

Lucy, George E.
The Catholic and
ADT 7992

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AND HIS
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By GEORGE E. LUCY, S.J.

THE

America

PRESS

IMPRIMI POTEST:

THOMAS E. HENNEBERRY, S.J.

Provincial: New York Province

NIHIL OBSTAT:

JOHN A. GOODWINE, J.C.D.

Censor Librorum

IMPRIMATUR:

✦ FRANCIS CARDINAL SPELLMAN

Archbishop of New York

April 14, 1958

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This article first appeared in Panel, published by the Labor-Management School of the University of San Francisco.

THE AMERICA PRESS

70 East 45th Street, New York 17, N. Y.

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THE CATHOLIC AND HIS TRADE UNION

By George E. Lucy, S.J.

MR. AVERAGE PERSON spends about one-half his waking hours "on the job"—a rather large slice out of his day.

That's a practical reason why work is so important. It eats up so much of our time. We might well ask ourselves what in the world God has in mind, so to speak, when He in His Divine Providence directs us to spend so much of our lives—His lives, really—on the job.

The answer is simple enough. He expects us to sanctify ourselves through our work as well as through our prayers. That's the Divine Plan.

Whether the Divine Plan becomes our plan depends on our attitude. Is our work just a job? Something which must be put up with if we are to live? Just a means to an end—making money? If so, we are merely serving ourselves, not almighty God.

BUILDING CATHEDRALS

Remember the story of the three stone masons? Someone asked them what they were doing. One said: "I'm laying bricks." The second said: "I'm earning a living." The third: "I'm building a cathedral."

What a difference an attitude makes!

Of course, no one would be so foolish

as to deny that at times work is hard, wearisome, uninspiring. Often, a dreary, deadening routine daily reminds us of the biblical command: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." Sometimes, even today, anti-human conditions and anti-social employment practices make the job a harsh ordeal. As Pope Pius XI said in his encyclical letter *Quadragesimo Anno*, "dead matter comes forth from the factory ennobled, while men there are corrupted and degraded."

But in itself—and so much depends on our attitude—work can sanctify and ennoble us. Because every job is productive in its own way, it continues "the unfinished work" begun by the Creator and represents the collaboration of each of us for the benefit of all of us. The late Father John P. Delaney, S.J., expressed this idea in his prose poem, "I'm Proud of My Dirty Hands":

And while I've worked
In the filthy mines,
I've thought
Of many a family
That sits in comfort in a warm house
While the snow and the wind blow
without . . .

People are warm and happy,
And people have the things they need
Because my hands are dirty.
I'm proud of my dirty hands.

During the annual "Industrial Service" in Leeds, England, axes, saws, hammers, chisels, scientific instruments and engineering tools of all kinds are piled on the steps of St. Anne's Cathedral and blessed. During one of these blessings, the Bishop said: "The value of your work, whether writing in a ledger or taking a temperature or digging a road, depends on the spirit in which you do it."

"The spirit in which you do it!"—laying bricks, or earning a living, or building a cathedral.

This spirit not only sanctifies our own lives but helps to make holy the lives of others: "I offer Thee my prayers, works, joys and sufferings of this day for all the intentions of Thy Sacred Heart." The morning offering echoes throughout the day. It's not just "another day," but another day on the road of sanctity.

Our job does something else. It also feeds, clothes and shelters us. For man exchanges his work for a price—for wages. This is not to say that labor is a commodity in the sense that it can be bought and sold like a bushel of wheat. There are angles from which work may be looked upon as a commodity, but the worker—never! He has all the dignity of a member of Christ, a sharer in divine life, a brother of Christ, a son of God and a temple of the Holy Spirit. The laborer does not hire himself out for work—only

his labor, his ability to work. Even though he works for someone else, he still remains a human being with all his dignity. Labor—the work done by human beings—is the activity of one who comes from God and is destined some day to return to God.

As Pope Pius XI said: “The wage contract is not to be condemned, it is not of its own nature vicious.” But he continues: “It is a grave abuse when capital uses its power in such a way that it scorns the human dignity of the worker, the social character of economic activity and social justice itself and the common good.”

MONEY IS NECESSARY

The Divine Plan regarding wages works out this way. The Supreme Being created both man and the other things on the face of the earth. Man, the creature, comes from the Creator, lives for Him, is destined to be with Him.

