

Perspectives
in
HISTORY

ALPHA BETA PHI
CHAPTER
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in
HISTORY

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CONTENTS

Perspectives In History

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ARTICLES

- 1 Foreword Elaine Richardson

THE COLD WAR

- 5 The Cold War Lawrence R. Borne
7 Cold War: Or a Plague on Both
Your Houses W. Michael Ryan

SOUTH AFRICA

- 13 South Africa: The Untold Story John Prescott Kappas
17 Is Apartheid Right or Wrong? Michael H. Washington

UNIONS

- 21 Unions: A Point of View Windel Stracener
23 If You've Got a Boss, You
Need a Union Roy Silver

AMERICA'S ECONOMIC FUTURE

- 31 Back to a New Innocence Martin Giesbrecht
33 America's Economic Future Mike Laux

THE MEDIA'S INFLUENCE

- 37 Media Role in Influencing Opinion Jim Friedman
41 The Free Press: It's Role in
Contemporary America Derick Rogers Harper

CHAPTER REPORT

- 43 Letter from the President/Editor
45 Officers
47 Members
49 Faculty

Foreword

To impart the power of moving and inspiring the intellect beyond its present quality is the purpose of education. While there are several methods by which to attain this goal, perhaps few are as stimulating, enduring, or mutually advantageous as academic debate. While providing a forum through which opinions are vocalized, such debate often elicits insightful responses on behalf of the participants. The culmination results in a true learning environment.

Two of Northern Kentucky University's distinguished professors of History, Dr. Lawrence Borne and Dr. W. Michael Ryan, have practiced and perfected this method of instruction. Together they have developed a course entitled "Conflicting Historical Viewpoints," in which their analytic appraisals of historical issues, events, and philosophies are invariably in opposition. Their rhetorical contrast of ideas incites emotions and induces thought within the classroom.

The editorial staff of *Perspectives in History* agrees that "Conflicting Historical Viewpoints" is a model worthy of imitation. Contained within this edition are thought-provoking commentaries on topics of historical value. May they inspire us to ponder the role of History in all our lives.

Elaine Richardson

THE COLD WAR

The Cold War

by *Lawrence R. Borne*

The Cold War is the conflict that exists because nations and people resist the Communist goal of world conquest. While the phrase "Cold War" was first used after World War II, the struggle it represents had been going on for many years by that time. Karl Marx stated this goal of world conquest in his writings and Communist leaders have reiterated it frequently. Many people would date this conflict more clearly from the point when the Communists (Bolsheviks) first gained control of a nation as a base of operations--Russia in 1917.

The conflict is obviously an old one even though many Americans have been unaware that a war was in progress. This lack of awareness is a major reason why the United States has fared so poorly in this long struggle.

In the 1920s, the Communists conquered the Ukraine, Georgia, and surrounding areas and formed the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; they also sent agents to the United States and other major countries to try to subvert and overthrow their governments. In the United States, raids on Communist bookstores and meetings uncovered numerous documents advocating the overthrow of the United States government, and revealed that illegal aliens were sent from Russia to foment this attempt. In the 1930s, Communist agents successfully infiltrated key government agencies. This infiltration partially explains the many United States actions during World War II that aided the Communists and gave them the opportunity for rapid expansion after the war. Prominent men such as Representative Martin Dies, Senator Robert Taft, and Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal warned President Franklin Roosevelt of the danger of allying with, and giving aid to, any Communist government. Roosevelt was oblivious to these and other warnings as he ignored the evidence of Soviet duplicity and expansive intentions.

Communist leaders did not know the exact form, shape of details of the post-war world but they prepared to exploit the confusion and chaos that always accompany war. In the late 1940s, they set up governments in central and eastern Europe that were controlled by, or subservient to, the leadership in Moscow. Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were absorbed into the Soviet Union while so-called satellite governments were established in Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Rumania, and Yugoslavia. Communist agents had been active in China since the 1920s; and, from 1945 to 1949, the Communists, aided by actions of the United States government, conquered China and the republican government fled to Taiwan.

Communist expansion has continued in North Korea, Tibet, North Vietnam, Cuba, Syria, South Yemen, Libya, Iraq, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Cambodia, Laos, South Vietnam, Angola, Nicaragua, and Zimbabwe. This list is not complete but it is representative of the many nations the Communist control. The estimated population of these various captive nations is 1,767,536,000. Current events in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, and Nicaragua show clearly that the Communists have not altered their goals, methods, or brutality.

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Those who prefer Communist words to Communist deeds should ponder Mikhail Gorbachev's address commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. On November 2, 1987, he stated: "We are moving toward a new world order, the world of Communism. We shall never turn off that road."

The Cold War continues regardless of who is the United States president, what rhetoric he uses, or what the American people think of it. It is a war of soldiers, planes, and missiles that involves other weapons including trade, loans and credits, appeals to national pride, propaganda, racial turmoil, and manipulation of public opinion. One of the most astonishing features of this war is the aid the United States government has given to Communism. Ostensibly anti-Communist, the United States government is the major source of critical items for Communist governments. Extensive research has shown that Soviet industry, technology, and military potential have come primarily from the United States and other non-Communist nations. The United States and its allies have sold, given or otherwise transferred technology that has improved Soviet weapons and then have spent hundreds of billions of dollars to match or exceed these advances. The cycle has been repeated as more sales or transfers are made. Currently, the United States is building up the Communist Chinese industry and military in the same way.

This process of simultaneous aid and hostility is the most bizarre charade ever perpetrated upon the American people. Any person or group that has pointed out the nature of Communism or the Americans who aid it has been mercilessly slandered by the American news media.

There seem to be three scenarios for the outcome of the Cold War. One is that envisioned by George Orwell in *1984*. In that novel the world was divided into three power blocs constantly at war; alliances among these three change regularly and the governments used the endless war as an excuse to oppress and control their citizens. With the current arrangement of supposedly antagonistic groups in the Soviet Union, Communist China, and the United States, one can see the possibility of this approach. The other two possibilities are obvious: the Cold War will end either when Communists control all nations in the world or when Communism is eliminated from the face of the earth.

