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Theses on Contemporary U.S. Labor Unionism

Paul Booth

The insight into the character of US trade unionism seems to have stopped with the AFL-CIO merger both on the Left and in academe. The following theses are intended to promote debate on the specific character of what might be called “late Cold War” unionism to highlight the idea that this is the period in which labor is shaking off the debilitating impact of the Cold War.

Business unionism, the main stream of US trade unionism, has been defined in misleading ways by labor economists. The accepted, limited definition emphasizes the Gompers tradition and the slogan “More”, and thus the conscious embrace by labor of pluralist limits to its activity. It has also been noted that the ventures of union bureaucracy in labor banking, labor life-insurance, labor racketeering, et cetera flourish side by side with business-union ideology. These insights are inadequate to describe the full meaning of US business unionism, which is the general ideology and practice of class collaboration.

Gompersism held to a pure economism in union practice, and to the avoidance of class action by labor in the political arena. Labor economists attempt to distinguish it from social unionism of the Reuther variety; yet since the AFL-CIO merger there has occurred a distinct convergence, in which the AFL unions have joined with the CIO as active mainstays of the Democratic Party, and in which the collective bargaining practiced by the former CIO unions has been accommodating enough so that the business press is now regretting the departure of the moderating genius of Walter Reuther from the bargaining table.

The particular feature of American business unionism is the laxity with which it approaches the day-to-day class struggle, due to the identification of union interests with particular interests of the bosses. No trade unions can transcend the limits of class society, but American unions in the business-unionism tradition not only fail to transcend those limits but operate within them in a way that dilutes militancy. This is visible on every level of normal trade-union practice, from the
lack of sturdiness of the steward systems to the terms of collective bargaining, from hostility to wildcat strikes to the lobbying unions do for their employers' political demands.

The political stance and activity of unions is thus a separate matter, as is evident from comparing the two major unions in retail trade, one with a secretary-treasurer who supports immediate withdrawal from Vietnam and one which sponsors CIA intriguers in the Third World. The determination that they are both business unions rests on the observation of their pattern of relations to employers.

Business unionism, however, is an unstable category, for even the most-corrupted business unionists are straddling the contradiction existing between a representative institution of the working class and collaborationist practice and ideology. Certainly the leaders of Chicago Teamsters are quite indistinguishable from that union's international leadership in all the traditional categories of evaluation (ideology, political involvement, internal democracy, honesty), yet they led the sharpest wage struggle of the current collective-bargaining term.

The hegemony of business interests in the US labor movement is not only unstable, it is also slightly incomplete due to a grab-bag of forces including new organizing, some of the remains of the CIO Left Wing, and industrial conditions in certain sectors, as in extractive industries (mining, farming, lumber) and the areas in which black and student radicalism have begun to infect labor.

Working-class politics and the petit bourgeoisie

The fragility of working-class culture in the US is best illustrated by the abject dependence of the working class on the politicians of the Democratic Party, who are the petit-bourgeois cousins of the working class, generally divided in ethnic groups. The Democratic Party is dominated by labor in every respect but one — the actual politicians are not of the labor movement, and they get its backing on the cheap. This reflects the non-existence of a distinctly-working-class ideology, or even the ideological strands that would cause labor to insist on its own candidates and/or its own program. Social surveys for the most part show working people to be barely differentiable from other classes in political matters, such as opinions on Vietnam.

The formation of working-class dependence on petit-bourgeois leadership is in the mediating institutions of neighborhood, church, ethnic association, and the extended family, reinforced at many points by the main lines of social structure. Unions that have attempted to double as community organizations, representing members against loan sharks and realtors, have run into vigorous opposition from the bar associations defending the prerogative of the neighborhood attorney to represent the worker in all matters outside the job.
Social Democracy’s Generation Gap

There is no continuous line of succession for social democracy in its sectors of the labor movement. When we speak of the generation of the ’30s and think of Walter Reuther, we overstate the situation if that brings to mind a whole echelon of labor leadership. After all, a healthy segment of the CIO founders were Left-wing, and subsequently driven out. Moreover, CIO leaders do not have the longevity of AFL leaders, and the number remaining from the ’30s of the distinctly social-democratic group is very small. The Left Wing and liberal Left were both suffocated in the post-World War II days, leaving only the

1936 Strike, Flint, Michigan

most-limited sorts to fill the shoes of retiring ’30s leaders. In the AFL, the generation gap is frequently 45 or 50 years; in the CIO, it is 40 years. It is a gap of two generations, not one, and therefore is an organizational problem of independent importance. CIO and AFL unions are for the most part indistinguishable today for two reasons: the AFL unions have embraced the Democratic Party; and, far more important, the Reuther brand of social-democratic trade unionism has practically died out. Even in the UAW it is internal politics rather than social action which consumes the energies of a vast majority of full-timers.
Differentiation among the working classes and the mesh between working-class sectors and trade unions

The division of labor is most advanced in the United States, leaving the old two-category division of the working class far behind in the dustbin of history. The craft unions and the industrial unions together describe a minority of the labor movement. We are familiar with the proletarianization of large chunks of "white collar" workers. Not quite so frequently discussed is the growth of industrialized service sectors such as hospitals and laundries. Along the same line is the fantastic expansion of transportation and communications sectors, including the airline industry, the post office, the trucking industry, and the phone company, alongside the decline of the railroads. And under the impact of automation, even within the industrial unions in primary metals and metalworking industries there has been a sub-development of the burgeoning skilled trades. Unions fit the contours of working-class strata more and more sloppily. Perhaps most ridiculous is the new jurisdiction of the Marine Engineers Beneficial Association among bank clerks, aerospace engineers, and other professionals.

Distinctive styles of trade unionism and different views of work and society can be found among at least the following 15 broad groupings or sectors: industrial unions in basic industries, skilled industrial trades, building trades and crafts, printing trades and crafts, people transportation and communications, goods transportation including rail brotherhoods, professions, office-clerical fields including government, extractive industries, apparel and needle trades, food processing, gray collar service, sales, building materials, and small entrepreneurs.

Official union structures in the US adapt to changing sociological contours very slowly because of the network of labor law in part, and because of the common phenomena of organizational lag. Some unions do vanish when their sociological raison d'être vanishes as in the case of the merger of the United Packinghouse Workers into the AFL Meatcutters after the death of the giant meat-packing houses and the consequent end of meat-packing as an assembly-line "basic" industry. Other unions vanish when their members vanish (as with journeyman horseshoers, coopers, and sleeping-car porters, all of which are in the process of dissolution). But most hang on, redefining their jurisdictions and bringing together under the same roof sharply-disparate groups. These redefinitions may be for industrial reasons, as in the expansion of the building trades into allied building materials, or for political reasons, as in the merger of the Furriers into the Meatcutters. Some unions even begin to take on the character of general workers' unions; these include the Seafarers, Marine Engineers, Teamsters, Laborers, and District 50. And both the Meatcutters and the Electricians could well be called "highly diversified".

Jurisdictional rivalry today has reached nothing like the intensity of the rivalries existing around the time of the AFL-CIO merger, due in
no small part to the success of the AFL-CIO umpire setup. But this is due also to the general decline of organizing and to the extension of business-union ideology which stands in the way of unions' making the kind of promises that raiding entails.

The major arenas of inter-union rivalry currently are hospitals and nursing homes, federal installations, airlines, and telephone. But a far longer list could be compiled of jurisdictions divided over a decade ago by the truce lines of uneasy jurisdictional peace in which uneasy peace has become serene indifference. These include brewing, chemicals, paper, electrical goods, and many others. The hands-off practice absolves the unions of the burden of competing in terms of economic gains as well as saving them money in the organizing budget. The most outstanding jurisdictional wars are primarily in organized areas where a number of aggressive organizations are expanding.

Such outright union mergers as have occurred are of two types, both in their small way attempts to bring union structure in line with the social realities of two decades past. Some have addressed ancient jurisdictional problems, dating back in most cases to the early CIO, by simply combining the former disputants, the weak being swallowed by the strong: Mine-Mill into Steelworkers, Packinghouse Workers into Meatcutters, gangster Bakery Workers into AFL-CIO Bakery Workers. Some have addressed craft problems, as in the creation of the United Transportation Union out of four railway operating crafts, and in the merger of Lithographers and Photo-Engravers in the printing crafts.

The problems of these residual bases for labor disunity are major ones, but are being dwarfed in the modern period by the new outlines
of corporate organization, both on the multi-national scale and in the conglomerate or multi-industrial form. To these challenges only the most-cursory adjustments have been made, resulting in a tremendous shift in the terms of collective-bargaining struggle to the advantage of the modern corporation, able to sustain the pinprick of a strike in one of its divisions while the rest of the company carries on unaffected.

By the end of World War II the CIO and its many imitators had won majority positions among the employees of many giant corporations in the US, particularly in manufacturing. Today only a few companies among the top 100 employers face one union representing a majority of their employees: General Motors, Chrysler, and Boeing.

At the initiative of the Auto Workers, the AFL-CIO Industrial Union Department has attempted for several years to construct inter-union coalitions to co-ordinate bargaining against the giant corporations; successes have been very few in number, and a number of corporations have resoundingly defeated such coalitions, among them Union Carbide, the cooper companies, et cetera. In a few cases the coalitions have played a positive role, as in the General Electric strike, although this occurred after six years of preliminary harmonizing of co-ordinating unions, and, it might be added, more than 20 years after the Cold War splintering of the formerly-dominant union — UE.

In this overall situation, what pass for visionary approaches to trade unionism are in reality only proposals to adjust trade unionism to the contours of corporate life.

Character of current wage conflict

National wage patterns continue to revolve around industrial contracts in a handful of highly-organized industries — in particular trucking, auto, steel, construction, and railroads. In the absence of wage policy standards set by the AFL-CIO, poorly-outlined patterns tend to develop with the chronology of national contract-expiration dates rather than conscious priorities on the part of labor playing the key role. Within the major industries, the unions attempt to use pattern bargaining — dividing the major employers up and negotiating the pattern-setting agreement with one of the major oligopolies.

Pattern bargaining is typical in most manufacturing industries, but in transportation (rail and trucking) a single master agreement is reached, with the same effect being produced due to the comparative disadvantage of employers in these industries.

Due to the prevalence of the three-year agreement, it is barely sensible to talk about recent collective-bargaining history in terms of three-year rounds. The contracts which were negotiated in the 1964 round soft-pedaled wage gains and cost-of-living protection in favor of various protections against automation and impending joblessness. The Steelworkers in particular negotiated a far-reaching extended-vacation and early-retirement package which cushioned against reductions in
workforce that never came to pass. Thus as the Vietnam War escalated and overtime mounted, the automation protection was worthless and the need for wage boosts dominated the 1967 round. In that round sizeable wage settlements were reached, but frequently accompanied, as in auto, with what seemed then to be minor concessions on the cost-of-living provision. The 1967 round did constitute a kind of spontaneous wage offensive, and a vague sense of declining working-class living standards (for the first time since Korea) was spreading, but it was an offensive without co-ordination, without conscious goals, and without any sense that the fate of the labor movement as a whole was being determined in bits and pieces at each conference table.

Only a half-dozen years previously, the labor movement had defeated the Kennedy-Goldberg attempt to enclose it in the "productivity box", in which wage gains were to be confined to the annual growth of productivity, 3.2%. The settlements which caused the abandonment of wage-price guidelines were the operating engineers' agreement in New Jersey and the airline mechanics' settlement nationwide. Unfortunately labor forgot the lessons of 1962-1963 fairly quickly — primarily the lesson that wages are a national and political issue even when the Administration refrains from making explicit an income policy.

The General Electric strike, which kicked off the 1970 round of bargaining, evoked more labor solidarity than any similar mainstream struggle for over a decade. The solidarity was brought forth around the fear of outright union-busting and compulsory arbitration, but unfortunately not around the question of wage policy. Labor was forced in the wake of the settlement to describe it as the "bare minimum". The AFL-CIO executive council's winter meeting did promulgate the 10%-a-year wage standard, a dramatic innovation, but this has not been mentioned subsequently. In fact, George Meany is aligned with the corporate liberals in Congress in favor of reviving the wage-price guidelines, as if that implied declaration of labor's guilt in the matter of inflation would "embarrass" Nixon.

A more-explicit income policy in one form or another is clearly emerging in the councils of the Administration, under none-too-subtle pressure from Basel and the international banking community, and under the pressure of the leveling-off of corporate profits. Labor is a patsy for absorbing the burden of economic decline unless it is armed for self-defense with a wage policy and a commitment to united wage action. Even if the leadership is unwilling to crystallize such a policy, it is fully capable of emerging from rank-and-file action (as it did from the airline mechanics over the proposals of the Machinists Union officers) if the question of wage policy is ever clarified. The Auto Worker negotiations would have taken place in the wake of a Teamsters settlement only barely in excess of the GE settlement, not approaching the 10% standard, had the Chicago leadership not held out against the Fitzsimmons settlement.

When capitalism is off the gravy train of unending prosperity, when
It has neither a capital-goods boom nor a new foreign war to give it an artificial stimulus, union wage agreements are the most-important element of political decision-making over income distribution. Income policy is composed also, however, of decisions on public salaries, dividend and interest rates, minimum wages, public-aid doles, private and public pensions, disability and unemployment payments, and divers forms of capital and professional and proprietors' incomes. Tax and price systems also fit into income policy. It is of course theoretically possible to have an income policy with a progressive impact, as the Palme government is claiming to be producing in Sweden, although no other social-democratic claim of progressive income policy has been delivered on. On the contrary, supposedly-neutral policies, such as Goldberg's guidelines, have in fact been skewed toward income on capital and against the working classes.

In the epoch of income policy, labor's role is defensive; but labor's defense must be politicized beyond the bargains that, arrived at one by one without either co-ordination or solidarity, can't help but leave the workers on the short end.

The interventionism of the state on behalf of a pro-employer income policy would take on a special significance now in the era of the multi-national, conglomerate corporation, for labor's defenses are much weaker, and the movement could more easily be smashed or badly set back on the terrain of collective bargaining than on that of labor legislation.

The labor Old Left

Far from being on their last legs, the remnants of the CIO Left still retain a fairly-significant position to the side of labor's mainstream. Although the Left was driven from the top leadership of all of the CIO internationals except the expelled Mine-Mill, Longshore, and Electrical unions, and these were all reduced in strength to one degree or another, the tenacity of those unions and similar fragments that were swallowed but not digested by a dozen or more other internationals, both CIO and AFL, persisted until two decades of decline gave way to something like renewed growth.

Their importance is to be found in two areas. In the first place, they have provided a basis for questioning the ideological sway of labor anti-communism, providing a large part of the base on which labor anti-Vietnam War sentiment has been built. On the official level at least, the worst vestiges of red-baiting have been overcome in a liberal minority of labor.

The other area is the organization of the unorganized, which is the least-invisible aspect of normal trade-unionism by which unions can be compared. Particularly in the industrialized personal-service fields, of which hospitals are the most important, outfits like Local 1199 and District 65, putting forward such explicit goals as the $100 minimum
weekly wage, have provided a great deal of the spark in recent organizing successes. The fate of Walter Reuther's Alliance for Labor Action is a further indication of this point; almost all of the unions that dickered seriously with Reuther about affiliation were remnants of the CIO Left. In some respects this was poetic justice, Reuther having been a prime antagonist of the Left; in his last years, when he finally split with Meany, almost none of his erstwhile allies came along.

The day is long past, however, when the labor Old Left could play a decisive role in the direction of even a major segment of the labor movement; most of its remnants now enjoy a quite-comfortable and semi-autonomous status in the bosom of AFL-CIO unions. The last two independents, UE and Longshore, are constantly the object of merger rumors.

Left-wing trade unionism

It is a traditional insight of revolutionary theory that trade unions by their very nature are defensive instruments, capable of waging class struggle from day to day but never to its conclusion. Trade unionism, no matter how militant, is by its nature only an expression of certain particularist demands of the working class or a part of it. In the US this is in harmony with pluralist ideology, allowing as it does for spontaneous self-organization at the base of the society but not for the conscious construction of a general alternative to the social order. The near-hegemony of business unionism in the United States is often mistaken for the general condition of unions in advanced capitalism, whereas in fact there is quite a range in the forms non-revolutionary trade unionism can take, between militancy and accommodation, and between movement and bureaucracy.

It is also a commonplace theory that, by virtue of their position in the social relations of production, unions are a breeding ground for revolutionaries. Even the most-mundane matters of the workplace are connected in a direct way to the fundamental contradictions of the society. In American capitalism, with the uniqueness of labor unions as authentically-working-class institutions, this formal insight takes on extreme importance.

It has been subject to two distortions. The predominant distortion over-stresses the formal activity of trade unionism. Leftists express their politics through the best-possible union practice—better steward systems, better contracts, better use of the power that rests in the strike tactic. Unfortunately the heavy weight of decades of erosion of the fighting spirit of labor requires so much of an honest union official that a Leftist union official physically cannot also do the job of political agitator.

The other distortion, which in practice involves ignoring the major problems of trade unionism as such, also results from over-stressing the formal role of unions in the social order. Many revolutionaries
play a strictly-parasitic role in relation to labor struggles, sifting through them in search of potential cadres while contributing little or nothing to the struggles themselves. They do this because they fail to see that while it is formally true that rank-and-file workers are forced to ask root questions about society by their experience at the point of production, it is really the way those experiences are mediated through trade unionism that forces questions to be asked. Left-wing parasites have slim pickings in a collaborationist, deadened labor movement.

Left-wing trade unionism requires involvement in and commitment to the key struggles of working people, whether they be mundane or worthy of headlines. The ingredient that moves the role of the Left beyond simple education in revolutionary ideas on one hand or simple honest unionism on the other is to be found in the struggles which politicize labor beyond the suffocating grip of business unionism. These may be called "intermediate" struggles or "anti-capitalist structural reform" struggles in that they do not pose a general alternative to the system as a whole, but confront major elements of class structure and the system of privilege and major terms of power relations.

American labor is today on the edge of several major breakthroughs which will presumably fall short of struggle for state power but which will demonstrate to workers their power and potential as a class by putting major sections of labor on the offensive. These offensives are most likely to form around the income question, around the relation of the state to its own employees and clients, and possibly around the health and safety of the workplace. And the job of focusing labor's tremendous potential power, which will undoubtedly fall to the Left by inaction of the rest of labor, obviously cannot be undertaken from outside the trade-union movement, nor can it be performed by officials completely absorbed in the particularities of their corner of the labor movement. Therefore a new form is required, a visible collecting and co-ordinating point for radical trade-unionists.
Old and New Working Classes
Donald Clark Hodges

We are now almost entirely a nation of wage earners and salaried employees. The question is what bearing this has upon the anatomy of American society and the class struggle. Does it mean, as corporation socialists would have us believe, that US capitalism has been eclipsed by a post-industrial classless society? Does it mean that capital has become corporatized and congealed in administrative, professional, and scientific brain power? Does it mean that bureaucratic power has begun to rival capitalist forms of property in claiming the lion’s share of the economic surplus? Does it mean that we are finally on the threshold of a complete polarization of society, when the claims of property to rule will be increasingly challenged by the traditional laboring class? Does it mean that the traditional struggle between labor and capital has been displaced, taking the form of a struggle between bureaucracy and a new working class? Or does it mean something else?

We shall not even begin to consider all the alternatives. Rather, let us examine the perspectives that are being discussed most widely as a basis for shaping the tactics of the radical movement during the coming decade. Despite New and Old Left differences concerning the particular segment of the working class prepared to play the leading role in transforming North American and Western European societies, their projection of a socialist future is based on common assumptions calling for detailed investigation. Let us scrutinize, then, the favorite theses of the Old and New Left concerning the role of the working class as the chief agency of social change. And let us compare their analyses of the present situation with what we shall discover to be the somewhat startling conclusions of applying a conceptual structure developed on the basis of Marx’s own anatomy of capitalist society.

