The American Socialist

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Friend or Enemy of Change?

This letter is not prompted by anything I read in your recent issues, but there seems to be a myth developing that, as individual material comforts become more readily available in the Soviet Union, there will rise a middle class which will move from demanding better shoes to fighting for civil liberties. This myth should be faced down!

Isn't our own corporation man that already developed Soviet-type middle class image? Isn't he already completely absorbed, body and soul, in the corporation life? What are his patterns? He wants stability, material comforts, the feeling of "belonging"; to retain status, and possibly to advance slowly by not being too non-conformist. His main worry is that things will change too rapidly or that some "outside" element will be introduced into his cozy picture. If not an enemy of liberal change, he is no real friend either.

The Soviet middle class which will develop will be jealous of its privileges and attainments. It will believe in moderate progress but can be expected to do nothing which will upset its comforts, and will have as little power to enforce change as does our own corporation man.

Another cliché that should be dealt with goes, "Stalin found the Russians starving and ignorant and left them the second most important nation in the world." The place of the individual in history has been discussed at length. It should not be oversold to people who believe in collective work and action. The Russian people were ready to jump from feudalism into a modern world and backward though they might be, once they got started the logic of history demanded that they build, not on the example of the industrial and social machine of 125 years earlier, but to a standard and model that had been developed since. That they had leadership, both strong and weak, is undeniable, but what is important is that they had the will to build. What they will do with this structure will be determined in part by them, in part by a leadership group, and to a large extent, by external pressures which may lead, on the one hand, toward liberalization, or on the other hand, toward tight control and war.

The credit should be given to those whose hopes, sweat, and blood built for them part of that new world which they desired. If these builders continue their hard work, they may yet finish the job.

M. H. B. *Minneapolis*

More on Freudians

Once again I feel it necessary to make more accurate Stanton Tefft's interpretation of the "Dynamic-Cultural" school as opposed to the neo-Freudian ones—with reference to his letter in the March 1959 *American Socialist.*

First Mr. Tefft's concept of the Horney-Fromm-Sullivan (he fails to include Adler, the most eminent of this discipline) group as fitting into the following structure: "Reik is the 'left wing' among the revisionists and Jung the 'right wing,' the center is held by Fromm, Sullivan and Horney," is erroneous. Among psychoanalytic experts, Reik *is* classified as a Freudian revisionist; the other four are not—in any sense.

Second, Mr. Tefft misrepresents the dynamic-culturalists (a trade term for this group) as endorsing capitalism. The facts repudiate this. Fromm is listed as an associate editor on the masthead of the *Socialist Call.* Horney, in *Our Inner Conflicts,* and Sullivan, in numerous essays, have attacked our "competitive society" as being the root of interpersonal conflict, which is a factor in psychoneuroses.

Cynthia Speare *New York*

It seems to me that the letters of C.S. (February issue) and Stanton Tefft (March issue) make it necessary that someone clear up a few factual points.

Mr. Tefft has obviously confused Theodore Reik with Wilhelm Reich. What he says about Reik is true of Reich. And if one is going to talk about Reich, one might also mention that it was he who provided what was to become the main idea of the group whom most up-to-date textbooks now call the "Cultural-Dynamic" school, which C.S. rightly identifies with Fromm, Sullivan, and Horney. I feel that it is pointless to argue about whether they should have this name or not, because that happens to be the name by which they are called. They based their approach upon an idea developed by Reich in his book *Character Analysis* to the effect that the therapist should start from the patient's current situation, his interpersonal relationships, one might say, rather than digging into the past for its own sake.

Anyone who has really studied Freud's work will know that he did not disagree with this idea at all. He merely felt that some people had overemphasized it at the expense of other things. And at least on one occasion Freud himself publicly said that the only real solution for the problem of mental illness was that the state should provide free psychotherapy for all those who needed it, and that it should then provide for the economic welfare of these persons so that they would not be driven back into mental illness again.

At about the same time that Reich was making what most people regard as his most important contribution to psychotherapy, he was also taking an active interest in the Marxist movement. Later, however, he lost his interest in Marxism and turned to a kind of orgiastic mysticism. Many of the people who were most impressed by his earlier work did not follow him in this later development.

The relationship between Marxism and the psychoanalytic movement is in some ways a very interesting topic. But I fear that it might not be wise to try to go into it too far, because both of these movements tend to produce numerous different kinds of sectarianism. And if we should stir up sectarianism from both of these directions, the results could be fatal.

George Woodard *Vermont*

[The editors regret that one of the difficulties in this discussion stems from an error committed in our office. Through no fault of Mr. Tefft, the last two references to "Reik" in our March issue were changed from "Reich" and should be read that way.]

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How Much Longer?

THE famous "red scare" after the first World War lasted just a couple of years, and by 1920 it had passed its peak and was ebbing rapidly away. The present anti-radical hysteria has been with us for a dozen years. It is not nearly so virulent or dangerous as it was at the height of the McCarthy terror five or six years back. A series of Supreme Court decisions has effectively limited the operation of the Smith Act and the inquisitorial efforts of Congressional investigators. But the hysteria is still very much alive and fraught with danger. Permanent inroads have been made on traditional American liberties, and a strong contingent of never-say-die witch-hunters is continually on the prowl.

Led by New Hampshire Attorney General Louis C. Wyman, the pack descended on the Chicago gathering of the American Bar Association at the end of February, and got that conservative body's approval for a report which condemned the Supreme Court wholesale, and called for a reversal of just about everything the Court has done on behalf of civil liberties during the past few years. The Bar Association urged Congress to revise the Smith Act to get around the Court's grounds for throwing out some convictions; to give the states a free hand once again in the so-called "subversion" field; to widen the scope of the Federal "security" program to include non-sensitive positions; to give back the State Department's authority, recently curtailed by the Court, for withholding passports on the basis of political denunciations by faceless informers.

Not that Congress needs too much urging. A parcel of bills aimed at the Supreme Court was passed in the House during the last session of Congress, and narrowly defeated in the Senate. In the present session, the offensive has been renewed, two bills having already been re-passed by the House unanimously, and more promised.

In justification of the hysterical anti-Bill of Rights campaign, the investigators have raised a banner with a strange device. The Communist Party, they shout in unconscious paraphrase of the bitter-end Stalinists, is indestructible; it is gaining strength as it declines in numbers; it is stronger than ever before! J. Edgar Hoover sounded this bizarre note in his *Masters of Deceit,* and his widespread and obedient claque has taken it up faithfully and noisily. With a vast army of touts, informers, wire-tappers, mail-steamers, and other assorted Hawkshaws to keep busy, the FBI and the Congressional investigators constitute a veritable industry which is abjectly dependent on the pathetic and tiny Communist Party for place and pelf.

INTRIGUING as the idea is that the machinery of the witch-hunt is kept going to prevent adding to an already large body of unemployment, it would be wise to dismiss that as a minor factor. More important forces are at work beneath the surface. Where the America of the twenties was different from the America of the fifties was in the relative absence of the kind of unresolved social tensions that haunt the scene today. Few Americans now believe in the possibility of a Harding-esque "normalcy." Instead, powerful antagonists confront each other, each with the firm resolve not to give way, and great issues clamor for solution or lurk just ahead.

We need hardly enlarge on that idea as it applies to the international scene, where the cold war continues unabated. On the domestic front, the movement for Negro equality is an outstanding example. Little reflection is needed to show that there is an intimate connection between the desperate resolve of groups of powerful people to keep the witch-hunt going, and the aggressive Negro movement of recent years. The first paragraph of the program of Americans for Democratic Action, printed in *ADA World* for February-March, reads:

> *1. Congressional Attacks on the Supreme Court: We oppose the efforts in Congress to reverse the civil liberties decisions of the Supreme Court or to limit its jurisdiction. We recognize such efforts as reprisals against the historic desegregation decisions of the Court and condemn them as unjustified attacks upon the integrity and independence of the courts.*

The ADA undeniably puts its finger on a key point: "reprisals against the historic desegregation decisions of the Court." But there is more to it than that. By creating a category of "subversive ideas" and "proscribed organizations," the dozen-year witch-hunt has placed an invaluable weapon in the hands of all reactionaries, on whatever social, political, or economic issue. To large numbers of Southerners and to quite a few Northerners, it makes sense to call the Supreme Court "Communist" because desegregation itself had long since been tagged as a "Communist idea." The idea that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is "radical," "subversive," and "red" would have been impossible to put forward if not for the years of softening up and the continued hysteria. The handy devices of registration, exposure of membership, and detailing of finances now being used against the NAACP in the South were all fashioned and popularized by the witch-hunt. To the self-styled upper-caste whites in the South—and, in truth, to millions of their unthinking followers—the anti-NAACP uproar is an easy and logical extension of the anti-radical hue and cry of the past decade.

The witch-hunt, consequently, serves an important direct purpose in this one great area of social conflict. Despite all pooh-poohing of warnings issued by the handful of stalwart defenders of civil liberties when McCarthyism was at its height, it has turned out that real

and alleged Communists, socialists, and other radicals were not the only targets of the witch-hunters. As predicted, it has been turned against a broad layer of Americans who, without espousing any brand of advanced social theory, just want their elementary human rights.

WHILE the connection with red-baiting may not be blatantly apparent in certain areas, it operates effectively all along the line. There is a debate shaping up over economic measures to ensure full employment and economic growth. The labor movement is easily made the target of incessant attacks. Decisions must be made in the cold war involving disarmament, H-bomb testing, coexistence. In each of the areas, the most reactionary elements of the country feel with good reason that a continued atmosphere of intimidation against so-called "radical" ideas helps them tip the balance in their direction. For all these reasons, the kind of witch-hunt that could evaporate rapidly at the beginning of the twenties despite the intensive efforts of J. Edgar Hoover and Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer to keep it alive, finds many willing hands to keep it going today.

Perhaps all of this is not surprising. The vested interests of cops and conservatives in the witch-hunt are anything but a secret and, especially in view of the social upheavals of various kinds going on throughout the world, an attempt to continue it is to be expected. What is most alarming, however, is the lack of response from the liberal side.

As the new Congress assembled at the beginning of the year, hopes that did not seem at all unreasonable were expressed in civil liberties quarters. It was pointed out by Clark Foreman of the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee that some of the most notorious enemies of freedom had been defeated or had retired: Knowland of California, Jenner of Indiana, Malone of Nevada, and Bricker of Ohio. Patrick M. Malin, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union, said he thought that "the new Congress promises far less danger to free speech and due process than the old, and perhaps some positive gains." He pointed to the victory last November of "many young liberal Democrats and a few young liberal Republicans." But within a few months, a black record has already been compiled.

THE first two bills introduced into the House to circumvent and nullify the Supreme Court's civil liberties decisions were passed without a dissenting voice. In the Senate, where Eastland of Mississippi is the bannerbearer for the inquisitors, seven bills of the same type elicited a few words of protest from only two Senators, Kuchel of California and Clark of Pennsylvania. The $327 million appropriation asked by Rep. Walter's House Un-American Activities Committee was approved unanimously by the House, without the public committee hearings that had been promised.

When Rep. James Roosevelt of California launched his resolution to abolish the House Un-American Committee—a queasy effort which soon shaped up, in his words, as "designed simply to carve out of the recent legal decisions a constitutionally permissible area for congressional investigation of seditious activity"—he got no support for even this questionable measure. The torrents of wild, reckless talk on the floor of the House traducing everyone who called for the abolition of the Committee, from Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt to Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, brought forth no reply from the liberals. In brief, there is little to indicate a stiffening of attitude in Congress. Despite the enlarged contingent of liberals, and despite the stand taken by the Supreme Court, the federal legislative arm, which ought to be most alive to issues of this kind, continues passive, timid, apparently paralyzed by the whips of terror cracked by the FBI, the Southern bloc, and the Northern reactionaries.

The witch-hunt, therefore, is still alive and kicking. It would not take more than a single turn of the wheel to put the country back in the McCarthyite atmosphere of a few years ago. Nothing separates us from those days but a number of shaky judicial decisions and the timid resolve of some administration circles. The witch-hunt was not, unfortunately, slowed down by a movement of popular protest or a Congressional revolt, but by a top-level decision in a section of the power elite that it had gotten out of hand and was interfering with the operations of government and decision-making. It can be speeded up again if the weight of opinion tips the other way in Washington and Wall Street.

At the present moment, however, there is a good chance of repelling the attacks in Congress. The narrow margins by which similar attempts were defeated in the Senate last year show that there is a close division on the issue. Every bit of public pressure that is brought into play will do some good. Perhaps by this time some Americans are beginning to realize that the witch-hunt threatens not just a few dispensable radicals, but also the balance of power between progress and reaction for the nation as a whole. As that realization crystallizes, a firm bulwark for civil liberties will finally be formed, and the nation will cease to depend for its freedom upon the vagaries of courts and administrative fiat.