But the other things exist for men. They are meant to serve him. They fulfil their destiny when they are correctly used by men. And in the Divine Plan every man—regardless of race, blood, color, creed—should have the opportunity to acquire at least a minimum amount of material things in order to live decently and becomingly.

Consequently, there is nothing wrong in money-making. The warnings of some against money, amounting to tirades, must be properly understood. They are warnings

against making a god out of money, a master which will use and enslave us.

Today it is only through making money, through wages, that most of us are able to buy that amount of the "other things on the face of the earth" necessary for us to live decently. In the United States 88 out of every 100 people employed in non-farm work depend on a paycheck made out by someone else who employs them. As Pope Pius XI wrote in *Quadragesimo Anno*:

But, except for pay from work, from what source can a man who has nothing else but work from which to obtain the goods and the necessities of life set aside anything for himself through practicing frugality?

The Divine Plan of work and of wages can change the whole concept of our working hours. Our job can be used as the royal road to heaven, even though at times it may be, as some like to say, "a hell of a job." It all depends on our attitude, our viewpoint, the spirit in which we do it. Our job also supplies us with the money necessary to house, clothe and feed ourselves according to our dignity as human beings.

THE DIVINE PLAN AND UNIONS

What has all this to do with a union card? Simply this. The Divine Plan is the real foundation of the labor movement.

Whether or not labor leaders realize it or express it in so many words, this plan is the basis of all their reasoning and activity. They may be lost and groping for solid reasons to help, as the saying goes, the "poor working stiffs." But sometimes, unknowingly perhaps, they are draftsmen working on the Divine Plan.

All the sound and fury about collective bargaining, contract negotiations, strikes, picket lines, boycotts—for whom? Higher wages, shorter hours, better working conditions, pension plans, health and welfare plans—for whom? For highly developed animals who simply eat, drink and are merry? Or for human beings who must work out their eternal destiny on and through their jobs—jobs which should add to their dignity as children of God? Every union card holder is called brother or sister—meaningless terms unless all have a common Father.

CARDINAL GIBBONS

Though he didn't hold a union card, John Cardinal Gibbons was a real labor leader. In his heroic fight on behalf of the Knights of Labor, a union founded shortly after the Civil War, he saw clearly how the Divine Plan had to work itself out in practice. To the then twelve archbishops of the United States, the Cardinal wrote:

Let me repeat, it is impossible to read revolution into demands which are

nothing more than a plan for better living, and if the laborer hasn't a right to this, no one has. He faces the daily risk of losing his sight, his limbs, his life, of falling ill because of wretched working conditions. A sick man loses his job, a jobless man is without money. He becomes a public charge, loses his hope, his ambition. And adding to that, you are willing to lose his soul without putting up a fight. I say again, there is nothing revolutionary, unpatriotic or irreligious in a man wanting weekly wages, an eight-hour day, the abolishment of child labor and healthy surroundings in which to work.

But, one might ask, why is an *organized labor movement* necessary to make the Divine Plan workable?

IN UNION THERE IS STRENGTH

Too often greed, ambition, a lack of appreciation or a misconception of God's plan by those who control jobs prevent its fulfillment. The individual worker finds it almost impossible to bargain on equal terms with his employer. He is a David facing a Goliath. He has found it necessary to join forces with other individuals and thus bargain collectively in order to make his cry for a better life heard. In union there is strength—and only the strong can make God's plan work. Even Senator Robert A.

Taft, co-author of the Taft-Hartley Act, said in a Senate speech:

The truth is that originally, before the passage of any of the laws dealing with labor, the employer had all the advantage. He had the employes at his mercy and he could practically, in most cases, dictate the terms which he wished to impose.

Little wonder, then, that the courageous Leo XIII, as early as 1891, in his encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, when labor unions were often looked upon as "radical," emphasized a man's natural right to organize. "It is gratifying," he said, "that [associations] are being formed everywhere," and, "it is truly to be desired that they grow in number and in active vigor," and, "they are highly opportune and are formed by their own right."

Little wonder that his successor, Pius XI, repeated the doctrine of the "natural right of man" to form associations, and added that to deny or frustrate this natural right is "criminal injustice." To deprive man of this right makes him something less than a man.

Little wonder that the hierarchy of the United States in its famous 1919 *Bishops' Program of Social Reconstruction* insisted on the right of the worker to organize, to enjoy fair conditions of labor, to earn a family wage, and to be represented by

agents of his own choice in settling grievances and disputes.