I

Among the major sources of the New Left’s assessment of the changing structure of the working class are Pierre Belleville’s Une
Nouvelle Classe Ouvriere (1963), Serge Mallet’s La Nouvelle Classe Ouvriere (Paris, 1963), and Andre Gorz’s Strategy for Labor, first published in France in 1964. Gorz in particular conceives of the new working class as a stratum of highly-skilled workers consisting of technicians, engineers, researchers, students, workers in scientific and cultural industries, and workers in pioneer industries (nuclear, chemical, engineering, heavy construction), including supervisors in automated factories. He claims that, unlike the old working class, the new working class only partially alienates through exchange commodity labor power. The educated worker remains the owner and master of the specialized qualifications and skills employed by the capitalist, because he does not sell skilled manpower but only lends it. Since such skills cannot be alienated in the same manner as brute energy or raw labor power, skilled workers are in effect supervisors and directors of how their energies shall be used, and cannot be ordered about like unskilled workers. The new working class is increasingly recruited from colleges or universities where it has been trained to do so-called creative or independent work. Being comparatively well-paid, its basic problem under bureaucratic capitalism is not the struggle for physical survival on behalf of a minimum wage, Gorz contends, but rather a struggle for cultural survival in the sense of maintaining its acquired skills and initiative by putting such creative abilities to work. Besides, he claims that such talents defy narrowly-economic or quantitative evaluation. The abolition of exploitation is not the issue, for workers who merely lend their specialized services to others; the issue is the power of decision or control over the work process.

Exploitation is not an issue for educated workers, Gorz argues, because they enjoy privileged incomes; moreover, their incomes are derived not from participation in the surplus value which is indirectly obtained from other workers, but from their own higher qualifications. (For Mallet their incomes derive from the extraordinary productivity of automated and pioneer industries.) Consequently, like Mallet, Gorz conceives of educated workers as constituting a new stratum of the traditional working class rather than a new class distinct from that of exploited laborers. But his premise, we shall see, is mistaken: highly skilled and educated workers are, because of their privileged incomes, indirect exploiters of the labor of others; hence they constitute a new class of workers different from the old. Furthermore, even on Gorz’s unstated assumption that educated workers are not exploited but only oppressed or dehumanized, they do not constitute a new stratum of the old working class, at least not in the Marxist sense. Why not? Because the industrial working class within a Marxist framework is defined not only in terms of propertylessness with respect to means of production, but also in terms of the relationship of wage labor to capital, or, in other words, exploitation—that is, the appropriation, whether direct or indirect, of more standard man hours concealed in products and services than the amount contributed in exchange.
Worker's self-management, the control of production by all workers instead of a small minority of professional managers or technocrats, has become the most-important single demand of the New Left and the corresponding educated segment of the working class. Thus, according to Andre Gorz, a permanent conflict has emerged between scientific or technical workers and a technocracy of production managers and co-ordination and planning specialists, ruling both in its own interests and in the interests of the proprietary classes. Industrial democracy or workers' self-management has been dignified by a revival of Marx's youthful concept of a sovereign praxis; its opposite has been censured in terms of Marx's early concept of self-alienation. In fact, emergence of a so-called new working class since World War II has gone hand in hand with renascence of the humanism of the young Marx, representing an ideological outlook especially suited to the predicament of educated workers under capitalism. Thus the ideological differences dividing the Old and New Left are in part expressions of the different life situations distinctive of the old and new working classes. Here we may agree with Gorz. Where we disagree is concerning his contention that only the new working class has moved beyond the wages and hours demands of the industrial working class, a class which even in Marx's time grasped for control over the productive process.
Gorz's work had a decisive influence in shaping New Left analyses of the American working class during the late Sixties. The high point of American New Left theory during this period is represented by two documents: the widely-discussed essay by David Gilbert, Robert Gottlieb, and Gerry Tomney "Toward a Theory of Social Change in America" (January 23, 1967), sponsored by Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), and James O'Connor's highly-controversial paper "The Situation at Present and What Is To Be Done" (Spring 1968), later revised and published under the title "Some Contradictions of Advanced US Capitalism" in Social Theory and Practice (Spring 1970). Although these two documents represented only a moment of the American New Left, and a brief moment at that, their importance lies not only in their originality and breadth of analysis, but also in that new-working-class theories surfaced so little in the American Left that less than a handful of such analyses ever reached the public. Thus a critique of New Left theories is helpful because of its lack in the American Left and because of mistakes still being perpetuated in the name of a new working class — to cite only one instance, Herbert Gintis's "The New Working Class and Revolutionary Youth", Socialist Revolution (May-June 1970).

Relying on US occupational statistics for the middle '60s, the first document, "Toward a Theory of Social Change in America", divides the American working class into three principal strata. The oldest and numerically-declining stratum consists of the traditional blue-collar manual workers, whether unskilled, semi-skilled, or skilled. This stratum is said to represent 36.2% of the gainfully employed. Next, a numerically-stable middle stratum consists of white-collar workers; supervised clerical, sales, advertising, and other commercial workers; and non-domestic, non-professional workers in the tertiary ("service") sector, such as transportation workers, cab drivers, hospital orderlies. This stratum is believed to represent 32.1% of the gainfully employed. Finally, there is the rapidly-growing new working class, or the upper stratum of highly-skilled workers, divided into three main types: first, technical and professional workers, such as engineers; second, higher level industrial workers, such as those in the chemical, metallurgical, and atomic industries; and third, social-service workers, such as teachers, social workers, and performing artists. This stratum is seen as representing 13% of the gainfully employed. Altogether, then, the working class in 1965 represented about 81% of total employment in the United States.

Most college students, we are told, are destined for membership in this new working class because of their supposedly-generalized knowledge of the operation of the productive system combined with lack of control — though one may suspect their knowledge is actually more specialized than generalized, giving them power even without property. At the same time, their higher income level, comparatively secure status, and structurally-crucial role in corporate and non-profit organizations is said to prepare them for the role of vanguard as an
agency of radical change. Thus the political issue for such a class is believed to hinge on the question of powerlessness and control. Other segments of the working class are also coming to stress this issue over the traditional bread-and-butter one. The middle strata of the working class are directly tied to the needs of compulsive consumption and, like defense workers, have a tendency to support the production of waste as a condition of their own job security; their lack of control and potential awareness of the utter uselessness of much of their work to the production and fulfillment of social needs, however, make them a potential ally of the new working class. Finally, since the traditional proletariat is likewise less-occupied with the struggle over wages these days than with the issue of economic security and job control, a convergence of interests on the issue of workers’ self-management is also preparing it for the role of a radicalizing agency of social change.

Among the major objections to this SDS anatomy of the American working class are, first, that white-collar workers in non-supervisory positions do not in fact constitute a middle stratum of this class with respect to either more-developed skills or significantly-higher wages than those of the corresponding grades of blue-collar manual workers; second, that this middle stratum mistakenly includes the exploited, unproductive laborers in government and other non-business areas of employment who constitute a rapidly-growing class that is numerically unstable as a percentage of the total working class, and to that extent a segment of a new class of laborers rather than a middle stratum between the new and the old working class; third, that the new working class is conceived as including a heterogeneous collection of highly paid but nonetheless exploited production workers along with still more highly paid supervisory and professional workers who are not exploited but in part indirect exploiters of the energies of productive workers; fourth, that the above stratum of professional and supervisory workers has less in common with higher-level industrial workers in pioneer industries than with the top stratum of salaried public administrators, top and middle management, and other top-level but not self-employed professional workers, whom the authors include in the ruling or bourgeois class instead of the working class; and fifth, that at the opposite end of the social spectrum, the working class is conceived as excluding what the authors call the underclass of poor people, discriminated-against ethnic minorities, the under-employed, and the unemployed, in the past identified with the lumpen-proletariat or lowest stratum of the working class.

Another compelling objection to this SDS concept of a new working class is that it shares common ground with the concept of a new middle class except under a different name. Thus in Chapter 2 of Classes in Modern Society (1965), T.B. Bottomore includes under the rubric of a new middle class such diversified occupational types as office workers, technicians, scientists, service workers in the areas of social welfare,
entertainment, and leisure-time activities, and supervisors including managers. To be sure, the office workers are excluded from the new working class, because they lack educational qualifications and are assimilated to a middle stratum of the working class. And managers are excluded by being incorporated within the ruling class. However by and large the concepts of new working class and new middle class are interchangeable, which makes them suspect as grab-alls as well as for their loose terminology.

The question of how best to classify the above occupations leads to a consideration of the reasons for including them within either a middle class or a working class. Since salaried professional workers are not self-employed, they do not satisfy the criterion of independence which is traditionally associated with the category "middle class". However, their incomes as well as educational qualifications generally exceed those of the other segments of the working class. This new working stratum enjoys a privileged economic position within the overall structure of society. Consequently, there is reason to believe that most of its members share in the exploitation of other workers and that the SDS concept of a new working class, like the corresponding concept in the works cited by Gorz and Mallet, presents a mixed bag, some of whose members belong to the exploited labor force and others to a class of exploiters. Let us postpone for the moment any final judgment on this issue, bearing in mind that the category "working class" is perhaps least equivocal when it includes all wage and salary earners, including managers and bureaucratic workers generally, and that what we need to isolate is a sub-class of exploited workers which excludes these privileged elements—precisely what the foregoing anatomy of a new working class has not succeeded in providing.

We shall pass, then, to a consideration of what is perhaps the most impressive of all the New Left assessments of the working class in America, James O'Conor's "The Situation at Present and What Is To Be Done", or, better still, its published version, entitled "Some Contradictions of Advanced US Capitalism". Instead of just describing recent changes in the structure of the working class, O'Connor tries to explain them in terms of the increased overhead costs of production brought about by the revolutions in science and technology, and the tendency of the corporate bourgeoisie to use state power to socialize these costs. These include the costs of the technical and scientific upgrading of the labor force; the costs of transforming raw labor power into technical, scientific, and administrative brain power; and the costs of scientific research and development. The state pays for most of the costs of education and training, and also provides over 60% of research funds. A new working class has emerged in response to these changes in the social relations of production. Thus there is a new stratum of increasingly skilled and specialized workers covering the external socialized costs of the corporations, such as teachers, scientists, technicians, and public administrators employed in and by the state
bureaucracy, whom O'Connor calls productive, indirect corporate employees. And, closely related, there is also a growing stratum of "publigopoly" employees in the private sector of the economy, such as in defense industries or in those industries indirectly servicing the military establishment, whose employers are subsidized by the state and whose workers are classified as productive, indirect corporate employees.

The corporate bourgeoisie are confronted with a leveling-off of demand within the domestic market as the needs of society are met increasingly under conditions of affluence. Mushrooming selling costs are required to dispose of a growing volume of goods and to discourage savings, according to O'Connor, through the artificial stimulation of needs and a treadmill of consumption. Such consumption increasingly has for its object waste rather than use values. The cost of many necessities also involves the compulsory consumption of waste, since, in the last analysis, workers must pay for the expense of advertising, as well as the costs of planned obsolescence in fashion and design. In the effort to socialize the cost of stimulating outlets for its products O'Connor maintains that the corporate bourgeoisie has come to rely on the public sector for guaranteed markets and compulsory consumption through military appropriations. Thus a new stratum of government employees has been called into being for the purpose of publicly subsidizing demand, disposing of, reinforcing, and accelerating the accumulation of waste by means of public expenditures and indirect subsidies to the private sector—a stratum classified by O'Connor as unproductive, indirect corporate employees.

The working class has also been changed by the capital-intensive character of the new technology. Despite the relative abundance of cheap unskilled manpower, it is more profitable to combine technical and scientific manpower with capital-intensive technology than to employ raw labor power with labor-intensive equipment, because the initial costs of training technical-scientific manpower and developing a capital-intensive technology are covered mainly by the state. There is therefore a growing stratum of increasingly-superfluous unskilled workers, mostly blacks and members of other minority groups, who constitute in O'Connor's terminology a new post-industrial proletariat. These workers do not compete with technical manpower, do not depress the wages of skilled labor, and accordingly do not function as an industrial reserve army with respect to the technological-intensive industries. It falls to the lot of the state, then, to hire these workers if they are to be employed at all.

We see, then, how the corporate bourgeoisie imposes ever-greater financial burdens on the state, while using the state for its own ends. At the same time, it endeavors to keep the state poor by monopolizing all profit-making activities in increasingly-wasteful ventures. In brief, the state cannot simultaneously meet the economic demands of the corporate bourgeoisie, relieve the conditions of the domestic poor in
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the ghettos, and wage foreign wars, while also attempting to raise the salaries of its own employees. Consequently, a struggle is emerging between public employees and the Administration over the issue of the fiscal crisis of the state. According to O'Connor, the socialization of production costs and the subsidization of demand, a form of socializing selling costs, have made the public sphere the focus of the domestic class struggle; and thus public workers, as productive and unproductive indirect corporate employees, have become the decisive agency of social change.

The public workers and the post-industrial stratum are not the only new strata which have turned to the state to provide what they cannot provide for themselves. There is also a new post-capitalist stratum of virtual dropouts, O'Connor notes, standing outside the public and corporate leviathans and living a marginal existence with respect to both employment and consumption. This so-called free stratum, to use his terminology, consists largely of students and ex-students who expect to continue living at a sub-standard income as the price of their freedom. Although among the most outspoken in favor of participatory democracy, they are not in a position to carry on an open or covert struggle either for the means of production or for the means of public administration. Rather than being a segment of the lumpen-proletariat in part by the idle revenue of the exploiting and professional classes, in part by casual labor of its own.

Since neither the free stratum nor the post-industrial workers enjoy a position of strategic power within society, O'Connor contends, the politically-decisive stratum in the immediate future will consist of state workers. At least they are in a position to exercise immediate influence over the direction of social change by exercising control over their own indirect course of production — the means of administration. Moreover, they have displaced the industrial proletariat, in O'Connor's opinion, from the role of vanguard. The industrial proletariat is on the decline numerically, wages are not the problems they once were, and trade unions have arrived at long-term settlements with employers. Thus O'Connor believes that the class struggle involving this stratum manifests itself chiefly within the unions in the efforts of militant workers and the rank-and-file to displace entrenched bureaucracies. The remaining large stratum of the working class, the growing army of sales and other non-productive personnel within the private sector, will in the future, if current tendencies persist, outnumber the industrial proletariat. But neither poor nor exploited, according to O'Connor, their pay increases not threatened by the fiscal crisis of the state, this quasi-parasitic group is comparatively immune from most radicalizing tendencies.

The major objections to O'Connor's concept of a new working class are, first, its assimilation to the category of public or state workers, thereby confusing a particular application of the category "social class" with a given sector of the economy; second, its indiscriminate lumping
together of both exploiting and exploited workers within the growing stratum of public workers who are also, objectively considered, indirect corporate employees; third, its lack of a criterion or measure of bureaucratic exploitation for the purpose of distinguishing between different, antagonistic classes of public workers; fourth, its mistaken characterization of those public employees working to reduce the external socialized costs of the corporations, who are classified as productive, instead of unproductive, corporate employees, assuming these terms are used in their original Marxist sense; fifth, its failure to include a second stratum of "publigopoly" employees in those knowledge industries subsidized by the Federal Government and the military, whose members are unproductive, rather than productive, indirect public employees; and lastly, its exaggeration of the influence of all but a small minority of public employees over the direction of social change.

For the purpose of isolating radicalizing agents of social change, the concept of class is most-effectively defined, following Marx, in terms of relations of exploitation as well as ownership. But exploitation is not exclusively a function of productive labor; as Marx shows in Volume 2 of Capital, the commercial proletariat is also exploited in a capitalistic sense. Moreover, bureaucratic exploitation is typical of almost all large non-profit and public institutions. Since O'Connor minimizes the radicalizing potential of exploitation on the working class, it is to be expected that he would underrate the radical potential of the commercial white-collar proletariat, while interpreting the radicalizing tendency of public workers primarily in terms of powerlessness and control.

Although his essay may be commended for correctly assessing the increasing influence of the corporate bourgeoisie in all spheres of life, O'Connor's anatomy of American society neglects to consider that this category is itself a mixed bag consisting of professional managers and technocrats as opposed to directors of corporations and other members of the bourgeoisie directly involved in the management of corporations. Thus O'Connor misses the objective community of interests between the various bureaucracies within the private sector and the government bureaucracy. Consequently, he minimizes the fundamental cleavage within the working class between exploiters and exploited, bureaucratic and laboring classes.

II

The mistakes of the Old Left, we have said, are similar to those of the New. For a representative statement of the Old Left covering the anatomy of civil society, we may consider The Changing Structure of the Working Class (1962), by an American Communist, the late J. M. Budish. His point of departure is the practical need of the Left to counter the demoralizing propaganda based on the anatomy of American
society in which the working class comprises a steadily-dwindling minority alongside a rising new middle class of white-collar workers. The thesis of a vanishing proletariat tends to undermine independent political action by organized labor, while the claim that white-collar workers constitute a new middle class discourages efforts to organize them into trade unions.

Although the industrial proletariat of blue-collar workers does in fact represent a declining percentage of the working class, according to Budish, the working class as a whole has been increasing both absolutely and relatively to other classes. For in Marxist terms the bulk of white-collar workers do not constitute a middle class, but rather constitute a commercial proletariat of unproductive workers. Thus they are included in the working class in either of Budish's two different uses of this term: first, in the broad sense of the class of wage and salaried workers deprived of ownership of the means of production and obliged to sell their labor power to the capitalists as the private or corporate owners of such means of production; second, in the more-precise sense of a class whose labor power is exploited by the class of capitalists through being employed in subordinate positions within the social division of labor.

There is a significant discrepancy, however, between these two interpretations of a working class. The first is not a class at all in Marx's or Lenin's sense, because it consists of a melange of both de facto exploiting, supervisory or bureaucratic, salaried employees and the bulk of subordinate and exploited wage-earners. And the second is not co-extensive with the category of wage and salaried workers deprived of ownership of the means of production, but is co-extensive only with a lower stratum of hired workers exploited by those in positions of power.

At the same time, Budish claims that a higher stratum of salaried employees does not belong to the working class at all, but rather to the middle strata in society situated between the capitalists and the workers. This stratum is conceived as including the topmost salaried workers in the ranks of management, government, and the military, who exercise secondary control over the means of production without actual rights of proprietorship. Of the 3,500,000 listed in this group in 1960, however, Budish believes that only a small fraction belonged to a middle class, the bulk consisting of workers. Moreover, of the 7,500,000 listed under professional, technical, and kindred workers, according to Budish, the great majority were to be included in the working class. Thus, of the nearly 29,000,000 engaged in white-collar occupations in 1960, making up about 43% of the work force, 3,500,000 consisted of capitalists and small-businessmen; another 3,500,000 consisted of managers and officials whom Budish regards as belonging almost entirely to the working class; 7,500,000 were professional, technical, and kindred workers of which the great majority belonged to the working class; and 14,200,000 consisted of clerical, sales, and
kindred workers belonging to the white-collar proletariat. In other words, of the 29,000,000 white-collar workers in 1960, only 3,500,000 consisted of capitalists inclusive of a middle-class or petty bourgeoisie, the remaining 25,500,000 belonging to the working class.

Budish's breakdown of the white-collar work force, however, lumps together supervisory and supervised, exploiting and exploited workers within a single mixed bag of wage and salary owners. A more-careful analysis indicates that only a negligible fraction of the 3,500,000 salaried managers and officials belonged to a class of exploited laborers, and that part of their income was derived from an indirect share in the exploitation of other workers. Moreover, of the 7,500,000 professional, technical, and kindred workers, only about 2,000,000 belonged to a class of exploited laborers: roughly 500,000 of the 1,600,000 public-school teachers, and the approximately 1,500,000 technicians employed as assistants to professional, scientific, and research personnel. Consequently, of the 11,000,000 white-collar
workers in administrative, professional, and technical occupations, approximately 9,000,000 were not exploited laborers at all. Thus Budish's category of 25,500,000 white-collar wage and salary earners decomposes into two antagonistic classes, of which only 16,500,000 workers belonged to the exploited labor force.

The problem is how to classify the 9,000,000 white-collar, salaried workers who were neither self-employed nor members of an exploited laboring class. What distinguishes them from members of the exploited labor force is that a part of their salaries, however small, represented an indirect share in the exploitation of other workers. Because of the predominantly-supervisory character of their work, we shall call this class the bureaucratic class. Corresponding to the division of the capitalist class into a top stratum of bourgeoisie and a bottom stratum of petty bourgeoisie, we may likewise distinguish two principal strata of the bureaucracy: a top bureaucracy, the bulk of whose salaries is derived from exploitation of other workers; and a petty bureaucracy, the bulk of whose income represents the man-hour equivalent of their professional services.

In classifying the 1,600,000 elementary-school and secondary-school teachers in the category of exploited workers, Budish is guided by the combined criteria of educational qualifications and income. Their income averages about that of a highly-skilled manual worker, but because of their greater education they are said to be underpaid. This suggests that Budish estimates exploitation in state establishments and in other unproductive establishments by the same criteria and by the same relationships that he estimates it within capitalist enterprises. However bureaucratic exploitation is a function not of per-capita output but of the per-capita share of the payrolls of non-profit institutions. Since this share is characteristically lower than the per-capita product within the capitalist sector, the comparatively-lower salaries of the qualified personnel in state employments are not a reliable index of membership in a laboring class. The relevant criterion is whether such public workers are paid more or less than the average salary allocated within a given non-capitalist organization, that is, whether the budgetary share self-allocated by officials and other supervisory workers is higher than the per-capita share reserved for subordinate employees.