People's Capitalism Propaganda

A WIDESPREAD propaganda campaign asserts that this is becoming a country of "People's Capitalism," because millions of people own corporation stocks. That claim was refuted at the recent annual meeting of the American Economic Association. One of the speakers was Robert J. Lampman, of the conservative National Bureau of Economic Research. He gave the latest available figures on stock ownership, and said those figures show:

That the richest 1 percent of the American people owned 90 percent of all corporation stocks in 1953, compared to 70 percent in 1949 and 61 percent in 1922. Thus, the percentage of stocks owned by the wealthiest group has been constantly increasing.

Moreover, although Lampman did not mention this, the figures show who really controls the corporations. The millions of Americans who own a few shares each have no "say" in the management. The corporations are "of, by, and for" the big stockholders.

In short, the "People's Capitalism" propaganda does not fit the facts.

—Editorial in *Labor,* Railroad Union Weekly

Face to face with a moral crisis brought on by the growth of a super-state which often failed to respond to his efforts to guide it, Lenin expressed his dismay in words "the like of which had hardly ever been uttered by any ruler."

Lenin's Last Dilemma

by Isaac Deutscher

LENIN often invoked the examples of Cromwell and Robespierre; and he defined the role of the Bolshevik as that of a "modern Jacobin acting in close touch with the working class, as its revolutionary agent." Yet, unlike the Jacobin and the Puritan leaders, Lenin was not a moralist. He invoked Robespierre and Cromwell as men of action and masters of revolutionary strategy, not as ideologues. He recalled that even as leaders of bourgeois revolutions Robespierre and Cromwell were in conflict with the bourgeoisie, which did not understand the needs even of bourgeois society; and that they had to arouse the lower classes, the yeomanry, the artisans, and the urban plebs. From both the Puritan and the Jacobin experience Lenin also drew the lesson that it was in the nature of a revolution to overreach itself in order to perform its historic task—revolutionaries had, as a rule, to aim at what was in their time unattainable, in order to secure what was attainable.

Yet, while the Puritans and the Jacobins were in their consciences guided by moral absolutes, Cromwell by the "word of God," and Robespierre by a metaphysical idea of virtue, Lenin refused to attribute absolute validity to any ethical principle or law. He accepted no supra-historic morality, no categorical imperative, whether religious or secular. As did Marx, he regarded men's ethical ideas as part of their social consciousness, which often was a false consciousness, reflecting and veiling, transfiguring and glorifying certain social needs, class interests, and requirements of authority.

It was therefore in a spirit of historical relativism that Lenin approached questions of morality. Yet it would be a mistake to confuse this with moral indifference. Lenin was a man of strong principles; and on his principles he acted with an extraordinary, selfless dedication, and with intense moral passion. It was, I think, Bukharin who first said that the Leninist philosophy of historic determinism had this in common with the Puritan doctrine of predestination that, far from blunting, it sharpened the sense of personal moral responsibility.

Cromwell and Robespierre became revolutionaries when they were caught up by the current of actual revolution; neither of them had at the threshold of his career chosen to work for the overthrow of the established system of government. Lenin, on the contrary, deliberately entered the path of the revolutionary a full quarter of a century before 1917. Of the thirty years of his political activity, he exercised power in the course of only six years—for twenty-four years he was an outlaw, an underground fighter, a political prisoner, and an exile. During those twenty-four years he expected no reward for his struggle other than moral satisfaction. As late as January 1917 he said at a public meeting that he and men of his generation would probably not live to see the triumph of revolution in Russia. What, then, gave him, a man of political genius and of extraordinary ability in many other fields, the moral strength to condemn himself to persecution and penury in the service of a cause the triumph of which he did not even expect to see?

IT was the old dream of human freedom. He himself, the greatest realist among revolutionaries, used to say that it was impossible to be a revolutionary without being a dreamer and without having a streak of romanticism. The enlargement of human freedom implied for him, in the first instance, the freeing of Russia from Czardom and from a way of life rooted in age-old serfdom. Ultimately it implied the liberation of society at large from the less obvious but not less real domination of man by man inherent in the prevalence of bourgeois property. He saw in the contradiction between the social character of modern production and the unsocial character of bourgeois property the chief source of that irrationalism which condemns modern society to recurrent crises and wars, and makes it impossible for mankind even to begin to master its own destiny. If, to Milton, Englishmen loyal to the King were not free men, and royalism was moral slavery, then to Lenin loyalty to the bourgeois society and its forms of property was also moral slavery. Only that action was moral to him which hastened the end of the bourgeois order and the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship; for he believed that only such a dictatorship could pave the way for a classless and stateless society.

Lenin was aware of the contradiction inherent in this attitude. His ideal was a society free from class domination and state authority; yet immediately he sought to establish the supremacy of a class, the working class, and to found a new state, the proletarian dictatorship. He sought to resolve this dilemma by insisting that, unlike

This article by Isaac Deutscher, biographer of Stalin and Trotsky whose analyses of Soviet affairs appear in many periodicals around the globe, was first presented as a talk on the British Broadcasting Company's famed Third Program.

other states, the proletarian dictatorship would have no need of any oppressive government machine—it would not need any privileged bureaucracy which, as a rule, "is separated from the people, elevated above it, and opposed to it." In his *State and Revolution,* which he wrote on the eve of the Bolshevik seizure of power, he described the proletarian dictatorship as a sort of a para-state, a state without a standing army and police, a state constituted by "a people in arms," not by a bureaucracy, a state progressively dissolving in society and working towards its own extinction.

Here, in this conception, and in its conflict with the realities of the Russian revolution, was the source of the one truly great and crushing moral crisis Lenin ever knew—the crisis at the end of his life. He had often to face grave dilemmas, to submit his views to the test of experience, to revise them, to retrace his steps, to acknowledge defeat, and—what was more difficult—to admit error; he knew moments of hesitation, anguish, and even of nervous breakdown, for to the actual Lenin, not the Lenin of the Soviet iconography, nothing human was alien. He suffered the most severe nervous strain whenever he had to confront old friends as political enemies. Never till the end of his life did he overcome the pain that his breach with Martov, the leader of the Mensheviks, had caused him. He was profoundly shaken by the behavior of the leaders of the Socialist International in 1914, at the outbreak of the first World War, when he decided to brand them as "traitors to socialism." Yet at none of these and other important political turns did he experience anything like a moral crisis.

LET me give you two further illustrations: in 1917 he had pledged himself to convoke and uphold the Constituent Assembly. Early in 1918 he convoked it and dispersed it. Yet he had no qualms about that act. His loyalty was to the October revolution and the Soviets; and when the Constituent Assembly took up an attitude of irreconcilable opposition to both, it was in a mood of almost humorous equanimity that he ordered its dispersal. In 1917, too, he had pledge himself and his party to fight for world revolution and even to wage a revolutionary war against Hohenzollern Germany. But early in 1918, at Brest Litovsk, he came to terms with the Kaiser's government, and signed with it a "shameful" peace, as he himself put it. Yet he did not feel that he had broken his pledge: he was convinced that by concluding that peace he had secured a respite for the Russian revolution, and that for the time being this was the only service he could render to world revolution.

In this and in some other situations he held that *réculer pour mieux sauter* was a sound maxim. He saw nothing dishonorable in the behavior of a revolutionary who retreats from his position before overwhelming enemy forces, provided that the revolutionary acknowledges the retreat as a retreat and does not misrepresent it as an advance. This, incidentally, was one of the important differences between Lenin and Stalin; and it is a moral difference, the difference between truthfulness and prestige-ridden, bureaucratic mendacity. It was precisely when he had to bow to expediency, and to act "opportunistically" that Lenin was more than usually anxious to preserve in his party the sense of its direction—a clear awareness of the goal for which it was striving. He had brought up his party in an enthusiasm as ardent and a discipline as severe as were the enthusiasm and the discipline of Cromwell's soldiers. But he was also on guard against the excess of enthusiasm which had more than once led revolutionary parties to quixotry and defeat.

Guided by this astringent realism, Lenin was then for five years engaged in building the Soviet state. The administrative machine he created had little in common with the ideal model of it he had drawn in *State and Revolution.* A powerful army and an awe-inspiring political police came into being. The new administration reabsorbed much of the old Czarist bureaucracy. Far from merging with a "people in arms," the new state, like the old, was "separated from the people and elevated above it." At the head of the state stood the party's Old Guard, Lenin's Bolshevik Saints. The single-party system took shape. What was to have been a mere para-state was in fact a super-state.

Lenin could not have been unaware of all this. Yet for about five years he had, or appeared to have, a calm conscience, no doubt because he felt that he had retreated from his position under the overwhelming pressure of circumstances. Revolutionary Russia could not survive without a strong and centralized state. A "people in arms" could not defend her against the White Armies and foreign intervention—a severely disciplined and centralized army was needed for that. The Cheka, the new political police, he held, was indispensable for the suppression of counterrevolution. It was impossible to overcome the devastation, chaos, and social disintegration consequent upon civil war by the methods of a workers' democracy. The working class itself was dispersed, exhausted, apathetic, or demoralized. The nation could not regenerate itself by itself—"from below"; and Lenin saw that a strong hand was needed to guide it from above, through a painful transition era of unpredictable duration. This conviction gave him what appeared to be an unshakable moral self-confidence in his course of action.

THEN, as if suddenly, his self-confidence broke down. The process of state building was already well advanced, and he himself was nearing the end of his active life, when he was seized by acute doubt, apprehension, and alarm. He realized that he had gone too far, and that the new machine of power was turning into a mockery of his principles. He felt alienated from the state of his own making. At a party congress, in April 1922, the last congress he attended, he strikingly expressed this sense of alienation. He said that often he had the uncanny sensation which a driver has when he suddenly becomes aware that his vehicle is not moving in the direction in which he steers it. "Powerful forces," he declared, "diverted the Soviet state from its 'proper road.' " He first threw out this remark as if casually, in an aside; but the feeling behind it then took hold of him until it gripped him completely. He was already ill and suffered from spells of sclerotic paralysis; but his mind still worked with relentless clarity. In the intervals between attacks of illness, he struggled desperately to make the vehicle of the state move "in the right direction." Again and again he failed. He was puzzled by his failures. He brooded over the reasons. He began to succumb to a sense of guilt, and, finally, he found himself in the throes of his moral crisis, a crisis which was all the more cruel because it aggravated his mortal illness and was aggravated by it.

He asked himself what it was that was transforming the Workers' Republic into an oppressive bureaucratic state. He surveyed repeatedly the familiar basic factors of the situation: the isolation of the revolution; the poverty, the ruin, and the backwardness of Russia; the anarchic individualism of the peasantry; the weakness and demoralization of the working class; and so on.

But something else now also struck him with great force. As he watched his colleagues, followers, and disciples—those revolutionaries turned rulers—their behavior and methods of government reminded him more and more of the behavior and the methods of the old Czarist bureaucracy. He thought of those instances in history when one nation conquered another but then the defeated nation, if it represented a higher civilization, imposed its own way of life and its own culture on the conquerors, defeating them spiritually. Something similar, he concluded, can happen in the struggle between social classes: defeated Czardom was in fact imposing its own standards and methods on his own party. It was galling for him to have to make this admission, but he made it: Czardom was spiritually conquering the Bolsheviks, because the Bolsheviks were less civilized than even the Tsar's bureaucracy had been.

HAVING gained this deep and ruthless insight into what was happening, he watched his followers and disciples with growing dismay. More and more often he thought of the *dzierzhymordas* of old Russia, the gendarmes, the leaders of the old police state, the oppressors of national minorities, and so on. Were they not sitting now, as if resurrected, in the Bolshevik Politburo? In this mood he wrote his last will, in which he said that Stalin had already gathered too much power in his hands, and that the party would be well advised to remove him from the office of its General Secretary. At this time, towards the end of 1922, Stalin was sponsoring a new constitution which deprived the national minorities of many of the rights hitherto guaranteed to them, and which, in a sense, re-established the "one and indivisible" Russia of old by giving almost unlimited powers to the central government in Moscow. At the same time both Stalin and Dzerzhinsky, the head of the political police, were engaged in a brutal suppression of oppositions in Georgia and in the Ukraine.

On his sick bed, while he was struggling with his paralysis, Lenin decided to speak up and denounce the *dzierzhymorda,* the big brutish bully, who was in the name of revolution and socialism, reviving the old oppression. But Lenin did not absolve himself from responsibility; he was now a prey to remorse, which was extinguishing the feeble flame of life left in him but which also aroused him and gave him strength for an extraordinary act. He decided not merely to denounce Stalin and Dzerzhinsky but to make a confession of his own guilt.