This long tradition of espousing man's right to form unions is carried on today. Catholic social teaching encourages every one to join a union. Some even say a worker has a duty to carry a union card. Be that as it may, every man and woman should become a union member in order to make God's plan for work and wages effective. The bishops in their 1919 program put it strongly when they said: "It is to be hoped that this right will never again be called in question by any considerable number of employers."

EMPLOYER OPPOSITION

It was not very long ago that many employers, including Catholics, did question this right to organize. Labor leaders were called radicals, foreign agitators, bomb-throwers, disturbers of the public peace. There were some exceptions, but generally employers fought unions. They had their own associations but denied the right of workingmen to have theirs.

The most extreme expression of the employer belief in his Almighty-given role in industry was made by George F. Baer, a railroad president whose company controlled 70 per cent of America's hard-coal output. Refusing to meet with union representatives when the coal miners struck in 1902 to increase their wage of \$22

per month for a 10-hour day, Baer wrote: "The rights and interests of the laboring-man would be protected and cared for, not by the labor agitators, but by the Christian men to whom God, in His infinite wisdom, has given control of the property interests of the country."

Employers used legal weapons such as the doctrine of conspiracy, damage suits and court injunctions to prevent unionization, strikes and boycotts. They maintained the "open shop," using it, in effect, to deny recognition and collective-bargaining rights to unions. They often planted company detectives to spy on union members in their shops as well as in union halls. They circulated among themselves "blacklists" of active union members. They resorted to the "yellow dog" contract, which required workers to agree not to join unions. They bought the services of professional strikebreakers. Even after unions were fairly well established following World War I, many employers resorted to flank attacks by forming company unions, by sponsoring employe representation plans under strict company control, and by adopting paternalistic welfare plans.

A "NEUTRAL" GOVERNMENT

During all this time a "hands-off" government was theoretically neutral. This meant that the basic rights of free assembly, free speech and free association

granted in the Bill of Rights and in the Federal and State constitutions and laws were often meaningless. The union card holder was no match for his employer.

Finally in the National Labor Relations Act (Wagner Act) of 1935 the Federal Government guaranteed employes the "right to self-organization, to form, join, or assist labor organizations, to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing and to engage in concerted activities for the purposes of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection."

Later, in the Labor-Management Relations Act (the Taft-Hartley Act) of 1947, some significant limitations on union activities were passed, but unions and collective bargaining were accepted as part of the everyday life of industry and commerce.

RECORD OF PROGRESS

Labor unions have come a long way since the Philadelphia Cordwainers formed the first union in 1794. The way was often rough and tough. At times it was splattered with the blood of those who preferred death to life—the life of a laborer who worked from sunup to sundown for a pittance. But today labor is recognized. Its legitimate rights are respected, its representatives are included in government delegations, national committees and community activities.

A union card symbolizes not only the

rights and aspirations of the workingman but likewise his duties. When organized labor was fighting for its life, when its rights were frequently not recognized, at least in practice, emphasis was naturally placed on its rights. Today labor has outgrown the diaper-and-formula stage. It is maturing. It has become powerful. As a result, duties and obligations must now receive their proper emphasis, for rights always impose duties and obligations.

The actions and decisions of any powerful group in a democratic country affect countless people, and hence are subject to public accounting. The policies and practices of a power group are not merely "their own business"—they are your business and mine. Because of the power it has acquired and seeks to expand, labor must be ready to assume great social responsibility. Only by living up to their duties toward their own members, toward employers and toward the general public will labor unions be accepted by the public at large.

The duties and obligations of labor are numerous but a few of the more pressing ones may be emphasized.

"A FAIR DAY'S WORK"

"A fair day's work for a fair day's pay" has been a traditional slogan of labor. Emphasis on the second half of the motto has produced such results that George Meany, president of the AFL-CIO, can

declare that labor "never had it so good." Now the time has come for labor to devote more attention to a "fair day's work."

It's not a question of generosity or of chivalry. It's a question of strict justice. The union card holder, just as any other employe, has an obligation in conscience to give to his employer an honest day's work. Not to do this is just another form of theft.

Much is said today about the laziness and inefficiency of workers, organized and unorganized. Once we allow for a certain amount of exaggeration, the fact remains that there is too much loafing on the job, too much "soldiering," or, to use the popular expression, too much "goofing off." Too often men are able to hide behind their union card. They consider themselves un-touchable, knowing that some timid union officer, fearing to lose his job, will go to bat for them.