Actually, some occupations, such as the teaching profession, cut across several different classes. Depending on the rank and salary, teachers may belong to the labor rank-and-file of student teachers and graduate teaching assistants; to a labor aristocracy of beginning public-school teachers with only the bachelor's degree and beginning university instructors without the PhD; to a petty bureaucracy made up of the vast majority of teachers, whether primary, secondary, or at the college level; or to a top bureaucracy of distinguished professors — mainly in the sciences. Although the teaching profession is typically of the bureaucratic type, its lower strata of beginning teachers and
teacher apprentices belong to the same general income category as apprentice craftsmen and journeymen. Moreover, these differences are only partly compensated for by the comparatively-short period of from four to five years required for the skilled worker to reach the top of his earning capacity: a journeyman's wage which, unlike the salaries for teachers, does not vary with experience and seniority.

In estimating the relative strength of antagonistic classes, the most-significant index for Budish is the ratio of capitalists and small-businessmen, the topmost administrative and supervisory employees, and self-employed workers maintaining their own offices or means of production, to the class of wage and salary earners minus the above administrative and supervisory personnel. However, this comparison is misleading in counterposing the proprietary classes to the non-proprietary classes, instead of the exploiting to the exploited classes. Thus it includes within the same category as the class of capitalists a bureaucratic class of top administrators and professionals and within the same category as the proletariat an exploiting class of administrative and supervisory employees.

A different classification is obviously required if we are to avoid such mistakes. The following reclassification shows what can be done to clarify Budish's data for farm as well as non-farm workers, and for blue-collar as well as white-collar employees, also based on 1960 Census reports. If we add the 5,500,000 farm workers, as well as the approximately 32,500,000 blue-collar employees, to the 29,000,000 white-collar workers in 1960, we obtain the following breakdown for the gainfully-employed population as a whole: first, a bourgeoisie consisting of corporate capitalists, big businessmen, and the topmost self-employed professional workers owning their own offices, the bulk of whose income is derived from exploiting their employees, rather than from the man-hour equivalent of their own professional services—a stratum, according to Budish, representing less than 50% of the class of 3,500,000 capitalists, say about 1,500,000; second, the petty bourgeoisie of small-businessmen mainly in retailing and the so-called service sector, consisting of almost 2,000,000, plus self-employed small farmers, whether owners or tenants, consisting of another 3,000,000, only a small fraction of whose incomes is derived from exploitation; third, the top bureaucracy of salaried workers, such as business and production managers, leading public officials, and the topmost professional employees, the bulk of whose income is indirectly derived from the exploitation of other workers—totaling roughly about 2,000,000; fourth, a petty bureaucracy of salaried officials, middle and lower management, and a majority of professional workers, only a minor part of whose income is derived from exploitation—bordering on 7,000,000; fifth, a labor aristocracy consisting of beginning teachers and other public workers as well as journeymen in the highest-paid crafts, only a minor fraction of whose labor is appropriated by their employers without compensation—totaling about 4,500,000 by a rough
estimate; and sixth, the labor rank and file, including a disproportionate number of blacks and women, and including not just blue-collar workers but also the bulk of white-collar employees, the major fraction of whose labor is appropriated without compensation — amounting to somewhere around 47,000,000.

The categories of old and new middle class have no place in this classification. Instead, the first of these categories is included under the heading of a petty bourgeoisie, and the second under that of a petty bureaucracy. Contrary to Budish, these sub-classes have little in common as segments of a so-called middle class, but are continuous with the upper strata of the bourgeoisie and bureaucracy respectively.

In the foregoing model we confront three great social classes, each of which has an upper and lower stratum. Two are exploiting classes: the capitalists and the bureaucratic class. Opposed to these we find a laboring class of exploited blue-collar and white-collar wage and salary earners. In 1960 the capitalist class represented a little less than 13% of the exploited labor force; the bureaucracy represented close to 18%. Since the first of these percentages has been falling and the second has risen during the past several decades, these data suggest that the privileged position of the capitalists is becoming more precarious, while the status of the bureaucracy is becoming more secure. The prospect of the coming decades is not, then, only a numerical weakening of the class of capitalists relative to a growing laboring class, but also a numerical strengthening of the bureaucracy relative to the labor force. Thus, even if the power of American capitalists were to be overcome before the close of the century, there is no guarantee that it would pass to the class of exploited laborers. On the contrary, the above data constitute strong grounds for believing that sovereignty might pass instead to the bureaucratic class.

In short, Budish’s anatomy of the American working class makes the same mistake as the New Left in confusing the concept “working class” with the related concept of a “laboring class” consisting exclusively of exploited workers; in defining the class of exploited workers somewhat too broadly, as covering the high-grade employees of both public and private bureaucracies; in over-estimating the capacity of an exploited laboring class to abolish capitalism without playing into the hands of a new bureaucratic class; and in under-estimating, as a consequence, the increasing autonomy of the bureaucracy and its emergence as a potential new ruling class.

III

Now let us consider Marx’s usage as an alternative to these Old and New Left anatomies of the working class. The proletariat he defines as inclusive both of the active army of exploited laborers and of the industrial reserve army or unemployed. By definition, only those laborers are proletarians whose labor increases capital, whether
actually or potentially in the case of the reserve army of labor, by producing a surplus product or realizing its monetary equivalent in the form of profit, interest, rent, et cetera. Wages are the price of labor power, the reward for performing a certain quantity of unpaid labor. Contrary to conventional misreadings of Capital based exclusively on the first volume, the proletariat includes not only industrial wage earners, but also commercial ones. The commercial proletariat increases capital by circulating rather than producing commodities; at the same time, it represents an unproductive cost or deduction from the total surplus. As Marx put it, commercial wage earners consist of unproductive laborers, as opposed to productive ones who produce a surplus. That white-collar workers surpass the number of blue-collar workers tells us nothing about the comparative size of a proletariat which includes commercial wage laborers. As a result, the proletariat is anything but an inconsequential minority, and continues to constitute a majority of the work force in the industrially-advanced countries.

Interpreted in this way the proletariat is still considerably narrower than the so-called working class, a term preferred by socialists in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The working class includes all those workers who are paid wages or salaries, whether exploited or not. In Marx's time there was some justification for using the terms "proletarian" and "wage laborer" interchangeably, because almost all employees were proletarians. This is no longer the case, despite the fact that the proletariat still constitutes a majority in the economically advanced countries. We have to distinguish, then, between two kinds of hired worker: those whose labor is exploited, and those auxiliaries or agents of the capitalists who perform work of exploitation. The work of supervising and managing other workers may be indispensable to the co-ordination of production under capitalism, but it is nonetheless exploitative. Managerial salaries are in part reward for the work of exploiting other workers, according to Marx's analysis in Volume 3 of Capital, and only partly compensation for supervising the production of commodities. In practice, the higher one ascends the managerial escalator, the more likely are salaries to be a disguised form of exploitation; yet even in the lower echelons of middle management, it is common for supervisory workers to appropriate their own surplus in addition to regular wages. All such workers are unproductive precisely because their surplus is retrieved in the form of salaries. In Marxist usage, they are salaried employees, and not wage laborers.

In addition to the unproductive stratum of the proletariat, Marx also distinguished a stratum of unproductive workers who are not strictly proletarians at all. The bulk, who are exploited without either producing or yielding a surplus for their employers, constitute a service class, according to Marx's analysis in Volume 4 of Capital. The remainder consist of high-grade workers or what he called the ideological class, a class of functionaries superintending or administering the common as well as private affairs of the bourgeoisie. Like the business sector,
according to Marx, the non-business sector involves relations of authority and subordination between a small minority in managerial, administrative, official, or supervisory positions performing work of exploitation, and a majority whose labor is exploited. In the business sector the opposition is between technocrats and proletarians; in the non-business sector between public servants and the servants of public servants. Thus at the base of Marx’s pyramid of exploitation we find a laboring class (Arbeiterklasse) consisting of two sub-classes, the proletariat and the service class described by Marx. This laboring class is less inclusive than the Saint-Simonist concept of a working class, which has since become the standard but mistaken English translation of both Marx’s Arbeiterklasse and Proletarier.

The first reference to a class of service workers is in Volume 1, Chapter 15, Section 6 of Capital, where a servant class is conceived as part of the laboring class. In the same context, this class is counterposed to an ideological class of public servants, consisting not only of government officials, but also of seemingly independent professional workers, such as lawyers and priests, a list subsequently expanded in Volume 4 to include artists, doctors, judges, kings, men of letters, teachers, and professors, that is, higher-grade unproductive workers whose job is to serve the private as well as public interests of the bourgeoisie. In Volume 4, Chapter 4, entitled “Theories of Productive and Unproductive Labor”, Marx makes a point of underlining the objective grounds for solidarity between the proletariat and the
service class, noting how the factory girl enables the owner, with a portion of her unpaid labor, to take directly into his service her sister as maid and her brother as manservant, and indirectly her cousin as an ordinary soldier or policeman. Although Marx’s term “servant class” was used in Volume 1 to cover only domestic servants, such as maids, cooks, lackeys, and privately-employed entertainers, from an economic standpoint it may be used to embrace, with the sole exception of commercial wage laborers, all subordinate workers in non-business occupations, whether they perform services for individual capitalists or for the class as a whole. Thus in Volume 4, Marx in fact enlarges this category to include public flunkeys as well as private lackeys, especially soldiers, sailors, police, and low-grade government workers generally.

The most-detailed account of the economic character of the services rendered by such unproductive workers can be found in Marx’s addenda to Part 1 of Volume 4. In an addendum on productive and unproductive labor, he defines unproductive services as use values, which become commodities only when contributed for the purpose of exchange. Unlike labor power that renders a service to the capitalist and is exchanged for capital, labor renders a service to the consumer, whether public or private, and is exchanged directly for income. Labor as well as labor power may become a commodity; however in exchanging for revenue rather than for capital, its consumption is in no way a source of enrichment or accumulation, but is undertaken for its own sake as use value. It is very likely, as Marx notes, that the quantity of standard man-hours rendered by servants is greater than that represented by their wages, although in exchanging for revenue their labor is subject to exploitation through trade only, as are all other commodities purchased for ultimate use in consumption. Unlike proletarians, then, service workers are employed to increase consumption, and are exploited for that purpose rather than for the sake of profitability.

As for the privileged stratum of workers who perform services, yet are not servants but functionaries of a capitalist class, they belong to a new middle class — an ill-considered category which Marx failed to analyze. In Volume 4, in his critique of Ricardo’s analysis of the effect of increased productivity in reducing the size of the active labor army, Marx notes that a diminishing stratum of productive laborers is precisely what makes possible the increasing size of this new social tier. Its members occupy an intermediate position between proletariat and bourgeoisie, are supported directly by revenue, are consequently maintained out of the surplus provided by productive laborers with virtually nothing in return, and increase the security and power of the capitalists. However, Marx’s category of a new middle class, like the current Old and New Left uses of this term, is a mixed bag embracing antagonistic social classes under a single roof. Thus it includes all unproductive workers, public servants as well as servants of public servants, the ideological classes as well as the service class, and
supervisors as well as the horde of flunkies under their immediate command. On careful analysis, the concept of a middle class is not only misleading, but also superfluous to Marx's analysis of classes in terms of antagonistic social relationships.

Marx's distinction between the service class and the proletariat corresponds only very roughly to New Left distinctions between a new an an old working class. New Left theorists have exaggerated the differences between white collar workers in subordinate positions and the old working class composed predominantly of blue-collar workers. This opposition is predicated on a distinction between productive and unproductive labor ultimately deriving from Adam Smith's distinction between labor that is productive of commodities and labor that is not. An objection to Smith's usage is that it divides workers not according to their capacity to increase capital, which is basic to capitalism, but rather according to their capacity to increase production, which only becomes basic under socialism. We shall want, in other words, to redefine the opposition between old and new laboring classes in terms of Marx's distinction between the proletariat and the service class. Thus we shall say that the old laboring class consists of exploited blue-collar and white-collar workers in finance and commerce as well as in industry, whereas the new laboring class consists of exploited blue-collar and white-collar service workers disengaged from business of any kind. Thus, if we add the 2,500,000 members of the armed forces and the 2,000,000 or so domestic servants in 1960 to the 67,000,000 civilians employed in the government and business sectors, the old laboring class constituted a little over 60% of the total, and the service class a mere 17%. Although by 1970 the figure for the service class had risen to 20%, the new laboring class is not only a very long way from outnumbering the old, but also is unlikely to catch up to it for many more decades, if at all.

In Capital, the basic opposition of interests within the working class is that between exploiting functionaries of the capitalists and the bulk of the active labor army under their command. The fundamental antagonism is between capitalists and proletarians. Nonetheless, the new laboring class, like the old, faces an enemy not only in the form of the capitalists, but also in the form of ideological and professional functionaries of capital. Failure to appreciate this antagonism of interests has led to a misleading extension of the meaning of the term "new middle class" to cover the new laboring class of service workers — thereby giving a false impression of the numbers, unity, and power of this supposed middle class, and a corresponding misimpression of the insignificance and weakness of the proletariat and its allies. Most unconvincing in New Left delineations of the scope of a new middle class, furthermore, is the inclusion of low-paid service workers like garbage collectors, postal workers, ordinary soldiers, policemen, janitors, and domestic servants in the same category as supervisory white-collar workers and functionaries of the capitalists.
Whether by accident or design, the New Left has disseminated the image of an impotent and numerically-insignificant proletariat that is internally divided and also without allies, and for these reasons is unsuited to the liberating role that Marx assigned to it. This thesis of a diminishing proletariat limited to production workers in Smith's sense, and of an ever-growing middle class conceived to be even now a majority in the United States, grossly exaggerates the differences between various segments of the proletariat and between proletarians and other exploited workers. It is not surprising that one result of applying such concepts is an unwarranted pessimism concerning the economic motivation, rationale, and prospects of a republic of labor in the United States.

In contrast, a Marxist analysis leaves open the practical question of revolution in the industrially-advanced nations, inasmuch as the proletariat still constitutes a majority and the so-called middle class decomposes into a service class, and a bureaucratic class that will continue to represent but a small proportion of the working population. A revolutionary alliance of the proletariat and the service class is thus in keeping with their objective interests. Moreover, it promises to accomplish in the future what revolutionary alliances of proletarians and poor peasants accomplished in the past. In the first place, the revolutionary forces are being concentrated in large cities instead of the countryside, that is, at the very nerve centers of the bourgeoisie's accumulated wealth and privilege; second, the bulk of the service class, consisting of public rather than domestic servants, is being pushed into resistance to the bureaucracy because of the growing fiscal crisis of the state; and third, public and private functionaries are becoming increasingly independent of the bourgeoisie and inclined to adopt a neutral role in any head-on collision between labor and capital. This prospect of a united front of proletarians and service workers not only points to a major effort to undermine capitalism in the West, but also suggests that the process of overcoming bureaucratic exploitation, of pushing beyond socialism to some form of communism, is even now within the realm of the possible.

We have seen that the concept of a new working class decomposes on analysis into a new bureaucratic class of exploiting rather than exploited workers, and into a new laboring class of service workers hardly less-exploited, albeit exploited in a different way, than the old working class of proletarians in Marx's sense. Contrary to New Left theorists, one segment of the new working class — the new bureaucracy of college graduates, specialists, and professional workers — does not constitute merely a new stratum of the old laboring class, but rather constitutes a new class whose objective economic interests are antagonistic to those of the proletariat. Moreover, the other major segment — the new laboring class of service workers — is neither a new class nor a stratum of the old working class, the proletariat, but rather a new sub-class or stratum of Marx's laboring class. Thus the
concept of a new working class is too diffuse to be retained, and needs to be replaced by the specific categories into which it decomposes. Although the theorists of a new working class tried to come to grips with the changing composition of the working class under advanced capitalism, and with what this might imply for the class struggle, their lack of a sophisticated conceptual apparatus, compounded by their misinterpretation and vulgarization of the Marxist model even beyond that of the Old Left, resulted in a virtual caricature of social reality. At most, New Left theorists were successful in focusing on other agencies of radical social change besides the traditional proletariat. Where they went astray was in their attempt first to subsume all of these agencies as a special stratum of the proletariat, and second to include in the category of laboring class a new bureaucracy of educated workers whose objective economic interests were and continue to be opposed to the abolition of bureaucratic privileges.

In view of this criticism, a new scenario is called for. In place of the New Left opposition between an old and a new working class of both wage earners and salary earners, we need to distinguish between old and new bureaucratic and laboring classes. These are not the only changes in class composition brought about by labor-saving technology, the professionalization of the work force, the bureaucratization of industry, and the expanding role of the state in socializing costs and subsidizing demand. We are also confronted with a new capitalist class. Briefly, the old capitalist class consists of the private owners and operators of their own establishments, including partnerships, whether large or small; the new capitalist class consists of an increasingly invisible corporate bourgeoisie, rentier, or securities-holding class. The old bureaucracy consists pre-eminently of public officials and managers of corporations, including low-level and middle-level as well as top-level supervisors; the new bureaucracy consists primarily of specialists, technocrats, and scientific and research workers, including teachers and social workers. The old laboring class consists of the traditional proletariat of blue-collar and white-collar workers in industry and commerce, including farm workers; the new laboring class consists of a service class of blue-collar and white-collar workers employed mainly in the public sector, representing various levels of education, and including medical and research assistants, teaching assistants, and unpaid college students.

In addition to the Old Left opposition between traditional capitalists and the old laboring class or classical proletariat, and the New Left opposition between the old bureaucratic class and the new, allied to a new laboring class, we have here a complex set of social antagonisms far from exhausted by these two sets of relations. The opposition between old and new strata within and between each of these great classes, moreover, is complicated by the further antagonism between upper and lower strata within each, between the upper stratum of one class and the lower stratum of another, between upper strata belonging
to different classes, and between the lower strata of these classes. Instead of the misleading suggestion that the new working class somehow emerged from the old working class, we are confronted with not only a new labor rank-and-file, but also a new labor aristocracy of comparatively-privileged but also partly-exploited workers, plus a new petty bureaucracy continuous in major respects with the traditional one. We cannot develop this scenario here. It is enough for the purpose of this critique to indicate the limitations of both New and Old Left anatomies of the American working class, and the continuing relevance to class analysis of the Marxist model of exploitation.