On December 30, 1922, cheating his doctors and nurses, he began to dictate notes on Soviet policy towards the small nations, notes intended as a message to the next party congress. "I am, it seems, strongly guilty before the workers of Russia": these were his opening words, words the like of which had hardly ever been uttered by any ruler, words which Stalin subsequently suppressed and which Russia was to read for the first time only after thirty-three years, after the Twentieth Congress. Lenin felt guilty before the working class of his country because, so he said, he had not acted with sufficient determination and early enough against Stalin and Dzerzhinsky, against their Great Russian chauvinism, against the suppression of the rights of the small nations, and against the new oppression, in Russia, of the weak by the strong. He now saw, he continued, in what "swamp" of oppression the Bolshevik Party had landed: Russia was ruled once again by the old Czarist administration to which the Bolsheviks "had given only a Soviet veneer"; and once again the national minorities "were exposed to the irruption of that truly Russian man, the Great Russian chauvinist who is essentially a scoundrel and an oppressor as is the typical Russian bureaucrat."

For thirty-three years this message was to be concealed from the Soviet people. Yet I think that in these words: "I am, it seems, strongly guilty before the workers of Russia"—in his ability to utter such words—lay an essential part of Lenin's moral greatness.

"I'M sick to death of cocktail party liberals," a young Southern matron said recently, a woman whose husband has business alliances which require frequent trips to New York. "People who wouldn't dream of being different in their own little circle, of ordering bourbon and water if the boss had set the pace at dry martinis, these organization men ask you with real amazement why more Southerners don't 'speak out' on racial matters. Well, some day I'm going to tell them. It's simple. We like to be executive vice presidents, too!"

—Wilma Dykeman,
The Progressive, February 1959

Learning from Russian experience and from their own earlier efforts, the Communist regime in China has adopted distinctly new and different ideas of economic planning. The first results are startling.

New Thunder Out of Communist China

by Bert Cochran

THE Chinese Communists, like the Biblical apostles, are fond of prophetic sayings. One of their favorites now is Marx's remark that there are periods when 20 years are compressed into one day. They are living up to the prophecy. The country is working as if driven by all the furies of hell. The slogan is "to catch up with and outstrip Britain in fifteen years." At the rate they are going, they won't need fifteen years — those that don't break down with nervous exhaustion in the meantime. The Western geopolitical analysts are with good reason worrying about the contours of power in 1980. China is blasting her way out of the sloth of centuries with a demonic speed that is defying all precedents.

Up to 1957, it appeared as if China would follow the path blazed by Stalin in Russia. With the completion of the first (1952-1957) Five Year Plan, the leaders could congratulate themselves on having forced through collectivization without the embitted struggle and disruption of production that attended Stalin's effort. As the plan had gathered speed, better than 20 percent of the growing national income went into accumulation; gross industrial output considerably better than doubled in the five years, rising 19 percent annually; while gross agricultural production brought up the rear, going up a quarter in the five-year span. The original outline of the second (1958-1962) Plan augured a continuation of the same: the sinking of the bulk of the funds into large basic industrial complexes, the neglect of consumer industries, a chronic agricultural lag, and the proliferation of a top-heavy apparatus to continue forcing the pace by the administrative whip. This was Stalin's method of industrializing — and it had become frozen into a Communist dogma as the only way the job could be done.

BUT the Hungarian and Polish affairs in late 1956 produced a crisis in the highly tensed Chinese society and

in its Communist leadership as well. The facade of unanimity in the party councils makes it impossible to see the precise lineups, but the anonymously directed polemics are evidence that a serious debate was afoot on economic policy inside the party paralleling the debate on the outside. Caught off-guard by the boldness of the liberal opposition that responded to Mao's invitation to "let a hundred flowers bloom," the Communist heads resolved to extirpate all dissent in a new massive "rectification campaign." From May to the end of the year, the campaign raged first in the party, then in the government bureaus, then in the ranks of the cities and the countryside. It is a terrifying and somewhat obscene business getting a whole nation "rectified," going through mass scenes of mummery and confessions under the watchful eye of Big Brother, with the folks finally getting their ideological metabolism properly adjusted through purgations of criticism and self-criticism.

When the rectification was finished, the botanical question which Mao had left in a twilight haze was once and for all cleared up. Reported Liu Shao-chi to the May 1958 Communist Party Congress: "The reactionary rightists of the bourgeoisie claimed to be one of the hundred socialist flowers. But that was simply a fraud. They can't be recognized as such. . . Since poisonous weeds exist objectively, if we did not allow them to grow as they are, they would have appeared in disguise, and poisoned the people in secret. We had better tell them openly: 'Poisonous weeds are illegal, they've got to be uprooted when they grow. But we do not stop you from sprouting if you want to. Whoever wants to come out and fight, let them do so!' " Liu assured the Congress that "this policy had proved very effective." There is no ground to question the assertion.

The ramifications of the rectification campaign can be gathered from General Secretary Tend Hsiao-ping's September 1957 report to the Central Committee. He explained that since the opening of the free market, the middle peasants in the collectives had been wavering, resisting state purchases, and speculating in grain. To make matters worse, "a serious right-deviationist view showed itself in the party" to the effect that there was no longer any need to stress class divisions in the countryside. We learn further that "Capitalist ideology has also gained ground among a few cadres in the rural areas, with the changed economic status of their families." The report outlined an intricate set of methods to be employed to carry on the struggle in the countryside.

As for the workers, their socialist education had to be polished up so that they would correctly grasp their role as the leaders in the socialist revolution, which role was to consist of developing "the excellent tradition of working hard, the noble characteristics of justice and selflessness, produce more, be industrious and economical." Among the subjects to be discussed in factories was listed "relation between workers and peasants (here the discussion should be centered mainly on why the workers' living standards should not be much higher than those of the peasants)."

WHILE the political lid was clamped on tight, the regime slowed down the economic pace drastically through most of 1957, cleaned up some of the loose ends and plugged up holes in the imbalanced economy. Free markets had already been set up in the final quarter of 1956 to correct the maladjustment between supply and demand, as shortages had developed in food items and consumer goods, as well as pig iron, steel, timber, and cement. Once the propaganda campaign was pretty well along, the economic campaign was resumed full blast. The big news of the 1958 "Big Leap" was not that after a year of consolidation, the breakneck race for production had been resumed, nor even that prodigal records had been piled up. The big news was that China had veered away from a number of unsatisfactory Stalinist patterns which it slavishly adhered to in the first plan, and had evolved a new integrated concept of growth more suited to her needs and background. The new pattern produces better results, permits a more harmonious growth of the economy, and offers the possibility of better compensation to the people who are doing the sweating and sacrificing.

The change in concept, compared to the first plan, is basic. At the start, Chinese planning was rudimentary. The complete plan figures were not published until mid-1955 when the plan period was half over. A delegation of leading Chinese had gone to Moscow in late 1952 and negotiated for Soviet assistance until mid-1953. It appears that the general scope of the Chinese plan was determined in the course of these discussions. The Soviet Union finally agreed to help build 91 large scale construction projects, which with the 50 previously contracted brought the total to 141. These became the foundation of the five-year plan.

Stalin was an imperialist-minded tyrant and exacted far-reaching concessions in return for the assistance. Had his rule continued, he might have brought relations with the Chinese to the pass to which he brought them with Tito. Fortunately he departed that year. The new Soviet heads displayed better judgement in the matter. In late 1954, when Khrushchev and Bulganin visited Peking, they increased the number of aid projects to 156, announced a new $130 million loan, and agreed to dissolve the joint-stock companies that Stalin had forced on the Chinese.

Russian thinking naturally dominated much of the plan organization, as the Chinese lacked experience and had to depend on the experts sent them. The extent of the dependence can be gauged from the statement of China's top economic planner: "On the 156 industrial projects which the Soviet Union is helping us to build, she assists us throughout the whole process from start to finish, from geological surveying, selecting construction sites, collecting basic data for designing, supplying equipment, directing the work of construction, installation, and getting into production, and supplying technical information, right down to directing the manufacture of new products." But the Chinese are apt pupils and learned fast.

A FEW general considerations of the experience in planning will help clarify what is going on in China today. One of the major criticisms of Russian planning, voiced by Trotsky in the thirties, and taken up by some of the Yugoslav and Polish economists recently, was that it lacked proportion. The disequilibriums between agriculture and industry, between producer-goods industry and con-

sumer-goods industry, between transportation facilities and plant requirements, led to high costs and enormous wastage. The argument went on that the chase after specific high targets and an arbitrary maximization of the accumulation fund did not necessarily lead to maximum rates of actual growth. In the pell-mell race for statistical records, generally in specific basic industries, costs were disregarded, slipshod work containing big percentages of rejects was pushed through, while necessary interlocking industries were neglected or ignored. Finally, the neglect of consumer goods and lack of attention to producers' living conditions, lowered productivity. In other words, it was claimed that planning is not a simple matter of the larger the accumulation and capital investment, the faster the rate of growth. A somewhat smaller capital investment, with greater attention paid to the harmonious development of the intermeshing lines of agriculture, transportation, heavy and light divisions of industry, and concern for the welfare of the human atoms making up the labor force, might under certain circumstances increase the actual growth rate. The problem was one of delicate balance and coordination rather than a rough-house race regardless of human and monetary costs. This "equilibrium" thesis had a corollary: Russian planning was too centralized and top-heavy. To accurately plan the economy of a huge country, millions of people would have to be drawn into the process, checking, providing grass-roots knowledge, giving down-to-earth reports of what was actually going on in their localities. Costly mistakes and soul-less bureaucratism were inevitable unless the rank and file participated.

A DIFFERENT kind of theoretical concept was forged by Professor Ragnar Nurske in his important work, *Problems of Capital Formation in Underdeveloped Countries,* published in 1953. Economists have analyzed for many years the twin scourges of rural overpopulation and underemployment in backward agricultural societies and how industrialization pointed the only way out of the *cul de sac.* But how to break out of the vicious circle and start industrializing? Professor Nurske came up with a novel solution (although he mistakenly thought it had no application for a densely populated country like China). You don't need, he said, a huge capital investment to achieve substantial increases in labor productivity. If you can put the rural folk to work half to two-thirds of whom have nothing to do for over half of the year, their annual production would increase enormously. Since they eat after a fashion while they are doing nothing, it would be sufficient to give them just a little more food while getting them to work. The largest part of their increased production could be treated as a social investment fund. Once this has been set up, you have the basis for large scale industrialization, not by lowering, but by increasing the standard of living. Professor Nurske discussed various possibilities of raising agricultural production by fertilization and irrigation operated with low-cost methods, from shoveling the mud out of river beds for use as fertilizers to the digging of thousands of small canals. As for equipment, he proposed the importation of a large mass of cheap simple tools, and to start the peasantry producing the most necessary primitive tools on their own.

Whether these critical writings actually influenced the Chinese, or whether they came to their conclusions through their own deductions, or both — is not important. The fact is they decided from their experience of the disarray of the economy after the first plan that they needed a change along the lines of the two propositions just discussed. No revised draft of the second plan has been published as yet, and it is probable that no such complete draft is in existence, as conditions are changing so rapidy from year to year. But the new watchword for planning is "walking on two legs," by which is meant the simultaneous development of industry and agriculture, heavy and light industry. As Po I-po thunders out the new dispensation:

"The law of planned and proportionate development must be observed in expanding the socialist economy . . . There must be all-round arrangements so that every branch can develop proportionately." The implementation of this line necessitated the stress on conservation and irrigation projects and the buildup of local industry. This in turn required widespread participation of tens of millions of people, from which derived the so-called "mass line" for planning.

HERE is how the new course shaped up in practice. Beginning with the winter of 1957, great armies of rural laborers were mobilized for thousands of local and regional irrigation and conservation projects. A number of these were enormous modern engineering ventures organized by the central government and requiring sizable investments of equipment. The bulk were smaller affairs of a labor-intense character involving little investment. This work, financed in great part by the food supplied to the laborers, has been estimated to have added an actual third to the total accumulation fund. According to Liu Shao-chi, the government invested 1,450 million yuan to harness the

Huai river, and completed over 1,600 million cubic meters of masonry and earth work in eight years. But by means of the labor, money, and material resources of the peasants themselves, in six months of the winter of 1957 and spring of 1958, more than 12,000 million cubic meters of masonry and earth work were completed in Honan and Anhwei provinces alone.

