

striction as being in the best interest of labor were dead wrong.

Private pressures for restoration of monopoly controls are at work now, and no doubt they will increase their activity as the demobilization and reconversion program progresses. The surplus plants and property which will shortly become available for peacetime uses furnish a unique challenge and opportunity to free enterprise and to American labor and consumers. But these plants and property also furnish a tremendous temptation to monopolists and cartelists who are bent on preserving and strengthening

their positions of control. These monopoly and cartel forces will campaign actively, sometimes through avenues not readily recognizable, to sabotage enforcement of the antitrust laws and to influence governmental policies affecting the future control and operation of America's great industrial resources. Whether these forces succeed depends upon the alertness of the American people and upon the strength of their determination to use the great opportunity that lies ahead to further the economic interests of ALL the people, rather than just a few.

The Future of Labour

By M. H. HEDGES

THE second violin holds an honorable place in the modern orchestra. It is true that the second violin does not receive as much pay as the first. Moreover, the second violin never achieves the esteemed place of concert master. But no one speaks in derogation of the performance of the second violin; and the composer writes in the lovely alto just as he lavishes care upon the soprano lead. All this is changed, however, when the phrase "second violin" is debased to the vernacular of "second fiddle." To play second fiddle is not to play second violin. The second fiddle has come to mean, with the people, a low, secondary position, of mean rank, not at all comparable to the first violin. To play second fiddle is to be inferior.

To borrow the metaphor, labor has played "second fiddle" in industry, in history, in government, and in the community since the dawn of time. The interior history of labor, from the beginning, has been the story of how a class has endeavored to quit playing "second fiddle." How an entire economic group,

upon a large scale, could pass from a position of inferiority to a position of superiority is labor's glorious tradition. What progress labor has made in this direction is not inconsiderable, but that progress has been enormously slow, tortuous, and discouraging.

It has led to violence and wars, and viewed from the vantage point of the human spirit, it has not paid dividends. The modern state of Russia is the end-product of one kind of logic in the long struggle of labor to transform itself. But one-half of the industrial world looks upon Russia with repugnance and a portion of the other half does not recognize the modern state of Russia as labor freed, but as labor transformed into bureaucracy. Certainly the influence of Stalin—of Russia—upon Mussolini and Hitler was not salutary; certainly no country in the world to-day would wish to emulate the Russian state in all things.

In another direction, labor to-day is not in an enviable position. Take the United States of America, an advanced industrial society, with a high literacy level. Despite the fact that the labor movement in the United States has advanced from a membership of four

EDITOR'S NOTE: Marion H. Hedges is Director of Research for the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers with headquarters in Washington.

million to a membership of 13 million in 10 years, still labor in the United States is certainly in no superior position. Leo Cherne, a sagacious observer, in his book *The Rest of Your Life* predicts:

For the nation the most significant feature of labor's immediate future is not so much what labor will accomplish but rather what will be done in American life because of its presence. The depth of public hostility and the degree of labor ineptness will determine how extreme the community's protective action will be and how useful a whipping-boy labor will prove to be. An ineffective minority will determine the conduct of a majority by throwing it into a rage. This negative result will be an even more certain consequence of Communist activity. A fire in the theatre may do less damage than the panic it causes.

Of all the groups in the entire nation the only economic class that emerges with a substantially accurate appraisal of its place, the only one which will seem to know where it is going, will be big business. Small enterprise thinks it does and will be disappointed. The middle class knows where it wants to go but will only multiply its already existing frustrations. Labor isn't sure where it's heading, except that the road directly ahead is retreat. It will be right.

In the reams of material which have been written about labor; in the Niagara of talk, of propaganda, of plans for justice, no one appears to have arrived at just why labor remains in a secondary rather than in a primary position in modern industrial society.

Marxism, a philosophy of labor, has been said to rank with Christianity in its hold upon the masses. Strange to say, its hold upon workmen of England, Canada, Australia, and the United States has not been great, or has it been even powerful, except by indirection. Karl Marx wrote his greatest work in England, and drew many of his generalizations from observing British industrial society. Marx recognized the inferiority of labor. His dream of labor's elevation turned upon his concept of power through the state. By capturing the government, labor was supposed to pass from a plane of slavery to a plane of emancipation.

The fault in this line of reasoning lay in the fact that labor was frozen into a rigid strata of society; a fluid society such as that under modern technology, or a democratic society such as that of England or the United States, made such reasoning futile and repugnant. The theory that "things must get worse before they get better" was at variance with the facts and at variance with the daily, upward surge of trade unions. Trade unions existed to elevate the economic status of their members. Marxism counselled a doctrine of defeatism. Trade unions counselled a doctrine of superiority. The steady rise of trade unions to power in the community and in democratic governments impeached the validity of Marx's premise. Things got better day by day, despite the doctrine of the class struggle. The result was an impasse between Marxists and trade unionists; the result was that the trade union proposed a solution for labor's lowly place in the hierarchy of society.

The trade union solution has been described as a policy of gradualism. At its best this theory merges into a theory of democracy in general backed by the faith; namely, if the union acts in the best interest of its members, day by day, the goal of the good society will eventually be reached; not now, but sometime. The trade unionist in following this policy, in his faith, is not unlike the disciple of Adam Smith, who believes that, if each individual assiduously seeks his best interest, all will arrive at the desired level of well being. Wars, class struggles, riots, strikes, disruptions, lock-outs,—these follow, but eventually, the common good will be served.

The contrast between Marxism, as a philosophy of labor, and of gradualism, as a philosophy of labor, is best described by an American scholar, Selig Perlman, University of Wisconsin. In writing of his friend, John R. Commons, Mr. Perlman recently said:

The working men were not abstract building blocks out of which the deity "History," so dear to Marxians, was to shape the archi-

tectural design of the socialist society, but concrete beings with legitimate ambitions for a higher standard of living and for more dignity in their lives primarily realizable through the attainment of citizenship status on their jobs and in their places of employment and parallel to their status in the democratic state.