I WANTED TO OVERTHROW THE GOVERNMENT —
BUT ALL I BROUGHT DOWN WAS SOMEBODY’S WIFE

30 dogs, 20 men on 20 horses, and one fox.
and look here, they write,
you are a dupe for the state, the church,
you are in the ego-dream,
read your history, study the monetary system,
note that the racial war is 23,000 years old.

well, I remember 20 years ago, sitting with an old Jewish tailor,
his nose in the lamplight like a cannon sighted on the enemy; and there was an Italian pharmacist who lived in an expensive apartment in the best part of town; we plotted to overthrow a tottering dynasty, the tailor sewing buttons upon a vest, the Italian poking his cigar in my eye, lighting me up, a tottering dynasty myself, always drunk as possible, well-read, starving, depressed, but actually a good young piece of ass would have solved all my rancor, but I didn’t know this; I listened to my Italian and my Jew and I went out down dark alleys smoking borrowed cigarettes and watching the backs of houses come down in flames, but somewhere we missed: we were not men enough, large or small enough, or we only wanted to talk or we were bored, so the anarchy fell through, and the Jew died and the Italian grew angry because I stayed with his wife when he went down to the pharmacy; he did not care to have his personal government overthrown, and she overthrew easy, and I had some guilt: the children were asleep in the other bedroom; but later I won $200 in a crap game and took a bus to New Orleans, and I stood on the corner listening to the music coming from bars and then I went inside to the bars, and I sat there thinking about the dead Jew, how all he did was sew on buttons and talk, and how he gave way although he was stronger than any of us —
and maybe that saved Wall Street and Manhattan
and the Church and Central Park West and Rome and the
Left Bank, but the pharmacist's wife, she was nice,
she was tired of bombs under the pillow and hissing the Pope,
but I guess she felt as I: that the weakness was not Government
but Man, one at a time, that men were never as strong as their ideas
and that ideas were governments turned into men;
and so it began on a couch with a spilled martini
and it ended in the bedroom: desire, revolution,
nonsense ended, and the shades rattled in the wind,
rattled like sabres, cracked like cannon,
and 30 dogs, 20 men on 20 horses chased one fox
across the fields under the sun,
and I got out of bed and yawned and scratched my belly
and knew that soon, very soon, I would have to get
very drunk, again.

from At Terror Street and Agony Way,
by Charles Bukowski (Black Sparrow Press)
Bargains

BARGAINS ON OVERSTOCKED RADICAL AMERICA BACK NUMBERS

(available only until May 1, 1971 at these rates; no institutional orders)

SPECIAL ISSUES

Radicalism and Culture, Volume 2, Number 6 (November, December 1968): essays by David Gross and Jeremy J. Shapiro on the scope and significance of the work of Theodor Adorno and Herbert Marcuse; a collage of El Corno Emplumado editorials by Dan Georgakas; and a study by Dave Wagner of poetry’s Mimeo Revolution (76 pages, regular price 75c, sale price 35c)

Culture and the Intellectuals, Volume 3, Number 3 (May, June 1969): a 40,000-word essay by Martin Sklar on economic disaccumulation and the proletarianization of intellectuals; an analysis by Stewart Ewen of advertising’s rise in the 1920s; and a document by Adalbert Fogarasi on “Tasks of the Communist Press” (1921) (76 pages, regular price 75c, sale price 35c)

Althusser and Marxist Philosophy, Volume 3, Number 5 (September, October 1969): a special symposium on Althusser by Andrew Levine, Greg Calvert, Martin Glaberman, and Dale Tomich, and a eulogy to T. W. Adorno by Hans Gerth (76 pages, regular price 75c, sale price 35c)

Socialist Scholars’ Conference, 1969, Volume 4, Number 3 (May 1970): superior papers and commentaries including papers by Trent Schroyer on Social Science Methodologies, Paul Buhle on Debsian Socialist Intellectuals, and Ron Aronson on Herbert Marcuse, and commentaries by James Gilbert, Paul Breines, and others (80 pages, regular price $1, sale price 50c)

Society of the Spectacle, Volume 4, Number 5 (July 1970): translation and lavish illustration by the Black & Red Group (Detroit) of French Situationist work by Guy Debord, with text consisting of 221 epigrams on the “Spectacle” of life in modern society, the collapse of the Historic Left (Socialists, Communists, Anarchists, et cetera), and the necessity for revolutionaries to create non-alienated organizational forms for struggle (120 pages, regular price $1.50, sale price 75c)

Lenin-Hegel Philosophical Number, Volume 4, Number 7 (September, October 1970), edited by Paul Piccone, the editor of the philosophical journal TELOS: articles on the practice of Lenin and its influence on his philosophy; on the central political problems of Hegel’s philosophy; and on Youth Culture (80 pages, regular price $1, sale price 50c)
OTHER ISSUES

Volume 2, Number 1 (January, February 1968): a document on an early New Left organizing project entitled "Hazard, Kentucky: Failures and Lessons", by Hamish Sinclair, and an exchange between Paul Buhle and James Weinstein on the failure of Socialist movements in America (68 pages, regular price 75¢, sale price 35¢)


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NEW LITERATURE FROM RADICAL AMERICA

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Worker-Student Action Committees, by R. Gregoire and F. Perlman: recounting and analysis by members of a Paris group of spontaneous action during the May-June 1968 events in France (Black & Red Press, 96 pages, illustrated, $1)

The Incoherence of the Intellectuals, by Fredy Perlman: the most vigorously-illustrated pamphlet published by the Left in the United States, presenting a study of C. Wright Mills by one of his students (Black & Red Press, 120 pages, in nine colors, with many diagrams, photographs, and collages, $2)

ARSENAL (Surrealist Subversion) #1, edited by Franklin Rosemont and Paul Garon: initial issue of the first indigenous American surrealist journal (Black Swan Press, 80 pages, profusely illustrated, $1.50)

Radical America Catalogue: illustrated guide to available back issues, full list of pamphlets and other available publications (12 pages, fully annotated, 15¢)
"At every bloody uprising she flowers into grace and truth": from *La Femme 100 Têtes*, Max Ernst, 1929.
WORKING CLASS COMMUNISM:
A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Brian Peterson

The history of working-class movements in the Twentieth Century has so-far been written as the history of parties and trade unions, rather than as the history of the working class itself. This review of the secondary literature on the Communist workers' movements in several Western countries attempts to extract the existing information on which workers were Communists and begins to analyze the factors that made some workers Communists. The Communist movement has not been chosen because it has been either perfectly revolutionary or an accurate reflection of the class consciousness of Western workers, as indeed it has not been. Rather, the Communist movement has been the largest radical movement in the West in the past half-century, and thus has more to contribute toward an understanding of the sociology of working-class radicalism than the study of even more radical movements, such as anarchism, syndicalism, and Trotskyism, which always remained relatively small.

This review concentrates on the socio-economic and ethnic factors in Western Communism and deliberately ignores the important problem of how the development of the Soviet Union affected Communism in the West. This topic is capably discussed in many of the books under review here, as well as in surveys such as World Communism (Ann Arbor, 1962, paperbound) and European Communism (London, 1952), both by Franz Borkenau, From Lenin to Khrushchev: The History of World Communism, by Hugh Seton-Watson (New York, 1963, paper), and the foreign relations sections of E. H. Carr’s A History of Soviet Russia (Baltimore, 1966, 1969, paperbound; New York, 1958, 1960); and in Isaac Deutscher’s excellent biographies on Stalin (New York, 1967, paperbound), and on Trotsky as The Prophet Armed, 1879-1921, The Prophet Unarmed, 1921-1929, and The Prophet Outcast, 1929-1940 (New York, 1965, paperbound).
The United States

Histories of Communist Parties everywhere fall into a few general categories: the official Party histories, tendentious, dull, defaming or ignoring former Party leaders who have since fallen from grace, about as analytical as a company-sponsored history of a Southern textile mill; the witty, anecdotal, Social Democratic histories of Communism, emphasizing the ironic cases in which the Communists acted in a racist or non-militant manner and attacking the CPs from the right or the left as fancy dictates; the serious, academic histories, usually hostile and mainly concerned with the minutiae of factional struggles and Russian dictation; and finally the rare-but-informative studies of the social composition of Communist Parties.

For the United States, William Z. Foster's History of the Communist Party in the United States (New York, 1952) serves as the official Party history. Irving Howe and Lewis Coser's The American Communist Party: A Critical History (New York, 1962, paperbound) provides the light reading. Theodore Draper's two volumes, The Roots of American Communism (New York, 1957) and American Communism and Soviet Russia (New York, 1960, paperbound) examine in over-abundant detail factionalism and Russian influence through 1929. An important work by James Weinstein, The Decline of American Socialism, 1912-1925 (New York, 1967) attempts to prove that the Socialist Party before and during the First World War was more radical than Communists have since maintained. Weinstein contends that the destruction of the SP due to the illusion among the Eastern European language federations that a Bolshevik-style revolution was possible in the United States destroyed the only mass Socialist movement that the United States has ever seen. Nathan Glazer's The Social Bases of American Communism (New York, 1961) analyzes the birth and development of the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA, although it had other names in the earlier period) in terms of the ethnic groups and the occupational categories which joined. David Shannon's The Socialist Party of America: A History (Chicago, 1967, paperbound) does a fine job of showing the social composition of the pre-war SP and the conflicts that led to the split in 1919 in terms of the social forces involved. Shannon's work on the CPUSA from 1945 to 1956, The Decline of American Communism (New York, 1959) is less successful than his book on the SP or Draper's books, but provides details of the later period which supplement Howe and Coser.

The early Communist Party in the United States was predominantly made up of foreign-language-speaking immigrants from Eastern Europe. The Slavic members were concentrated in unskilled jobs in heavy industry. The Jews were mainly young, recent immigrants in the New York garment industry. The Finns were farmers and miners in the Middle West. Since most of these early Communists neither voted nor belonged to trade unions, they had been alienated by those elements in
the Socialist Party that stressed electoral politics and working within the AFL unions. The more-reformist elements in the SP were mainly found among the small-town, middle-class native Americans and the immigrants from the earlier waves of immigration, such as Milwaukee Germans and older Jews in the New York garment industry.

The SP underwent a demographic shift in the years 1917-1919, with Eastern Europeans joining the foreign-language federations in large numbers under the impact of the Russian Revolution; and many native American Socialists were dropping out of the Party, both from the Rightist, small-town middle-class elements which tended to favor the war, and from the Leftists concentrated among Oklahoma tenant farmers, facing extreme repression after the abortive "Green Corn Rebellion", and the Western miners. These native American Leftists never joined the Communist Party in large numbers, and this was a severe blow to American radicalism.

Further study is needed to sort out exactly why such groups as the Western miners and Oklahoma tenant farmers dropped out of the organized socialist movement. Several factors converged in those years, including fantastic repression, new opportunities in the war boom, and the creation of a Communist Party with almost-exclusively foreign membership and a preoccupation with events in Europe that could not have been particularly appealing to native American radicals.

In the long run the Communist Party served to integrate immigrant members into American life, but it could do this only by providing a secure setting in the foreign-language clubs at first. Later it was able to break up the language groups by teaching the members English in Party schools and by involving the members in union organizing and political work among workers outside their ethnic groups. This process of integration is part of the reason for the popularity of "Browderism" in the 1930s and 1940s, with its support for Roosevelt and slogans like "Communism is Twentieth Century Americanism". This process of integration could be regarded as completed after World War II, when most people quit the Party and became indistinguishable Americans, active in their unions and liberal politics.

There are no adequate histories of Communist trade-union activities. Max M. Kampelinan's The Communist Party Versus the CIO (New York, 1957) and David Saposs's Communism and American Unions (New York, 1959) are merely Cold War polemics written to justify the expulsion of Communists from the CIO. One must be satisfied with general party histories and histories of the labor movement and the individual unions. The main works on the labor movement containing material of interest concerning the Communists are Irving Bernstein's well-written History of the American Worker, of which two volumes have already appeared (The Lean Years, 1920-1933 (Baltimore, 1966, paperback) and The Turbulent Years, 1933-1941 (Boston, 1970)), and Art Preis's Labor's Giant Step (New York, 1964), which covers the history of the CIO. Preis reads like an editorial in the Trotskyist Militant, for which he was a
reporter for many years. If Bernstein had Preis’s politics or if Preis could write like Bernstein, we would have a fine book. As it stands the two supplement each other nicely, Bernstein attacking CP labor policy from the right and Preis from the left.

The most-important locus of Communist trade-union activity in the 1920s was among Jewish garment workers in New York City. There was a virtual civil war in the garment industry from 1924 to 1928 involving the old Socialist leaders of the unions and their supporters who were mainly the older, more-skilled workers against Communist challengers who were strongest among younger, less-skilled workers. Bernstein has several fascinating chapters on the conflict. Melech Epstein’s *Jewish Labor in the USA* (New York, 1969) provides the background of the conflict, describing the conditions in Europe that led to immigration and the economic changes that the garment industry was going through, as well as bringing the history of the garment unions up to 1950. Donald A. Robinson’s *Spotlight on a Union: The Story of the United Hatters, Cap and Millinery Workers International Union* (New York, 1948) gives a detailed history of Communist-Socialist rivalries among the hatters, emphasizing the disruption caused in that industry due to the decreased wearing of hats in the 1920s.

In general, Communist strength in the garment industry owed much to the political concern of these workers with events in their homeland. Many identified deeply with the Bolshevik Revolution, and wanted to do the same thing in America. In addition, the economic conditions of the industry were quite unstable in the 1920s. New techniques were rationalizing production and reducing the skills required. Work was being contracted out to small sweatshops, where union protection was ineffective. High wages in New York City compared to the small towns nearby was leading to the dispersal of the industry, and the New York garment unions were forced to agree to lower wages or else see their jobs disappear. The Socialist union leaders were becoming more and more friendly to the employers, anxious to keep unionized employers in business. Under these conditions, the Communists were able to win control of the three largest ILGWU locals in New York City, only to lose control after a disastrous strike in 1926 that was unnecessarily prolonged for purely-political reasons.

The only union in the garment industry of which the Communists were able to get and keep control beyond the 1920s was the Furriers. This was partly because the Communists led a successful fur strike in 1926 which won the first 40-hour week in the garment industry. Epstein points out that Communist control was facilitated because the fur industry was compact, concentrated in a small area of New York City, and because the furriers were ethnically homogeneous, composed mainly of Jews from Bessarabia and Greeks. The Communist dual-union policy from 1929 to 1934 did not wipe out earlier Communist gains in fur as it did in the other garment industries. Good close-ups of the fur industry are given in Philip S. Foner’s *The Fur and Leather Workers*
Union (Newark, 1950) and in Sandor Voros’s American Commissar (Philadelphia, 1961). Voros tells in his autobiography of the cut-throat competition for work in the highly-seasonal fur industry and the harsh conditions of poverty faced by the unskilled fur workers. He also gives a description of the functioning of the Hungarian section of the CPUSA, from which several later leaders of the Communist government in Hungary emerged. Foner describes in abundant detail the struggles in the fur industry between the Communists (whom he idealizes) and the Socialists and gangsters (whom he shows in constant coalition, perhaps unfairly).

The fur industry had had earlier experiences with an IWW union, and this was characteristic of Communist trade-union activity. Communists tended to be active in the same areas in which the IWW had been, and sometimes were able to take over IWW unions as well as recruiting many IWW members. The same factors of transiency, harsh conditions, and recent immigration that made for IWW strength also favored the Communists. One such group was immigrant textile workers, among whom both the Communists and the IWW were able to conduct long and violent strikes with little success in terms of lasting organization. The major Communist textile strikes in the 1920s were in Passaic, New Jersey in 1926 by Polish, Hungarian, and Italian workers; in New Bedford, Massachusetts in 1928 by Portuguese, Italian, and Slavic immigrants; and in Gastonia, North Carolina in 1929 by native white Southerners.

These strikes and their defeat were typical of Communist union activities before 1934: Wherever there was a chance of success the strikes were taken over by the established trade unions; only where failure was certain did the AFL keep out and let the workers appeal to the Communists. This restricted Communist-led strikes primarily to declining industries (like textiles, garments, and mining) faced with chronic over-production, high unemployment, and competition from abroad as well as from new fuels and synthetic fabrics. Speed-ups, low wages, and anti-union employers made the workers angry, but small production units, low skill, and the easy availability of strike-breakers made them powerless. As in the garment industry, the Communist dual unions of 1929-1934 isolated the Communists from the big organizing drives of the first years of the New Deal by the established unions.

During the first years of the Depression, a new generation of Communists emerged at City College in New York, mostly Jewish, second-generation Americans, the children of small-businessmen and workers. The influx of Jewish students and white-collar workers into the CPUSA came in two waves, corresponding to two periods of Party history. The first wave brought in an important group of future Party leaders during the Leftist “Third Period” between 1929 and 1934, including John Gates and Joseph Starobin. After 1934, during the Popular Front period of support for the New Deal, there was a further, more-massive influx of Jewish white-collar workers and professionals.
This growth changed the Party's class composition from 5% to 41% middle-class between 1932 and 1938, and its concentration in New York City from 22.5% to 47% between 1934 and 1938. This can be seen as a specifically-historical phenomenon, the reaction to the rise of fascism in Europe and to the successes of the Soviet Union in the Five Year Plans at a time when America was undergoing the Depression. It was also a stage in the integration of Jewish immigrants into American life, with a resurgence of attenuated radicalism coming with the high rate of unemployment among educated white-collar workers. There was a great deal of elitism involved, many going out of New York to work as CIO organizers to lead the "real" workers, seeing themselves not as part of the working class, but as bourgeois intellectuals.

The long-term importance of this movement, though, is that for the first time a significant number of white-collar workers were beginning to act as class-conscious members of the working class, organizing unions among teachers, social workers, and librarians. This is made clear in the literature on the New York City teachers and their unions, as in Robert W. Iversen: _The Communists and the Schools_ (New York, 1916-1964 (New York, 1968); and Bella Dodd: _School of Darkness_ (New York, 1954). Iversen is the most informative, though his book is filled with naive anti-communism. Zitron writes as a Communist, and is quite unanalytical. Dodd was the legislative liaison of the Teachers Union with the New York State Legislature, and was a power in the CP in New York. She wrote this book after returning to the Catholic Church and testifying before Congressional investigating committees about her former Communist associates, but nevertheless tells much of interest about the Communists in the Teachers Union.

Communist strength in the Teachers Union was based chiefly on the most-oppressed teachers: the substitutes, who were underpaid, denied paid vacations and job security, really full-time teachers but given a substitute classification to help the schools through financial squeezes; college instructors and teaching assistants, underpaid and denied faculty status or tenure, but doing much of the undergraduate teaching; and WPA teachers, who escaped unemployment by taking subsistence wages from the WPA. Whatever may have been the subjective illusions of these workers about their social role, their consciousness was determined to an important extent by their objective social position, and they were being radicalized along with other workers in the same situation of insecurity and poverty.

With the rise of the CIO in the mid-1930s, the Communists got their first chance to influence large sections of workers in basic industry. Communist strength in the CIO came from three main sources: Slavic immigrants who had always been employed in heavy industry and who took an active part in the CIO at the shop level from the beginning, often rising quickly in the ranks due to their long union-organizing and political experience; formerly-unemployed workers who had gone through the Communist unemployed groups and now had jobs and
valuable organizing experience; and finally trade-union organizers, many from the New York area, whom the CP sent out to help the CIO since there was a super-abundance of Communist teachers and social workers. To these three groups were later added the opportunists who joined the CP to get union positions in the unions in which the CP was influential.

The only union outside the garment industry with respect to which a good deal of information exists on Communist activity is the National Maritime Union, set up in the mid-1930s as an industrial CIO union appealing mainly to the unskilled, as opposed to the old craft unions which mostly attracted skilled seamen. The NMU is best described in Joseph P. Goldberg's *Maritime Story: A Study in Labor-Management Relations* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1958), which includes a fine history of IWW and Communist activities among seamen and much of interest on socio-economic conditions of the industry and its workers. Other works on the NMU include Frederick J. Lang's *Maritime: A Historical Sketch and a Workers' Program* (New York, 1943), which is interesting for its Trotskyite approach, and Richard O. Boyer's *The Dark Ship* (Boston, 1947), an impressionable account of Communist seamen during the Second World War.

The seamen were a unique group of workers, the only United States workers with wide international contacts, both on the ships, on which many foreigners worked, and in foreign ports. US sailors smuggled in Communist literature to Nazi Germany, and over a thousand fought in the Spanish Civil War on the side of the Loyalists, more than any other occupational group in America. The unskilled seamen to whom the NMU appealed were overwhelmingly single male down-and-outers with long periods of unemployment and wide experience as migrant workers. They were thus part of the classic IWW constituency. The CP was the direct successor of the IWW in organizing unskilled seamen, using much the same methods and involving many individuals who came from the IWW to the CP. A big factor in the Communists' strength was their appeal to black and foreign workers. The Communist Marine Workers Industrial Union, active in the 1929-1934 period, had its chief strength among the black seamen and longshoremen in Philadelphia and New Orleans, inheriting a previously-IWW union of black longshoremen in Philadelphia. The craft unions were anti-black and anti-foreign and had succeeded in getting a national law restricting foreign employment on US mail subsidy ships. The CP in the NMU and the National Union of Marine Cooks and Stewards did much to integrate ships and promote blacks to other jobs than the menial posts they had traditionally occupied. The difficulties of the Communists in the NMU came during World War II, when the Communist fraction in the union split apart over whether to extend the wartime no-strike pledge to the postwar period as the current Browder line demanded. The militance of the rank-and-file in the NMU turned against the Communists, and in 1948 Joe Curran was able to sweep the Communists from office.
The research on the relations of the CPUSA with blacks is quite limited, leaving many questions about the kinds of blacks to whom Communism appealed. Wilson Record in The Negro and the Communist Party (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1951) and in Race and Radicalism: The NAACP and the Communist Party in Conflict (Ithaca, New York, 1964) gives a picture of how the CP line toward blacks varied, but offers little on the sociology of black Communism. William A. Nolan's inaccurate diatribe, Communism Versus the Negro (Chicago, 1951), includes more information on which blacks joined the Party and its fronts than does the more-temperate Record. In addition there is much of value in The Black Workers and the New Unions, by Horace R. Cayton and George S. Mitchell (Chapel Hill, 1939), which includes a tantalizing chapter on Birmingham, Alabama, where the CP had a large black membership in the 1930s. The Communists built their strength among Alabama blacks first in a tenant farmers' union, then through organizing among the unemployed in the Birmingham area. Their dual union, the Steel and Mine Workers Industrial Union, had a significant black membership in Birmingham in the early 1930s, and there was a large Communist fraction in the CIO Steelworkers' Union later. It is significant that of all the areas of the South the Communist Party did best in Birmingham, for Birmingham was the most-industrialized area of the South, and its work force was 70% black in iron-ore mining and 40 to 45% black in the steel mills.