China's use of chemical fertilizer is still negligible, and it is dependent on foreign sources for most of that. The original plan looked forward to the manufacture of three million tons in 1962, which would only provide under 20 pounds per acre as against Japan's use of 40 times as much per acre. But it is remarkable to note that in this same period, the peasants accumulated 15½ billion tons of crude clay and mud fertilizers with which they were able to achieve startling results. The two main efforts, improved irrigation and increased use of fertilizer, coupled with better seed selection and control of pests and plant diseases, has been sufficient for spectacular increases in 1958 which have revolutionized all perspectives. Where the original target figure for grain was 250 million tons, later revised downward to 240 million tons for 1962, production for 1958 is now estimated at 350 to 375 million tons — double last year's crop. Where the raw cotton target was 2-2/5 million tons, later revised downward to 2-1/6 million tons for 1962, production for 1958 was estimated at 3-1/3 million tons — again, a doubling of production within one year. Output of cured tobacco, sugar cane and sugar beets doubled. Other farm produce increased by 20 to 40 percent. It was assumed by Westerners, as the reports of bumper crops came in, that the sown area had been considerably extended. But Liao Lu-yen, the Minister of Agriculture, explained that the area enlargement was very slight; the increases were due primarily to higher yields per unit.

WHAT is one to make of these figures? There has never been reported anything like it. The most spectacular example of agricultural advance in a population-congested area has been that of Japan. It was able to double agricultural production prior to mechanization from 1885 to 1915, a period of thirty years, by standardization, seed selection, improved irrigation, scientific management, and large uses of commercial fertilizers. In this thirty-year span, output rose by three-quarters, a rate of increase of 2-2/5 percent per year, with the rural population declining while the national population was rapidly growing. Western experts were convinced that this type of advance was excluded for China, as her population density was already extreme and growing at an alarming rate, and her productivity per acre was high, much of her farming being practically of the garden type.

The 1958 achievemet has demolished this Western expertise. It has demonstrated that once the social barriers to the scientific application of production techniques and utilization of labor are swept away, even in a country as thickly inhabited as China (where a smaller acreage than that of the United States supports a population 3¾ times as large), productivity advances are possible of a magnitude and at a rate that no one had dared suggest before. Even if we downgrade the figures considerably (as Chinese statistics necessarily have a high component of inaccuracy, and the Communists have a tradition of juggling with figures), it is still unimpeachable, as many Western observers have attested, that agricultural production has been revolutionized and the whole economic perspective has altered for the better.

The next stage in the "leap forward" came in the spring of 1958 when small workshops and local industries were set up in thousands of villages. This is the sharpest point of the break with the Stalinist tradition of planning, as the collectivization and conservation campaigns were not so much distinct in conception as in execution and performance. Stalin's plans provided no bridge from the technology of the eighteenth or seventeenth century to the last word of the twentieth. Unskilled workers but recently recruited from backward villages were put to work on the most complex and intricate engineering structures under the tutelage of experts, a considerable number of whom were hired from abroad in the early years. There was no proportionality between the different parts of the economy. Industry was constantly running short of parts, fuel, raw materials. Deliveries were rarely in accordance with the schedule. There was no realistic provision for the housing, clothing, and feeding of the swiftly growing working class. The party machine had to substitute for the market as the regulatory machine. Naturally, big mistakes were unavoidable, the disequilibrium produced chaotic conditions in many lines, and the over-centralization made for unbearable rigidity and bureaucratism. What Stalin never understood after 25 years, the Chinese learned in four. Already in his February speech, Mao adumbrated the new concept. He said: "As China is a great agricultural country, with over 80 percent of its population in the villages, its industry and agriculture must be developed simultaneously. Only then will industry have raw materials and a market, and only thus will it be possible to accumulate fairly large funds for the building up of a powerful heavy industry . . . Hence what may seem to be a slower pace of industrialization is actually not so, and indeed the tempo may even be speeded up."

BY the spring of 1958, the new line as laid down by the party was "to oppose any tendency to chase only after the latest technical equipment, while failing to make full use of all that is on hand; to oppose any tendency to overemphasize the role of experts to the disparagement of the great role that can be played by the workers and peasants in developing new production techniques." The results have probably left Professor Nurske breathless. According to official statistics, more than 15,000 medium and small factories and mines were set up on the county level, and two million workshops, more than 30,000 of which work regularly the year round, were turning out mountains of goods from pig iron and steel (or at least stuff that is called steel), to farm implements, simple machinery, and a variety of consumers' products. China, it should be remembered, suffered cruelly from rural underemployment. Even in 1955 the national average was computed at somewhere around 125 work-days per year. But in 1958, the villager labored 300 days, with only two days rest a month provided for. Rural underemployment had turned into overemployment.

The big advantage of local and cottage industry is that it permits the immediate output of a considerable amount of simple production based on indigenous techniques calling for very small investment, and making possible an immediate improvement in the mass living standard. Because results are quickly seen, people can be enlisted for continuing efforts to hurtle the next economic challenges. Here in a nutshell lies the possibility of industrializing a backward country without big foreign investments while slowly raising rather than lowering living standards. The January 6, 1959 *Peking Review* reported that "Although more projects were built in the past year than during the entire first Five Year Plan, the total investment was less than half the amount invested in the 1953-1957 period. This was possible because the costs of construction were reduced in many cases by more than one half as indigenous methods were combined with modern methods, materials locally available were used to the full and excessively high standards were lowered."

The new pattern of work unleashed the initiative of masses of people and the results have been little short of miraculous. The September 1958 *China Reconstructs* gives the flavor of some of the doings:

> *In mountainous Yunnan, where over two million new tools have been popularized, the emphasis has been on transport. The watchword became: "End carrying on the back, the shoulders and the head." This was spurred by the need to free manpower for other farm tasks. . . . A wheelbarrow can free two people and take five or six times as much per trip as a set of baskets on a pole, while an oxcart releases nine peasants for other jobs. These low-cost wooden vehicles have been made at the co-ops in large numbers. Together with wooden rail systems for short hauls on reservoir projects, they have raised efficiency 15 to 20 times and in some places 40 or 50 times. . . .*
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> *Ho Ting, a once poverty-stricken peasant from Honan province who never had a day of schooling in his youth, devised a system of wooden earth-carriers moving on overhead cabes with an automatic dump and return mechanism which reduces by eight times the amount of labor needed to build a reservoir. . . .*
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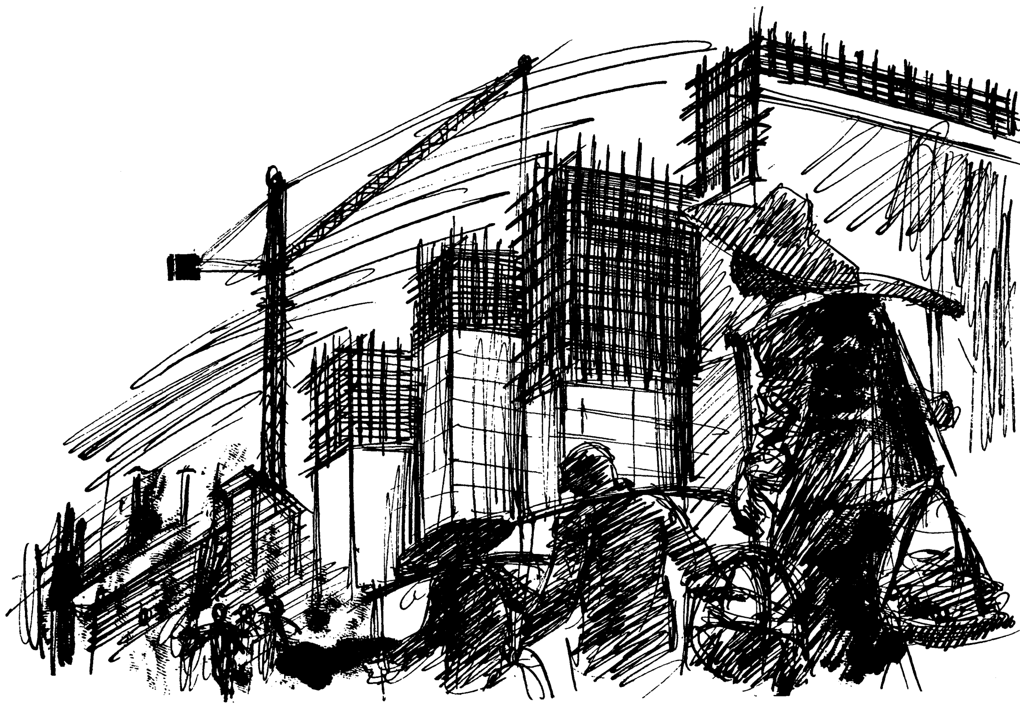
> *Over 3,000 inventions from all parts of the country were brought together for exhibition this spring at the College of Agricultural Mechanization just outside Peking. To it came thousands of farmer delegates to study the devices, sketch them, take home scale models or blueprints, and otherwise consult on farm tool problems. Similar exhibitions have been held in almost every province and region. Copies of 300 of the most widely used farm tools from the Peking exhibition are being sent to every provincial show. By mid-summer more than 50,000 types of tools have been invented or improved and tens of millions were in use.*

Business Week (December 13, 1958) can sneer that the peasants are up to fourteenth-century technical standards. To be sure, the techniques are crude. But what counts is that they represent a big rise in Chinese productivity, a utilization of wasted manpower, an addition to the total wealth, and an effective school for industrialization. A serious problem would arise, as in Russia under the NEP, if cottage industry based on crude techniques were to become the substitute for the buildup of modern industry. But China is going ahead with both: Cottage industry is used to fill some of the gaps while great modern industrial enterprises are being erected.

THE Communist leaders were bowled over by the results obtained from the two innovations in agricultural development and establishment of local industry. All their targets had been left far behind. They called an extraordinary meeting of the Central Committee, held August 17-30, 1958, which proceeded to raise the sights all along the line, in modern industry as well as agricultural. But the most controversial decision of all was to establish "People's Communes." The exact origin of the communes is obscure, but apparently a number of the regional leaders set up on their own during the summer some coordinated systems on county levels as they found the collective inadequate for the organization of vast public works projects, and for the accumulations of raw materials and manpower to feed the local industries. In any case, by the middle of August, the Communist hierarchs, according to the Yugoslavs, after embittered debates in the Political Bureau, took the plunge and issued the directive to reorganize the countryside along communal lines. So effective is the Communist organizational machinery that within two months, 90 percent of the peasant households were swept into the communal maw. By December it was all over: 740,000 collectives had been converted into 26,000 communes consisting of 120 million households. The speed of the operation seems to indicate that many of the pre-conditions for the communes had already been established during the public works and local industry drives.

The commune has replaced the township as well as the individual collective and is now the governmental, legal, economic, administrative, and social center. The governing committee runs its own courts, directs the local militia, issues all directives and edicts, and operates the communal enterprises, which according to figures at the end of 1958 added up to 1,400,000 public restaurants, 1,200,000 crèches, and a variety of free services like public baths, barbering establishments, tailoring shops, medical clinics, commissaries, etc. All the property of the collective farms has now become the property of the communes, and even the midget personal holdings have been largely taken over. When R. H. S. Crossman, the British journalist, who visited a number of communes last autumn, asked an elderly peasant whether he objected to turning over his personal farm and private livestock, he got the reply: "We work too hard and too long here to manage a private plot." He told Crossman what he had left was his house, garden, trees, and fowls. The communes are able to exercise considerable local initiative, but they are rigidly bound as to their rights and obligations by the central authority. They are permitted to barter some of their goods with other communes, but they cannot sell in the open market (which has likewise been sharply curtailed in the past six months), and prices and selling arrangements are fixed by the government.



THE Mao entourage has on more than one occasion exhibited strong gambling traits. Under the mood of success in 1958, many of them thought that they had discovered a short cut to full-blown communism via a virtual militarization of the whole Chinese people. The original resolution promulgating the communes declared: "It seems the attainment of communism in China is no longer a remote future event. We should actively use the form of the People's Communes to explore the practical road of transition to communism." An editorial appeared in the theoretical journal, *Red Flag,* in September, which explained that of the ten measures that Marx and Engels had held necessary in the *Communist Manifesto* to establish a communist society, eight had already been realized in China, and the remaining two were on the way to being carried out. Next there was talk of abolishing wages. On October 13, the *People's Daily* ran an article called "Abolish the Ideology of Bourgeois Rights." The authors called for doing away with wages and demanded, "Who got wages on the Long March?" The Hshushui Commune announced that it had already eliminated the wage system.

These ideas of hurtling into the society of the free and equal by way of a Spartan sharing of the scarcity are like echoes of Russia's "War Communism." The mood there was similarly heroic and military. Voicing a thought that was common to all the leading Bolsheviks at the time, Trotsky said in 1920: "We are now advancing towards a type of labor socially regulated on the basis of an economic plan . . . compulsory for every worker. That is the foundation of socialism . . . And once we have recognized this, we thereby recognize . . . the right of the workers' state to send each working man and woman to the place where they are needed for the fulfillment of economic tasks . . ." Lenin personally participated in a "Communist Saturday" (unpaid work) to give an example, and the active workers engaged in Trotsky's emergency campaign for the rehabilitation of the prostrate transportation system were called *udarniki,* shock troops. Bukharin that year in his *Economics of the Transition Period* argued that compulsory labor service, which under capitalism meant "enslavement," was simply "the self-organization of the working class" under the proletarian state. In the Russian case, all these notions of a forced march to communism evaporated when the government had to give way to the peasant with the announcement of the NEP in 1921.