Employers would not oppose unions as much as they do if every member turned in a good day's work. They would be much more willing to offer a fair day's pay if they could depend on a conscientious, efficient work force.

And there's a much more fundamental point in this whole question. Let's not forget that the job can be used as a means of sanctification. A daily account must be given to the boss, but some day a life account will have to be given, as someone

said, to the "big Boss." An honest life's work may cover over a lot of our transgressions.

A REASONABLE PROFIT

Closely connected with the duty of a fair day's work is the responsibility of a union member to see to it that his employer makes a reasonable profit. To the juvenile, immature card holder this, of course, is "selling out to the employer." But organized labor accepts the American system of mixed free enterprise and with it the profit motive. This is mere rhetoric unless the wage earner realizes that the boss is entitled to a fair return on his investment.

No Sale, No Job is the title of a book by Alexander Heron of Crown-Zellerbach, one of industry's most progressive leaders. Consequently, even from a self-centered point of view, an employe must be interested in the sale of the product which he helps to produce. When a company begins to lose sales, a worker begins to lose his job.

A mature sense of responsibility here would eliminate waste, carelessness and inefficiency, to say nothing of stealing. The total cost to industry of such practices is staggering.

A forward step in the right direction was the recent offer of the AFL-CIO Boot and Shoe Workers' Union to spend \$100,000 to make Americans more shoe-conscious. Other unions have engaged in similar promotional

campaigns, notably the United Hatters, Cap and Millinery Workers. A union which spends thousands of dollars on convincing Americans that they should not be satisfied with a couple of pairs of shoes, or that they shouldn't go around bareheaded is surely convinced of union-management cooperation. But such money is wasted if the same union doesn't convince its members that they have an obligation to put in an honest day's work and to eliminate waste in all its forms.

THE COMMON WELFARE

Another duty should be mentioned. Perhaps it is not so clear-cut as other obligations but, nonetheless, its importance can scarcely be exaggerated. Union members and especially union leaders must be more interested in the common welfare.

It's good, sound Americanism for everyone to contribute according to his capacity to the common good. Social justice, we call it. But labor is no privileged group. In fact, the more powerful labor grows, the weightier are its obligations based on social justice. Such shortsighted spectacles as wildcat strikes, unreasonable demands, unfair picket lines are against the common welfare. The employer pays the price. But so do you and I.

Too frequently labor gives the impression that what's good for labor is good for the country. Such smugness is received

about as graciously as the recent remark of a leading industrialist: "What's good for General Motors is good for the country."

Labor will be accepted by the general public largely to the extent to which it lives up to the demands of social justice, to the demands of the common good. In recent years, through its participation in community affairs, its interest in general legislation, its support of an enlightened foreign policy, its new codes of ethical practice, organized labor has made considerable progress in this respect.

UNION RACKETEERING

Another duty, perhaps the most serious of all at the present time, calls for more detailed treatment. It involves the whole question of racketeering.

"For God's sake, stop looking the other way. Stop apologizing and sidestepping. Use the AFL-CIO Ethical Practices Committee to begin a real, all-out war against the mobs."

Thus exclaimed Victor Riesel from his hospital bed. In the early hours of April 5, 1956, as the veteran labor columnist stepped out of Lindy's restaurant in New York, a slender, blackhaired man in a blue-and-white lumber jacket appeared out of a doorway, sidled up to him, doused his face with concentrated sulfuric acid, then fled into the night.

Mr. Riesel will never see again.

This cold, calculated, well-planned, savage act has been commonly interpreted as a reprisal and as a warning to Riesel. There were some who did not appreciate his efforts to clean up unions, and who did not approve of the help he had given, or was about to give, to a grand-jury investigation into labor rackets.

Murders, beatings, shakedowns, corruption, theft—some labor leaders have been accused of all these and, in too many instances, have been found guilty.

What's to be done about such a shameful situation?

First of all, we should keep in mind several facts. The average rank-and-file union card holder is as fair and honest as the next fellow. Generally speaking, he tries to follow God's plan regarding work and wages. He is married, has a family, tries to make ends meet in an effort to live a decent, respectable, fairly comfortable life on the salary he earns. He knows that his earnings and working conditions are due to the equal bargaining power he enjoys through his union. But he is no more interested in bribes, thievery, beatings or killings than you or I.