* * * * *

There is no single book that covers all aspects of the Cold War. Helpful books on the nature and history of Communism are *A Century of Conflict* by Stefan Possony and *The Naked Communist* by W. Cleon Skousen. Communist conquests of specific countries are detailed in *I Saw Poland Betrayed* by Arthur B. Lane, *And Not A Shot Is Fired* (Czechoslovakia) by Jan Kozak, *How the Far East Was Lost* by Anthony Kubek, and *Red Star Over Cuba* by Nathaniel Weyl. An early volume on United States aid to the Soviet Union is *From Major Jordan's Diaries* by George R. Jordan; more recent works by Antony Sutton include *Western Technology and Soviet Economic Development* (3 volumes), *Wall Street and the Bolshevik Revolution*, and *The Best Enemy Money Can Buy*. Readers interested in collectivist influence in the United States government should read *Fabiar*, *Freeway* and *The Selling of America* by Rose L. Martin. Conspiratorial aspects of recent history are discussed in *The Naked Capitalist* by W. Cleon Skousen and *Conspiracy Against God and Man* by Rev. Clarence Kelly.

Cold War: Or a Plague on Both Your Houses

by *W. Michael Ryan*

“Joseph Stalin is dead; Josef Stalin remains dead.” All right-wing ideologues approaching the topic of the so-called Cold War should be required to chant this phrase at least three times before writing anything on the subject. Conversely, ultra-revisionists should recognize that their attributions of sole responsibility to the United States are not only methodologically flawed, but are also fundamentally ethnocentric. Just as rabid communist baiters assume that all world problems can be traced to a Kremlin-based conspiracy, the United States bashers seem to believe that only decisions made in Washington, D.C. can determine significant events. Both extreme interpretations are unsupportable because we lack access to critical Soviet archives, and in their simplicity both interpretations lack the balance, perspective and nuance which make for sound historical analysis. True understanding of the complex dynamics of international affairs cannot be perceived through the deductive method of dogmatic theoreticians.

At the risk of engaging in this debate of one thousand word or less simplifications, I would assert that a primary reason for the intense competition between the United States and Soviet Union for the past four decades is that after 1945, two young and naive Superpowers, neither accustomed to true global power, stared at each other across a war-shattered world and were frightened by what they perceived. Hence, both consistently placed the worst possible interpretation on the actions of the other. Efforts at conciliation were seen as cynical ruses, and belligerent gestures merely confirmed the pre-existing paranoia. Of course, the wild card element of conflicting ideologies and social systems which has complicated the international arena of the twentieth century has certainly exacerbated this syndrome, but is not its fundamental cause. Indeed, had Russia remained a monarchy or had the United States embraced Bolshevism, underlying tensions would have remained. In our era of sovereign nation states, some level of xenophobia and competition are nearly inevitable between two such disparate and powerful countries.

Ironically, the two competitors for global bragging rights are appropriately suited to play adversary. Both sanctimoniously condemn the forthright imperialism of earlier powers, while they pursue similar expansionist goals disguised by a cloud of gaseous rhetoric. Such a ludicrous state is hardly astonishing, given the historical fact that both countries were created from a small geographical nucleus by arrogantly rolling over other cultures. Thus, today the United States uses its relatively homogenous home base to project military prowess to the four corners of the globe and the Soviets scramble to prop up the last of the old polyglot empires. Although Genghis Khan might have been proud of us both, it is small wonder that most nations actually exploit the global bullies when it suits their purposes. Since the United States and the Soviet Union consistently treat other peoples as if their aspirations are merely a synthetic ball in a soccer

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game of cosmic proportions, it is only to be expected that they occasionally kick back. Just ask the Egyptians, or the Chinese, or the Iranians, or the Lebanese.

In the final analysis, both countries shoulder the burden of history and share responsibility for the Cold War. The United States has adamantly refused to face the fact that in the age of decolonization following the collapse of European empires, some degree of revolutionary change and anti-imperial sentiment directed against a Western capitalistic power is unavoidable. Moreover, we have been short-sighted and even ungrateful by our failure to recognize that the Soviet Union, which suffered twenty million deaths in defeating Nazi Germany, is positively paranoid about the recurrence of such a debacle and thus feels compelled to maintain an enormous military establishment out of sheer self-defense. Americans fail to appreciate that we have lived a charmed existence while the Russian people have always died in daunting numbers.

The Soviets are culpable of frightening the United States in related ways: the subjugation of Eastern Europe after 1945, the incessant rhetoric of "burying" the West, support of bloody wars of liberation (replete with extermination of political opponents) and the construction of a massive nuclear arsenal. These thrusts -- all predicated on an obsolete nineteenth century Marxist ideology -- frightened a United States already worried about defending those interests gained in World War II and still itself conscious of surprise attacks like Pearl Harbor.

There are no panaceas or simple ways out of an impasse created by a myriad of historical factors and mutual fear. At least a new beginning could be made, however, if both nations recognized that the now-familiar outlines of their bipolar struggle for global dominance are rendered outdated and irrelevant by a world changed beyond recognition since the late 1940s. That temporarily shattered world characterized by two Superpowers and broken rivals has been replaced by a more complex international arena marked by emergent military and economic giants, new dynamics such as Islamic fundamentalism which do not fit within the traditional Cold War paradigm, and regional struggles wherein all political factions fear the meddling penchants of both Superpowers.

Even if the United States and Soviet Union cannot alter their policies out of either a sense of moral commitment to peace or a profound understanding of international subtleties, perhaps a bit of crude self-interest might bring both to their senses. As the renowned historian Paul Kennedy has suggested in *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, every modern empire has eventually collapsed due to over-commitment for which it is unwilling to pay. Hence, governments which prop up regimes like Castro's Cuba, or support nearly 350 overseas military bases like the United States feels compelled to fund, merely assure their own decline. Mikhail Gorbachev seems at least to dimly perceive this; Hollywood actors cannot and thus pursue self-defeating policies which feel good briefly but which ultimately contribute to disaster.

Clear recent historical examples reveal these limits of naked power: Asian guerillas are not supposed to be able to put to flight the two most vaunted armies of this age. Yet they have done exactly that twice in the last decade, each time somehow surprising the "Best and the Brightest" technocrats of both Superpowers, who have been sadly seduced by their own rhetoric of omnipotence into neglecting the limits of their megatons and megalomania. "Good morning, Vietnam"; "Good eveninsk, Afghanistan."