The hubbub in Western Communist circles about the new miraculous Chinese short-cut to communism was abruptly silenced by the frigid reaction of the Russians. Khrushchev told Senator Humphrey that the communal system wouldn't work. Mikoyan remarked in the course of his American visit that they had tried the same thing in Russia, and had to give it up. The Polish Communist press went to great pains to explain that whatever merits the scheme possessed for China, it had no application at all for Poland. The Yugoslav press emphatically rejected the communes. *Nova Makedonija* claimed that the year before "750,000 members of the security organs" had been employed to quell armed peasant revolts, and that terror had been widely used to push the peasants into the communes.

IN fairness to the Chinese communes, it should be pointed out that the Russian analogy is of limited application. The Russian experiment of payments in kind to workers and barter arrangements between plants and cooperatives took place in the depths of the civil war when industry was progressively breaking down and inflation was destroying the value of the currency. The requisition of the peasant's grain by armed formations from the cities,

the regimentation of labor and the *ad hoc* quasi-communistic arrangements to feed and clothe the people, were less the result of ideology than the grim necessities forced upon the regime. They were the only way to prosecute the civil war and keep things from going under in the general dislocation and disintegration. Once the imperative of the civil war was removed, the system of compulsion fell apart. But that didn't end the matter. Ten years later, under other circumstances, a semi-militarization of labor was again put into effect under Stalin's industrialization, and whatever its true worth in most effectively mobilizing labor, and whatever justification it may or may not have from the socialist and humanist point of view, it "worked," in John Dewey's sense of the term.

The Chinese communes have been created—were one to use the Russian political calendar—not in 1919, but in 1934. The country is not only making remarkable economic progress, but living conditions are slowly improving. Moreover, the communes are not simply a mechanism of compulsion for the forced extraction of the peasant's produce, or the seizure of his personal holdings, but part of an integrated constructive framework to organize beneficial public works, local industries, and public services. To arrive at any reasonable estimate of the communes and their future, one has to consider their different functions. There has been a good deal of philistinism, not to mention cold-war humbuggery, in the American press criticism. It is unnecessary to spend too much time on a good many of the self-righteous journalistic moralists who have flung up their hands in horror at the horrendous breaking up of ancient Chinese traditions. The destruction of what traditions are they so exercised about? The patriarchal family where women were held in virtual bondage? Where daughters were sold into concubinage and prostitution? Where hunger was the most stable feature of the peasant's life?

Many of the communal services, like public restaurants, free medical centers, children's nurseries, do not only free labor for work in the fields and public projects, but are clearly a marked improvement in the living conditions of the rural people, who for centuries have never had enough to eat, who have had to eke out their life necessities under the most primitive and back-breaking conditions. To read some of the heart-rending accounts in our pulp press about the separation of children from parents, and the tragedy of communal feeding, one would imagine that the writers had never heard of plant cafeterias and child nurseries in our own country. This type of criticism is not to be taken seriously.

ON the other hand, one must reject all utopian notions about the institution being a bridge to communism. The society of the free and equal, without compulsion or discrimination—or any society that is a half-way reasonable facsimile thereof—can only come when there is an abundance of material goods, when the most acute of social maladjustments have been righted—and most probably, when the acute conflicts between nations have been ameliorated. To imagine that all this can come via primitive regimented, rural settlements in China whose per capita output cannot equal England's or Germany's for another forty years, is to indulge in the fantasies of Russian nineteenth-century populism. The process of accumulation in China will inevitably breed an income differentiation in the countryside no less than in the cities—just as it has in Russia. Even were it barred from the front entrance by communal fiat, it would re-enter by the rear door. Before long, we will be reading about rich communes and poor communes, and rich and poor members within the same communes.

As a matter of fact, after a few months of frenzied socialization, the regime was forced to spell out its objectives more in keeping with the facts. The December 10 resolution of the Communist Central Committee first called a halt to any further spread of the communes. They were not to be introduced into the cites for a while until "the skeptics and doubters have been convinced." Furthermore, the organizers were told to understand that "socialist ownership by the whole people" will not be realized "very soon," and they are not to lose sight of the fact that the properties and output of the communes are "collectively owned by the communes and differ from those of the state-owned enterprises." Further, "every Marxist must soberly realize that the transition from socialism to communism is a fairly long and complicated process of development," and therefore the abandonment of wage payments can not be rushed. As a matter of fact, "the communes must strive gradually to increase the wages of their members and, for a number of years to come, must increase them at a rate faster than that portion of their income which comes under the heading of free supply." To set the communist Eldorado further back, the resolution added that wage scales should be divided into six to eight grades, "and the highest grade may be four or more times as much as the lowest grade."

When divested of high-flown rhetoric and stripped of illusions, the communes can be compared to the ill-fated agro-town scheme projected some years back by Khrushchev. Why was the proposition dropped like a hot potato in Russia, and why has it been pushed through in China? Mao Tse-tung has provided the essential explanation. The people of China are like "a sheet of blank paper." Nothing is written on a blank sheet, "but it lends itself admirably to receive the latest and most beautiful words." Others have idealized the same fact by declaring that the

Chinese have not been morally and intellectually contaminated by capitalism.

WELL, we don't want to pile too many crimes on the shoulders of capitalism. True, it has bred a highly property-minded class of petty proprietors whose social horizons are narrow if not non-existent. This has traditionally been considered a debit by socialists. But the highly developed sense of individualism of this class, its stubborness in arranging its own affairs, its hostility to regimentation by the government, is an expression of the general flowering of the human personality under capitalism. This has been thought hitherto as providing the groundwork for the onward march of humanity. We can probably accept as fact that the Chinese were successfully hustled out of semi-feudal villages into colectives, and now into communes, because they never had a sturdy, independent yeomanry, and that this very backwardness may save them some troubles in industrializing the country. But if we are going to idealize "blank sheets of paper," then we have to provide in the beneficent society of the future a class of mandarins who will do the beautiful writing, and a class of helots who will docilely do the reading. Under that arrangement, who is to guarantee the continuing wisdom and benevolence of the mandarins? And even if some deity were to underwrite this clause in the contract, wouldn't life lose its savor if people were regimented and ordered about—for their own good, to be sure—by a Brahmin caste of calligraphers?

This is the biggest objection to the communes—the militarization of the labor and lives of its members. There is no point in anybody trying to talk around this. The Chinese Communists make no bones about it. The December 10 resolution lays down the line: "What we describe as getting organized along military lines means getting organized on the pattern of a factory. It means that the organization of labor in the People's Commune should be as organized and disciplined as in a factory or the army." Admittedly, Chinese regimentation is not a simple matter of Simon Legrees forcing people to labor on chain gangs at the point of a gun. There is an amazing élan in the nation. Many are in a frenzy of patriotism. The prospects for the country are dazzling. A wide variety of observers has noted how much more indigenous is the local and regional leadership, and how much smaller the role of outside experts, in comparison with Russian enterprises. R.H.S. Crossman believes that the communes sprang from the hard puritan elite of peasant Communists who have emerged in tens of thousands through the countryside. He is probably right. It is nevertheless a disturbing proposition—a fanatical mass movement which flattens out all dissent and pushes millions along as so many cogs of the centrally directed apparatus, which in turn is run on a military basis with directives funneled from the top down. It is a far cry from the first few years of the Russian revolution with the rich diversities of thought and cultural renaissance.

THE Chinese revolution is probably the most important social event in post-World War II history. Western socialists have to see the reality of what is going on there without prejudice, and also, without blinders. They would be foolish just to damn this momentous changeover that is transforming China into a modern nation because it employs compulsion and dictatorship. There is merit in the argument that compulsion is necessary to get a backward people to make the sacrifices necessary for a forced industrialization. Moreover, democracy is not a supra-historical moral ideal which can be fitted into any society, whether it be the Egypt of the Pharaohs, or the Athens of Pericles, or the England of Richard the Lion Hearted. It arose out of certain material and social circumstances in the evolution of middle class commercial states in the West, and it has survived and survives only when a society achieves certain material and cultural advantages and enjoys a mitigation of the social struggles within the nation. In the absence of these sufficient conditions, democracy succumbs. Look at Asia today. From one end to the other, Pakistan, Burma, Indonesia, parliamentary regimes have given way to military dictatorships, with no intervention of Communists. Why? Because there is an insufficient cultural level to maintain parliamentary democracy, and the internal conflicts and pressures are too raw to be adjudicated by European parliamentary processes. Hence, it is unreasonable to ignore the Chinese heritage and background and the difficulties it is up against, and to make demands upon it that no set of leaders, no matter who, is in a position to fulfill. The Chinese are entitled to sympathy from the West in their herculean efforts to lift themselves by their bootstraps; they are entitled to practical aid in their battle for industrialization. They should not be blockaded. They should not be ostracized. They should not be reviled. They should be helped.

At the same time, the Left in the West has to maintain certain standards of what it means by socialism, and what methods are on the approved list to get to the new society. We cannot accept militarization of a people, the hounding of dissenters, the enthronement of a new bureaucratic elite, as the true face of the culture we stand for. We have to take our stand on the ground of a new humanist and democratic society, all the more so as the socialism of Russia, and now of China, have been blended with so many barbarisms of their past cultures, that Eastern socialism is alien and repellent to the labor movements of the West—where socialism was first born. Whatever its rising attractive power in the colonial world, it has up to now undermined rather than facilitated the spread of socialism in the capitalist heartland.

CORRECTION

In the article "Challenge of Russian Planning," March 1959 issue:

Page 8, column 2, lines 11 and 12 gave the 1955 figures for Russian tractors which in fact are the figures for tractors held by the Machine and Tractor Stations. The overall figures are somewhat larger: 844,000 tractors in actual units; 1,439,000 if figured according to 15 horsepower units.

Page 8, column 2, lines 28 and 29 read "with over half of the total crop finding its way to the market . . ." They should read, "with over a quarter of the total crop," etc.

Notebook of an Old-Timer

by George H. Shoaf

Prosperity Gets the Shakes

EVERY intelligent and informed man and woman in this country, including politicians, subsidized editors, preachers and priests, not forgetting radio and television broadcasters, knows that what is preventing decline of U. S. economy are the huge expenditures involved in keeping the cold war a going concern. Unfortunately, as Mark Twain remarked about the weather, no one seems to be doing anything about it.

From Maine to California the landscape is flecked with war factories and plants, the heaviest congestion being in those localities where political influence exerts a commanding pressure. There appear to be three things perpetuating the cold war and, as one statesman declared, perpetuating it as far as possible "into the unforeseeable future," which by implication means as long as the present profit economy endures.

They are, 1) To prepare for "Russian aggression." 2) To provide employment for American workers who otherwise would be idle. 3) To maintain the current social, political, and economic status, or the American way of life, against the rising tide of world-wide change. Of the three it is difficult to determine which is the most important.

In this discussion California, the "land of gold and glory," where this writer lives, and whose economy is dominated by war industry, is chosen to illustrate the national situation.

Time was when California was prosperous and invitational to American home seekers because of gold, oranges, oil, scenery, and climate. Gold mining has disappeared. Climatic change, with infiltration into the atmosphere of smog from factories and plants, has put a crimp in the growth of the orange crop to such a degree that today orange growers consider themselves lucky if they break even with the season. One grower, a personal friend, due to a succession of seasonal losses, recently sold his grove to an Eastern "sucker" with the intention of retiring to private life. While fortunes have been made in California oil, the underground reservoirs are being so rapidly depleted that gas imported from Texas is being substituted as fuel in factories, plants, and homes. Remains, then, scenery and what has become a dubious climate. But human beings, while they may eke out an existence by taking in each other's washing, certainly cannot subsist long on scenery and climate. More important is the establishment and operation of war factories and plants throughout the length and breadth of the state, with the heaviest concentration in Southern California.

A RECENT survey showed an astonishing number of these factories and plants. It was just as astonishing to learn of the mighty influx of men, women, and families into the state, the majority of whom came to get jobs in the war factories and plants. According to the February 5 Los Angeles *Herald-Express,* 559 people come into Los Angeles County daily, with the County having "upped its population by 204,035 during 1958," bringing the total number of people today living in Los Angeles County to 5,818,257. Throughout the state, proportionally, the population increase measures up to that enjoyed by Los Angeles County.

