive analysis the entire 1940 Philadelphia listing of *Who's Who,* with special attention to that portion of it appearing in the *Social Register.* He has supplemented this data with a broad knowledge of the upper-class educational milieu, church and club life, residential neighborhoods, historical background, and biographical data. The result is one of the best pictures in depth that has yet been set down of a portion of the American ruling class. Like most current sociological writing, it is handicapped by its intensive working of a few specialized veins to the point of exhaustion, at the expense of social and historical perspective. Even if we leave aside whether this is the best way to get scientific results, there is no question that it makes for duller reading. Still, we've gone through a lot worse since we first began browsing in the bookshelves in aid of the readers of this department. It may be that the subject matter itself arouses the Peeping Tom in us, but on the whole the book overcomes its difficulties of repetitiousness and academic detail to hold the interest pretty well.

THE boiled-down distillate that drips from Dr. Baltzell's retorts at the final stage is summarized this way: "High-level executive decisions are often made by Proper Philadelphia bankers and businessmen within the halls of the Philadelphia and Rittenhouse Clubs. Out of the 770 Philadelphians listed in *Who's Who* in 1940, a small group—forty-two members of these two clubs—can be said to constitute a primary group of power and influence at the top of the social structure." These forty-two show, in concentrated form, the characteristics of the entire stratum of several hundred analyzed in the book.

A member of this ruling elite is, first of all, a banker or businessman, or, less possibly, a lawyer. Of the entire forty-two, only four fall outside these three categories, and these four divide between publishing and education. Of the two "educators," one is a director of four of the largest corporations in the city, including the Pennsylvania Railroad. This is just about exclusively, in other words, a business elite. Each among these forty-two is a director of at least one of the nine leading corporations of the city. In the overwhelming majority of cases, he will be a director of three, four, or five of these corporations, and will also sit on the boards of numerous other companies across the nation.

Our elitist will most likely be a director on the board of one or more of Philadelphia's outstanding educational and cultural institutions, the University of Pennsylvania, Franklin Institute, Museum of Art, etc. He will more than likely make his residence either on the Main Line or Chestnut Hill. In every case, his name will be found in the *Social Register,* and in most cases, his family will have appeared in that august and exclusive publication at least as far back as 1900. He is sure to be a member of one of Philadelphia's two top clubs, Philadelphia and Rittenhouse, the former being the ultimate mark of distinction, and there is a fair chance he belongs to both. This will not exhaust the list of his club memberships. The club is the ultimate badge of acceptance, and no gentleman would be caught dead without at least a half-dozen to list in his obituary, including, if possible, one in London.

In religious affiliation, the elite puts up a remarkably solid front. A quip quoted by the author illustrates the theological hierarchy: "The average American is born the son of a Baptist or Methodist farmer; after obtaining an education, he becomes

a businessman in a large city where he joins a suburban, Presbyterian church; finally, upon achieving the acme of economic success, he joins a fashionable Episcopal church in order to satisfy his wife's social ambitions; in a materially secure old age, of course, this unusually successful American is converted to the Catholic Church as a hedge against failure in the after life." Our upper class is, of course, almost exclusively Protestant, but, in accord with the distinct class stratification of the Protestant Church, the elite is overwhelmingly Episcopal.

FINALLY, for schooling, most of our elite has put itself—and all the elite puts its children—in the hands of one or another fashionable church, or New England-type, boarding school: St. Paul's, St. Mark's, Groton, Andover, Exeter, Taft, Choate, Lawrenceville, etc. *De rigeur* after that is a spell at Harvard, Yale, or Princeton, with a sprinkling of local patriots heading in to the University of Pennsylvania. Entering these, or some other Ivy college is secondary; what matters most is the system of exclusive clubs, including the very exclusive and the *absolutely* exclusive. The scion of a Proper Philadelphia (or Proper Boston, or Proper anyplace else) family generally enters college with the understanding, implied if not made explicit the way George Apley does in a letter to his son in the Marquand novel, that his chief aim is to make the appropriate club, while coasting along on aristocratic C's and looking down on the drones. Nothing can so mark a man as to fail in this aim, and he would not be likely to rise very far in station in later life if he did fail.

This is the pattern. It is not optional. While there are many powerful outsiders—Dr. Baltzell mentions the independent Pew oil and shipbuilding family, and Jewish-derivation real estate magnate Albert M. Greenfield—the bulk of the class is drawn to this model, and does not accord full recognition to those not of it.

Dr. Baltzell would be the first to tell us he is not in the "moral valuation" business, but at times his aloofness goes further than pure scholarship demands. His historical chapters are particularly weakened by his care, however motivated, in unnecessarily circumscribing the field of analysis. Surely it is impossible to tell the story of Philadelphia's most revered industrial institution, the Pennsylvania Railroad, without at least a hint of the days when that lovable mascot of Proper Philadelphia did at least as big a business in legislators and judges as in rails and rolling stock.