Most of the rest of the world has long recognized that Josef Stalin is well and truly

dead. Unless the citizens and governments of the world's most influential countries can grasp the implications of this simple fact, the future of humankind is jeopardized. Even if we should not perish by fireball and mushroom cloud, we so deplete our resources in a chimerical quest for global hegemony that the consequences for the values we hold most dear may be too horrible to contemplate.

SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa: The Untold Story

by John Prescott Kappas

Shortly before his death, Soviet dictator Leonid Breshnev stated, "our goal is to gain control of the two great treasure houses on which the West depends most -- the energy treasure house of the Persian Gulf and the mineral treasure house of southern Africa."¹ This ominous statement probably best typifies the situation in the Sub-Sahara.

Since the end of World War II, the Soviet Union has been engaged in a violent campaign to conquer the Republic of South Africa. It has used proxies like the African National Congress and the United Democratic Front ("UDF") to terrorize local populations and to subvert regional law and order. Until the late 1970s, the Soviet goal was to combine these anti-government forces into a single subversive front led by the South African Communist Party. This operation has now been expanded to include a campaign of misinformation in the world press. As a result of this tactic, the people of the United States have been exposed to a distorted picture of the South African Republic that has only served to further the Soviet position in the region.

A common misconception surrounding South Africa is the economic status of blacks in the country. The media has falsely portrayed this group as living in the worst conditions humanly possible. Not only is the presentation inaccurate, but in most cases the reverse situation exists. International studies have shown that South African blacks enjoy one of the highest standards of living on the continent. Mining and industrial workers alone have experienced a 200% wage increase over the past ten years. This condition has led to a substantial rise in annual black per capita income which has resulted in the emergence of the largest black middle-class in Africa. Perhaps this situation accounts for the fact that there are more black-owned cars in South Africa than there are privately-owned cars in the whole of the Soviet Union.²

This attractive appeal of the Republic's economy has been a magnet for blacks living in states bordering South Africa. Thousands enter the country each day to take advantage of high-paying jobs in mines and industrial plants. The country's rapidly growing economy and well-established technological base provide these non-South African blacks with the impetus to dramatically improve their lives. Contrary to the popular view presented by the media, blacks prefer the economic prosperity of South Africa to the communist tyranny of Mozambique.

Another distortion of the situation in South Africa involves the African National Congress ("ANC"). The media inaccurately portrays this group as a dedicated "freedom fighting" organization. The term "freedom fighting," however, does not remotely describe the objectives of the ANC. Since 1948, this terrorist group has been the prime force behind Soviet expansion in the Sub-Sahara. Not only is the bulk of the ANC's annual budget supplied by the Kremlin, but the organization's leader, Oliver Tambo, has repeatedly stated his intention to form a Marxist dictatorship once he comes to power.

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In fact, Tambo proudly proclaims that the ANC and the South African Communist Party are inextricably linked as "twin pillars of the revolution."³ Radical stances like this only further exemplify the true terroristic nature of the ANC.

A specific point of controversy related to the African National Congress is the governmental imprisonment of ANC leader Nelson Mandela. An intensive campaign by the world press has transformed this self-admitted terrorist into a virtual saint. He is frequently referred to as a "liberator" and often wrongly classified as a political prisoner. In reality, however, very few positive qualities can be attributed to him. In 1964 he was found guilty of having plotted a nationwide revolution with the South African Communist Party that included plans for a bloody guerrilla uprising known as Operation Mayibuye. He also worked diligently to increase the Soviet presence in South Africa by expanding the communist objectives of the ANC. While in prison, Mandela has steadfastly refused to renounce violence although President P.W. Botha has guaranteed his release if he will do so. This shameful advocacy of bloodshed clearly proves that Mandela remains as much a terrorist in 1988 and as he was in 1964.

A third major point the media misrepresents is South Africa's supply of strategic raw materials. The country's mineral reserves contain 86% of the West's platinum, 64% of its vanadium, 83% of its chrome ore and 48% of its manganese ore. As Breshnev's quote suggests, the Soviets are actively engaged in acquiring control of South Africa's "treasure house" of natural resources. Their strategy involves the utilization of communist shock troops which will, in the words of Oliver Tambo, "make the country ungovernable."⁴ Kremlin leaders believe this condition will precipitate a collapse of the South African economy and thus allow Soviet proxies like the ANC and the UDF to take full control of the Republic's valuable mines and processing plants. The resulting Soviet monopoly of strategic metals will quickly destroy Western defense industries and ultimately leave Europe open to communist domination.

As is evident, the media's distorted view of South Africa does not match the facts of reality. The false portrayal of political and economic conditions in the country has only given further aid to the Soviet juggernaut. While the world press raises untrue allegations of human rights violations, the Kremlin's subversive network of terrorist groups completes a classic communist encirclement of South Africa. Countries such as Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and Angola have all fallen into Eastern-bloc-style orbits. Now the last bastion of the West is facing fifth-columnist agitation from within and Soviet-inspired incursions from without. If the United States fails to recognize the severity of the situation, the last, most crucial domino of the Sub-Sahara will undoubtedly fall to the Red menace.

If You've Got a Boss, You Need a Union

by Roy Silver

Labor history and the contributions of working people are some of the most ignored aspects of our history.¹ Jean Anyon, in her investigation of the content of seventeen frequently used high school textbooks determined that the portrayal of our economic and labor history from the Civil War to World War II, illustrated that they "promote the idea that there is no working class in the United States, and to contribute to the myth that they are middle class."² These textbooks deviate slightly, all use a standard descriptive lexicon, and the interpretations they use are incredibly similar.

In regard to unions and labor history, these texts are extraordinarily confined and insensitive.

*The average length of the section in the texts on labor history is six pages. Most strikes are not even mentioned, and although there were more than 30,000 during the period, the texts only describe a few of them. Fourteen of the seventeen books choose from among the same three strikes, ones that were especially violent and were failures from labor's point of view...Each of these strikes represented a severe setback for the labor movement, leading either to the demise of a particular union or to the withdrawal of support by the middle class.*³

These stereotypes, distortions and omissions have greatly contributed to popular misconceptions of the conditions and contributions of labor and unions to our history.⁴

While the nature of the real and ideological assault against labor and unions are beyond the scope of this paper, they have been important factors in its demise.⁵ What has suffered the greatest setback is the quality of life for the vast majority of people in the United States.⁶

Working class⁷ unionization results from an unchecked capitalist class⁸ that traditionally does everything it can to reduce wages, promote unsafe working conditions and pollute the environment. Profit maximization is its number one priority and all else becomes a factor of production.

