



With tongue in cheek, a well-known individualist explains . . .

★ WHY THE U.S.S.R. **MUST** SUCCEED

FRANK CHODOROV

SOME American scientists have cautiously questioned the authenticity of the Luniks. Nobody has said flatly that these trips to the moon are hoaxes; scientists are not given to such accusations, for their disposition is to accept at face value the statements of all scientists, including those of communist persuasion. Such skepticism as has been expressed rests on the lack of independent, non-communist evidence supporting the claims from Moscow. Furthermore, they say, the announcements from Moscow always come a day or two after the Luniks are supposed to have been launched, which is too late for verification. And, in further support of their doubts, they point to the fact that the Soviets do not supply the rest of the world with such information as would help track the satellites in their course. What have the Russian scientists to hide? The truth?

The average American citizen, whose knowledge of physics is at best limited to a six-months course at high school, is ill-equipped to get into the hassle. The best he can do is to recall that Edgar Allen Poe in one of his stories described a trip to the moon in such detail that the scientists of the time asserted the thing could have happened. Well, if a storyteller could fool the scientists, why cannot a commissar?

Nevertheless, a view prevails that even if these moon satellites are mere fantasies, we must accept them as fact. For, if it should be proven that the Luniks were hoaxes, the bottom would fall out of our "race" with the communists. Our Washington spenders, backed by ambitious civilian and military scientists, would lose valuable support for their requests for more money.

This Lunik business suggests

how important it is for some of our citizenry that the commissars make a bang-up success of all their ventures. Whenever they succeed in doing anything spectacular, or even claim an achievement, somebody with an axe to grind can use the event to scare the American citizen out of his wits, so that he loses all power of resistance to demands made on him. That is to say, there is in this country a vested interest in the success of the U.S.S.R.

Various Vested Interests

When the first Sputnik hit the air, a cry went up that we must increase the number and improve the brand of our scientists. Who raised the largest howl? The professional educationists who had long been demanding the nationalization of our schools through "federal aid." For many years before the advent of the Sputnik, these opinion molders had been harassing Congress, and the country, with their demands for federal funds to overcome statistical shortages of teachers and classroom space. Now the Sputnik gave their cause a fillip: money was needed to make scientists!

Recently, a story of the remarkable advances by the Russians in the development of hydroelectric plants hit the public press. To the advocates of public power this

news was a godsend, and to those who yearn for federal monopoly of atomic power, it was a stimulant. Certainly, they said, we must not let the Russians get ahead of us in this business, even though we are now producing as much electricity as we can use with low-cost, conventional methods. We must have nationalization — and quickly!

When Khrushchev announced the Kremlin's intention to outdo us in handouts to underdeveloped countries, our proponents of foreign aid were in their heaven. The fact that Khrushchev wasn't giving anything but a little well-secured credit, and that he made sure of getting his pound of flesh in every transaction, was blithely overlooked; nor did anybody ask whether Soviet production was capable of supporting such gifts. Our foreign-aidists accepted his announcement as a challenge: If we want to win the good will of the world, we must pit the dollar against the ruble!

And so it goes. Despite the fact that every achievement claimed by the commissars is guarded from scrutiny, despite the fact that what little information escapes the Iron Curtain throws doubt on these claims, there are Americans who are most anxious to accept them at face value. Such persons seem to have a pathological inclination to believe every word and

every statistic published in *Pravda*, not because they are pro-communist, but because they are convinced that political power can accomplish miracles; a Soviet success supports their faith in the competence of government and gives them courage to demand more intervention at home. They have an intellectual interest in the success of the U.S.S.R.

The biggest and most powerful vested interest in Russian achievement is the American bureaucracy. Their jobs depend on it. If the American people can be convinced, for instance, that in the so-called propaganda race these clever communists are outdistancing us, the United States Information Service can wangle a sizable appropriation from Congress. Foreign aid does not spend itself; thousands of agents all over the world must work hard to get rid of billions. The huge State Department thrives on this so-called competition from the Soviets. How many government jobs would lose justification if it were demonstrated that Russia is about as competitive to unhampered private enterprise as a high school football team is to a professional eleven?