Other trade unions in which the CP had considerable influence among blacks included the United Auto Workers, in which the CP promoted the idea of a guaranteed post for a black on the UAW executive board as an issue in its fight against Reuther in the late 1940s. The CP's strongest base of strength, Ford Local 600, at the River Rouge Plant, was also the largest local in terms of black membership, and this was probably no accident.

The CP was strong among blacks employed by the WPA in Harlem in the 1930s and 1940s, especially among black writers and theater people in the Federal Theater Project there. The aftermath of this is discussed in Harold Cruse's The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual (New York, 1967), which denounces the CP for suppressing black cultural nationalism while encouraging Jewish cultural nationalism at the same time. The CP published the magazine Jewish Life, while not allowing blacks in the Party to put out their own cultural magazine. Cruse headed the CP in Harlem in the late 1940s, and gives a fascinating picture of Communist activity among black intellectuals.

Great Britain

As with the CPUSA, the historians of the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) have concentrated on its formation and growth through the 1920s. Henry Pelling's survey, The British Communist Party: A Historical Profile (New York, 1958), is hostile, superficial, and
sensational, but the only work that covers the whole history of the Party. Walter Kendall's *The Revolutionary Movement in Britain, 1900-1921: The Origins of British Communism* (London, 1969) argues for Britain, as Weinstein for America, that the revolutionary groups would have been better off continuing their own autonomous development rather than coming under Russian domination. Kendall is informative on the relations between the early British Communist movement and the Russians, though a good deal of his story of smuggled money is spy-novel material. Kendall is at his best in his chapters on the shop stewards' movement in the Clyde Valley around Glasgow.

The official Party historian, James Klugmann, has so far issued two volumes covering up to 1927 in his *History of the Communist Party of Great Britain* (London, 1968, 1969). Klugmann's style is to include many quotations from contemporary Party documents and to take his interpretation from what the Party said at the time. This allows a historian with few original ideas to write very-large books. Of course it would be worthwhile to have a compendium of what the CPGB said in the 1920s, if only one could be sure that Klugmann wasn't leaving out the most interesting things.

The best book on early history of the CPGB is L. J. MacFarlane's *The British Communist Party: Its Origins and Development Until 1929* (London, 1966). MacFarlane manages to be sympathetic and analytical at the same time. He is able to see the CPGB in all the ambiguity of its dual role: part of a world Communist movement controlled by an increasingly-Stalinist Russia, but at the same time an authentic part of the British working-class movement. MacFarlane is among the first who have managed to be historians of Communism rather than vilifiers or apologists.

The early CPGB drew many cadre from the shop-steward movement among the munitions, ship-building, and machine-building workers on the Clyde River in Scotland. All the above writers treat it briefly, and it is given more extended discussion in Branko Pribicic's *The Shop Stewards Movement and Workers' Control, 1910-1922* (Oxford, 1959). The movement was a response of the skilled metalworkers to dilution of their monopoly on certain jobs by the introduction of new machine processes that could be carried out by semi-skilled workers. The skilled workers were in a strong bargaining position since they were essential to war production, but the pro-war trade leadership did not adequately protect their positions. Consequently, a movement developed based on unofficial shop stewards who led several wildcat strikes during the First World War. The movement was destroyed after the War with the failure of a general strike in Glasgow in February 1919, and the economic crisis which curtailed the bargaining power of the workers from 1921 on.

Glasgow radicalism was a deep rooted phenomenon that continues today to give the CPGB one of the highest votes it gets anywhere. This radicalism is a compound of several factors: the brutal expulsion of
the Scottish peasantry from the land in the Nineteenth Century to make way for sheep pastures and hunting estates which resulted in peasant revolts as late as the 1880s; the presence of radical Irish immigrants in Glasgow industry, particularly in relatively-unskilled work; some of the worst slums in all Britain; and rapid growth of the Clydeside war industries, which accentuated all the other problems.

The Sociology of British Communism, by Kenneth Newton (London, 1969), while overly theoretical and not as interesting as Glazer's social analysis of the CPUSA, nevertheless gives some indication of the main groups involved in the CPGB. Among the first members of the CPGB were Jewish garment workers. The condition of the Jewish garment workers is quite-well explained in the section on the United Clothing Workers' Union in Shirley W. Lerner's Breakaway Unions and the Small Trade Union (London, 1961). These workers faced much the same sort of situation as the garment workers on the Lower East Side of New York: small shops with sub-contracting that made for long hours and weak unions; discriminatory legislation which served to restrict new Jewish immigration; and hostility from the native workers. Thus the Communist policy of dual unions found a ready response among the garment workers of London's East End in 1929. They resented control of the national garment workers' union by Catholic, anti-Communist Irishmen who seemed to have no will to struggle against technological innovations that were resulting in speed-ups for the workers.

Although the CPGB was strongest among the miners in Scotland and Wales after their big strike of 1926, in England the Party was strongest in London and in the metal industry. Newton suggests that the large plants and skilled work force of the metal industry were reasons for Communist success there, but since there is no study that treats Communism in the British metal industry in depth, one can only speculate. The main growth of Communist strength in the metal and aircraft plants around London came in the period of wartime expansion (1939-1941), when the Party's policies were anti-war and industrially militant. Nevertheless, the Party was able to keep its membership strength in this industry after Party policies switched with the invasion of the Soviet Union to supporting the War and opposing strikes. This switch away from militance did cause the Party some losses, including Dick Beech of the Chemical Workers' Union, who instead followed the more -anti-war policies of the Independent Labour Party. The Chemical Workers' Union was able to greatly increase its membership through effective strikes during the War, when other unions refused to support strikes.

Large sections of the English working class have never been reached by Communism, and perhaps as much can be learned about Communism by understanding why these workers failed to become Communists as by understanding why others became Communists. Universally, three of the most-important factors seem to be concentration (the number of workers of a single industry in a locality and their percentage in the
local population — the higher, the more likely to be radical), sex (the higher the percentage of men employed, the more radical), and religion (the less, the more Communists). This means that small towns that aren’t single-industry towns aren’t likely to have many Communists, and industries like textiles that employ many women are likely to be less radical than industries like mining or metal that employ mostly men. Minority-group status is a source of many frustrations that can lead to an abnormally-high number of Communists, and this is true in Britain not only for Jews, but also for Indians and Greek Cypriots who have made up 10% of the Communists in London. This is related to thwarted nationalism which existed and still exists among the Scottish and Welsh, and has served to intensify working-class radicalism in Scotland and Wales.

The question of the conservatism of women is a complicated one. There have been many groups of women who have not conformed to the conservative pattern and have fought militant strikes or have supported revolutionary politics. Usually there was something special about these women, such as particularly-proletarianizing circumstances, or ethnic problems, or anti-clericalism as a powerful social force. The male radicalism relationship holds in all of the countries discussed here, and seems to be part of a broad problem of the relation of women to the working class in this historical epoch. Women workers generally worked during the time of their lives before and after their years of child-bearing and child-raising, so that they were not considered and did not seem to consider themselves permanent workers. The whole society united to say that the man’s income was primary and that the woman’s was only secondary, even though it was obvious that women were a permanently-large percentage of workers and their incomes were needed to maintain their families. Women were generally more religious than men, and more inclined to see the church as the key institution outside the home, as opposed to men, who had alternative institutions that they regarded as their own and effectively excluded women from, such as the tavern (where not only drinking, but also political discussion and planning for union organization went on), the trade union, and the political party. Due to all of these factors, women were less inclined to join unions, to vote Communist, or to identify themselves primarily as workers. It is to be expected that women, as they become more integrated into the work force, will begin to act more and more like workers with their own special interests that they will actively defend.

Coal mining has been the largest industry in Britain in the Twentieth Century, and it has also been the largest source of CPGB members. In 1932 over half the total Party membership were coal miners, but these were predominantly in Scotland and Wales. Due to the relative abundance of books on coal miners, some of the factors involved in radicalism versus conservatism in miners can be explained. R. Page Arnot, from the same school of history writing as Klugmann, with long
quotes and little analysis, has come up with few ideas of interest on radicalism and the coal miners in the five volumes he has devoted to the subject: *The Miners: A History of the Miners’ Federation of Great Britain*, three volumes (London, 1949, 1953, 1961); *A History of the Scottish Miners from the Earliest Times* (London, 1955); and *South Wales Miners, 1898-1914* (London, 1967). Arnott has long been a leader of the CPGB, and it is not surprising that he has devoted special attention to the Scottish and Welsh miners. A Communist has been the president of both the Scottish Miners’ Federation (Abe Moffatt, from 1942 on) and the South Wales Miners’ Federation (Arthur Horner, 1936 on). In addition, the first Communist elected to the House of Commons was elected by the Scottish mining district of West Fife in 1936.

These districts of radical miners would have to be compared with a conservative mining district, and a truly excellent history of one such district exists in *The Derbyshire Miners: A Study in Industrial and Social History*, by James Eccles Williams (London, 1962). Although this is an official history, sponsored by the Derbyshire Miners’ Federation, just as Arnott’s works were sponsored by the appropriate unions, Williams has shown how a detailed treatment of the miners’ lives enriches a trade-union history. His work is a model for any historian who would like to go beyond dull histories of trade-union leadership fights and contract negotiations to look at the daily lives, families, religion, hobbies, working conditions, and political views of the workers of an industry.

While Arnott gives little information on the religious life of Scottish and Welsh miners, Williams shows its importance to the Derbyshire miners. Primitive Methodist lay ministers often became leaders of miners’ unions there. This influenced the unions in a pacifist and class collaborationist way, although the social-protest elements of Primitive Methodism should not be underrated. The role of religion was gradually declining even in Derbyshire, but the religious ideology provided an integrating set of ideas that led to a smoother transition to the Labour Party from Nineteenth Century liberalism in Derbyshire than in either Scotland or Wales. The Midlands coal fields were also more modern and mechanized than those of Scotland and Wales, which meant that the Midland miners earned more and that the Midland miners were the best equipped to survive the general crisis of the British coal industry.

As noted above there are certain general reasons that lead one to expect greater radicalism among miners than among other groups of workers: They tend to be concentrated in single-industry towns where economic and political struggles are more-tightly connected; mining is almost exclusively a male occupation; its dangers give miners’ strikes a particularly-fierce aspect, for when safety issues are involved they are literally fighting for their lives; and finally, mining is extremely sensitive to economic fluctuations even in the best of times. From 1920 onward the British coal-mining industry was declining, leaving huge numbers of miners unemployed and isolated in mining towns where no
other work was available. A renascence of anti-English nationalism among the Scottish and Welsh miners made them particularly radical. The mining industry was much more isolated from other sources of employment in Scotland and Wales than in the English Midlands, where there were iron, steel, and textile industries nearby. Hence the Scottish and Welsh miners suffered more during unemployment and it was more difficult for their wives to find work.

Although the CPGB was never a mass party, it has consistently had greater influence in the British working class than the CPUSA has had among American workers. The CPGB has generally been quite strong at the shop-steward level in big metal-workers' unions, on the docks, and in Scottish and Welsh mining. The CPUSA has never had such strong membership support on the lower levels of the unions.

France

France is the first country with a mass Communist Party in this survey. Unfortunately, French historians have been less involved in labor history than the Americans and British, and are oriented to the institutional history of unions and parties that is increasingly outmoded among English-speaking historians because of the influence of E. P. Thompson.

Three good, recent general histories of the Parti Communist Francais (PCF) exist. Jacques Fauvet: Histoire du Parti Communiste Francais, two volumes (Paris, 1964, 1965) is of the hostile - anecdotal school. An official work by the History Commission of the Central Committee of the PCF, Histoire du Parti Communiste Francais (Manuel) (Paris, 1964), conforms to the dullness and inaccuracy which are expected in official histories. An anonymous two-volume Histoire du Parti Communiste Francais is of particular interest because it was put out by PCF members hostile to the Thorez cult in orthodox party history.

Besides these, there are two recent works on the formation of the PCF. Robert Wohl's French Communism in the Making, 1914-1924 (Stanford, 1966) is a detailed political history of the splits in the French Socialist Party (Section Francais de l'Internationale Ouvriere: SFIO) and the CGT. He, like Weinstein and Kendall elsewhere, sees the French CP as an alien form imposed on the French Left, and shows how the growing rigidity and request for complete domination of the Russian CP in the Comintern drove out those French CP leaders of any independence and integrity.

The other recent work on formation of the PCF is Annie Kriegel's Aux Origines du Communisme Francais, 1914-1920: Contribution a l'Histoire du Mouvement Ouvrier Francais, two volumes (Paris, 1964). Kriegel has a companion volume on the growth of the Confederation Generale du Travail, 1918-1920, which tries to use statistics to show
local population — the higher, the more likely to be radical), sex (the higher the percentage of men employed, the more radical), and religion (the less, the more Communists). This means that small towns that aren't single-industry towns aren't likely to have many Communists, and industries like textiles that employ many women are likely to be less radical than industries like mining or metal that employ mostly men. Minority-group status is a source of many frustrations that can lead to an abnormally-high number of Communists, and this is true in Britain not only for Jews, but also for Indians and Greek Cypriots who have made up 10% of the Communists in London. This is related to thwarted nationalism which existed and still exists among the Scottish and Welsh, and has served to intensify working-class radicalism in Scotland and Wales.

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A surprising result of Annie Kriegel's analysis of the split in the SFIO was that many of the pro-Comintern delegates represented the peasant members of the Party. The peasants were more affected by the War than any other class in society: over half the dead and missing were peasants. Many veterans joined the SFIO in a militant mood, contemptuous of the old reformist parliamentary politicians. In many rural departments the countryside was pro-Communist and the towns, with their lawyer - notary - schoolteacher - postman socialists, were anti-Communist. Among the most-revolutionary elements in the Party, alongside the youth movement and the Parisian intellectuals, were the peasants of Lot-et-Garonne Department, led by Reynaud Jean, who was consistently elected to Parliament from the Department. These peasants combined a traditional hostility toward the Government and the Military with a revolutionary anti-urbanism which in this case was directed against capitalism although it was somewhat similar to other peasant sentiment that was hostile to the workers and socialism. Gordon Wright's *Rural Revolution in France: The Peasantry in the Twentieth Century* (Stanford, 1964) suggests that the PCF did well only among the marginal smallholders, share tenants, and landless laborers in parts of the Massif Central and in the Southwest of France, long centers of rural Leftism. His book tells much more about peasant Rightist groups than about the Left, but this is only fitting since the Left was outnumbered two-to-one by the Right among the peasantry.

In the 1920s the PCF had considerable success in Alsace-Lorraine, where there was much resentment against the refusal of the French Government to grant provincial autonomy and the use of the local German dialect in official business. The PCF formed an electoral alliance with Alsatian clerical autonomists, but when the Party line changed to "class against class" in 1929, several Alsatian Communist leaders, including the mayor of Strasbourg, were expelled from the Party for refusal to follow the new line and break their alliance with other autonomous groups. As a result the PCF lost its especially strong position there.

The PCF, unlike the American and British parties, started big and then declined in membership through the Twenties and early Thirties. All three parties grew rapidly from 1934 on, with the Popular Front policy of supporting bourgeois reformist governments like Blum's in France and Roosevelt's in the US. The PCF policies from 1934 to 1938 were to the right of the SFIO, being willing to subordinate any need for changes in the French socio-economic structure to an alliance with any group, however conservative, that would support a policy of alliance with the Soviet Union against Nazi Germany. This policy led the PCF to oppose the continuation of the massive sit-down strikes of June 1936 beyond the signing of the Matignon Accords between central employers' associations and the newly-united CGT. Nevertheless the PCF had such good organization that it was able to expand its trade-union base very rapidly and become the dominant force in the French working class by
French working class children, June, 1936.
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the time of the Stalin-Hitler pact in August 1939. The organized French working-class movement up to 1936 was largely composed of skilled workers, with relatively-weak trade unions. Only in 1936 (almost exactly as in the United States), with the slowdown strikes, did the basic mass of the French industrial proletariat and the low-paid department store clerks organize into the CGT and get trade-union recognition. The Communists were able to win them as supporters because for the most part the SFIO was satisfied to remain an electoral association based largely on the petty bourgeoisie, and the old CGT leaders were content to remain the leaders of the skilled craft workers.

The story of the June 1936 strikes and their aftermath is narrated vividly in Daniel Guerin's *Front Populaire: Revolution Manquee* (Paris, 1963). Guerin was a follower of Marcel Pivert, a semi-Trotskyist, semi-Luxemburgist operating in the SFIO until expelled in 1938. The politics of the Pivertists were similar to those of the International Socialists in the US and Britain today. Guerin and Pivert tried to get the workers to form Soviet-style horizontal associations that would allow them to act on their own initiative outside the hierarchical control of parties and trade unions. Guerin gives an unusually-frank picture of politics, showing the inadequacies and errors of his own group as well as exposing the class-collaborationist politics of all the other political forces.

Henry W. Ehrmann provides another picture of the aftermath of the June 1936 strikes in *French Labor: From Popular Front to Liberation* (New York, 1947). He shows that by 1939 PCF strength in the CGT was concentrated in heavy industry, particularly in the metal and defense industries, while the reformists controlled the craft and white-collar unions as well as such blue-collar workers as miners, sailors, and dockers. The mining and maritime workers became Communist only after World War II. Since these are basic industries with a primarily male work force, one would normally expect them to be Communist. One factor in their non-Communist status in 1939 may be that these were occupations with old unions that were set up and continually controlled by non-Communists. The Communists were most successful when they got in on the ground floor of a union when it was first formed or when it was undergoing a big expansion. We need detailed studies of these groups of workers to be able to be more precise. The PCF vote in the coal-mining areas of the Nord and Pas-de-Calais overtook that of the SFIO in 1936, so it may well be that a lag existed between the switch in the politics of the workers and the installation of Communist union leaders. A trade-union bureaucracy that is long entrenched has many means of thwarting the will of the membership.

There is considerable controversy about just when the PCF became actively involved in the Resistance in World War II, whether right after the Nazis invaded in the summer of 1940 or after the Soviet Union was invaded in the summer of 1941. Whichever it was, by the end of the War the Communists were the largest group in the Resistance, and their
Maquis in the rural areas of France spread their influence to many areas where the Party had been weak or non-existent before. After the War their vote greatly increased again, and they held ministerial positions in the Government until 1947. When the Force Ouvrière, financed by the CIA, split off from the CGT in the late 1940s, the Communists remained in control of the CGT and the lion's share of the organized workers. The Party's vote stabilized at about 25% in France as a whole, and it became clearly the strongest party in the French working class. However it has lost its dynamism and relies more and more on institutions like the trade unions for its base, rather than making gains among new groups.

Germany

The history of the German Communist Party (the Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands: KPD) is better covered than any other Western CP due to the existence of the German Democratic Republic. Not only have sizeable resources been expended in the GDR on the gathering of materials and writing about the German workers' movement, but this has stimulated the West Germans to write in rebuttal. This exchange has been fruitful in bringing forth opposing viewpoints on Germany's working-class history. The subject has been approached on both sides as the history of institutions, with the main question being: "Which party, the SPD or the KPD, is the true leader of the German proletariat, and which state, the Federal Republic or the Democratic Republic, is the best for the German workers?" Relatively few books deal with the German workers themselves, aside from their unions and parties. The methodology of "revisionist" Social Democrats is essentially identical to that of "orthodox" East Germans except for more-frequent reference to Lenin in the East.

