

NEWS FROM IRVINGTON

Charles Hull Wolfe



IF COLUMNS could talk, this one would start out with: "Greetings! I'm a new feature! Every month I'm going to scoop up some news about what's going on at the Foundation for Economic Education."

The Foundation does a lot of things besides putting out a journal. It has quite a staff — ex-professors, former businessmen, a clergyman — and they're all busy in a variety of activities calculated to promote the idea of a free society. Each month "News From Irvington" will keep you posted on their doings.

Harper's Swedish Trip

At year's end, one of the big events at FEE was the return of Dr. F. A. "Baldy"* Harper from his trip to Sweden, where he conducted a firsthand study of Swedish socialism.

He entered Sweden at Halsingborg, port city at the country's southern tip, and traveled by bus

to Stockholm which became his home base for eleven weeks.

One thing that motivated the trip, "Baldy" explains, was the prevalent notion here in the United States that "socialism can work wonders — look what it's done in Sweden" — so he set out to discover, as impartially and objectively as possible, just what socialism *had* done in Sweden.

Dr. Harper describes his "procedure" this way: "I guarded against becoming embroiled in the pleasantries of the smorgasbord circuit by working as inconspicuously as possible for a time." He wanted to reduce to a minimum his exposure to mere personal opinions on the subject, so he first went about getting straight factual information.

"Baldy" points out this was fortunate for several reasons. "For one thing, it protected me from absorbing many prevailing impressions that now seem contrary to the facts — impressions which are always difficult to unlearn later."

Right now Dr. Harper is work-

* The "Baldy" in this case does not describe a current condition but stems from an observation by college classmates that Floyd Harper's hair was less luxuriant than that of his older brother.

ing on an extended analysis from which he will derive final conclusions. Meanwhile, though, we can give you this sneak preview in his words: "The fruits of socialism in Sweden are, I fear, near the point of bitter harvest. However, I would not attempt to predict the date of a collapse."

College-Business Program

Dr. W. M. "Charley"*** Curtiss has just announced that Business Fellowships will again be available in the 1956 College-Business Exchange Program. And there are already signs, he says, that more professors will apply than ever before.

"Charley" explains the program in an official announcement which is now being sent to American businesses:

"Since World War Two an increasing number of business firms have made it possible for college professors of economics, business and related fields to spend a few weeks with them during the summer and discover what goes on in the business world.

"Many of the educators in our colleges and universities have moved directly from their undergraduate and graduate studies into the teaching profession. Each of these teachers may influence thousands of students, many of whom

are destined to become leaders in business and government.

"Such teachers need more than a textbook knowledge of the business world. To help solve this problem, the College-Business Exchange Program was set up in 1948 with nine professors in six business firms. During each of the last four summers, more than 100 professors have devoted six weeks to an on-the-spot study of a business firm.

"More business firms are needed to meet the requests from professors. In 1955, nearly 500 applications were received from teachers, but there were only 108 openings.

"Business men, generally, have been highly pleased with their experience with teachers. One manufacturer covered most of the benefits when he said:

"We have received very valuable ideas from our candidates during the visits and from reports which each has submitted. We feel these fellowships develop a better understanding between colleges and the business leaders. We also feel that the presence of these Fellows tends to spark our own executive group."

Businessmen who want to find out more about the program, in considering whether they want to participate, should write to Dr. W. M. Curtiss, The Foundation for Economic Education, Irvington-on-Hudson, New York.

*** The "Charley" is the fore part of a charley horse developed in a high school basketball game.

Two Points Of View

Edmund A. Opitz

The author, for nine years a parish minister, formerly directed the conference program for Spiritual Mobilization, and in that capacity held a number of two-day seminars for clergymen and laymen designed to promote a better understanding of the libertarian philosophy. Similar questions recurred at many of these conferences, and experience suggested ways of clearing up certain persistent misunderstandings. The following dialogue is a reconstruction of many conversations. Mr. Opitz is now a member of the staff of the Foundation for Economic Education.

A: I am in favor of private enterprise — wherever it can do the job — and I am as much opposed as you are to big government. But I am more opposed to poor housing, poor medical care, unemployment and other social evils. These evils are so pressing that I am willing to risk the dangers of big government to overcome them.

B: I am in full sympathy with your desire to rid society of the evils you mention, so let's talk then about your suggested method: relying on the instrumentality of government as a means of getting better housing, better medical care and full employment.

A: Please remember that I do not favor strengthening the power of government for its own sake. I would much prefer that private enterprise provide the necessary

housing, medical care and so on. But let's face the fact that private enterprise is not adequately providing these services for large numbers of people.

For example, I'm thinking of what was once a bad slum in Chicago. Private enterprise had every opportunity to clear that slum and erect decent dwellings on the site. But it did not do so. That would have been my first choice as a remedy for that evil condition. My second choice would have been for the local government to take care of that situation, and my third choice would have been the state government. But none of these agencies did anything, so the federal government stepped in, and now we have large apartment houses where once there were slums.

B: You said that private enterprise failed to do the job. What do