Perhaps one would object by saying that it's not much help to claim that the average union man is as honest as the next fellow. The next fellow isn't sprouting wings either. If this be true, it's merely throwing the

spotlight on the general lack of morality in all walks of life. But we needn't examine this question now. There is just as much room for honesty and integrity, let's say, in government and business as in union ranks. We should not isolate one group as if it were the only offender.

THE ONE-PER-CENT

Another fact we must recognize was expressed a short time ago by President George Meany when he said:

Our purpose is not to aggrandize anyone's power, to swell any individual's bank account. I think that we are better than 99-per-cent right and decent but the one-per-cent gets publicity. It is up to us to see that this one-per-cent does not make a contribution to the enemies of the trade-union movement.

It's that one-per-cent that gives labor a black eye. And so many people see only this one-per-cent that they forget all about the 99-per-cent who are honest and decent. Consequently, such wild statements as "They're all crooked" just don't make sense.

But as Mr. Meany said: "It's this one-per-cent that gets all the publicity." Which leads to another fact.

There appears to be a double standard in judging abuses. Labor, generally speaking, gets a bad press. As a result, the ac-

tions of a few hoods or crooks color the whole labor movement. Honest citizens become indignant over corruption in government or business, but few of them generalize as freely about that as they do about labor. Too often, when a labor leader is convicted of extortion, his crime is charged against the entire movement and all its leaders.

In a way this double standard is a compliment to labor. People seem to demand more of labor leaders than they do of others. They are supposed to have dedicated their lives to helping the workingman find his rightful place in the Divine Plan, and to fail in such a responsibility is treason.

Another fact. Racketeers have slithered their way into the comic-book industry, into boxing, into college basketball, into the stock market, into any soft spot where, as the saying goes, an "easy buck" can be made. When such crooks attach themselves to unions, it's wrong to call them "labor racketeers"—better to call them racketeers who happened to find the pickings in labor rather lush. They certainly aren't labor leaders. They're labor leeches.

With the above facts in mind we are in a better position to seek a solution for the corruption, the hoodlumism, the murders, the beatings, the shakedowns that give labor such a bad name.

THE ETHICAL PRACTICES COMMITTEE

First of all, labor must clean its own house. As Victor Riesel said, they've got to "stop looking the other way." The decent men of labor must flush out the one-per-cent who give labor a bad name. It's a difficult job; one that will never end. But it's got to be done if labor is to stay in business. And it is being done.

The AFL-CIO Constitution provides for a Committee on Ethical Practices which "shall be vested with the duty and responsibility to assist the Executive Council in carrying out the constitutional determination of the Federation to keep the Federation free from any taint of corruption or communism, in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution."

Recently Mr. Meany said that the labor movement must see to it "that the small minority who indulge in what is commonly characterized as racketeering are eliminated from the ranks of the trade-union movement." "I can assure you," he added, "that, to whatever extent it is possible for the national office of the AFL-CIO to bring this about, we will do our part."

The national office is doing its part. It has backed the Ethical Practices Committee to the hilt. For instance, the committee has decreed that people convicted of crimes, as well as men commonly known to be

crooks or racketeers, even though they have no criminal records, cannot hold union office. It has set up elaborate rules for preventing graft in welfare and pension funds. It forbids union officials to have business ties in industries with which they bargain. The Executive Council has declared that unionists who use the Fifth Amendment in government investigations into racketeering have no right to hold their jobs.

Apparently the Ethical Practices Committee and the top AFL-CIO leaders mean business. And well they might. The American public can be pushed around only so far. Those who defend the labor movement and wish it well will not tolerate corruption forever—not even on the part of the one-per-cent.

Several years ago a well-known Jewish philosopher and labor economist stated that “the lack of a labor conscience is, in a sense, the basic problem of American trade unionism. The root of this problem,” he added, “is that among all groups—Catholics, Protestants and Jews—there has been an almost total divorce between their religion and their labor activity.”

The labor movement at the present time is confronted with a very serious crisis. It is basically a moral and spiritual crisis and one that has its roots within the labor movement itself. In the final analysis the exposures of the McClellan committee are merely symptomatic of a decline in religious

values on the part of the rank-and-file. This decline shows itself principally in a lack of interest in union affairs, and in a failure to inject religion and morality into the everyday problems of the labor movement.

The only adequate solution to the crisis is a profound renewal of moral and spiritual values. The rank-and-file must deepen their religious convictions and strive to narrow the gap between religion and life—between religion and labor. Congressional investigations, Ethical Practices Committees, Public Review Boards will accomplish very little unless each union card holder is convinced that he has a moral obligation to assume his full share of responsibility, based on religious and spiritual values, for the proper conduct of union affairs.