The main survey on the East German side is the eight-volume Geschichte der Deutschen Arbeiterbewegung, available in English in a condensed early version, Outline History of the German Working-Class Movement (East Berlin, 1963). Both are by collectives working under the direction of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party (SED). The three best surveys from West Germany are: Die Deutsche Arbeiterbewegung, 1844 bis 1914, by Hedwig Wachenheim (Cologne, 1967); Hammer or Anvil: The Story of the German Working-Class Movement, by Evelyn Anderson (London, 1945); and Geschichte der Deutschen Arbeiterbewegung: Ein Überblick, by Helga Grebing (Munich, 1966). The split in the German workers' movement that resulted in the establishment of the Independent Social Democratic Party (USP) in 1917 and the KPD in 1919 was more than in any other country the product of conflicts fought out within one party, the SPD, and the trade unions that were closely connected to it. Thus the histories of the prewar Socialist movement are of more interest in Germany than elsewhere for their
ability to explain the origins of German Communism. We are served well in English with accounts of short periods of the SPD's history: *The German Social Democrats and the First International, 1864-1872*, by Roger Morgan (Cambridge, England, 1965); *The Outlawed Party: Social Democracy in Germany, 1878-1890*, by Vernon L. Lidtke (Princeton, 1966); *German Social Democracy, 1905-1917: Development of the Great Schism*, by Carl E. Schorske (New York, 1955; paperbound 1965); *The German Social Democratic Party, 1914-1921*, by A. Joseph Berlau (New York, 1949). The main point that emerges from these surveys of the German workers' movement and histories of the SPD is that both the SPD and the trade unions were controlled by a growing bureaucracy that represented primarily the skilled craft workers. During the period 1870-1914 the basic industrial proletariat were growing rapidly, but their interests were not adequately represented by the SPD and the trade unions. The SPD wasn't willing to lead a general strike against unequal suffrage in the states of Northern Germany, where the voting power of the workers was actually being curtailed in the first decade of the Twentieth Century. The trade unions weren't willing to spend money to support organizing strikes that were needed to bring the unorganized, unskilled workers of heavy industry into the trade unions. When large numbers of unskilled workers were present in unions like the German Metalworkers' Union (DMV), they found that these unions were controlled by representatives of skilled metal trades whom it was impossible to dislodge. Even after the upheaval of the First World War and the German Revolution the skilled workers still dominated the DMV. (See Fritz Opel: *Der Deutsche Metallarbeiter-Verband Während des Ersten Weltkrieges und der Revolution* (Hanover, 1957).)

Since the miners were the only occupational group whose voting pattern showed a Communist predominance in the 1920s, it is essential to understand why they came to be dissatisfied with the SPD and the reformist trade-union leaders. The earlier discussion of the general reasons for miner trade-union radicalism is relevant to Germany. Johann Fritsch has written an orthodox, East German account of the politics of the German Miners' Union leaders before the First World War, *Eindringen und Ausbreitung des Revisionismus im Deutschen Bergarbeiterverband (bis 1914)* (Leipzig, 1967). From Fritsch and the surveys, it is apparent that the miners were poorly organized before the War. Although masses of miners joined unions in big strike waves, they quickly left again. Many miners were organized into Catholic trade unions and were supporters of the Catholic Center Party, particularly in Western Germany, where the mine-owners were mostly Protestant and the Prussian state had a tradition of hostility to the Catholic Church. The bourgeois Catholic Center Party could thus pose as the protector of the interests of the Catholic miners against the Protestant employers and state. This gradually broke down, as the Catholic unions proved unwilling to fight hard enough for the interests of the miners.
After the War, many previously-Catholic miners jumped straight to the KPD, skipping the intermediate step of the SPD, which almost all workers in the non-Catholic sections of Germany went through. (See Johannes Schauf: Die Deutschen Katholiken und die Zentrumpartei: Eine Politisch-Statistische Untersuchung der Reichstagswahlen seit 1871 (Cologne, 1928).)

Another factor was the changing composition of the Ruhr miners from old, established miners with guild traditions, religious faith, and comfortable homes with gardens and goats to recent immigrants from the farms of Eastern Germany and Poland, living in slums, wanting to save enough to return home and buy a farm, with no resources to fall back on in times of unemployment. This shift is shown in the work of Wilhelm Brepohl, Industrievolk im Wandel von der Agraren zur Industriellen Daseinsform Dargestellt am Ruhrgebiet (Tubingen, 1957), which traces the pattern of settlement in the Ruhr and shows how the big wave of immigration just before World War I settled in certain areas of the Ruhr that later proved to be the largest sources of Communist votes. Areas of the Ruhr that had been urban earlier and settled more slowly remained Catholic Center or Socialist.

The German mine-owners were among the most-hostile employers toward unionization, and refused to recognize the unions until compelled by the Military to deal with representatives of the workers during the First World War. The story is ably told in Gerald D. Feldman's *Army, Industry, and Labor in Germany, 1914-1918* (Princeton, 1966). At the end of the War, when socialization of the mines appeared imminent, the mine-owners signed a recognition agreement with the labor unions and established an eight-hour day, but as soon as the unions had been sufficiently weakened by the chaos of the split, the occupation of the Ruhr by French troops in 1923, and the inflation, the mine-owners revoked the agreement.

Another heavily-Communist workers’ group in the Weimar Republic were the port and dock workers. Helmut Kral’s excellent analysis of the situation of the ship-builders before the First World War, *Streik auf den Helgen: Die Gewerkschaftlichen Kampfe der Deutschen Werftarbeiter vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg* (East Berlin, 1964), shows how they became alienated by the anti-strike policies of the SPD and reformist trade-union leaders. The main difficulty arose over a huge strike in 1913 that was not called in a manner pleasing to the national leadership of the DMV, who refused to support the strike financially. The strike failed. As a result many dock workers quit both the union and the SPD, since the SPD supported the position of the trade-union leadership. Another source of resentment among the dock workers, concentrated mainly in Hamburg and Bremen, was the unwillingness of the SPD to fight to prevent the weakening of the representation of workers through unequal suffrage in municipal government elections.

The results of the events described by Kral are shown by another fine book, Richard A. Comfort’s *Revolutionary Hamburg: Labor Politics*
in the early Weimar Republic (Stanford, 1966). Comfort shows in detail how the Hamburg trade-union movement was dominated by the traditional craft industries such as building workers, tobacco workers, and printers in spite of the numerical preponderance of workers in mass industries such as the factory, dock, and harbor industries. During the First World War, the workers in the harbors and factories grew more and more restive over the anti-strike policies of the unions and over the bad food-rationing system. When the revolution came in November 1918, the majority of workers supported Communists in the workers' councils, and it was only by relying on the more-conservative soldiers and the terrorist Freikorps that the National Government was able to put down the Hamburg workers. In the 1920s the Hamburg unions were retained by the Socialists, but the Communist Party was preferred by most of the harbor and factory workers in the elections.

Ossip K. Flechtheim's Die KPD in der Weimarer Republik (Frankfurt am Main, 1969, paperbound) has an interesting chapter on the sociology of the KPD. He shows that the skilled-unskilled dichotomy is not wholly adequate to explain the split, since many skilled workers supported the KPD (plumbers in Berlin and cutlery workers in Bolingen and also in Remscheid), while many unskilled workers supported the SPD (textile workers in the non-Catholic areas of Germany in particular, but the workers in the small towns of Northern Germany in general). This shows the need for precision in analysis. In general, however, the KPD was the party of the basic factory proletariat, while the SPD was the party of the craft workers and some of the white-collar workers. Skilled workers in basic industry and mining were often Communists, since many were in situations similar to that of the Clyde Valley metal workers, facing insecurity due to new technology and greater use of semi-skilled machine operatives. Richard Muller's Vom Kaiserreich zur Republik, two volumes (Vienna, 1924) shows that the Berlin shop steward movement that led several militant strikes during the First World War and contributed many members to the KPD was dominated by skilled turners. These workers had the same situation of high bargaining power but insecurity from the increasing employment of semi-skilled workers as did the Clyde metal workers.

An extremely-fascinating picture of an unusual aspect of the early Communist movement in Germany is furnished by Max Hoelz in his autobiography, From White Cross to Red Flag (London, 1930). Hoelz was the leader of several Communist uprisings that took place in the chaotic conditions of postwar Germany. He led a Red army in the mountainous Vogtland in 1919 that stole from the rich and gave to the poor like Robin Hood or someone out of Hobsawm's Primitive Rebels. Among Hoelz's finest exploits was the burning of all the law books and files from the town hall of Falkenstein in the village square. In March 1921 Hoelz was the leader of the military forces of the Communist uprising in the Mansfeld region of Central Germany.

One of the finest studies of the sociology of the rise of Nazism,
Civil War, George Grosz, 1928

William Sheridan Allen's *The Nazi Seizure of Power: The Experience of a Single German Town, 1930-1935* (Chicago, 1965, paperbound) gives a good picture of what life was like for German workers in a typical Northern German small town where there were almost no Communists. His town was quite placid, the only large industry being the railroad, whose workers were considered civil servants and were thus secure against unemployment, paid wages which were regular if low, and able to look forward to receiving a nice pension on retirement. Thus the Social Democrats were not challenged in the workers' movement there until the Depression, when the KPD tried without much success to stir
up interest among the unemployed.

There was a larger Communist movement in Germany in the 1920s than in any other Western country. The reasons for this are complex, but several ideas seem relevant. First, Germany had lost the War, and was forced to pay heavy reparations. Since Germany still remained a capitalist country, the heavy taxes these reparations necessitated came from taxes on the little people, the workers, the small-businessmen, and the peasants, rather than on the large corporations. (American loans played a large part in German reparations, but only from 1924 on.) Germany had no colonies, and there was a temporary decline in German investments abroad. This meant that any economic elbow that the workers in the Western countries had from colonialism and from super-profits in the less-developed countries were absent in Germany. German industrialists, particularly in heavy industry, were certainly not "corporate liberals" by any stretch of the imagination. They were tough, anti-union repressive capitalists who did all they could do to squeeze their workers. Any idea of keeping the class struggle within the bounds of a "pluralist, democratic society" seemed ridiculous to most workers in the heavy industries in which the Communists were concentrated, although it was quite appealing to the Socialist workers in light industry and the small towns. Finally, Germany more than any other country had a real Socialist mass movement before the War. The SPD got a third of the vote nationally in 1912. This SPD experience had raised certain expectations in many workers about what a Socialist society would be like. When the Weimar Republic turned out to be just a capitalist society governed by Socialists, the betrayal seemed to be intolerable, and the KPD grew.

The major problem now facing those who would like to understand the history of the German working class is the Nazi experience. We need to know what effect the twelve years of Hitler's rule had on the workers at the shop level. To what extent were institutions like the German Labor Front and the vacation association, Kraft durch Freude, successful in overcoming the radicalism of German workers? Has the quiescence of the West German workers since the Second World War been a fluke, owing to the unpopularity of Communism because of the anti-worker policies of East Germany, or is it the sign of some deeper process that took place during the Third Reich?

Conclusion

Obviously the Communist Parties were not exactly alike in their recruitment from country to country, since they never gained a mass base among the workers of Britain and the United States, and they did gain such a base in Weimar Germany and in France after 1934. Still, the pattern of working-class radicalization in the last fifty years has some universal components. The round of radicalization in the late Nineteenth Century that brought about the creation of the socialist
parties and the craft unions was based mainly on skilled craft workers who were reacting to the destruction of artisanship in the Nineteenth Century. The creation of the Communist Parties was associated mainly with the rise of industrial unions in heavy industry and mining, based mainly on unskilled workers. This is clearest in France and Germany, where the CP was able to influence the majority of the industrial workers. It is also noticeable in the United States, where the CP was able to play a much larger role in the CIO than it did in the AFL. It is least clear in Britain, where there was no trade-union split along craft and industrial lines, but where there was nevertheless a concentration of Communists in such industrial occupations as mining and metal.

The skilled-worker component of Communism is the strongest in France, Britain, and Germany, where the CP has always been strong in the metal industry since the shop-steward movements of the First World War. Skilled workers reacted sharply to threats to their status, and had strong unions to back up their opposition to new technology that threatened to wipe out their monopoly of certain jobs. The wartime problems of the unskilled workers in the metal industry were great enough so that the unskilled followed the skilled in huge strikes that rocked the munitions production of all three countries in 1917-1918. The shop-steward movements that led these strikes in Britain and Germany played an important role in providing cadre for the later Communist parties. The Communists have done poorly everywhere among skilled workers who weren't being threatened, such as printers.

The ethnic aspect of Communism is most noticeable in the United States, where CP membership has always been concentrated among Eastern European immigrants, Jews, and blacks. It has been important also in Britain, if one considers the nationalism of the Scottish and Welsh. In France, the key examples have been the Alsatians and the Italians. The largest ethnic group, the Bretons, have tended to be conservative, religious, or even fascist in their nationalism rather than Communist. In Germany, the nationalism of Polish workers, many of whom worked in Ruhr and Silesian mining, has been channeled into religious and conservative paths, although there were some instances of co-operation between Communist German miners and Poles in Silesia in the 1920s. The factors that make for radical nationalism rather than for conservative nationalism among minority groups are obviously complex and need further study.

One need not conclude from the fact that the Russian-line Communist Parties have become more and more conservative in the past fifty years that the "end of ideology" is upon us. There can be no question that Russian-line Communism is thoroughly Bourgeoisified; but new social forces (students, unorganized white-collar workers, minorities, women, industrial workers both organized and unorganized who are dissatisfied) remain outside any consensus and may provide the basis for a new radicalism more successful than that studied in this paper.
Poetry
Dan Georgakias

THE NEW JERSEY — BEATTYSTOWN

old man salter sold his fifty-five acres
to shopping center planners.
diamond hill developing seventy new units.
swenson sold his last herd of cows.
schmidt rented his road acreage for a diner.
the state hatchery stocked the musconetcong with rainbow
trouth for the fishermen while the game division grew
cockbirds for hunters to kill.
a vice-president from the new candy factory won
the annual firehouse turkey shoot —
for the first time in memory not one deer
came down from Schooly's Mountain.

THE NEW JERSEY — ROCKPORT

the pasture on the road to rockport
was home for a cow with a half-size fifth leg
growing nonchalantly from its left shoulder.
the other cows didn't seem to even notice
and the birds sang their usual songs
and the green grass flourished
then swenson's death.
then the auction.
a cow butchered for cat food.
a pasture seized by monsters throwing up
ugly wood/brick housing units,
so many 6th, 7th, Nth legs,
dumb clubs smashing down the trees
murdering the grasses
and sending our birds
into exile.
In this issue we are printing several review essays written for an informal seminar in American labor history held last year at the University of Wisconsin. The reviews printed here concern books dealing with various aspects of working-class life and organization in the early Twentieth Century. They are among slightly more than a hundred review essays included in a mimeographed booklet produced by participants in the seminar.

Elizabeth Beardsley Butler: Women and the Trades, Pittsburgh, 1907-1908 (one of six volumes in The Pittsburgh Survey, Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1909)

The Pittsburgh Survey was to be a "fairly comprehensive study of the conditions under which working people live and labor in a great industrial city". The purpose of the survey directors was to bring to the attention of the public, through a carefully-documented study, the need for social legislation which would eliminate some of the worst abuses of the factory and sweat-shop system. Women and the Trades, one of the six volumes of the Survey, is a description of the conditions in the manufacturing and mercantile industries in which the majority of the employees were women. The following industries, in which a total of 22,185 women were employed, were studied: food production (canning

American Labor History: Critical Summaries for an Interdisciplinary Seminar at the University of Wisconsin, February-August 1970 (268 pages, available from Radical America at cost: $2, no bulk discount)

Radical graduate students in history, sociology, economics, English taking part in this seminar read and summarized over a hundred books and articles on American working-class history up to the present. The summaries are grouped under the following topics: Class Structure, Race, and Work in the Colonial Period; Workers and Slaves in the Early Nineteenth Century; Workers' Lives, 1860-1929; Development of Organizations Among Workers, 1860-1929; Immigrant and Black Workers, 1860-1929; Management Strategies in the Twentieth Century; Labor in the 1930s; Is There a Working Class?; The Role of Unions; Racism and Workers; Women's Work.
and cracker industries, confectionery factories): 2,726 women; stogy industry (32 factories, 203 sweat shops): 2,611; garment trades (28 factories, numerous sweat shops): 1,494; laundry industry: 2,685; metal, lamp, glass trades: 2,818; mercantile establishments: 7,540; telephone and telegraph operation: 777; printing: 397.

This book is easy reading. As the author pictures in fairly-vivid detail the working life of these women, one gets a real sense of what the oppression of workers consisted of during the period of intense industrialization. While Elizabeth Butler preserves to a certain extent the detachment of the researcher (presenting a total of 77 comparative tables giving very-precise data on wages, hours, distribution of work, et cetera for each trade studied), there emerges a uniformly-appalling picture of women’s work: long, exhausting hours spent in performing painfully-monotonous tasks in crowded, dirty workrooms for merely subsistence wages.

Wages — The Piece Rate, “Equal Pay for Equal Work”: In many of the trades, wages depended on how much workers produced. (In sweat shops and garment factories, women were paid for each piece they sewed; in stogy shops, by the number of cigars rolled or the number of pounds of tobacco stripped.) As a result, the women were forced to “oppress” themselves in the effort to produce. Speed was emphasized, and women literally wore themselves out under the strain, unable to maintain a high rate of speed for more than two or three years. Girls often started at the age of 14 years and were unfit for further work by their early 20s. In the unskilled jobs which were the lowest paid, speed was particularly important, and this strain combined with monotony.

Monotony of Work: This can best be conveyed by an example. In the stogy industry, one of the unskilled jobs held by many women was that of stripping tobacco: 10 hours or more a day of the purely-mechanical work of pulling out the stem of filler tobacco, throwing the leaf into a scale, and tying the tobacco pound by pound. The wages for this job on the “piece rate” averaged $3.50 a week.

Hours: The 60-hour work week — 10 hours a day, 6 days a week — was the legal limit imposed by Pennsylvania law; however illegal overtime was widespread, particularly during the rush months (August through December).

Surroundings: Few employers, whether they ran factories or sweat shops, were concerned with the decency of the workers’ surroundings. The workshop that had suitable lighting, was swept clean daily, allowed proper circulation of fresh air, and took safety precautions, was an exception. The opposite was the rule. The sweat shop was the worst — a cramped single room in a cellar or attic without daylight, crowded with workers literally kept at their tasks from morning till night.

One knows that these unbelievable conditions existed; nevertheless it is always a shock when one is presented with the bleak lives these workers were forced to lead, and from which there appears to have been little escape. This brings us to those questions raised earlier in
the course: First: Was there a real prospect of escape from the working class or even the illusion of upward mobility? And second: Was the pattern of immigration responsible for the lack of cohesion within the working class?

According to the data in this book, there is a connection between a woman's nationality and the type and quality of the job she obtained. There was a real division along national lines, not only within the trades, but from trade to trade as well. Within the trades, native-born American girls were consistently found in the best positions. Slavic women, on the other hand, accepted unskilled jobs that women of other nationalities regarded as socially inferior. The worst jobs fell to those women who had most-recently immigrated, Slavs and Italians, though the Italian women were more tied to the home and resistant to factory work than other women. In terms of status, clerking was considered among the best jobs, and one finds that saleswomen were predominantly native-born, or of Irish, German, or in some cases Jewish descent.

The garment trades employed a high number of American and Jewish women, the best jobs going to the Americans, while Irish and German women held subordinate positions and Slavic women were found in the most-inferior jobs. Elizabeth Butler maintains in her study that length of settlement was related to the industrial success of the immigrant groups. There is also evidence of division along national lines from trade to trade. Slavic women, following the occupations of Slavic men, tended toward glass-making and metal trades, while Jewish women predominated in the garment trades and English-speaking women were strongest in telephone and telegraph offices, millinery houses, and the printing trades.

On this slight evidence, it would seem that there was at least the appearance of upward mobility within the industries. Consequently it might have been possible for the very oppressed to hope for an escape from their situation in time. Also it seems that to some extent national divisions were perpetuated when certain nationalities migrated toward particular industries, and this could well have had some effect on the fragmentation of the American working class.

Connie Pohl


This book is in many respects complementary to Steve Scheinberg's dissertation in showing the development of an ideological basis for the integration of unions into the corporate system. The basic ideology developed by Frederick W. Taylor and his followers — that increased
productivity is a solvent for social conflict — is in some ways the essence of corporate liberalism. (Stated so broadly, this idea is not very different from the basic tenet of Adam Smith's liberalism, or Mandeville's, that "Private Vices" are "Public Benefits". But there is significant stress on the particular problem of the employer-employee relationship, and corporations are generally assumed to be the active agents in pursuing efficiency for the common good.)

Despite the potential for agreement, the relations between unions and scientific management before World War I were characterized by much conflict. There was some conflict in shops in which various scientific management techniques were introduced before Brandeis first brought "scientific management" to public attention in 1911, but the real battle was over Taylorism in the government arsenals, with unions emerging successful in getting the stopwatch and bonus wage systems banned in the arsenals from 1916 until 1949. The techniques the unions especially opposed were time studies, which they feared would lead to speed-ups; job analysis, which was associated with craft-skill dilution; and the incentive wage systems, not only more difficult to understand and to prevent abuse of, but also explicitly designed to reward individual achievement and ambition, and thus counter to the notion of collective determination of wages for similar groups of workers.