The Common Sense Approach

Since we who have to foot the bill are in no position to challenge the information or misinformation

emanating from the Kremlin — and supported by American propagandists — the best we can do is to fall back on common sense and principle. We know from the evidence of the ages that slaves are poor producers. That is the same as saying that when the worker is deprived of the right to possess and enjoy the fruits of his labor — which is private property — he has no interest in production, and his output will tend toward the minimum of mere existence. That is a universal truth. True, he may produce a little more to avoid the lash of the master's whip, but that little more cannot constitute prosperity. Therefore, since the denial of property is the basic tenet of communism, we can assert without fear of contradiction that Russian production is necessarily limited and that there is no possibility of its matching capitalistic production. There is no competition for us there — unless we persist in going socialistic.

We know, too, that it is a matter of principle with communists to lie. They have made it plain in all their authentic literature since *Das Kapital* that truth is anything that promotes the cause of communism, and if a statement favorable to communism is contradicted by fact, the fact must be denied, altered, or hidden. That is dogma with all true communists. Why,

then, should we accept any claim they make without demanding supporting evidence, and evidence not of their own making? Would it not be wiser to begin by doubting every statement they make? Taking them at their word, we should judge every statistic they produce, every promise they make, every word they utter as to its importance to the cause of communism; what may be true to them may not be truth at all.

If, on the other hand, we continue to act on the assumption that communists can be believed

without question, if we heed our own people who have a vested interest in the "race" with Russia, what will be the result? We shall spend ourselves into a socialistic regime. We shall give our own government more and more power to do with our wealth as the bureaucrats see fit, and in the end our political and economic system will approximate that of our presumed competitor. And the communists will match or exceed our accomplishments, not because they have progressed but because we have retrogressed. ◆

IDEAS ON LIBERTY

Political Behavior

IT IS TRUE that human beings fall farther below their own standards when they are acting in the plural, as "we," than when each of them is acting in the singular, as "I." We know from personal experience that, when we are acting as parents or as practitioners of a profession, we act more responsibly, more altruistically, and more humanely than when we are acting as members of a committee or as voters in an electorate.

Yet, when one has faced and acknowledged the matter of fact, the choice between right and wrong still

confronts us in our public life as well as in our private affairs. The fact that we do behave worse in the plural than in the singular does not make our political bad behavior good.

The choice between right and wrong is intrinsic to all human action. I do not escape it by changing over from the first person singular to the first person plural. I am still misbehaving when I misbehave as "we."

ARNOLD TOYNBEE

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Two Kinds of

PAUL L. POIROT

POWER

FOR YEARS, the term “economic power” was used almost exclusively to suggest something bad about Big Business. But now, with the increasing concern over the “economic power” of labor unions, it seems high time to examine the charge. Just what is the nature of economic power? And to what extent, if any, do labor unions have it? Or, is it some other kind of power that unionism exerts?

In terms of human relationships, the word *power* means the ability to influence others, whereas *economic* has something to do with the management of one’s own business. *Economic power*, then — unless it is a total contradiction of terms — must refer to the voluntary market-exchange arrangements in a so-called free society. It must mean purchasing power, or the ability to get what you want from others by offering to trade something of yours that they want.

A workable exchange economy presupposes various conditions, including the infinite variability in human beings with their differing wants and differing capacities to fulfill such wants. Men with specialized skills, tolerant of their reasonable differences, and respectful of the lives and properties of one another, have reason to cooperate, compete, and trade, thus serving others in order to serve themselves. This is the kind of noncoercive, creative power that has provided most of the tools, capital, technological development, goods, services, and leisure that are available in increasing quantities to increasing numbers of persons over the world. This, briefly, is economic power.

In what respects, then, and to what extent, do labor unions possess and wield economic power? Unions, as organizations of laborers, represent a great deal of economic power in the form of