The shortcoming of a policy of gradualism, of course, lies in the fact that it easily bogs down into a policy of mere opportunism. Even the vague goal of democracy, in the midst of the daily hurly-burly of strife, can quickly be lost sight of. There is no real unity of purpose. The general staff becomes a supernumerary without function or inspired leadership. Confusion easily arises. Parts of the movement get out of line. Disputes ensue. Division follows. Decay sets in swiftly. The great realities become empty litanies. Ideals become old platitudes to be secretly sneered at. Materialism—shoddy materialism—becomes the only motive; and sacrifice, the breath of life of any institution is studiously avoided. Soon, by going wrong at this point, or in that, principles are compromised into nullity.

This is a drab picture, but opportunistic gradualism, without clear-cut social goals, religiously adhered to, can only produce drabness.

The kind of society in which labor finds itself—an industrial society, the central fact of which is the machine, and the dominant characteristic of which is change—makes unified purposes very difficult, but accentuates the necessity of central purpose. Technology becomes the foe of man. The machine not only displaces manpower; but the induced fluidity, the rapidly shifting of essential parts, under the impact of new invention, tends to dazzle and blind, so that direction is lost, and objectives obscured. Modern industrial society can accurately be viewed as a drama of struggle; the soul of man against the machine. Labor's part in this struggle has been an honorable one inasmuch as labor, amidst confusion and despite its delinquencies, has always stood for man against the

machine. If labor plays second fiddle, it is because human beings are held so cheaply.

We are probably seeing—at long last—the beginning of recovery. Having discarded Marxism, and having discerned the emptiness of mere opportunism, labor, in cooperation with other elements of the community, is erecting new goals, and what is more important, is creating new techniques to adjust itself to changing environment.

The new goal of labor action in every industrial country of the world has become full employment. This represents a natural evolution of labor policy out of day-by-day unionism—opportunism stretched toward a worthy objective. The objective is worthy because it puts—not goods, profits, or materialism—but human beings at the centre of industrial operations. It is significant, moreover, because it involves engineering techniques; and emphatically requires the utmost cooperation between all economic groups. The community—the industrial community—will be transformed from a congeries of warring factions—into a federation of workers, welded into common purpose and unity. More cooperation and less competitive rivalry will be demanded. Attendant result will be a new kind of stability and security.

Ernest Bevin, British labor leader (now foreign secretary in the new labor government) urges:

I suggest that at the end of this war, and indeed during the war, we accept social security as the main motive of all our national life. Begin there. That does not mean all surpluses would be wiped out, but it would determine how they would be used; it does mean that the whole of your economy—finance, organization, science, everything—is directed to give social security, not to a small middle class or those who may be the possessors of property, but to the community as a whole.

The anomalous philosophy of Marxism established upon the eternal split between those who have and those who have not, will be discarded. The day-by-day opportunism of daily unionism will be

abandoned. Men will have worthy goals to guide and admirable goals of attainment to inspire.

Traditionally, labor unions have performed two important functions in industry. The first, and most active, has to do with welfare; the second, with production. The trade union has certainly raised the standard of living of its members. It has established a wage structure. It has regulated hours and working conditions. Under a policy of full employment these functions will be routinized. They will still be enormously important for they will need to shift to higher levels of operation—in most countries, to the national level. But they should not demand the assiduous attention that they did on local levels. This should leave labor free to develop its other great function of increasing production. Through this door—if labor opens the door, and passes through—labor will move into a promised land, long beckoning.

Labor can and should arrange its

staff and its internal affairs better to cooperate with management. Labor must become management-minded. This has nothing to do with class-strugglism. Management is a form of creative activity. Managers are workers. The chasm—now closing—between managers and workers has been artificially induced by the attachment of management to ownership. As this set-up changes, as managers and workers draw nearer, labor can and must understand the objectives and techniques of management. Labor must gauge its demands on the welfare level by the volume of production achieved on the technical level. Labor must move toward participation in management by fitting itself for such participation.

To one who has read labor history, watched with jealous eye all labor developments, participated in labor conferences and viewed national and international events, this appears the only way in which labor can cease playing second fiddle.

Placement of Disabled Workers

By P. S. DEQ. CABOT

THERE is some evidence that public interest in the employment of the physically impaired in industry is increasing. Prior to the outbreak of the war, business and industrial firms were slow to recognize the productive potentialities of the handicapped, especially those with physical disabilities. Opportunities for the employment of such persons were limited, partly because they could not meet rigid physical requirements, but chiefly because of the lack of confidence on the part of employers.

Gradually this attitude is changing. Several reasons may be found for this. More improved methods of the sel-

tion, placement, and promotion of employees have focused attention upon the positive contributions each employee can make toward raising the production rate. At all levels of responsibility the more enlightened leaders in industry appreciate the significance of the scientific approach in an analysis of the (1) effect of working conditions upon employee morale and efficiency; (2) the social and interpersonal relationships among employees; (3) an objective determination of the particular skills, duties, and responsibilities required of jobs at all levels, with a corresponding emphasis upon a careful evaluation of an applicant's skills, abilities, and personality through well validated testing and interviewing procedures. Moreover, advances in medical knowledge, particularly in the specialty of orthopedics, have contributed in no small

EDITOR'S NOTE: Dr. P. S. deQ. Cabot, a New Zealander by birth, psychologist by training, is at present Personnel and Research Director of United Drug, Inc., Boston. The article is a summary of an address delivered at a Course for Personnel Officers in War Industries conducted by the Institute of Public Affairs at Dalhousie University, Halifax, in March, 1945.