On the engineers' side, Taylor himself, and most of his disciples, tended to share the general hostility of management toward unions.

Unions were viewed as misleading workers for the sake of their own bureaucratic and political ends. It was thought to be inherent in the nature of unions to restrict output, in direct conflict with scientific management's goal of increasing productivity, and collective bargaining with such unions meant compromising "science" with "ignorance". And finally it was believed that scientific management would obviate the need for unions, by allowing the payment of higher wages as a result of increased efficiency, as well as by eliminating some "inefficient" (for example fatiguing) grievances. By the time of the 1912 Congressional investigation of Taylorism in the arsenals, Taylor had developed a line of defense which made a "mental revolution" on the part of management a necessary part of the definition of scientific management, so that any abuse could be attributed to "charlatans" applying technique piecemeal, without the "mental revolution". As part of this revolution, Taylor put a great deal of emphasis on the co-operation of management and labor, but in 1909 he defined workers' "co-operation" as "to do what they are told to do promptly without asking questions or making suggestions". This emphasis on scientific management as a way of winning workers' allegiance away from unions was later developed by such people as Elton Mayo (with less emphasis on Taylor's financial incentives) into a manipulative "human relations" management, a development largely ignored by Nadworny.

The basis for a rapprochement between scientific management and the unions after Taylor's death in 1915 was foreshadowed on both sides
before the War. Labor leaders, before the Commission on Industrial Relations in 1914, went beyond their simple opposition to particular techniques, and broached what Nadworny feels was the key issue, by saying that scientific management techniques might be acceptable if they were made subject to collective bargaining. On the engineers’ side some found that resistance to the introduction of systems of scientific management could be reduced by more democratic participation of the workers. Lillian Gilbreth’s emphasis on the “human element” in her Psychology of Management in 1914, while not necessarily pro-union, at least broke with Taylor’s mechanistic “one right way”. But the key move was a paper given by Robert Valentine to the Taylor Society in December 1915: “The Progressive Relationship Between Efficiency and Consent”. Both the general emphasis on “consent” (instead of Taylor’s “natural laws”) in Valentine’s approach to efficiency, and his specific recommendations for management to deal with groups rather than with individual workers, preferably through unions, marked a new path. This rapprochement, which was stimulated by engineers and labor leaders working together in government agencies during World War I, was formalized by a symposium in the 1920 Annals on “Labor, Management, and Production” edited jointly by Gompers, Morris Cooke of the Taylor Society, and Fred J. Miller of the ASME. This ideological alliance was confirmed by friendly exchanges of guest speakers at several points in the ’20s, and involved not only engineers’ advocacy of independent unions despite the prevailing open-shop climate, but also the AF of L’s adoption of a pro-productivity policy. Herbert Hoover was a key figure in another engineers’ endeavor, the Federated American Engineers’ Society’s study of waste in industry in 1920, which was designed to bring home “management’s responsibility” for waste, especially labor conflict and unemployment.

The engineers’ advocacy of union recognition clearly could not have had much effect during the ’20s (including many scientific management shops). The major area of activity, outside of speech-making, was in several “union-management co-operation” schemes, the most notable being those of the B&O Railroad, the Naumkeag Steam Cotton Company, and the ILGWU in New York and Cleveland. These plans involved union participation, through collective bargaining, in instituting changes in production methods to increase efficiency. At one extreme, they were simply production-process-oriented grievance mechanisms or systems for eliciting worker suggestions for improved management. Through gaining worker acceptance of management-initiated changes in process of production, they could sometimes force management to strive for non-labor cost-cutting as well, and provide significant cushioning of the disruption and sharing of the benefits of an inevitable stretchout, as at Naumkeag. This sort of schemes tended to break down during the Depression, though they did better where there was some rank-and-file involvement, as at the B & O, than where it was largely a process of negotiation between management and union leaders, as at Naumkeag.
In the garment industry, union recognition of the need for, and their co-operation in achieving, greater efficiency is one phase of the well known role of the industrial unions in rationalizing fragmented industry — although this role was not satisfactorily institutionalized until the '30s, when both the ACWA and ILGWU set up independent management engineering services.

In the chapter on the '30s, which is largely cut in the book version, Nadworny notes a continuation of the scientific management movement position to the left of most nominally business groups. With just a few exceptions, they endorsed the various legislative efforts to protect collective bargaining. Taylorites figured in such New Deal agencies as the REA, the FWA, and various labor relations boards, and many were interested in national economic planning. On the union side, the co-operation between unions and management tended to lie dormant until the late '30s. The AF of L used its experience with "co-operation" as an argument against the CIO at times, and in general, once union recognition was secure, many unions showed an interest in the joint administration of scientific management techniques. This interest was aimed in part at immediate issues, such as protecting job security in the face of technological change or being better able to formulate wage demands; but in part it reflected the change in union power since the '20s, with union-management co-operation being an effort to extend the scope of union influence over "management prerogatives" instead of, as in the '20s, being an opening wedge to try to justify collective bargaining in business terms.

Evan Metcalf

Selig Perlman: A Theory of the Labor Movement, 1928

Perlman concludes his work with a call for intellectuals who will eschew revolutionary visions for the working class, and will instead try to endow the labor philosophy which accepts capitalism "with an attractiveness which only specialists in thinking in general concepts and in inventing 'blessed words' for these concepts are capable of". This is surely the purpose of his book, a paean to economist American unionism and a polemic against Marxist labor theory.

Unfortunately Perlman never counters the Marxist analysis with one of his own, but merely dismisses it as "utopian" and "dogmatic". His main refutation of revolutionary ideas lies in showing that they have not taken hold among workers unless under exceptional circumstances. The first half of the book takes up those exceptions: the Russian Revolution, whose success he attributes to the Bolshevik appeasement of a land-hungry peasantry; the radical turn of the English labor movement with the formation of the Labour Party, which he ascribes
to a unique crisis in the economy; and the original German workers’ movement, whose repudiation of socialism and political action he now views as a sign of a new era in the integration of labor.

Most of the book is an explanation and defense of the conservative policies of the AF of L, collaboration with capitalists in established political parties, decentralization, craft organizing around job security. Perlman argues that the development of a radical labor movement in America was precluded by: the identification of labor with producers’ movements such as farmers’ anti-monopoly politics; the acceptance of an individualistic, competitive ethos; the strength of the ideal of private property; mobility, attained first through land acquisition, then through education; the inability of the “pluralistic” American state, dominated by a middle class, to undertake economic reform; the absence of cohesion due to immigration; the openness of the political system to workers and the absorption of “talent” into management.

These factors are all asserted, not demonstrated. Several of them are entirely-subjective criteria which lend a tautological quality to his argument — there’s no radical consciousness in America, so radical ideas are wrong here. (Where there are radical forces Perlman writes off their significance, as with European labor.) The argument is that revolutionaries don’t understand workers, but abstract them into a historical force. Perlman replies with his own stereotype based on the “workingman’s psychology” of scarcity: obsession with security, lack of initiative. This psychology, rather than objective social position, constitutes the main difference between worker and capitalist. Perlman asserts confidently that workers don’t want power and that they eschew the “risks of management”.

Thus he denies the basic Marxist assumption, class conflict inherent in economic and social relations, with his own belief in class harmony. “The only solidarity natural in industry is the solidarity which unites all those in the same business establishment, whether employer or employed.” (Perlman finds it easy to write off decades of violent labor conflict.) The reason for this harmony, according to Perlman, is that “practical trade unionists” recognize the necessity of the profit motive to good management. The author seems to contradict himself, however, in a later argument that the profit-oriented owners have yielded power to efficiency-minded managers. Anyway, his assumption of harmony is just repeated in his conclusion — the need for a labor movement which will assuage the hostility of business so they can work together for the increase in productivity which is in the interest of both. The sole evidence for this conclusion is that labor in the mid-‘20s seems to favor such a policy.

The real conflict is not between labor and capital, but between trade-union members and radical intellectuals who would impose irrelevant and probably foreign ideologies. The correctness of the AF of L approach is proven not by economic or historical analysis but by its “naturalness” to the worker mentality. (Lenin would agree
that workers are spontaneously economist, but assert that this pits them against real conditions.) To establish this naturalness Perlman tries to show that it was present even in the earliest form of labor organization, the medieval guild. The guilds insured work to a closed group of craftsmen by regulating prices, standards, apprenticeship, and volume of production. Then he turns to the oldest American union, the International Typographers, to find the same emphasis on restriction of trade and guaranteed work. "Unionism's deepest concern remains the right to job opportunities." Perlman envisages a partnership in which capitalists monopolize the means of production but the unions monopolize the jobs through participation in decisions regarding the introduction of machinery, et cetera.

The medieval precedent is revealing, for it points to the author's complete evasion of an analysis of advanced capitalism. Thus he can ignore such questions as the needs of unskilled labor, the absence of full employment, international competition and wars, internal economic dislocations. His thesis rests on an explicit assumption of capitalist stabilization and growth. The irony, of course, is that this assertion of "capitalist vitality" was written in 1928!

The lack of analysis and short-sighted empiricism leads to other glaring historical miscalculations. Perlman praises German workers for their nationalism and their increasing abstention from political activity—the very factors which a few years later would pave the way for Hitler. With that in mind, some of Perlman's positions seem more portentous. In his summation he points to the "advanced trade-union philosophy" espoused by a contemporary German sociologist, Karl Zwing. He praises Zwing's call for a new society neither capitalist nor socialist, "but an abandonment of the class struggle and a spiritual surrender to the protagonists of social harmony". Setting his agreement with Zwing's denunciation of democracy alongside the argument that workers don't want and shouldn't have political participation which runs all through the book, one begins to wonder just what kind of permutation of "individualism and collectivism" that might be.

Jackie DiSalvo
Coal miners coming out of shaft on cage, Scranton, Pa.
THE C.L.R. JAMES ISSUE OF R.A. GAVE YOU SOME EXCERPTS — HERE ARE THE COMPLETE WORKS:

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SEND ALL ORDERS NOW TO:
Friends of Facing Reality Publications
Book Service Room 220
14131 Woodward Avenue,
Detroit, Michigan 48203.
F. Perlman and R. Gregoire: Worker-Student Action Committees (Black and Red, Box 9546, Detroit, Michigan, 96 pages, $1, available from Radical America)

The Mass Strike in France: May–June 1968 (Root & Branch Pamphlet Number 3, 59 pages, 75c, available from Left Mailings, 275 River Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139)

Perlman and Gregoire were both participants in the May events. A few of the essays were written during May and June in France, while the rest were written when Perlman returned to the United States. The pamphlet is an excellent, exciting account of the events and an analysis of (1) why May happened, and (2) why it did not lead to revolution. The rejection of bourgeois society (commodity production and relations) is analyzed by the authors as being the motive force behind the students' actions and then the workers' actions, an analysis similar to American New Left understanding of American radicals and American society.

The second problem is much more difficult. Rejecting Leninism, the authors feel that the reason links between workers and students did not develop was the students' reliance on spontaneity. Perlman writes:

By telling themselves that it was “up to the workers” to take the factories, a “substitution” did take place, but it was the opposite from the one the anarchists preferred. The militants substituted the inaction (or rather the bureaucratic action) of the workers' bureaucracies, which was the only “action” the workers were willing to take, for their own action. The anarchist argument, in fact, turned the situation upside down. The militants went in front of the factories and allowed the bureaucracies to act instead of them.

Perlman feels that this is “a blind application of the anti-bureaucratic tactic to a situation in which the tactic has no application at all”. The essay implies that the situation was not pressed to its limit because no “militant minority” of workers existed, and the students were unwilling to take this role.
The second pamphlet was written by Information Correspondance Ouvriere (ICO), a group of workers who met to compare their various experiences in the shops. The pamphlet was written by those who took part in ICO's meetings in Paris during May and June 1968, and was published in America by Root & Branch, followers of Anton Pannekoek and other European council communists. The thrust and analysis of what happened is quite different from that presented by the first work.

The ICO study begins with a commentary on French capitalism's economic problems, the dynamic behind May-June. The writers view this crisis in terms of dollars and cents. As they say:

In this (French economic development and problems over the past twenty years) lies the profound economic reason for the student "malaise" throughout the world. Students question a system which can no longer offer traditional opportunities. They discover on this occasion the existence of unemployment and the idiocy of the system of production.

According to this account students reject capitalism because they can't get a job. There is no analysis of why the movement failed. There is no attempt to understand false consciousness — that is, how the workers allowed the power to slip back into the hands of union bureaucrats.

ICO sees its role as that of educating and pushing the movement in its natural direction — that of forming workers' councils. But they do not see themselves as militant minorities which initiate actions and reject all forms of organization besides that of workers' councils.

Together the two pamphlets make good reading, since Perlman and Gregoire concentrate on the subjective conditions in France, while ICO examines the objective conditions of French capitalism.

Sean Bayer

James A. Martin: Men Against the State: Expositors of Individualist Anarchism in America (Ralph Myles, Colorado Springs, Colorado, 1970, 315 pages, bibliography, notes, index, $2.50)


Recent bombings, kidnappings, and attempted assassinations directed against the more-conspicuous symbols of an oppressive corporate government monolith have renewed interest once again in anarchism. The emotive identification of anarchism with terrorism and violence has been the nemesis of anarchists since the era of "propaganda by the
deed* in the 1880s and 1890s. One gets a distinct feeling of deja vu from the latest repressive crusade launched against those heretical dissidents whose revolutionary aims threaten to overthrow America’s undemocratic misgovernment. The present scare is both rhetorical and real — ask any Weatherman or Black Panther. Both liberals and conservatives, maybe not such strange bedfellows after all, have buried their differences and linked their frightened arms in a holy alliance against what they erroneously think is anarchism.

Few in the United States have risen to defend anarchism from this frenzied onslaught. Although historically American Leftists have found comfort and inspiration in writings by Bakunin, Kropotkin, Proudhon, and other European anarchists, they were never able to raise their libertarian impulses to the stature of a viable revolutionary alternative. Both as a system of social thought and as a social movement, American anarchism seems like a dwarfed mutant when it is juxtaposed with its European counterpart. Moreover, lacking such prominent historical apologists as Daniel Guerin, James Joll, and George Woodcock, the anarchist tradition of the United States, until very recently, has been the mistreated and unwanted bastard of American radicalism.

Eunice Schuster and James Martin have made impressive attempts to retrieve American anarchism from its premature grave, and restore some of the richness and brilliance it legitimately deserves. Martin’s book, originally published in 1953, makes great strides beyond the wasteland of native anarchist historiography. Bolstered by tedious research and documentation, Martin has made a pioneer effort to rectify gross misunderstandings and deliberate distortions that for so long doomed anarchism to obscurity and abuse. Unfortunately, Martin’s obsession with objectivity and accuracy makes for dry, monotonous reading. And, though Men Against the State is remarkably detailed and comprehensive, analysis is superficial and notably scarce.

Native American Anarchism fares a little better in this respect. Written as her master’s thesis in 1932 at Smith College, Schuster’s work covers a longer period in shorter space without sacrificing scope or depth. Less myopic than most intellectual history, it is a more sensitive and perceptive treatment of the origins and failures of native anarchism than Martin was able to produce more than 20 years later.

Yet, when all is said and done, both books are disappointing — not for what they say, but for what they do not say. Whatever the merits of concentrating on native individualist anarchists like Josiah Warren, Lysander Spooner, and Benjamin Tucker, the picture is incomplete without a discussion of the immigrant anarchist strand. Johann Most, Emma Goldman, Alexander Berkman, and numerous other radical immigrants are portrayed as foreign anomalies in the indigenous mainstream. Yet it was precisely these “foreigners” who attempted to transcend the narrow individualism that immobilized native anarchist potential and made it the impotent ideology of an isolated elite. These
German-American, Italian-American, and Russian-American radicals breathed new life into the deteriorating American anarchist movement with their creative efforts to adjust anarchist thought to the inescapable conditions of a newly-emerging urban-industrial order. In a dialectic response to the changing social-economic realities, they refined and adapted libertarian thought, freeing it from the rigid confines of the pre-industrial agrarian individualism. And while in the long run the immigrant anarchists fared no better than native American individualist anarchists, they, nonetheless, deserve more than footnote attention in any study that purports to deal with American anarchism.

Martin Verhoeven


The editors tell us in their foreward that they want this book to be a general introduction to Lenin's thought and life, and in many ways it serves this purpose admirably. Lenin's ideas and their place in the US revolution will not be settled in an essay, a small book, or even an encyclopedia of books. This will only be done through political practice and political theory, as Lenin himself would have been the first to say. The authors of the eight essays that compose the book understand this clearly, and have not tried to lay down any line. Instead, they have dealt with Lenin's ideas on the role of the party, Imperialism, "Aristocracy of Labor", the cultural revolution, and the problems of the Socialist State in a way that can serve only to open discussions, not to end them.

The one essay that relates directly to the United States and political movements that are going on is James and Grace Boggs's "The Role of the Vanguard Party". It is an excellent essay that tries to understand what Leninism would mean in terms of a Black Revolutionary Party. The essay points out that this is a transitional period for the Black movement between the end of the Civil Rights movement, which laid the groundwork for the now-emerging Black Liberation struggle, and the problems this presents.

Always stressing the need for "a scientific, that is, historical and dialectical, method" that must make an objective analysis of the social forces in the world and in the United States, the Boggses reject all dogmatic and mechanical formulas. The structure and program must come from the present situation, and not from Russia of 1917 or from China.

Along with arguments against spontaneity and Blacks rejecting Lenin because he was White is an analysis of when a "revolutionary party becomes historically necessary", that is, "when the contradictions and antagonisms of a particular society have created a mass social force whose felt needs cannot be satisfied by reforms but only by revolution
which takes power away from those in power". They feel that the time to begin is now.

Several other essays in the book, such as Martin Nicolaus's "The Theory of the Labor Aristocracy" and Ralph Miliband's "The State and Revolution", are also good. Other articles are on the relationship of US Imperialism to Latin America and Africa, and the way in which Lenin's conception of the party was a dynamic (that is, not a static) view. The only article that shouldn't be included is George Thompson's "From Lenin to Mao Tse-tung", the purpose of which "is to outline the dictatorship of the proletariat, as developed by Lenin, and to show briefly how it has been maintained and deepened by Mao Tse-tung". Not because this point is or is not true, but because it is not shown by twenty-two quotations from Lenin, eight from Mao and Lin Piao, and two from Stalin about the necessity for workers' control and cultural revolution.

The collection was originally published as the April issue of Monthly Review and can probably be obtained as a back issue for about $1.25.

SB


The nature and significance of the May revolt in France has not yet been sufficiently analyzed, despite the plethora of books on the subject, especially in French. This collection of documents concentrates on the student role in what the bourgeois press calls the "May events", and deals with them exhaustively by means of systematic documentation and annotation. For anyone seriously interested in understanding the nature, development, and limits of the most-significant manifestation of New Left action in a developed capitalist society, this book is a must. And, by the same token, it is a "must" for us to understand the successes and failures of May.

H. Sandkuhler (editor): Psychoanalyse und Marxismus, Dokumentation einer Kontroverse (Suhrkamp Verlag, 1970, 315 pages)

After a period of uneasy coexistence with the Freudo-Marxism of Wilhelm Reich, the orthodoxy of the Third International felt Reich's teachings had become a menace to its own position, and excluded him and his followers. At first the psychoanalytical social critique seemed to aid the Communist propaganda, even in Russia, where the work of Vera Schmidt was encouraged for a time; but then what Hans Sandkuhler
calls the “revolutionary reality principle” came into play, and the goal of a non-repressed society appeared utopian. The typical “orthodox” criticism of Freudo-Marxism turns around the following objections, in Sandkuhler’s words: “Psychoanalysis is a product of the declining bourgeoisie; it is an idealistic, non-materialistic theory of subjectivity without a class perspective; it carelessly utilizes results of individual investigation for an analysis of mass phenomena, and thus degenerates from science to a Weltanschauung; its biologism is responsible for its lack of historical consciousness, and its notion of a psychic nature which is ambivalent as opposed to libido and aggression is pre-rational and mythological; it absolutizes knowledge derived from the family relations in declining capitalism; and finally, it reflects the seemingly senseless world of dying capitalism as an unconscious world ruled by ‘pansexuality’.”