Take one town, Pomona, situated in the San Gabriel Valley, in the south central section of the state. Twelve years ago its population numbered 10,000. Today, it has jumped to 62,959. Twelve years ago its inhabitants earned their living growing and trafficking in oranges, lemons, fruits, walnuts, and vegetables. Today, subdivisions have replaced most of the orange and lemon groves, and it is estimated that 40,000 of the town's population work in the nearby war industries, chief of which are guided missile plants. But herein lies a tragedy which is destined to befall not only Pomona, but many other California towns similarly situated.

Lured to California by State Chamber of Commerce advertisements, sponsored largely by real estate sharks and phony construction companies, with promise of employment and the "good life," hundreds of thousands of people came, many of them penniless, to seek employment in the war industries. Meanwhile, promoters, taking a gambler's chance, bought orange and lemon groves, uprooted the trees, and hastily built homes which they sold and are still selling to the newcomers on the installment plan. On the installment plan, the newcomers furnished the homes, bought late model cars, and for the first time in their lives began to live, as the saying is, "high, wide, and handsome." So forgetful are they of the past, and so accustomed has the younger set among these newcomers become to the present conditions, that apparently they imagine this artificial way of life will endure forever.

BUT will the cold war last twenty years, the time limit set for the last payment on their homes? What if peace were negotiated, and the war industries suspended operation? Jobless, how then will the people continue their payments? As a matter of fact, California, aside from scenery and climate, has few natural resources. Henry J. Kaiser, millionaire promoter, uncovered some iron deposits out in the desert region of Southern California which in his plant in Fontana he is

converting into steel, but experienced miners, familiar with the region, assert these iron deposits will give out in the near future, with Kaiser left with an expensive plant for which there will be no use. The fishery business along the Pacific coast until recently was a profitable enterprise, but even that is slowing down with many concerns withdrawing their investments. Such crops as corn, beans, wheat, potatoes, and cotton, with peaches, apricots, apples, grapes, figs, and walnuts, can produce abundantly provided water is supplied for irrigation. These can and will be consumed by Californians with a residue for export. But can these crops make the people wealthy and afford sufficient incentive to impel outsiders to come to the state with the view of making it their permanent residence?

Although several million newcomers are working in the war industries and imagine themselves "going to town," the truth is they are skating on thin ice, economically speaking. Unemployment in the state is increasing instead of decreasing. The dread specter of eviction is beginning to haunt the senior workers who find it difficult to make their installment payments and meet the exorbitant demands of inflated prices. Now and then a war plant has to shut down for a while. It is then the installment-buying workers face a situation which amounts almost to a disaster.

In the community where this writer lives, a community composed largely of subdivisions recently laid out with homes, ten evictions occurred within the last two weeks. The occupants, taking what they could carry in their cars, were compelled to "go back where they came from," leaving their unpaid-for homes and furniture to be resold to the next "sucker." Next door to where this writer lives, a family from Missouri two years ago made a down payment on a home. Both man and woman secured work in one of the war industries and they congratulated themselves on finding what they thought was a bonanza. First, the woman lost her job, and could find no other. The man became ill and could work only part time. Payments on home and furniture slackened until they began to stop. Finally, they decided to return to Missouri. Another man, a farmer from South Dakota, with a family, bought the place. The oldest daughter found work in a war industry, but other members of the family are still looking for work. These experiences, a common occurrence, presage a disturbing future, to say the least.

Los Angeles newspapers are distributed in this community by agents who are having a hard time collecting payments. As a barometer revealing actual conditions among families living in showy homes and driving shiny cars, one of the agents the other day said: "One would guess that the occupants of these nicely appointed homes could easily and promtly pay for a newspaper, but this is not so. To keep up their installment payments, many skimp on food. In the homes I visit, I find few books and magazines. Their cancellation of newspapers is increasing. If it keeps up I will have to quit the agency."

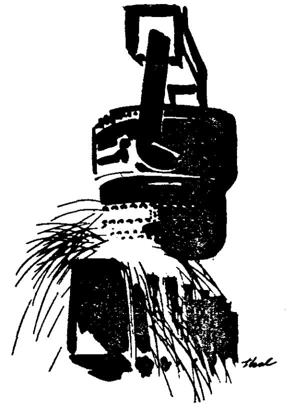
DESPITE the surface prosperity, word comes from Sacramento, the state capital, that California has been losing $800,000 a day during the current fiscal year as the result of increased spending and decreased revenue. To make up the current and anticipated deficits, Governor Brown has called for an additional $235 million annually in new or higher taxes.

What is true of California, is true of virtually every state in the Union where war factories and plants are located and operated. Michigan is in great difficulty, with the unemployed preparing a march on Washington. The mining regions of West Virginia and Kentucky are reportedly overwhelmed with jobless miners whose families are on the verge of starvation. Everywhere the introduction of automation and the speedup is displacing workers by the hundreds of thousands despite the assertions of labor exploiters to the contrary.

What becomes of all the manufactured war equipment? Some of it is sent to foreign dictatorships the U. S. government is subsidizing. Most of the remainder is stored out in the desert regions of California, Arizona and New Mexico to rust in the weather and eventually to become inadequate and obsolete. For more than a hundred miles between Barstow and Mojave, in the Antelope Valley, in California, the desert as far as the eye can see is covered with planes, tanks, army trucks and other equipment representing billions of dollars of American tax money. A small army of soldiers is kept on guard to prevent vandalism.

The sheer hypocrisy of the situation, the songs of prosperity sung by the bigwigs of capitalism, and the obvious intention on the part of the purveyors of information to keep the people ignorant of the facts, constitute an outstanding indictment of the American way of life. Newsmen, radio and television commentators who have dared to speak out, have either been fired from their jobs or relegated to positions of innocuous desuetude. If the liberal press succumbs to intimidation, and either distorts the facts of the outrageous situation that has developed in this country, or refuses to publicize them, to what agency can the people turn if they would learn the truth?

Our war boom, soon to celebrate its 20th birthday, is clearly an established part of the system. An economist here gives his views of what this means for the U. S. economic structure and functioning.



Economics of the War Economy

by Paul Mattick

EVER since Lord Keynes' dictum that wars—like pyramid-building and earthquakes—may serve to increase wealth, it has been increasingly recognized that war and preparation for war are necessary aspects of the prevailing economy and a condition of its proper functioning. Because, in recent history, only inflation and war have resulted in full utilization of productive capacities, the question has been raised whether this association between war and full employment is an accident or a necessity. It is usually answered with the assurance that, although it is no accident, it is not a necessity, for government expenditures can lead to full employment whether they are geared to the needs of war or to the requirements of peace. With full employment as the sole goal of economic activity, even people opposed to war do not seriously object to the creation of "wealth" in the form of armaments and military installation, even though they may prefer "wealth" in the form of social welfare.

Quite independent of preferences, government spending includes an always growing amount for purposes of defense. The "military wealth" of the United States is said to exceed $124 billion. This "Real and Personal Property of the Defense Department" does not include investments in atomic energy estimated at $12½ billion, nor the properties of the "National Plant and Equipment Reserve," nor the supplies and equipment in overseas depots, nor the military assistance to allied and favored nations. The great bulk of the inventory consists of things that can be used up, wasted, or that will become obsolete. The Defense Department is actually a tremendous business enterprise. In 1955, for instance, it spent more than $42 billion, or about one-seventh of the national income. It was directly responsible for the employment of close to 4½ million people, or about 7 percent of the national labor force.

As always, so now, too, there is much talk of cutting government spending and reducing the budget deficit. This economy talk, however, does not include spending for military purposes. On this point both "savers" and "spenders" think alike. The "defense establishment," as the President made clear recently, "is an exception to the general desire of living within the amounts set by the Budget Bureau after it had cut the spending requests." Opposing all cuts and arguing for increased government spending, Truman's former chief economist Leon H. Keyserling found it necessary to complain that "we remain content with a defense strength far below the minimum judged essential by most experts." But then, spending for defense loses its sinister implications when it is referred to as the "rising cost of peace."

INCREASED control of the economy by way of government spending seems to worry nobody, particularly because far more than half of it is thought to serve national defense. Despite a high rate of government spending there are still millions of unemployed and it was only under conditions of actual warfare, in which nearly half of the gross national product served the needs of war, that there was full employment and full use of productive capacities. Organized labor will certainly not object to increased government spending for whatever purposes, as this means jobs and a better position at the bargaining table. Neither will big corporations nor small entrepreneurs oppose increased defense expenditures, no matter how much they may object to taxation and social welfare, since spending for defense does not restrict general market demand. Although government-financed social welfare schemes may interfere with private business interests, in military expenditures the government provides both supply and demand simultaneously and takes part of the social product out of the marketing process.

Since government funds proper can come only from taxation, additional funds must be borrowed from private sources. Deficit financing, which covers government expenditures that exceed government income, is resorted to by the government in buying goods and services that would otherwise not be bought. This increases economic activity and even the profitability of enterprises filling government demand. The increase of the national debt is limited only by national productive resources. Deficit financing simply means that the government avails itself of part of the means of production that belong to private capital. Increased production through government initiative is, then, a kind of temporary "expropriation" of private capital and deficit financing, as the means to this end, gives the "expropriation" its temporary character. The funds borrowed by government are only monetary expressions of its power to set unemployed resources to work. The rising national debt indicates that this power has been granted only temporarily and for a price, i.e., interest paid to the bond-

holders. And because the "nation as a whole" stands behind the national debt, there arises the possibility that interests will be paid and bonds will be redeemed if the national income rises faster than the national debt. All that this means is that enough new wealth must be created to take care of old obligations. New wealth has to come out of new private production; what the bondholders get back from the government, they will themselves have to provide either by paying more taxes or by subscribing to new loans.

This situation explains the reluctance of private enterprise systems to engage in deficit financing, and of their governments to live beyond the budget. Funds going to the government cannot be accumulated to private account and it is, therefore, not "policy" but necessity which induces free enterprise systems to increase the "public sector" of the economy in any direction. Of all directions, however, that of increased armaments appears the least obnoxious because of the traditional association of capital expansion with military might and because it supports "genuine" capital formation in so far as it subsidizes the suppliers of government demand at the expense of the national economy as a whole.

THE "defense establishment" is an exception to the general desire to live within the government budget because it is the least obnoxious of all public endeavors. But it is subject not only to national decisions but is determined also by international power struggles. This, of course, is equally true for all competing nations, or power blocs, and enables each to blame the other for the armaments race. International competition contradicts "planning tendencies" in free enterprise systems—or "mixed economies" rather—as well as state planning in totalitarian countries. For it is the competitive process itself which determines the character and extent of the various "defense establishments." To expand or contract armaments production is then not a question of choice, but is determined by the apparent impossibility of reaching international cooperation under conditions of national and social antagonisms and, of course, by the armaments technology which determines the size of the defense budgets.

Speculation regarding future relationships between defense requirements and national production seems rather idle, as the determining factor with regard to defense cannot be ascertained in advance. Moreover, at any time now preparation for war may turn into war, despite a general desire for peace. The assumption that peace will prevail rests on the certainty that the armaments race will also prevail if only to safeguard the existing armed peace. This, in turn, safeguards the status quo in international power relations and therewith the status quo of social relationships within the great powers and within the nations under their control.

However, the "permanent war economy" has lost some of the horror previously associated with it, at any rate in America. For America's capacity to produce is such that it could support war production and a high defense budget without lowering the living standards of the broad masses. This is not true for other nations which need American support to maintain their defense programs, and it has not been true for totalitarian countries still forced to accumulate capital at a faster rate than they can improve living standards. And because, from a material-technical point of view, there is nothing to hinder a further growth of American productivity, a steady increase of defense expenditures need not necessarily lead to a future lowering of living standards. This is possible with a general economic expansion which allows for both sufficient capital formation and increased government budgets.

In a profit producing economy, however, the material-technical possibility for further expansion is not enough to make this expansion a certainty. If, for example, a *profitable* capital formation should require foreign expansion and if the areas in question should be under the control of competing social systems or nations, capital formation would be possible only in violation of the profit principle. It is for this reason that the future growth of the American economy is envisioned, to quote Keyserling once more, through "private and public economic adjustments [which] constantly reinforce and supplement one another"; avoiding both "the virtual merger of public and private action which necessarily occurred during wartime, and the opposite extreme which fails sufficiently to recognize that, while there are many segments in our economic life, there is in the final analysis only one America."

IT is true that there exists only one America. It is just as true that her "many segments" represent an equal number of particularistic and contradictory interests which exclude a common economic policy by consent. When the rate of private capital formation is too low to guarantee stable social conditions, and when the latter are an inescapable necessity because of the United States' position within the world political situation, economic activity will be supported by government action with or without general consent. Unless recent trends should be reversed, the need for government intervention will increase and therewith the government-controlled sector of the economy. To choose one example: government purchases of goods and services in 1929 accounted for 9 percent of the gross national product; in 1952 they accounted for 20 percent (the war-time high was 45 percent). Although slow, the rise was persistent and the probability of the trend continuing is far greater than for its arrest or reversal.