What were the conditions that laborers have endured in nonunion working environments? Let us take a look at three examples:

(1) Take the Second Avenue Elevated, and ride up half a mile through the sweaters' district. Every open window of the big tenements, that stand like a continuous brick wall on both sides of the way, give you a glimpse of one of these shops as the train speeds by. Men and women bending over their machines or ironing clothes at the window, half-naked....The road is like a big gangway through an endless

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Endnotes

¹Richard Nixon, *The Real War*, 1980, 23.

²Paul Johnson, "The Race for South Africa" *Commentary*, September 1985.

³National Center for Public Policy Research, "The African National Congress: Reformers or Terrorists?" *Bulletin*, February 1987.

⁴*Ibid.*

Is Apartheid Right or Wrong?

by Michael H. Washington

The question whether Apartheid is right or wrong is, above all else, a moral question. The answer can be determined only by the degree of morality inherent in the nations that grapple with the question. In other words, when the construct of a nation's social-self is rooted in the need to oppress others in order to attain the feeling of self-worth, then Apartheid, from this pathological perspective, is not only good but essential to the existence of the self. What this means is that without the existence of Apartheid or some other institutional form of white supremacy, the citizens of such nations would have no sense of self-worth. They would feel worthless as equals to indigenous people because their entire social, historical and cultural identities require the dehumanization of native populations.

This fragile construct of self-identity is made possible when people willingly surrender their ethnic identification to become identified as white. The conspicuous absence of a nation or a geographic area called "Whiteland" suggests that as a nationality or ethnic group, no such people exist. Being white is being political since this classification did not exist until political documents called constitutions were drafted in colonies such as those in America and Africa.

Asking whether Apartheid is wrong is like asking the United States government, was it wrong to murder the Indians, steal their lands, and win the West from them? Does not the government's victory of the West imply the subjugation of the Indians?

Was it wrong for George Washington to incarcerate over 160 Africans on his plantation? Another way of asking this question is how much would Washington have been worth in southern society without them? Was it wrong from the view of a Nazi for Hitler to order the murder of over six million Jews, or for United States corporations to help bolster the German economy and thus contribute to the development of Hitler's modernized war machine?

In regard to South Africa, just who would one seek to provide an ethical answer to the question of whether or not the two hundred racial laws placed on the books in South Africa between 1900 and 1971 was right or wrong, or whether the Sharpsville massacre was a day of celebration or mourning? Since the South African Dutch Reform Church saw fit to denounce Apartheid as church policy, was it right or wrong in 1982 for the Reagan administration to allow the exportation of 2,500 electric shock batons to South Africa to help keep the blacks in their place?

It is obvious that those who define themselves as white and on the right do not view Apartheid as wrong. The real question then is not whether Apartheid is right or wrong--but how long? That is, how long will it take to destroy the cancer of white supremacy?

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UNIONS

Unions: A Point of View

by *Windel Stracener*

The United States is a country that will permit individuals to rise or fall on their own merit. From its inception, that basic right of individuals to pursue success and happiness has been carefully preserved. The nation's forefathers included in our Constitution certain inalienable rights that guarantee these freedoms to all citizens.

Through various stages of development, many changes have necessarily occurred. Industrialization brought about many situations that were not and are not considered today to be morally acceptable. During the early years of industrialization employers made their own rules about how many hours an employee would work, what an employee would be paid, and under what conditions he would be required to work. Employers were not regulated concerning the age of a laborer; therefore, many factory owners and business managers included children as an integral part of their labor force.

In the early part of the twentieth century, many inequitable conditions existed in the mining industry. Many differences divided employee and employer. There were no laws to govern the conditions of employment. Individuals were powerless and unable to bring about change in the inexcusable conditions of the workplace.

Individuals began to complain about working conditions, speaking out in public and voicing the displeasure of the masses. Thus, unions were born. In the early days, unions fought to change conditions in the workplace. They sought to establish regulations and pass laws that would guarantee workers acceptable working conditions.

Everyone has a right to safe working conditions and equitable pay. Indeed, there was a time when something was desperately needed to change the existing labor conditions. Unions played an important part in bringing about those changes. Laws were passed and federal and state regulatory agencies were developed to monitor compliance with regulations and laws. However, unions no longer make meaningful contributions to society.

Unions are now a serious threat to the survival of our nation as an industrial competitor because they have negotiated wages to levels that many times prohibit the utilization of world markets. It is great to earn a substantial amount of money so as to afford nice things. Unions, however, provide laborers with substantial incomes that buy very little. We as individuals must realize from where money comes. For most, the source of income is their job. Jobs are created by the need or desire of people to have manufactured goods. In turn, manufacturers desire to make a profit to purchase goods for themselves. As people purchase more manufactured items, more laborers are hired to produce the goods for purchase. As more people are employed, more people can afford to purchase goods, thus the need for employment is supplied to an ever expanding society. It is therefore necessary to understand that if industry is not profitable, society is not profitable.

Unions are a major cause for the non-productive, wasteful, and sloppy craftsmanship of manufacturing companies in this country. In 1960, I was working in a factory in Richmond, Indiana. I had just recently decided to get married and I was very ambitious.

Windel Stracener is a resident of Erlanger, Kentucky.

My job in the factory was to operate a machine that performed six machining operations to a single aircraft part. The only thing that I had to do was to take the part out of the jaws of the machine when all the functions had been completed and install a blank part to begin another cycle. The machine was designed so that if I could complete the operation in the allotted time, the machine did not have to be manually stopped therefore maintaining maximum efficiency. As I worked at this job a few days my ease at maintaining the sequence of the machine increased. Since the company offered a bonus for excess production, I kept the machine moving as fast as it would go.

I had noticed that many of my co-workers were slow returning to their machine after a break period but I gave it little thought. It was my understanding that perhaps they were satisfied with their production earnings and would therefore take their time. Needless to say, I was puzzled when one day after morning break four co-workers followed me back to my machine. One man stepped forward and introduced himself as the "Union Steward." He stated that he and others had been observing my production rate which, by their standards, was too high. I was informed that if I continued to perform at an accelerated pace, upper management would conduct a "time study" to re-evaluate the production quota and possibly set higher production requirements. Just before the Union Steward took leave he said, "If you know what is good for you, you will slow the S.O.B. down."