H. B.

"The Jungle" to "EPIC"

SOUTHERN BELLE, Story of a Crusader's Wife, by Mary Craig Sinclair. Crown Publishing Co., New York, 1957, $5.

AFTER his EPIC (End Poverty in California) campaign for California's governorship in 1934 in which he won close to 900,000 votes, Upton Sinclair retired from politics to devote himself to writing. In the years following, he wrote eleven novels in the Lanny Budd series, a total of three million words, and one of them, "Dragon's Teeth," won the 1942 Pulitzer Prize. His role as one of the foremost socialist crusaders of the earlier years of the decade, nearly forgotten, is recalled for us by his wife's autobiography, which arrives with its alarming publisher's blurb: "The gracious, proud tradition of the Kimbroughs of Mississippi was Mary Craig Sinclair's family heritage and the stamp of the Southern lady remained undimmed through the challenges and crises, the strange causes and crusades, that the years with Upton Sinclair would bring."

"Southern Belle" is a lively, sometimes irritating, chronicle. Craig is her husband's tireless Boswell; she is also, despite occasional resentments, very much the dutiful and enthralled helpmeet of a prolific social propagandist, political activist, and novelist. Clearly apparent, however, is the unending, though politely restrained, conflict: the pitting of Sinclair's reckless expenditure of passion and energy against Craig's protective maternal instinct. Who takes the battles is without doubt; who wins the war, conjecture.

The images flow easily: the post-bellum "Old South" with its magnolia blossoms and suavely attentive Negro servants, the close-ups of ruling-class whites of the Cotton Empire, preening themselves in witless decadence, the rapid social functions with their stale provincial amenities, the gentlemen of honor with their conventional adoration of the purest ladies in the world.

Upton arrives, distraught over the failure of his first marriage. The new love takes root quickly. Patently the hero (notwithstanding Craig's mental footnotes), the young author hurries, blandly smiling and without malice, through his world, a socialist always in quest of converts, blurting out his mind to friend and foe alike, plunging from one hectic crusade to another. His brashly unorthodox strategy cracks the walls of kept-press silence. In mourning, with Craig at his side, he pickets 26 Broadway in protest against the Rockefeller 1914 Ludlow Massacre. He gets himself arrested in San Pedro for reading the U.S. Constitution. Before appreciative audiences, the sing-song orator, with friendly humor, banishes the belligerent heckler.

WITH never-failing enthusiasm, the muckraker closes in on the facts for his latest—and always his "greatest"—story. After the meat-packers came coal, religion, the press, education, the courts, and finally, Henry Ford, "The Flivver King." After that, Sinclair declared war on the liquor traffic. With Craig, he practised "telepathy," delved into "levitation." There is the recurring strain of debts, poverty, near-hunger. There are the visits of the great and the half-great, with fabulous free-wheeling crackpots thrown in.

Early in her life with Sinclair, Craig learned to question the South and its "peculiar institution"—the sacred Lost Cause of her loving parents. But still, sitting at a dinner of a New York intellectual set, she felt herself "unnatural and ill at ease" in the presence of the "grave, soft-voiced man wearing glasses," a Negro, beside her, and his wife opposite him. After a time, the color line blurred and vanished. "We discussed the problems of our time.... They believed what I did and that was all there was to it."

Then Craig read her young husband's "Manassas." Thereafter, there was no escape from "Dutch Joe," the haunting black giant torn from wife and children in a Northern home, kidnapped to the South, broken with lash and club to unremitting toil, finally running away and foiling the mob of pursuers, but at the end writhing in delirium on the dirt floor of a lonely cabin, pouring out in death his everlasting hate of his master. "I felt," Craig writes, "as if I were being stabbed in the breast." The worlds of chattel slavery and of capitalism which the Southern belle had tacitly accepted reeled under the onslaughts of new images and ideas. With her moral sensitivity, it was foregone that she should reject them, but her earlier years, grooved and safeguarded by anxious "Papa" and "Mama" made the renunciation painful.

In its romantic approach, the book documents skillfully the impact of Sinclair upon his times, but there is little reverse documentation—of the impact of the times on Sinclair. In the early years of the century, a vast progressive and anti-monopolist movement was sweeping the country. The muckrakers had a broad audience. Who of us in those days did not eagerly await the next issues of the *Atlantic Monthly, Everybody's, McClure's,* the *American,* among others, to seize upon the latest findings of Charles Edward Russell, Ida Tarbell, Ray Stannard Baker, Lincoln Steffens; who did not yield to the excitements of David Graham Phillips' popular exposés?