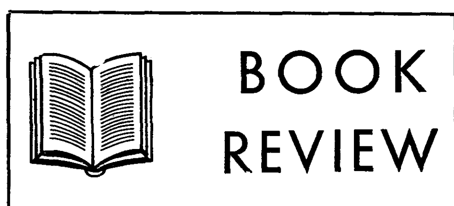
The end product of capitalist production is an enlarged capital. The end product of a government-fostered expansion of production is also a larger productive apparatus. But though nominally in the hands of private capital, it can be fully utilized only at the command of government. From the free enterprise point of view, production which the government commands, whether in the form of public works or armaments, falls into the sphere of "consumption," for like consumption proper, public works and armaments do not constitute, and do not add to, the accumulated capitalist wealth. Yet from the free enterprise point of view this is still better than government-sponsored production for personal means of consumption which would alter not only the *volume* but also the *direction* of production. More of the total social effort would disappear in direct consumption instead of in additional means of production and military strength. And since it is the function of government to maintain itself by maintaining the exist-

ing social system, its economic policy must serve the latter and must therefore be so designed in order to do the least damage to the private enterprise system. This it does by directing government-induced production in increasing measure into armament channels, into production for destructive purposes, into waste-production.

While government-induced production helps to overcome the harmful social consequences of an insufficient rate of private capital formation, it also makes it more difficult to overcome the relative stagnation of private investments. It reduces their profitability and hinders changes of the existing capital structure such as occur in prolonged periods of depression. At any rate, the very existence of the "mixed economy" points to insurmountable difficulties in the way of private capital formation and to a relatively faster growth of the "public" over the "private" sector of the economy. And this, in turn, implies the permanent and steady growth of the economy as a war production economy.

BUT as stated before, so long as the growth of waste-production does not infringe upon customary living standards, it will have no directly perceptible effects other than the increasing militarization of social life—so pleasing to some and so obnoxious to others. Yet, the status quo it is intended to secure cannot really be maintained. While change is arrested in one direction, it occurs in another. The "mixed economy," in which the government attempts to safeguard private enterprise, changes into a government-controlled economy that tolerates private capital. The increasing role of government by way of armaments production brings into being new political forces interested in the maintenance and further expansion of government control. While some social interest groups are still best served in a purely private enterprise system, others have already little or nothing to lose from the extension of government controls, and still others may profit directly thereby. These groups are supported by social attitudes shared by large layers of the population whose actual life may remain unaffected by whatever change takes place.

The concentration and centralization of economic power extends into the political sphere. There now exists a relatively small group of capitalists, financiers, managers, politicians, militarists, and labor leaders able to determine social activity by virtue of their overwhelming influence over the economy as a whole, including the defense establishment. The celebrated "People's Capitalism" is no indication that people see themselves actually or potentially as members of the capitalist class; rather, it springs from the growing realization that, under conditions as they are now emerging, the traditional capitalist is doomed to extinction. Individualism evaporates in the test of experience; privileges are sought for in increasing measure not so much for the amassing and possessing of capitalist property as for the control of key positions in industry, commerce, politics, or government. With government itself becoming the largest of all businesses, service to the state becomes more attractive and remunerative. Objectively, then, the mass of the population is quite ready to accept a more radical change from the private enterprise to the state-controlled economy—to say nothing of the ambitionless and propertyless layers of the population who have no real stake in the issue at all. In this objective readiness lies the danger for the ruling groups, for in any period of economic stress, it may find expression in political attitudes which would force the free enterprise system into further retreat and give new impetus to those social forces that are steering towards a state capitalist economy.



An Open Door for Revolutions

THE TRAGEDY OF AMERICAN DIPLOMACY by William Appleman Williams. World Publishing, Cleveland and New York, 1959, $4.75.

REGULAR readers of this periodical will recall that the bulk of last September's issue was devoted to a thorough analysis by Professor Williams of what he called the "political economy" of American foreign policy. The same theme, greatly amplified and detailed, occupies him in this brilliant book. Of a number of recent books, all quite good, arguing for a change in policy to avert nuclear disaster, this one is by far the best.

Bertrand Russell, for example, has just published a slim volume in England called *Common Sense and Nuclear Warfare,* soon to be brought out here by Simon and Schuster. Professor Russell argues with profound conviction and powerful eloquence that, in the face of a threat of nuclear annihilation, all international quarrels are petty and ought to be submerged in a common interest in peace. There is no gainsaying the force and logic of his arguments, yet the net effect of the book is far from convincing, because Russell has little to offer in the way of solutions beyond the exasperated shout that reason condemns a war which will destroy both sides and all neutrals as well. The fatal flaw—Russell himself points to it repeatedly—is the limited power of pure logic in the affairs of human institutions. The major antagonists will *not* relinquish their contending claims and interests in response to reasoned appeals; that much, at least, is very clear. The issues may be compromised, or stalemated, as is at present the case. But in the long run, the antagonisms will have to find some way to work themselves out, in a process involving a lot of change in the social systems of the major powers, as the precondition for a secure peace.

Some years ago, when difficulties in the Korean war had renewed the perennial debate over proposals to take refuge in a "Fortress America" defense and let the rest of the world go hang, the *New York Times* delivered its refutation in two words: *economic strangulation.* This simple and devastating polemic was big with implications. Its ringing overtone is that, for our rulers, present foreign policy is not just a moral and ideological choice, but a necessity dictated by hard material facts, trade and investment arrangements that are indispensable for our present economic system. Where Professor Williams' new book is immeasurably superior to most others on the subject is that he has gotten a firm grip on this central fact and explored its ramifications from every angle.

THE guiding line of American foreign policy in the twentieth century, Professor Williams finds, has been the Open Door Policy, which originated formally with Secretary of State John Hay's notes of 1899 and 1900. Just what this policy really means is little hinted at by its euphemistic name, which Charles A. Beard ridiculed as "a clever phrase to catch, if not inform, the public imagination." "Based on the assumption of what Brooks Adams called 'America's

economic supremacy,'" Professor Williams writes, "and formulated in the context of vigorous pressure from domestic economic interests and the threatening maneuvers of other nations, the policy of the open door was designed to establish the conditions under which America's preponderant economic power would extend the American system throughout the world without the embarrassment and inefficiency of traditional colonialism."

In the last decade of the nineteenth century, when so many changes in American life crystallized, the exhaustive first plowing of the economic ground within national borders was substantially completed, and American business was forced to look around for new worlds to conquer. The pressures were intense; as one Senator put it: "Fate has written our policy for us; the trade of the world must and shall be ours." But the American imperial urge hit us at a time when much of the world had already been carved up into outright colonies or preempted in the form of spheres of influence by the European powers. Secretary Hay's "open door" notes, in demanding free access to the markets of the world, served notice in diplomatic language that the United States was entering the struggle for markets and investment areas on a massive scale, first in China and then throughout the world.

The "open door" catchword tried to put across an image of a harmless Yankee trader offering his notions deferentially in a free market. The savage realities of international commerce being quite different, the United States was soon involved in a general European war, and had to build an armed force capable of dominating simultaneously the entire Pacific basin and, with the help of Britain, the Atlantic as well. While a lot of reliance was placed on the commercial potency of the dollar, the cheapness of the products of our factories, and the plenitude of American capital, the United States, like all nations that play the imperial game, had to be ready to try its strength in the court of last resort. Thus, despite the anti-colonial slogans and ideals supposed to be expressed by the "open door" idea, America rapidly became a fully accoutered imperial power, lagging behind the others only in the trappings and formalities of colonial ownership, but in all other respects, commercial, exploitative, military, soon leading them all.

By the end of the second World War, open door expansion was freed from all restraints by the prostration of Europe, ally and foe alike, and was threatening to take shape in a world-wide American system, organized chiefly with an eye to American commercial convenience. As Americans had once thought their spread across a continent was nothing but the manifest destiny of a people, so now they were ready to believe that the global American system was nothing but the manifest destiny of the dollar. There was nothing immoral or unjust about all this; it was simply that the best man and the best currency had won. Nor could there be any cause for complaint; the whole thing was obviously working out in the best interests of all the peoples involved, too. "As far as American leaders were concerned," writes Professor Williams, "the philosophy and practice of open-door expansion had become, in both its missionary and economic aspects, the view of the world. Those who did not recognize and accept that fact were not only wrong, but they were considered incapable of thinking correctly." It was this view, writes the author, and the decision to employ American power in keeping with the traditional policy of the open door, which "crystallized the cold war."

The distinguishing strength of Professor Williams' analysis is that he treats foreign policy as a true projection of the nation outside its borders, and thus a direct reflection of what the nation *is,* rather than simply a policy arbitrarily adopted. He quotes Dean Acheson in November 1944:

> *We cannot go through another ten years like the ten years at the end of the twenties and the beginning of the thirties, without having the most far-reaching consequences upon our economic and social system. . . . We have got to see that what the country produces is used and sold under financial arrangements which make its production possible. . . . My contention is that we cannot have full employment and prosperity in the United States without the foreign markets.*

Through his survey of the development of American policy from 1900 to 1958, and by quoting liberally from a cross-section of corporate and governmental opinion over the years, Professor Williams establishes that the United States is, in its relations with the rest of the world, primarily a nation which cannot survive in its present institutional form without access to and control over foreign markets, investment areas, and sources of raw materials. Far from being a free and untrammeled agent, governed only by moral imperatives in the search for world peace and freedom, bothering with other nations only out of the goodness of its heart, the image is more realistically and hard-headedly reshaped by Professor Williams. From his discussion of the economic implications of the Marshall Plan it emerges that we are so abjectly dependent on other nations that we have to see to it that they buy the products of our factories even if we have to give them the money to do it with. In his discussion of the effects of American domination on other countries, it becomes clear that little benefit accrues to the country that opens its door—or has it forced open.

From all this, Professor Williams concludes that it is not American ideals that have failed, but a foreign policy which has flouted and disregarded traditional American ideals in pursuit of its "open door" empire. It is time, he says, for a reversal of policy, an "open door for revolutions" abroad, and a "balanced domestic system" at home. "Once freed from its myopic concentration on the cold war, the United States could come to grips with the central problem of reordering its own society so that it functions through such a balanced relationship with the rest of the world, and so that the labor and leisure of its own citizens are invested with creative meaning and purpose."

> *Having structured a creative response to the issue of democracy and prosperity at home, the United States could again devote a greater share of its attention and energy to the world scene. Its revamped foreign policy would be geared to helping other peoples achieve their own aspirations in their own way. The essence of such a foreign policy would be an open door for revolutions. Having come to terms with themselves—having achieved maturity—Americans could exhibit the self-discipline necessary to let other peoples come to terms with themselves. Having realized that "self-righteousness is the hallmark of inner guilt," Americans would no longer find it necessary to embark upon crusades to save others.*
>
> *In this fashion, and through a policy of an open door for revolutions, Americans would be able to cope with the many as yet unknown revolutions that are dependent upon peace for their conception and maturation. They would be able, in short, to contribute their insights and leadership to man's constant labor to know himself and his universe. Having accepted the permanence of change, America could do much to sustain and extend man's creativity. Instead of trying desperately to keep its brothers, America could then become a brother.*

This is a hard-headed book, more concerned with realities than rhetoric and analysis rather than appeals. It has none of the feverish urgency of the recent books of C. Wright Mills or Bertrand Russell—at least on the surface. It surveys sixty years of diplomatic history with relaxed care and discretion. But Professor Williams' history is, itself, insistent with purpose. He tells the reader in his introduction: "As Oliver Cromwell spoke to England, so History speaks to all men: 'I beseech you, in the bowels of Christ, consider that ye may be mistaken.'"

H. B.

Uncle Tom and the Lord

J. B., A PLAY IN VERSE by Archibald MacLeish. Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1958, $3.50.

There are two widely different uses to which poetry can be put in the theater. The first of these is to heighten and lend a mythic quality to an action which needs a certain majesty and distance to evoke our full feeling. In the sense in which Brecht used the term, poetry can thus become an "alienating" device, a means to remove speech from the realm

of everyday reality and invest it with a new dimension.

The other use to which poetry can be put is to decorate and ornament an otherwise trivial dramatic structure. Here its function is not heightened emotion but essentially that of camouflage. It must be admitted that Americans have a strong weakness for such camouflage and will hasten to the hustings to celebrate any piece which is so dressed up, no matter how unimportant it may be in its bare bones.