Sandkuhler’s book contains a series of essays, pro and con, debating the nature of Freudo-Marxism. Due to the confused copyright situation, only one of Wilhelm Reich’s essays (“Dialectical Materialism and Psychoanalysis”) is included in the book, along with two contributions by Siegfried Bernfeld, and essays by I. Sapir, W. Jurinetz, and A. Stoljarov. These texts are of prime importance today, at a time when, thanks to the work of Herbert Marcuse, questions raised and debated by the Sex-Pol Movement are once again being seriously posed.

C. Riechers: Antonio Gramsci: Marxismus in Italien (Europaische Verlagsanstalt, 1970, 251 pages)

Christian Riechers, who previously translated a large volume of Gramsci’s writings into German, explains in his introduction that he had for several years accepted the prevailing view that the Gramsci of the “prison notebooks” was the hidden key to the understanding and the changing of modern capitalist conditions, but that his study of Gramsci convinced him that this was in fact not the case. The book, then, is a thoroughgoing critique of Gramsci, the first half of which is historical and biographical, treating Gramsci’s relation to the intellectual and political currents in Italy, and the second half of which contains a critique of Gramsci’s Marxism.

The second part of this book is exceedingly rich in ideas, treating Gramsci in relation to Lukacs and Korsch, to the philosophy of Croce, to the idealism of Bogdanov, and to Lenin. Riechers undertakes a sustained critique of the major theoretical innovations of Gramsci by comparing them to the positions of Marx and Lenin, and showing that Gramsci expressed a quite-different position from either, be it on the notion of Hegemony, the materialist nature of Marxism, the relation of philosophy and Marxism, or the notion of political theory as subjective idealism and its relation to praxis.

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Space prohibits detailed presentation of Riecher's critiques. Suffice it that, for this reader, Gramsci emerged from this presentation as a far more relevant theoretician than either the Marx presented by Riechers or (especially) than Lenin. It is important that we come to grips with the critiques of Riechers; the idea of a philosophy of praxis, the notion that Marxism is not a crude materialist ideology but rather the summation and transcendence of all past bourgeois thought and creation, the theory of Hegemony and the relation of the state to civil society and the implications of this relation for revolutionary praxis—these are questions which we still have to pose in order to understand the actual actions which we are undertaking.

Dick Howard

Paul Mattick: Marx and Keynes (Boston, Porter-Sargent, 1969, $6.95)

Paul Mattick is the most serious Marxist economist writing in the United States today, and any book of his would be an important event. That is not to say that his volume on Marx and Keynes is an unmixed blessing. But whatever its errors or its limitations, it takes Marxism seriously. Mattick's treatment of such phenomena as the law of value (Chapter 3) and the falling rate of profit (Chapter 6) offers a refreshing change from the theoretical superficiality of Paul Sweezy and dogmatic incomprehensibility of Ernest Mandel.

Sweezy can write that he is "particular conscious of the fact" that his general approach "has resulted in almost-total neglect of a subject which occupies a central place in Marx's study of capitalism: the labor process" (Monopoly Capital, Page 8) and be apparently unaware that the elimination of the labor process and of the working class as a revolutionary force (ibid., Page 9) has transformed his categories into bourgeois categories, devoid of contradiction and of the necessity of development. Unlike Sweezy, Mattick is not situated in the Left wing of bourgeois economics.

Nor does Mattick commit the error of Mandel, who can write two volumes on Marxist economics and neglect to mention once the crucial distinction between value and exchange value which Marx makes in the very first chapter of Capital. Mattick, on the whole, accepts economic categories as workable theoretical tools, not as precious little icons to be worshipped but kept safely away from the hustle and bustle of real life.

Mattick's book, nevertheless, suffers from considerable unevenness. The introduction notes that the book "is not presented as a consecutive narrative, however; various of its parts have been written on different occasions and at different times." (Page viii) But some contradictions go deeper than just a simple reflection of the book's poor organization.
The analysis of Keynes is much needed and goes a long way toward a final accounting of Keynesian theory. Keynesian economic theory is not simply a theoretical innovation which has achieved considerable popularity. It is the reflection in bourgeois economic theory of a new stage of capitalism and the inadequacy of earlier economic theory to deal with it. Mattick establishes without any question that Keynes was bourgeois, that is, concerned with the maintenance of a fundamentally capitalist society, and he also establishes that the kind of "managed" economic system which Keynesianism (including the multitude of Keynes's successors) argued for does not in any really serious way eliminate the crises of capitalism.

Mattick has a very fine formulation that exposes the neo-Marxist (and Keynesian) belief that the roots of crises are in over-production or under-consumption: "The actual glut on the commodity market must be caused by the fact that labor is not productive enough to satisfy the profit needs of capital accumulation. Because not enough has been produced, capital cannot expand at a rate which would allow for the full realization of what has been produced. The relative scarcity of surplus labor in the production process appears as an absolute abundance of commodities in the circulation process and as the overproduction of capital." (Page 79) (See also lengthier passages on Pages 78-79.)

Mattick comes close to settling accounts with Keynes as the founding

MARX AND KEYNES:

The Limits of the Mixed Economy

by Paul Mattick

A critical analysis of contemporary capitalism coupled with analyses of both Marxian and Keynesian economic theory provides a clearly reasoned argument for the author's statement that the problems inherent in capitalism are not subject to solution by the application of Keynesian mixed economy theory. As Mr. Mattick states in the Epilogue: "...Keynesianism merely reflects the transition of capitalism from its free-market to a state-aided phase and provides an ideology for those who momentarily profit by this transition. It does not touch upon the problems Marx was concerned with."

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father of the theory of state capitalism, at least in its welfare-state form, in the following passage: "Though carried out in the name of Marx, the state-capitalist, or state-socialist, revolutions would be better described as 'Keynesian revolutions'. What is usually designated as the 'Keynesian revolution' is Keynes's recognition and acceptance of the fact of intensive state intervention in the economy.... Arising at the same time as the mixed economy, the state-capitalist system may be regarded as Keynesian in its most-consistent and most-developed form." (Pages 279-280) The foundation is laid for a critique of Mandel, Sweezy, and company as more Keynesian than Marxist.

But unfortunately Mattick places certain limits on his understanding. Essentially the limits stem from the fact that although he recognizes the importance of the working class and the process of production to Marxian economic theory, his understanding of the working class is very abstract, and he constantly falls into the habit of dealing with property forms instead of with social relations. The crucial point is the use of the term "mixed economy". In one sense every capitalist economy is a mixed economy, since there is always some government ownership or regulation in the most laissez-faire system, and there is some free enterprise in the most completely-nationalized economy. But a term so universal loses its value in distinguishing changes in stages. (Mattick's hostility to Lenin and his refusal to deal at all with Lenin's theory of imperialism as a distinct stage of capitalism doesn't help matters at all.)

In most of the book Mattick makes a completely-formal distinction between mixed economy and state capitalism. What is worse, he insists too often on an absolute dichotomy between the "private sector" and the "public sector". If he had a concrete sense of the working class and its role in production, he could not be so misled. To the worker, there is no social difference in working for a British nationalized coal mine or for an American privately-owned coal mine; there is no distinction between working for nationalized Renault or for private-enterprise Citroen, between working for US Steel or for the Russian steel trust. That it may be of decisive importance to particular capitalists is of entirely-minor importance.

Mattick seems to be unaware that both Marx and Engels were very much aware, at least in theory, of the movement toward complete state capitalism. Marx says in Volume 1 of Capital that "The limit (of centralization) would not be reached in any particular society until the entire social capital would be united, either in the hands of one single capitalist or in those of one single corporation." (Kerr/Modern Library edition, Page 688) Any way you wish to interpret that, it's the economic form of state capitalism.

Engels, who was witness to later developments, spells it out in more detail: "...with trusts or without, the official representative of capitalist society — the state — will ultimately have to undertake the direction of production....
"If the crises demonstrate the incapacity of the bourgeoisie for managing any longer modern productive forces, the transformation of the great establishments for production and distribution into joint-stock companies, trusts, and state property shows how unnecessary the bourgeoisie are for that purpose. All the social functions of the capitalist are now performed by salaried employees....

"But the transformation, either into joint-stock companies and trusts or into state ownership, does not do away with the capitalistic nature of the productive forces. In the joint-stock companies and trusts this is obvious. And the modern state, again, is only the organization that the bourgeois society takes on in order to support the external conditions of the capitalist mode of production against the encroachments as well of the workers as of individual capitalists. The modern state, no matter what its form, is essentially a capitalist machine, the state of the capitalists, the ideal personification of the total national capital. The more it proceeds to the taking over of productive forces, the more citizens it exploits. The workers remain wage workers—proletarians. The capitalist relation is not done away with. It is rather brought to a head...." (Marx and Engels: Selected Works, Progress Publications, 1968, Pages 427-428)

In light of this, Mattick's distinction between "private" and "public" sectors in the "mixed economy" and the presentation of "the private sector as profitable and the public sector as not profitable (Pages 154, 189, 190, et cetera) makes no sense. Or rather it makes bourgeois sense—the abandonment (if only temporarily) of Marx's categories of capital and profit for the very-different bourgeois categories of capital and profit. The book abounds with such "slips" or contradictions or just plain mistakes. But when the reader has almost resigned himself to the conclusion that all is lost, Mattick recovers himself and shows his awareness of the theoretical methodology that is at the heart of Capital in some statement such as the following: "As long as the capitalist mode of production prevails, Marxism will retain its relevance, since it concerns itself neither with one or another technique of capital production, nor with social change within the frame of capitalist production, but only with its (capitalism's) final abolition." (Pages 333-334)

The book does not maintain the level of economic analysis of which Mattick has proven himself capable. It is nevertheless a useful work in its study of the leading theoretician of state capitalism and in its demonstration of the usefulness of Marxism as a theoretical tool.

Martin Glaberman

"There is no point of view in a world which has but one point of view," says Howard McCord toward the end of this collaboration, and it reminds us of Marcuse in more ways than one. McCord's entire approach creates the kind of atmosphere we discover in Marcuse's works. Only perhaps McCord is more the poet as he allows us to see his own personal suffering and growth while Marcuse only points to his fellow humans.

This book is a dialogue about the meaning of "death" and therefore the relevance of "life" and our attitudes toward both. It is a dialogue between Howard McCord, who fell in love with Fraenkel the way he seems to have fallen for Kierkegaard, and Walter Lowenfels, who knew Fraenkel when Fraenkel lived in Paris in the Thirties and was a close friend of and influence on Lowenfels and Henry Miller.

"Pretense, as Kierkegaard saw more than a hundred years ago, is the malignancy that maims our age. Do not pretend to be a Christian if you are not, he shouted. Do not pretend to be religious if you are not. Do not even pretend to be a man if you are not human. And Fraenkel added the final commandment: Do not pretend to be alive if you are dead." (McCord)

The best part of the book, and the reason the book should be read and will be enjoyed, are the sections containing the correspondence between McCord and Lowenfels as McCord tried to work out his response to an imperfect world, and Lowenfels went ahead and did it. "Reduced to its skeleton, isn't our difference just this: You say you can't change human nature; I say it has to change, otherwise there won't be any human nature." (letter from Lowenfels to McCord)

Two poets, two good poets, one a young man and recent convert to Catholicism, the other an old man and long-time convert to socialism and its goal of a human world: communism. The topic is supposedly the meaning of Fraenkel's life: Michael Fraenkel, born in Kopyl, Lithuania in 1896; brought to New York by his parents in 1903; self-made business man; self-proclaimed philosopher; friend to Anais Nin, Alfred Perles, Henry Miller, Walter Lowenfels, and the Paris of the late Twenties and Thirties.

But Michael Fraenkel wrote about death in order to better understand death, and what he believed was the fate of Western man: "increasing alienation and hurt until he recognized his wound as death, and gave himself up to it, lived in it, and found, after enduring the reality of it, a truly humane life beyond". So Fraenkel wrote about himself and his individual confrontation with the absurdity of life and his compromise with the inevitability of death until he truly understood it.

Lowenfels and McCord write about the Twentieth Century struggle of Western man with the reality he has learned so well to define but not to understand. And their understanding becomes more difficult as they
use Fraenkel to get closer to themselves and each other, but still the reader's understanding should increase with each exchange of letters. It almost seems as though we're eavesdropping on an argument between two contemporaries over which direction they should take to avoid the kind of world we've inherited. It is not surprising that it is Lowenfels, the man of the 1930s, who sees salvation as a social event necessarily carried out by a united mankind, while McCord, the product of the 1950s, finds himself ready to go it alone.

The two men are honest; the discussion is relevant; and even if we come to no positive conclusions about Fraenkel, we still get to know ourselves and those we are arguing with a little better by seeing these men so close, and even get a good dose of some of the best criticism of Henry Miller that has been written.

"With Fraenkel and Miller you are dealing with Nineteenth Century men echoing old tragedies in our age. But that's the way most of us live, so it's hard to recognize it.

"We have to consider writers like O'Casey, Brecht, Eluard, Vallejo to realize how uncontemporary Fraenkel and Miller both are. The new humanity reaches a new kind of integration you can never suspect exists from reading Miller and Fraenkel.

"So, first you have to create Fraenkel's values and then throw away the ladder, as Wittgenstein advises, and move into the Twenty-first Century, where Fraenkel and Miller will be seen, if at all, as curious hang-overs of old deaths in the new life that was cooking." (Lowenfels)

The letters begin in 1964 and end in 1969. And while McCord and Lowenfels discussed it and dissected it there began the movements of the 1960s that attempted to do something about it. The book ended, I don't know about the letters, and we all know about the movements. Very few documents capture as well the dual personality of those who would make history, or "a world where love is more possible" (Carl Oglesby) as does The Life of Fraenkel's Death.

Michael Lally

Douglas Blazek: Battlefield Syrup (published as Meatball #3), 57 Scott Street, San Francisco, California 94117 (50¢)

Reading Blazek lately puts my head back in the early 1960s, before the rise of Youth Culture and the New Left and all that. In the last few months these images have been getting stronger and stronger, not because I want to go back or because the Empire has restabilized itself but because the collapse of New Left politics has thrown a whole lot of us onto our own resources, returned the intensity of the day-to-day and the personal in our lives. At his best Blazek makes you intensely aware of what it's like to go through the day flushing toilets, trying to talk out unresolvable tensions with the people you love, recalling the fragments

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of childhood, and all the time feeling lonely and pessimistic.

Some of Blazek's best writing even sounds like the way we talked ten years ago—he has resisted, in some way or other, the two or three cycles of hip talk, without retreating into Nineteenth Century British diction, and for that he deserves much credit. Unfortunately, Battlefield Syrup is not Blazek at his best. As usual, he publishes too much to hit every time, and the occasional result is a spiritualization of soggy melancholia and a forcing of obvious metaphors. Still, you can hear him

hopping down the street
my arms
working like cooks in grease joints
or with Everyman who is pulling
the wheels off the
stagecoach to Paradise
because he thinks
he sees his face
behind its window

We hear Blazek die some, and we hear him come back to life some. It's no surprise, after all, but I like it, and it makes sense to me.

Paul Buhle

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**Magazines & Journals**

The Abolitionist, c/o LABS, GPO Box 2487, New York, New York 10001 (published monthly by members of the Radical Libertarian Alliance, 6 pages, 8 1/2 x 11, mimeographed, $2 per year)

The Abolitionist is without doubt the most interesting and valuable publication to come from the Right-Left Libertarian youth movement. The economic perspective of this journal's editors is rooted in classic anarcho-capitalism, pointing toward a future society of self-regulating communities with absolutely no outside interference from the State. Yet they clearly see that they have more in common with the Youth Culture Left than with either the Old Right or the New Right, especially in their hostility toward all forms of authoritarianism, whether from Nixon or from the Communist Party. In fact, the reader might think at first glance that the Abolitionist was some exotic Yippie publication—and in some respects it is.

The most interesting to me have been the articles by Steve Halbrook, which condemn the classic, doctrinaire Anarchism of Goldman and Berkman, and praise the practical attempts by Lenin to smash the bourgeois State. Clearly, this breaks with the whole ideological nature
of Anarchist attitudes toward Bolshevism, and, although Halbrook has not carried his critique to any great depth thus far (most recently he has praised the Tupemaros as modern Bakuninists, and on the other hand has tried to show Right-wing libertarians that the State is not pro-labor, as they have always been told), his insights promise much.

The Abolitionist badly needs a neater format, but they do everything possible within the limits of an electric typewriter and a mimeo. Above all, the paper is lively in a way that much of the tired former New Left is no more, and for that reason alone it deserves a reading.

PB

Red Sky/Blue Sky, c/o TDG, 22 South 11th, San Jose, California 95112 ($1 for 10 issues)

Marxist? Anarchist? Yippie? Marcusesque? Red Sky/Blue Sky evades all such classifications, either out of sheer eclecticism or out of some deeper level of synthesis which will show itself in time. But whatever, the paper is one of the brightest and most-energetic sheets to have come out of the recent Left in America. One issue was a full-scale reprint, from TELOS, of the interview between Sartre and editors of Il Manifesto, translated by TELOS from Le Temps Moderne. In the Red Sky/Blue Sky version, the added graphics made a world of difference in readability.

More recently, they had a "Work Is Death" issue, another hailing Yippies, and now most recently (Number 7) one entitled "Long Live Anarchy!", with a beautiful front-cover illustration taken out of Debsian Socialist literature, an extended treatment of Emma Goldman, a review of Guerin’s Anarchism: From Theory to Practice, and an editorial on Angela Davis which managed to mix in Critical Theory — criticizing activists, New Left intellectuals, and old-time Marxists for not pooling their talents.

All in all it’s a bit hard to believe sometimes, but plenty interesting to get in the mail; and for only $1 per year, it’s preposterously cheap.

PB
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Radical America looks at itself

We're making some changes ...

This issue of Radical America marks a new phase of development. The editorial board noted on the inside front cover has reorganized the entire operation and is in the process of establishing and elaborating its technical and editorial functions.

During 1971 Radical America will cut back to a bi-monthly schedule to facilitate greater care for contents and format. Henceforth Radical America will cease to publish monothematic, or "special", issues, and instead will produce a coherent political review including semi-regular features on a variety of subjects. The main focus for study and analysis will be the American working class, particularly its female and black components, its historical development, and its future prospects. Other areas of special concern include Mass Culture, the activity of working classes in other nations, the nature of American radicalism, struggles for revolutionary culture, developments in Marxist philosophy, and the conceptions of party and praxis in Twentieth Century Marxism. Also, each issue of Radical America will contain a substantive review section to which our readers are invited to contribute.

In our next issue, Volume 5, Number 2, we will elaborate a "world view" around which the editors have loosely combined. We have no final, worked-out solutions to the dilemmas that today's radicals face, and we neither propose nor constitute a political grouping ourselves. Nonetheless, we will offer our views, collectively and individually, on political problems and perspectives in a way that Radical America has not encompassed up to this time.

Finally, we appeal to our readers for financial aid in the immediate future. The disintegration of formal New Left remnants has further jeopardized the scale of RA's operation, always circumscribed by lack of funds. To produce the greatest possible number of pages, maintain a regular schedule, and free ourselves from persistent financial worry so that our full energies can be devoted to editorial concerns, we must receive more money than we can gather through subscriptions and bulk sales. Therefore, we ask our readers not for an amount extending into five figures (as with other radical newspapers and journals), but for stabilizing funds, either through contributions or through pamphlet or supporting subscriptions. Since we have no paid staff all funds received by Radical America go directly into production and distribution costs.
SOLIDARITY FOREVER!

BY RALPH CHAPLIN

(Tune: "John Brown's Body")

When the Union's inspiration through the workers' blood shall run,
There can be no power greater anywhere beneath the sun.
Yet what force on earth is weaker than the feeble strength of one?
But the Union makes us strong.

CHORUS:

Solidarity forever!
Solidarity forever!
Solidarity forever!
For the Union makes us strong.

Is there aught we hold in common with the greedy parasite
Who would lash us into servitude and would crush us with his might?
Is there anything left for us but to organize and fight?
For the Union makes us strong.

It is we who plowed the prairies; built the cities where they trade;
Dug the mines and built the workshops; endless miles of railroad laid.
Now we stand outcasts and starving, 'mid the wonders we have made;
But the Union makes us strong.

All the world that's owned by idle drones, is ours and ours alone.
We have laid the wide foundations; built it skyward stone by stone.
It is ours, not to slave in, but to master and to own,
While the Union makes us strong.

They have taken untold millions that they never toiled to earn.
But without our brain and muscle not a single wheel can turn.
We can break their haughty power; gain our freedom when we learn
That the Union makes us strong.

In our hands is placed a power greater than their hoarded gold;
Greater than the might of armies, magnified a thousand-fold.
We can bring to birth the new world from the ashes of the old,
For the Union makes us strong.