Unions use these same tactics in other areas. If union negotiations on the terms of a contract cannot be agreed upon, it is not uncommon for picketers to become restless, often committing acts of violence. When union members resort to terroristic tactics, I consider them no different than terrorists in any other part of the world.

Recently, unions have been linked to organized crime. In recent years there have been numerous associations reported between union officials and former union officials that have served time in correctional institutions for various infractions of the law. Unions obtain their bargaining power by producing a "sense of strength" in numbers. They combine the element of fear with the sense of strength and many times the result is a "bullyish" attitude. This attitude surfaces in instances where negotiating has been unsuccessful and a strike has resulted. Employees who do not feel the "strike" is necessary either continue to work or return to work before the strike is settled. These individuals, commonly called "scabs," are often mistreated, abused and many times injured by the terroristic actions of the "faithfuls" walking the picket lines.

While these actions are not legal, seldom do we hear of any picketers being arrested for assault or for vandalism. Local officials tend to overlook the illegal actions of picketers even though their actions are terroristic. Unions also violate the civil rights of those workers who wish to stay on the job. It is not their place to deny others the right to work.

Early in my life I chose not to associate with such organizations or actions. The past accomplishments of the unions is not a sufficient reason to condone the continued methods and actions that they demonstrate today. Laws and regulations exist today that prevent abuse to workers. Minimum wages have been established and workplace guidelines determined. Since regulatory agencies monitor and police the workplace, the need for unions with their illegal and terroristic tactics no longer exists.

workroom where vast multitudes are forever laboring. Morning, noon, or night, it makes no difference; the scene is always the same...It is not unusual, ...when the weather permits to see the balconies of the fire escapes occupied by from two to four busy workmen. The halls and roofs are also utilized for workshop purposes very frequently?

(2) ...horrible. The computer (Sabre) had arrived....Sabre was so expensive, everything (and everyone) was geared to it. Sabre's down, Sabre's up. Sabre's this and that. Everything was Sabre... It was almost like a production line. We adjusted to the machine. The casualness, the informality that had been there previously was no longer there...

They monitored you and listened to your conversations. If you were a minute late for work, it went into your file. I had a horrible attendance record -- ten letters in my file for lateness, a total of ten minutes. You took thirty minutes for your lunch, not thirty-one. When I was in the airlines, I was taking eight tranquilizers a day. I came into this business, which is supposed to be one of the most hectic, and I'm down to three a day. Even my doctor remarked, "Your ulcer is healed, it's going away." With the airline, I had no free will. I was just part of that stupid computer.¹⁰

(3) I worked all the time, day and night, seven days a week. But my boss was no good. Once he gave me a bundle with 1,000 pieces in it. When I brought it back, he said it had had 2,000 pieces. He wouldn't pay me until I worked off the missing pieces.¹¹

The first example is from the sweat shops of the 1920s and second and third are from the 1970s and 1980s respectively. These are representative of the working conditions that workers have had to endure under capitalism in our country.

When workers attempt to improve their quality of life, they are often greeted by severe repression from the bosses. The United States Commission on Industrial Relations reported in 1916 that:

Freedom does not exist either politically, industrially or socially for workers trying to organize. ...the use of thugs, spies and hired gunmen was general throughout the country in the employers' efforts to keep the open shop....Almost without exception the employees of large organizations are unorganized as a result of the active and aggressive "non-union" policy of the corporation managements...¹²

One capitalist went as far as to boast about his power to smash unionization efforts: "I can hire one half of the working class to kill the other half."¹³

During the 1912 strike in the coal fields in Paint Creek and Cabin Creek, West Virginia, the coal operators brought in strikebreakers and 300 Baldwin-Felts detectives. "Later during the strike, the mine guards rigged a train, called the 'bull moose special,' with iron-plate siding and machine guns, and then at night, with its lights turned out, and with coal operator Quinn Martin and Kanawha County Sheriff Bonner Hill aboard, they drove the monster through the valleys, machine-gunning the people in the tent colonies on the sides of the hills."¹⁴ Today, the United Farm Workers have been subjected to the same violence of the gun thugs hired to bust their union by the growers in California.

Martin Luther King, Jr. recognized the contribution of labor when he stated: "the labor movement did not diminish the strength of the nation but enlarged it. By raising the living standards of millions, labor miraculously created a market for industry and lifted the whole nation to undreamed of levels of production."¹⁵ Unionized companies and nations with robust labor movements seem on balance, or to feature superior productivity efficiency than the 'union-free' environments promoted by some. In the United States, the period of high unionization and union strength in the immediate postwar decades was a sustained period of strong productivity growth. The decline of union strength in the 1970s and 1980s was accompanied by a productivity slowdown.¹⁶

A comparison of the United States, Belgium, Denmark and Sweden (which are the most unionized of the advanced Western industrial nations, with unionization rates ranging from 60% to 96%) establishes that these Western European countries have higher rates of investment and average productivity growth rate in manufacturing for these countries was roughly 80% to 150% higher than in the United States. In addition, both Germany and Japan, which have outperformed the United States in terms of productivity growth over the postwar period, have had higher rates of unionization in recent years.¹⁷

Non-union workers also derive benefits from unions. In states with higher rates of unionization, the wages of all workers are higher. These and the many other positive contributions of labor and unions have been and will continue to be vital forces in the improvement and quality of our lives.

Endnotes

¹ The purpose of this paper is to present some of the problems labor has faced and some of its positive contributions. While the author recognizes that there have been some problems associated with organized labor, he believes that the historical record will show, that on balance, the contributions of labor and unions have been constructive and positive.

² Jean Anyon, "Ideology and United States History Textbooks," *Harvard Educational Review*. Vol. 49, No. 3, August 1979, 383-4.

³ Anyon, 373.

⁴ The presentation of the role of racial minorities and women also suffer from the same inadequacies. See Council on Interracial Books for Children, *Stereotypes, Distortions, and Omissions in U. S. History Textbooks*, N.Y.: Racism and Sexism Resource Center for Educators, 1977 and Baltimore Feminist Project, *Sexism and Racism in Popular Basal Readers: 1964-1976*, N.Y.: Racism and Sexism Resource Center for Educators, 1976.