EMPLOYERS AND THE LAW HELP

But labor can't do the clean-up job by itself. It needs a big assist from employers. For employers are involved. Corruption and bribery are often a two-way proposition. Bribery involves a briber and a bribed. Frequently, certain types of chiseling employers are guilty of collusion. A "soft" contract, buying off a strike, selling out a fellow employer—numerous are the techniques used by slick employers.

For example, those close to the New York waterfront situation have publicly exposed some of the employers as sharing the guilt of the unions. When, for instance, the

AFL expelled the International Longshoremen's Association, some employers sided with the union—it was much more profitable to deal with the ILA than with the new union chartered by the AFL.

Politicians and law-enforcing agencies likewise have a responsibility. They are often slow to catch up with racketeers and criminals even when they have sufficient evidence to support a conviction in the courts. Corruption has found its way into many places, even into groups whose business it is to wipe it out. It makes the job that much more difficult.

The united efforts of labor, employers and public officials can lick the problem of corruption in labor relations. The big push, however, must come from labor itself. Talk is not enough. Strong, resolute action is needed. The Ethical Practices Committee can give labor a clean name. It will require determination and courage. Responsibility rests on this committee to see to it that the hoods, the criminals, the racketeers do not find a home in the house of labor.

OBJECTIVES OF LABOR

The question is often asked, what does labor want? Where is it going? Samuel Gompers, one of the founders of the American Federation of Labor, put labor on the road it has followed ever since. It's a road named "Business Unionism"—"Pure and

Simple Unionism," "Bread and Butter Unionism," the type of unionism which wins higher wages, shorter hours, better working conditions. Before Gompers' time, unions were interested more in "pie in the sky," in utopias, in planning an industrial system which would have no bosses.

But the man who was president of the AFL for thirty years was a practical man. When asked what labor wanted, he replied: "More." In 1919 he said:

The primary essential in our mission has been the protection of the wage worker, now: to increase his wages; to cut hours off the long workday which was killing him; to improve the safety and the sanitary conditions of the work shop; to free him from the tyrannies, petty or otherwise, which serve to make his existence a slavery.

OUR WAY OF LIFE

Underlying these aims was the acceptance by the AFL of our existing economic order as a "going concern." Organized labor believes in our free-enterprise system and is determined to work only within its limits. Those who see nothing good in present-day unionism should remember that the labor movement in this country could have taken other directions.

It could have followed the cooperative-commonwealth aim of the Noble Order of

the Knights of Labor, with their vaguely conceived substitute for the employer-employee relationship.

It could have been led astray by the Socialist appeal to government ownership of productive resources, to a "planned" economy, to a redistribution of income.

It could have swallowed the line of the militant, radical Industrial Workers of the World. Chanting the slogan, "the working class and the employing class have nothing in common," the "Wobblies" aimed at taking over industry by direct action, such as sabotage, violence and general strikes.

It could have gone the Communist way, promoting class warfare, undermining private property and scorning religion as the "opium of the people."

But U.S. labor steadfastly refused to follow the paths which many European labor movements took. Instead it accepted our capitalistic way of life and determined to work within it, not to overthrow it.

The basic American philosophy of the AFL-CIO is nobly spelled out in its Constitution. Thus the preamble states:

We shall combat resolutely the forces which seek to undermine the democratic institutions of our nation and to enslave the human soul. We shall strive always to win full respect for the dignity of the human individual whom our unions serve.

Article III leaves no doubt as to what these "forces" are:

No organization officered, controlled or dominated by Communists, fascists or other totalitarians, or whose policies and activities are consistently directed toward the achievement of the program or purpose of the Communist Party, any fascist organization or other totalitarian movement shall be permitted as affiliates of the Federation or any of its State or local central bodies.

"CO-DETERMINATION"?

U.S. labor is not interested in seeking a direct voice in management. In other countries it is. For instance, in Germany "co-determination," a system in which unions are represented on the board of directors and share in the active management of a company, is quite extensive.

When co-determination was introduced abroad immediately after World War II, many American management men cried out in alarm. Fearing that co-determination might become a labor goal here, they wrote and spoke loudly against this alleged superhighway leading to socialism and communism.

Their fears had no basis in fact. Shortly before the merger of the AFL and CIO, George Meany wrote: "For the AFL, I can say flatly that collective bargaining is not

a means of seeking a voice in management. We do not want so-called 'co-determination'."