In the field of politics, La Follette in Wisconsin and Hiram Johnson in California had freed their state governments of the corporate utility stranglehold, conferring on them the strange new dignity of honest administration. In 1912 the newly organized Progressive ("Bull Moose") Party almost annihilated the national Republican machine, and the Socialist Party scored its biggest percentage of the national vote. Two years earlier, Milwaukee had elected Emil Seidel and Victor Berger as its first Socialist mayor and Congressman; there were 56 socialist mayors and 300 socialist councilmen in smaller cities and towns in Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, Montana, and New England. More than a thousand dues-paying Socialists held elective offices across the nation. The total number of socialist periodicals is estimated at well over 300, some having circulations in the hundreds of thousands.

SINCLAIR was legitimate progeny of this great ferment. Burning with zeal for great humanitarian causes, he was from the

start, despite a personal heritage of *noblesse oblige,* a partisan of the labor struggle. As an aspiring—and hungry—young author he was suckled by the burgeoning socialist movement. It was the *Appeal to Reason* that catapulted "The Jungle" into popular fame by serializing the novel in its pages before commercial publication. The Jimmy Higginses of the Chicago radical and labor movement supplied him with the picture of Packingtown's labyrinthian hells. It was the Socialist Party in California which was to choose him twice as its candidate for U.S. Senate, before the Democratic EPIC campaign.

Approaching 80, Upton Sinclair lives in California, and recently defined his attitude towards socialism in an article for the *Socialist Call*: "I am as much a socialist today as I ever was, though I am not sure it is wise to use the label. In the first place, I fear that the Communists have poisoned it for us. . . . I do not believe the Socialist Party will ever be able to elect major candidates on the Socialist ticket in this country. The people have found out how to do it through the existing parties; they have seen the New Deal and the Fair Deal, and while they didn't get everything, they got an awful lot, which has contented them for a few years. . . . I think the job of socialists is to educate the people; to carry on a campaign fifty-two weeks in the year, to make the people understand what is the matter with the country and what has to be done about it."

REUBEN BOROUGH

End of the IWMA

THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL; Minutes of the Hague Congress of 1872 *with related documents, edited and translated by Hans Gerth. University of Wisconsin Press, Madison,* 1958, $6.

KARL Marx, the founder of the International Working Men's Association (First International) which was set up in London in 1864, decided at the Hague Congress in 1872 that the time had come to give the organization a decent burial. The factional struggle between the followers of Marx and Bakunin was tearing the organization apart and Marx was resolved to disgrace and expel his opponent from the International and then to place the remains of the organization out of his enemies' reach. Both he and Engels made extraordinary efforts to get their supporters to the congress, and by means of an alliance with the French Blanquists, Marx commanded a majority throughout the explosive eight-day gathering, and was able to secure a favorable vote on both proposals.

Nevertheless, when Frederick Engels, on the last day of the convention, rose to make his motion to move the General Council to New York, you could have heard the proverbial pin drop. It was some time before anyone rose to speak. Finally, the old Communard, Vaillant, took the floor, and in the words of the correspondent on the scene, "He besought those whose leadership had made the International Society the dread of Kings and Emperors, to continue their great sacrifices for the cause, sacrifices which, ere long, would surely be crowned with success." On the final vote, many faithful supporters of Marx wouldn't go along and the motion carried by only 26 votes to 23 with 9 absentions.

Even before the congress, the foundations of the International had already been undermined when the two main protagonists who had originally joined to found the organization drifted away. The British trade union leaders began losing interest with the passage of the 1867 reform bills and their improved chances for concessions through an alliance with the Liberals. The French movement of the sixties was shattered after the Paris Commune and the center of gravity gradually shifted to Germany. But by the time of the Gotha unity convention in Germany, the First International had already passed into the limbo of history.

After the Hague Congress, the anarchists and their allies made an attempt to set up a rival International which maintained a shadowy existence for a few years, but its specific sources of strength were likewise wiped out with the breakup of the revolutionary forces in Spain and Italy. The broad revival of radicalism in Western Europe began only with the eighties and then it took a distinctly socialist turn sealed with the founding of the Socialist (Second) International in 1889.

At the conclusion of the congress a number of the delegates left for Amsterdam where the Dutch Federal Council had arranged a public meeting which was addressed by Marx and others. It was here that Marx made his controversial remarks reported at the time in the Brussels paper, *Liberté* and the Dutch *Algemeen Handelsblad.* This latter account has been published in English in recent years by the International Institute of Social History at Amsterdam. It was in this speech that Marx juxtaposed reform and revolution: "The worker must one day conquer political supremacy in order to establish the new organization of labor. . . . But we do not assert that the attainment of this end requires identical means. We know that one has to take into consideration the institutions, mores and traditions of the different countries and we do not deny that there are countries like England and America, and if I am familiar with your institutions, Holland, where labor may attain its goal by peaceful means. Whilst this may be so, we must recognize that in most countries of the Continent violence must be the lever of our revolution. . . ."