Martin Luther King, Jr. in a 1961 speech before the AFL-CIO remarking on the link between the black human rights movement and the labor movement stated: "We are confronted by powerful forces telling us to rely on the good will and understanding of those who profit by exploiting us. They deplore our discontent, they resent our will to organize, so that we may guarantee that humanity will prevail and equality will be exacted. They are shocked that action organizations, sit-ins, civil disobedience, and protest are becoming our every day tools, just as strikes, demonstrations and union organization became yours to insure that bargaining power genuinely existed on both sides of the table.

...In this way labor's historic tradition of moving forward to create vital people as consumers and citizens has become our own tradition, and for the same reasons." *Proceedings of the Fourth Constitutional Convention of the AFL-CIO*, Miami Beach, Fla., December 7-13, 1961, Vol. 1, 282-89. Cited in Philip S. Foner, Ronald L. Lewis, and Robert Cvornyek, eds., *The Black Worker: A Documentary History from Colonial Times to the Present, Volume VIII, The Black Worker Since the AFL-CIO Merger 1955-1980*. (1984), 183.

⁵ Membership in organized labor peaked during the 1950s at about one-third of the labor force and is currently around 16%. Other causes of this deterioration in union affiliation are: the anti-union tactics of business; escalating joblessness; and the changing structure of the economy.

⁶ Between 1973 and 1986 real wages declined by 13.8%. "The average family in bottom 40% of income earners (below \$24,000 a year) absorbed \$918 decreased annual earning in 1986 over 1979, after adjusting for inflation. Even the average family in the middle 20% (income of \$24,000 to \$35,000 a year) ended up behind with \$228 less than in 1979." For a more detailed description of this erosion in the quality of life of the working class see: Roy Silver, "Epitaph for the Reagan Legacy," *The Cincinnati Enquirer*. November 15, 1987, (Forum section), 3.

⁷ I define the working class as being composed of those absorbed in the manufacturing and distribution of material goods and services who do not possess or govern the object of their labor or its uses. They are neither exclusively workers in the production sphere who manipulate things, nor those in the distributive sphere who manipulate symbols and people.

⁸ The capitalist class consists of the owners of the means of production and their agents.

⁹ Louis Levine, *The Women Garment Workers*. New York: B.W. Huebsch, Inc., 1924. Cited in Rosalyn Baxandall, Linda Gordon and Susan Reverby, *America's Working Women: A Documentary History - 1600 to the Present*. (1976), 101.

¹⁰ Studs Turkel, *Working*. (1974), 49-50.

¹¹ Annette Fuentes and Barbara Ehrenreich, *Women in the Global Factory*. (1983), 52.

¹² Final Report of the Commission on Industrial Relations, Washington, D.C., 1915 in Richard Boyer and Herbert Morais, *Labor's Untold Story*, 3rd ed. New York: United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America, 1970. 184-6.

¹³ Boyer and Morais, 72.

¹⁴ David Alan Corbin, *Life, Work, and Rebellion in the Coal Fields: The Southern West Virginia Miners, 1880-1992*. (1981), 88.

¹⁵ Foner, et.al., 183.

¹⁶ The typical yearly incidence of increase of production per hour in the business sector was 2.9% between 1950 and 1965. The annual rate of growth of productivity averages only 1.7% between 1966 and 1984, a time of diminished unionization. Computed from *Economic Report of the President*, (1985).

¹⁷ U.S. Department of Labor, *Handbook of Labor Statistics 1983*, and Office of Productivity and Technology (unpublished data).

AMERICA'S ECONOMIC
FUTURE

Back to a New Innocence

by *Martin Giesbrecht*

Poverty, chastity, and the rejection of material wealth have often been proposed as the pathways back to a more innocent and more virtuous world. Noble savages, who own little more than their spears and loincloths, and humble monks, who dedicate their entire lives to a greater glory, have occasionally been held up as paragons of this ideal. The third of the Earth's human population, which lives in the grip of communist dogma today, although decidedly not antimaterialist in its philosophy, is achieving the same cleansing poverty through its virtue seeking rejection of private property ownership.

None of this has ever had much appeal in America. Owning things, owning cars and trucks, owning toys, owning a house and some acreage in the country, along with a nice portfolio of investments, has generally been considered a more promising path to the good life here. Not that we are all seized by a materialist fit! We recognize that land and capital are the means by which we can best feed, clothe, and shelter ourselves. This has always been the most realistic approach, at least since our expulsion from the Garden of Eden, where food was free for the picking and clothing and shelter were blissfully unnecessary. Land ownership has always been necessary for efficient agricultural production and capital ownership has always been necessary for efficient industrial production.

But all this is changing very rapidly in America and in the rest of the modern world today. And the change is due not to a new ideology or a rejection of worldly values, but to the new importance of a factor of production that is shouldering its way ahead of land and capital as the main determinant of our well-being. This factor is technology.

Unlike land and capital, technology cannot be owned exclusively. That is, technology -- like all knowledge -- can be given away, can be shared, can be sold, can be stolen, and the original owner of it still possesses the original technology. We can protect our land with fences and our capital with security guards, but trying to prevent our latest technological advance from slipping into other minds is eventually always a losing battle, just ask IBM or any leading pharmaceutical company.

This is very unsettling to the established national and global economic orders. Persons, regions, states, and nations that enjoyed a superior standard of living, because of their wealth of land and/or capital, find that they are in an entirely new ball game when technology becomes important. The formerly poor nations like Japan or Taiwan can become very much richer in a hurry, and the formerly rich, Great Britain can lose their status almost as quickly.

Fortunately America, well endowed in both land and capital, is also technologically advanced, at present. But technology, once achieved, can slip out of our exclusive possession very easily and, in any case, is usually obsolete in short order. So the only way America can maintain its economic health and stature is to continue to develop and expand its technological base.

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That is a tall order and promises a tough and competitive future. But, in a way, it also promises a way back to a kind of innocence and virtue, not via poverty, chastity, and the rejection of material wealth, but via the emphasis on technology, a factor of production that cannot really be owned, that can be shared almost costlessly, and that is available to all who would acquire it, regardless of their station in life.

America's Economic Future

by *Mike Laux*

America's economic future will depend on how we answer two key questions: Will America impose trade sanctions on its trading partners? And will the United States Government lower its enormous budget deficit?