A THIRD PARTY?

Nor is American labor interested in forming a third political party—a labor party. It has no such ambition. Recently the *New York Times* editorialized that a "labor party in the United States is politically unthinkable."

From time to time some popular weekly or monthly magazine runs an article with such a title as, "An American Labor Party." It makes good copy. It catches the public fancy, but that's about all. Labor is doing very well under the two-party system—at least well enough to postpone thought of a labor party to a vague and distant future.

But what does labor want? What are its objectives? The Preamble to the AFL-CIO Constitution eloquently states:

We pledge ourselves to the more effective organization of men and women; to the securing to them of full recognition and enjoyment of the rights to which they are justly entitled; to the achievement of even higher standards of living and working conditions; to the attainment of security for all the people; to the enjoyment of the leisure which their skills make possible; and to the strengthening and extension of our

way of life and the fundamental freedoms which are the basis of our democratic society.

Or, as Gompers said: "More." Labor wants more money, more leisure, a richer cultural life.

It wants a bigger slice of the national income pie. It does not want a smaller pie, but an ever-expanding one with labor coming in for a just cut. Without doubt, the American worker is better off than any other worker in the world. But labor believes that there is nothing anticapitalistic in wanting to make him better off still.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Labor intends to pursue this goal not by overthrowing the government, not by "exploiting the exploiters," not by class warfare, but by free collective bargaining. It is through the give-and-take of collective bargaining that labor wants to achieve its goals.

Thus in recent years collective bargaining has expanded considerably. To many it has resembled a rubber band. It has been stretched from wages, hours and working conditions to hiring, firing, promotion, and to health, welfare and pension plans. Just how far collective bargaining should be stretched along the guide-posts of social justice and social charity is difficult to say. A complex, dynamic economy

such as ours will probably keep the bargaining table in a state of perpetual motion. Issues which are important today will be insignificant tomorrow. Those unheard of today will be burning ones tomorrow.

○ Labor's goal and definition of "more" will be resisted by management. Strikes, lockouts and court injunctions will probably always be with us. But this is the price that must be paid for free collective bargaining. Compared with the alternatives, it is cheap.

Until quite recently management was accustomed to dictate the conditions of employment. It regarded union efforts to intervene in the employer-employee relationship as a challenge to its authority, and resisted them bitterly. The shift to collective bargaining, with unions sharing in the decision-making process, has not been an easy one.

Nor has labor always been the most pleasant company to sit down with. Union representatives have too often been men and women who approached the bargaining table drunk with newly acquired power, ignorant of the economics of the industry and the structure of the enterprise, intolerant of any view but their own, expert in the art of double-talk, blind to the demands of justice and fair play. Dealing with such people, under any circumstances, is not the most pleasant of duties. On the whole, management has been patient.

As the years pass and labor becomes more intelligent and mature—and as management sincerely accepts unionism—labor-management strife will lessen. Of course, differences will always exist. But in the normal course of things we can expect to see less of the take-it-or-leave-it attitude on both sides, less violence on the picket line, less suspicion and selfishness.

UNION CARD

Organized labor is stronger today than at any other time in its history. On December 5, 1955, the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations united to form the world's largest federation of free labor. The AFL-CIO numbers some 13.5 million members. To this add 4.5 million more who belong to unions outside the federation.

Eighteen million union card holders! These union cards have transformed American capitalism. They have fashioned a kind of capitalism that neither Karl Marx nor Adam Smith ever dreamed of. Gone are the days of the "robber barons," gone is the "public-be-damned" attitude, gone is the belief that the owner is the absolute master of his property and his workers. Present-day American capitalism is manned by the best-housed, best-fed, best-clothed working force in the world.

It's no idle boast of labor that the union card has in large measure brought

about this transformation. Significantly it was a transformation, not a bloody revolution, not a bitter class warfare. Capitalism has not been overthrown, nor has it been deeply hurt. Labor has worked within the system, quietly changing and improving it.

The workingman is not a member of a caste. He holds a respected place in society. He has achieved that position through union with his fellow workmen. His union card stands as "his tool for gaining and keeping as an individual the status and security of a full citizen in a capitalistic society." What's more, it is his passport to a better world of tomorrow.

But above all, it is through his union card that a worker can better accomplish the Divine Plan of work and so achieve satisfaction and happiness here and hereafter.

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