It is the taste for this tinsel which leads one great section of our consuming public to insist upon the chrome trim and foam-rubber upholstery which decorate our contemporary automobiles and to ignore the merits or demerits of the machine itself. Among the intellectual public, I suppose, there is a similar law of conspicuous consumption at work: I can find no other rational explanation for the hubbub created by Archibald MacLeish's latest verse play, *J.B.*

Let me summarize the architectonics of the play. As most readers no doubt know, it is MacLeish's reconstruction in a quasi-modern setting of the Biblical story of Job, a man "perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil," but who had the misfortune to become the object of an altercation between Jehovah and the Devil as to the strength of his faith. To settle the argument Jehovah visited upon Job every conceivable misfortune and affliction which, to the chagrin of Satan, Job bore without flinching or complaining and with unremittant thanks to the Lord. Needless to say, since the parable was meant for the edification of the meek, God ultimately restored to Job (once his role as guinea pig was successfully completed) all of his wealth "twice over" and in His Infinite Magnanimity allowed him an additional 140 years of life in which to procreate seven more sons and three more daughters to balance with nice accuracy the number of offspring which the Deity had previously killed. Nowhere in the Bible is there a more perfect prototype of the Uncle Tom.

NOW to my mind this parable is the sort which might have attracted the talents of Anatole France, or Charles Erskine Scott Wood (*Heavenly Discourse*), but Mr. MacLeish, who has always been noted for a monumental earnestness, chooses to take it very seriously.

His Job is now "J.B.," a successful American banker with millions in the till and a fine family right off a Norman Rockwell cover for the *Saturday Evening Post.* He is a blameless and upright man and if he has one shortcoming it is that he tends to take God's goodness a little too much for granted. Meanwhile, in a loft overhead two old actors out of Samuel Beckett play at God and Satan and the machine is on its way.

Calamity after calamity strike J.B. One son is killed in the aftermath of a war, two more are dispatched in an automobile accident, a daughter is raped and murdered, and the final children and all of J.B.'s fortune go up in the bombing of his bank. Not content with this God razes most of the city to add to his discomfort and finally his wife, fed up with his uncomplaining spinelessness, walks out and leaves him in the company of three shabby "comforters," in which characters MacLeish satirizes all those who seek some explanation for humanity's suffering—in this case, the theologian, the psychiatrist, and the socialist.

Finally God speaks to the benighted Job and since most of what he says is directly from the King James version of the story the poetry is, not unexpectedly, better than MacLeish's own. The burden of God's message is that it is presumptuous of J.B. to question God's will and that his only course lies in accepting life as it is. Once J.B. has accepted this stirring pronouncement (which comes to him by way of an offstage microphone) his wife returns to him and, consoled by the possibility of conjugal love and "sharing" the small delights of life, they set about restoring the upturned furniture. I don't know if there is a musical score for J.B. but at this point violins are called for. Or perhaps an angelic choir chanting a *beata.*

All this is decorated with a great deal of incidental poetry of varying merit and is given plenty of theatrical *brouhaha* indicating a close reading of Christopher Fry's *A Sleep of Prisoners* and other works of that sort. I imagine that it can be staged very well (I am forming my own opinions from reading the text, which is the safest way with pretentious works of this kind) and probably sends the susceptible sections of the audience away in the assurance that they have been listening to something very "artistic" and "significant." Some enthusiasts may even echo the blurb of the *Saturday Review* that it "may well become one of the lasting achievements of art and mind in our time."

WELL, I'm sorry. To your hard-headed correspondent cheese is still cheese, no matter how artfully it is sliced. I am not opposed to religious drama (*Murder in the Cathedral,* for example, I find quite moving) but to amount to anything it should have passion and conviction. Mr. MacLeish has neither; in their place he has put a soggy quietism, characters who are all abstractions, and a gallery of theatrical tricks borrowed from his betters.

And the message? Well, it was accurately put one hundred years ago by a far better poet than MacLeish:

> *Ah, love, let us be true*
> *To one another! For the world, which seems*
> *To lie before us like a land of dreams,*
> *So various, so beautiful, so new,*
> *Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,*
> *Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain:*
> *And we are here as on a darkling plain*
> *Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,*
> *Where ignorant armies clash by night.*

It comes from the melancholy and pessimistic Matthew Arnold and it makes very good poetry if extremely dubious philosophy.

GEORGE HITCHCOCK

Learning as a Commodity

THE ACADEMIC MARKETPLACE by Theodore Caplow and Reece J. McGee. Basic Books, New York, 1958, $4.95.

THE ACADEMIC MIND by Paul Lazarsfeld and Wagner Thielens, Jr. Free Press, Glencoe, Illinois, 1958, $6.

OF increasing concern to many Americans has been the growing conservatism of the campus community in the United States. In contrast to the universities of Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America, only an insignificant minority of American students shows any interest in liberal or radical ideas. Pathetically enough, teachers participate even less than students in dissenting political activities. Both teachers and students seem immersed in the ethos of careerism, usually to the exclusion of public responsibility. Where the cauldron of new social and political ideas should boil, there isn't even any fire.

William Whyte, Jr., has gone so far as to charge that "like his brother in management, the scientist is becoming an organizational man." It is a "search for careers" rather than a "search for knowledge" which is undermining the very goals of science and impartial inquiry.

Why have the foremost exponents of academic idealism, scientific objectivism, and dissenting opinion fallen prey to a set of values which have undermined their traditional goals? Thirty years ago, the penetrating insight of Thorstein Veblen gave us a partial perspective on the problem. Veblen saw "a systematic direction of academic forces to unscholarly ends" as a consequence of the fact that pecuniary motives, rather than those of dispassionate search for truth, had permeated campus life. The diabolic agent which had introduced these goals was, for Veblen, the board of directors. These boards, Veblen felt, ran the universities like a business corporation if not a "penal colony and a house of correction." The business-oriented directors had turned the university into a vocational school for the greater glory of the business world itself. As a result, the scholarly affairs of the university were being run by unscholarly salesmen, who instituted a system of "authoritative control, standardization, gradation, accountancy, classification, credits, and penalties." (*The Higher Education in America,* 1918.) Years later, Jacques Barzun had much the same impression of academic administration:

> *Nothing strikes the foreign observer with surprise as the size and the power of the American collegiate administration. The best offices in the best building, the row on row of filing cabinets, the serried ranks of secretaries and sten-*

ographers, make the European feel he has wandered by mistake into a large business concern. (Teacher in America, 1945.)

Such candid findings have been more recently documented by Hubert Park (*Men Who Control Our Universities,* 1947). Out of 734 trustees studied, only ten percent were scientists or active in fine arts, while 79 percent had business backgrounds as proprietors, managers, officials, directors, and executives in industry or finance. Many of these came from America's largest corporations. Most leaned hard on the conservative side in their beliefs, only a small handful were Catholics or Jews, and at the time of the study, there were no indications of any Negro members on any of the boards. Park concluded:

> *A . . . shortcoming of the boards studied was their biased class structure. Unavoidably, the heavy dominance of a single major class among their members provided an opportunity for subtly perverting the great resources and potentialities of higher education from the service of society as a whole to the service of a special class, the highly privileged class to which the board members belonged.*

While Barzun, Veblen, Park, and others showed how our major universities are administered by men from wealthy class backgrounds and committeed to a business ideology, none of the authors explained the submission of faculties to controls and values of these administrators. Two studies just published throw new light on the situation of the faculty in a modern university. *The Academic Marketplace,* by Theodore Caplow and Reece McGee, analyzes the professor as a commodity, while Paul Lazarsfeld and Wagner Thielens, Jr., analyze the reactions of the "academic mind" to the witchhunting attacks directed at it of late by congressional committees and other groups.

CAPLOW and McGee have studied the hiring and firing practices in the liberal arts departments of ten major universities during the academic years 1954-1955 and 1955-1956. All ten are major institutions conferring PhD degrees. The study documents what Veblen pointed out three decades ago: that "common notoriety" is the test of success or failure for both the university and faculty members within it. A man's capacity as a teacher has little promotional value. His productivity as a research worker is more readily exhibited. "Publish or Perish" is the theme which Caplow and McGee see as the underlying value governing professorial life.

The staff member who may be brilliant but is not "productive" is soon replaced, for much the same reason as a faulty machine on an assembly line. As one respondent to the Caplow-McGee questionnaire put it: "He was dilatory, unreliable, and erratic, brilliant, charming, and versatile. But he was in the basic sense unreliable. He showed little inclination to become a scholar. He came to us highly recommended from one of the great universities, but he lacked power and perserverance. We told him that there would be no future for him here and gave him two years to find a job." If "productive," the professor rises on the escalator, but if "unproductive," he rides it downwards to obscurity in a small school.

The major result is that teaching and education have given way to assembly line production of "research" on which promotion depends and the notoriety of the university rests. In such an atmosphere, the student becomes a second-class citizen at best, or, at worst, a time-consuming distraction taking the professor away from his chief occupation. Naturally, with the strong emphasis on publication for its own sake, much of the research tends to be trivial and specious, space-filling wordiness with the most safe and obvious conclusions.

THE academic market, unlike the classical model, is a closed system. It is not an open market, as there is preferential treatment of job candidates, and a limited circulation of information about vacancies. Favoritism of a sort, rather than merit, dominates hiring practices. A candidate has a better chance for a job if he "had help from his home university," "knew the man who left," had "been here before," and so forth. Likewise, in the academic market in contrast to the classical model there are prestige positions appropriate for each worker and he must take offers at the appropriate levels, for he will get no offers from those institutions with prestige higher than his own. "The prestige system," the authors note, "protects him from demotion and from loss of pay but not from the cost of living with the familiar result that professors are hard-pressed in times of prosperity and relatively affluent during depressions."

Caplow and McGee indicate that the opposition between faculty and administration is tempered by the power structure of the university. As in the business world, a chairman, when he has a difficult decision about budget or changes of staff, "tends to throw the responsibility . . . upward." Likewise, the junior staff members when confronted with an authoritarian chairman turn to the dean for redress. Thus the university administration and the faculties cooperate in fostering a business ethos of bowing before administrative might. Paternalism and nepotism are certainly not an adequate environment for the distinterested pursuit of knowledge. Of course, it ought to be pointed out that the small liberal arts school and various general education colleges within the larger universities may produce a counter-current, albeit a small one, in the stream filled with academic salmon rushing upstream to spawn.

If the social forces generated within the university breed conservatism and conformity, what about the pressures from the outside world? The study by Lazarsfeld and Thielens is a treatment of one major aspect of this problem. The authors analyze the reactions by social scientists to the attacks on higher educational institutions in the decade following the war. Choosing 165 accredited four-year undergraduate colleges at random from among the 900 in the United States, the team of interviewers for the authors questioned 2,451 social scientists at these institutions.

It was found that only 24 colleges, mostly minor institutions, reported no attacks on faculty or administration, while the rest reported from one up to 20 instances, one school having as many as 28. Such attacks included charges of Communism, being un-American, or distorting the position of the Catholic Church. Students were attacked for studying the sociology of prostitution, and similar reasons but during the post-World War II period, charges of extremist politics and "disloyalty" seem to have been the most common.

SUCH charges filled faculty members with apprehension and significantly affected their lecture orientations. As one respondent summed it up: "These trends have the effect of making people more concerned to conform to acceptable views. My conscious attitude is 'Go to Hell,' but subconsciously, I am influenced."

What some teachers have been up against is illustrated by a number of stories told to interviewers. A woman from off campus brought an Eisenhower petition to faculty members for their signatures. When one (with a Russian name) refused to sign, she denounced him as being a Communist. A professor reported that "the mere fact that I said the Soviet Union had a constitution made the students think I was a Commie." The amazing situations that developed of teachers fearing their own students had as their background incidents like the following:

> *A student who had failed here—flunked out—was a reporter for a local paper. He dreamed up a story that there were Communist pamphlets being distributed in the Christian Center building. This story was carried all over the state. The local paper ran editorials criticizing the college for permitting this to happen and for denying the validity of the report. Retractions and apologies were printed several days later in small stories on inside pages.*

Not only was the teacher's campus activity restricted, but also his participation in politics off campus. Many refused to join civil liberties groups since they felt that such groups might end up on the Attorney General's list. Most toned down outside lectures, avoided "controversial" issues, or refused to give lectures at all save to the most respectable organizations. University administrations offered little comfort. Most professors found the administration "ready to distrust and quick to censure" them. Most also felt that faculties could have little effect on powerful administrations. This sense of powerlessness promoted more retreat and conservatism.

STANTON TEFFT

Reminder

LAST month we announced our annual fund appeal, and contributions have begun to arrive at our office. Our letter to subscribers has just been mailed out, bearing the same appeal and providing an addressed, postage-paid envelope for your convenience. Subscribers are urged to return them as quickly as possible, with as generous a donation as possible.

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