A German longhand copy of the Fifth Congress minutes was found among the papers of Hermann Schlüter, whose library was presented to the University of Wisconsin by William English Walling. This is the first publication of them. The volume consists of a photostatic copy of the German document as well as F. A. Sorge's report on the congress to the North American Federation, and the English translations of the two papers. The editor has also included the reports of Maltman Barry, who was a delegate and covered the sessions for the conservative English *Standard.* Before the discovery of the minutes, Maltman Barry's account and the memoirs of the Bakunist, James Guillaume, were the principal sources of information on the Hague Congress. A brief introduction by the editor gives the reader some indispensable background information. The volume is a welcome addition to the documentation of the history of the Marxist movement.

B. C.

Authoritative Source

THE IWW, A Study of American Syndicalism, by Paul F. Brissenden. Russell & Russell, New York, 1957, $7.50.

IT always seems strange when that walloping package of spirit, militancy, and color, the Industrial Workers of the World, is reduced to the dry paraphernalia of footnotes, tables, and quotations. Professor Brissenden's book, nevertheless, remains the best history of the IWW up to 1917. Originally published by Columbia University Press in 1919, it has been re-issued, with a brief new introduction by the author, and its publishers are to be thanked for making available a fine book which has long been out of print.

Had Professor Brissenden been less of a scholar and more of a partisan, he could not have written a book which would retain all of its value many years after the virtual demise of the IWW—at least not at the time this one was written. In mid-1918, when the author sent his book to press, the wartime hysteria was raging, and "Wobbly" was taken by official public opinion as synonomous with "traitor." For an author, in the midst of this, to insulate himself against pressures, consult all the major relevant sources, and trace out in intricate detail the various internal conflicts and rough-and-tumble fortunes of the IWW, constituted a feat of scholarship. Tribute has long been paid to Professor Brissenden's book by the large community of readers in labor affairs who have made it their classic source on the subject. Together with John S. Gambs' later book, "The Decline of the IWW," which covers the 1917-31 period, it makes up a complete history.

But all of the IWW is not there when reduced to scholarly discussion. To catch some of the flavor, the fighting heart, the crusading fervor and fire, of this remarkable and authentic band of American rebels, you also have to read Jack London's "Dream of Debs," "Bill Haywood's Book," Ralph Chaplin's "Wobbly," the semi-fictional documentary passages in John Dos Passos' "USA," and other literary and autobiographical treatments of the IWW. These are essential supplements to Brissenden's authoritative history.

H. B.

Thanks to One and All

THE editors wish to extend their heartiest thanks to all who contributed this year to our annual fund appeal. To those who sent in anonymous donations, we convey special thanks here as we have not been able to acknowledge their gifts by direct mail.

One other class of contributors is particularly deserving of mention and gratitude. As we indicated last month, the recession slowed down our collections from some groups of readers. It was possible to see its effects geographically; regions like Detroit, from which we usually get quite a number of reader contributions, were down this year. Others maintained or bettered their contributions. The class of contributors we have in mind for special thanks are those unemployed readers who, while they could give little, made it their business to send in a dollar or two. Quite a few notes indicated the jobless state, and one or two visitors to our office who brought in their donations were in the same plight. We hope they all get back to work very soon, and we appreciate their donations as showing the sincerest form of realization that the socialist movement needs their continuing help.

So far as the overall results of the fund are concerned, our added appeal last month helped in cutting into our deficit, but we did not eliminate it. We came close enough to the goal that we should be able to get our financial craft in trim for another year, providing our faithful friends who help us around the calendar continue to pitch in.

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New York Readers: Monthly Review Associates is presenting, as the featured speaker at its Ninth Anniversary Meeting, Professor G. D. H. Cole, Britain's foremost labor and socialist historian, speaking on "Socialism and Capitalism in the World Today." Leo Huberman and Paul Sweezy will also speak, and Prof. C. Wright Mills, author of "The Power Elite," will be chairman. The meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 27, 8:30 pm sharp, at Roosevelt Auditorium, 100 East 17th Street.

Joint Summer Issue

This summer, we will publish a special double issue, devoted entirely to the labor movement in the United States today. We are preparing it in collaboration with Monthly Review. Both magazines will have identical contents, and the editors of both magazines will contribute articles.

This July-August number, in expanded form and with a lot of additional material, will subsequently be published as a book by Monthly Review Press.