Harsh critics of trade sanctions are correct in saying a trade war could be sparked by tough, protectionist tariffs. However, they overstate this risk when speaking of today's World Economy. They usually mention the Great Depression and how it was caused by terribly isolationist economic problems. However, it is not mentioned how different the high tariffs of the 1920s and 1930s are from those proposed today. The 1920s tariffs were purely revenue-raising acts designed when the federal government had less money coming from other sources, such as the income tax which is the main source of revenue today.

By contrast, Fair Trade proponents support punitive measures on those who block our products from their markets. And, for the most part, they want to have an import fee on similar goods in our markets which would discourage foreign countries from taking unfair advantage of the United States in the blossoming World Economy. Many Fair Trade proponents also support an oil import fee. Again, this fee is not necessarily designed to raise revenue for the federal government, rather, it would protect the consumer if implemented carefully. Consumers, and the economy in general, will never face another energy crisis as in 1973 or 1979 when OPEC decided to boost oil prices. Furthermore, Texas will cease to be a depressed region of the United States and embark on a strong, steady growth toward a stable future.

The Federal Budget Deficit must also be addressed. Fear of this multi-trillion dollar monster and its implications caused the Stock Market Crash in October 1987, and is bound to cause future uneasiness. The Budget Deficit, which President Reagan has said would be zero by now, needs to be tackled in the political arena as no other economic issue facing us.

Politicians must first admit that the deficit is not the other guy's or the other party's fault. Once they see it as a problem to be tackled on a nation-wide scale, it will in fact be tackled. However, the day when they will seriously address it seems very distant. In any case, we can expect the following proposals to be put forth, and depending on which party is in power, some will be implemented.

1. A second summit on the deficit to make long term plans about how to tackle it with revenue increases (higher taxes) and spending cuts.
2. Balanced budget and line-item veto amendments to the Constitution.

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3. More embarrassments to congressmen, and even past presidents who have misused funds.

However, the politicians are reluctant to address the budget deficit because decisions about tax hikes and revenue cuts are difficult.

Therefore, although high tariffs may be very dangerous economically, punitive import fees and even an oil import fee should not be great causes of alarm. Rather, the Federal Budget Deficit is a huge beast in America's economy and will probably remain one until the voters demand that it be addressed. This is where you come in. Become aware of the candidates and their policies and vote!

THE MEDIA'S INFLUENCE

Media Role in Influencing Opinion

by *Jim Friedman*

When the clock changes from 6:59 to 7:00 my sleep is shattered by rapid fire radio talk. As I stumble across the room to turn it off, I turn on a television morning show which keeps me company and somewhat informed through by morning ritual. I make my way downstairs to read the morning paper and eat my morning cornflakes because my morning commercials told me this is the brand I need. My days are a constant barrage of media companionship which scares me -- we're known by the company we keep.

The media is so omnipresent that people cannot avoid its influence. But there are only a few ways in which the media can possibly influence the people it reaches.

It is important to understand that the viewer, listener, reader is always armed with an important tool which will determine how he/she will perceive the media. These are the selective barriers which we all possess.¹ The first is selective exposure. Viewers, readers, and listeners will only expose themselves to things with which they already agree or are already comfortable. The staunch conservative is not going to read a liberal magazine, newspaper editorial, or watch a politician spout liberal ideology on television.

On the occasions when we find ourselves in a situation opposite of what we already agree; the second selective process takes over, called selective perception. In this instance the reader, viewer, or listener will perceive information in a manner in which it agrees with previously held beliefs. The conservative watching a newscast in which liberal ideology is expressed will therefore perceive the liberal speaker as wrong.

The third barrier, selective retention, holds that the receiver will remember in a manner in which it agrees with previously held beliefs. This was demonstrated in a 1945 study.² Subjects were shown a picture of a bus scene wherein a white man was holding a razor and arguing with a black man. In the course of their later description of the picture, the razor often changed to the black man's hand.

So, with the mind of the receiver locked in by previously held beliefs is it even possible for the sender/media to affect any influence on opinion? Yes, and in many ways.

The basis for all knowledge is a combination of what we hear and observe and since the media ubiquity is a fact of life there is no way for us to escape the barrage of messages from the media.

We have established that if the media message opposes our viewpoint we perceive it as wrong; if the message agrees with us we perceive it as correct. The power of media, therefore, is in the presentation of subjects about which we have not yet formed our opinion and subjects about which we are unaware.

But what is really important? Action or opinion. General Motors does not care if your opinion is that they make great cars. Their only concern is that you buy -- action. The media has a large influence on our actions.

Many people point to that influence saying that the A-Team mentality of early 1980s television created a violent society. They point to anecdotal cases in which a Miami child

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murdered a woman after watching *Kojak*,³ a San Francisco girl was raped with a broomstick by two boys who watched the same act on a television movie.⁴ But now in the late 1980s, television trends lean toward a *Cosby* mentality and no one is talking about how television has created a funnier society.

Anecdotes can be used to answer most people's concept of the media. In 1871, Thomas Nast attacked Tammany Hall's political Boss Tweed with a barrage of editorial cartoons which ran Tweed from office and into jail.⁵

In 1934, Clark Gable took his shirt off in "It Happened One Night." He was not wearing an undershirt, and men followed suit almost ruining the undergarment industry.⁶

In 1977, an episode of "Happy Days" showed the Fonz applying for a library card. The next day libraries were flooded with library requests.⁷

And just a few years ago, Johnny Carson asked a studio audience if they had been affected by the toilet paper shortage. There was no toilet paper shortage until the next day. Viewers rushed the stores creating a nationwide shortage of toilet paper.⁸

Sure, the anecdotes all point to an influence of the media but one medium, one exposure, is rarely the sole agent of a person's opinion choice. They are straw which breaks it.⁹ The strongest statement I can make about the effect of media opinion is that some media affect some people, about some issues, under some circumstances, sometimes. Therefore, it is our task as media consumers to choose wisely. We must take responsibility for our own actions and opinions.

Endnotes

- ¹ Joseph Klapper, *The Effects of Mass Communications*, (Glencoe, IL, 1960), 63.
- ² G.W. Allport and L.L. Postman, "The Basic Psychology of Rumor", (Transactions of New York Academy of Science, Series II, 1945), 67.
- ³ *The Miami News and Herald*, scores of articles on the Ronnie Zamora case.
- ⁴ Fred Fadler, *An Introduction to Mass Media*, (New York, 1978), 41.
- ⁵ Steven Hess and Milton Kaplan, *The Ungentlemanly Art*, (New York, 1968), 15.
- ⁶ Patrick Robertson, *Movies; Facts and Feats*, (New York, 1980), 132.
- ⁸ Hugh Wilson, Television Producer, a conversation with the author, 1982.
- ⁸ Roge Von Oechs, *A Whack on the Side of the Head*, (New York, 1983), 120.
- ⁹ Klapper, 63.

The Free Press: Its Role in Contemporary America

by *Derick Rogers Harper*

What is the role of the press in contemporary society? The press states that it is the guardian of truth in our democratic-republic. Others decry it as a slanderous and sensationalized tool of special interests who misuse their power and hide behind the Bill of Rights to guarantee no reprisals. In many cases, those who comprise the ranks of the press have begun to question the professional ethics of their chosen field. How far should the press go in investigations? Is the press really trying to inform the public or is it just trying to raise television and radio ratings, and sell more newspapers? Even worse, is the press actually trying to influence American politics to conform with its biases?

These are just a few of the questions facing the American press today. Many people, however, do not realize that sensationalized and biased news reporting is not an entirely modern problem. It has been an American plague since the founding of our nation-state with the first skirmishes between the Federalist and Jeffersonian Republican parties. Republican newspapers attacked Federalists, Federalist newspapers attacked Republicans, and simply greedy newspapers attacked whomever they wished if it would sell more copies of their publication. Just as today, there were many good newspapers but the yellow rags tended to obscure them.

There are two probable reasons why this type of journalism is noticed to a greater extent today. One is because of the modern media blitz. With the advent of radio, television, and satellite communications the modern American citizen is bombarded with both well and badly reported news. The early American got his news from only two primary sources, word of mouth and newspapers. Secondly, the growing American appetite for sensationalized journalism is to blame. This is seen in the advent of more and more television programming and newspaper publications dealing with the sensational and scandalous. These two elements grow and feed on one another and have become a menace to responsible news reporting.

Many people are calling for stricter controls on the media, because of what appears to be the recent irresponsibility of the press. Some of the concerns of the media about censorship are for legitimate reasons while others fear that their ability to scandalize the lives of others will be sharply curtailed. The word "censorship" causes an unlikely and strange alliance between the *Wall Street Journal's* and the *National Enquirer's* of the world. When the media argues that if censorship begins in order to stop yellow journalism, it will continue into the world of responsible news reporting, they make a cogent point. Just where is the line drawn? And who has the needed insights and unbiased opinion to determine this line of transgression? This is easily answered. Depending on who a person is and what his background is, the line would differ. No human being is completely free of bias. Therefore, a standard scale of censorship that conforms to the views of the entire populous, or even a simple majority, is impossible.

This leaves the problem of finding the truth in journalistic publications on the shoulders

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of each individual. History has shown us that liberty, at least in the Western tradition, can best be preserved under the system of democratic-republicanism. For a democratic-republic to exist, a free press is essential. The dissemination of accurate information must not be hindered in order that responsible decisions can be made by each citizen of a nation-state. Since the press cannot be trusted to be entirely accurate nor completely unbiased, each citizen must take it upon himself to find the truth. This is best done by each person reading as much as he can emanating from various sources of differing biases. In this way, the citizen can gain the facts from one source that were left out by other sources, either intentionally or accidentally. Then the person can weigh the information contained within the various sources against one another and balance the issues involved into a concise personal opinion. Discussion of the information with ones' peers also serves to broaden a base of understanding. In this way, each citizen can fulfill his civic responsibility by filtering out impurities and arrive at the greatest amount of factual information possible.

Unfortunately, most of the citizens in a democratic-republic are not willing to accept this responsibility. Therefore, those who do take up their civic burden must carry the additional load of others by being more careful in their interpretation of media sources and the actions they take in response.

Liberty in a democratic-republic not only carries the prize of many rights, but it also carries great power. With great power comes great responsibility. It is the charge of every citizen to be well-informed in order to make responsible decisions. To do this, they must expose themselves to as much information that deals with their lives and those of their neighbors as possible, weigh the facts that are available, develop an opinion, and act upon it with responsible judgment. People in a democratic-republic, especially America, are brought up with an understanding of their civil rights. It is an unfortunate testament to our nation that they have not been raised to also know their civil responsibilities. If people wish to continue the rich democratic-republican tradition of America, they must continue to honor a sometimes abusive free press and take upon themselves the responsibility to extract the truth.

Letter from the President/Editor

My association with the Alpha Beta Phi chapter of Phi Alpha Theta has been perhaps the most practical and rewarding experience of my undergraduate studies. Through Phi Alpha Theta, I have developed new skills that augmented my education. Active membership also taught me how to integrate academic theories with the world that lies beyond college. Most importantly however, I was given the opportunity to meet and work with some truly outstanding individuals.

I am forever indebted to my mentor and friend Dr. Jim Ramage, NKU's chapter advisor. His guidance, dedication, and genuine concern have meant success for the Alpha Beta Phi chapter. He is a remarkable man from whom I have learned a great deal both personally and professionally.

The two previous editors of *Perspectives in History*, Ken Hughes and Chris Burns, were a constant inspiration to me. Their hard work, diligence, and love of history set the standard for publications of high quality. I hope that my efforts in maintaining those standards has been achieved.

The editorial assistance given me by Mr. Scott Kappas is immeasurable. His input often enabled me to make confident decisions. I am certain that Scott will be an effective President/Editor in 1988-89.

Ms. Shirley Raleigh, Ms. Amelia A. Maldonado and Mr. Roger Adams have been tireless in their willingness to assist our chapter. I am deeply grateful for their sharing with us their expertise and valuable time.

I wish to extend a special thanks to Dr. W. Michael Ryan, Chairperson of the History and Geography Department. His support for our chapter and his willingness to help it succeed are never ending.

A final thanks to all who have contributed articles, time, and/or suggestions that have made our journal and chapter a pleasurable and valuable learning experience.

Respectfully,

Elaine M. Richardson
President/Editor



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