

On the basis of studies of a large number of managers occupying middle positions in hierarchical business structures, Wilensky reports that they were generally prone to restrict information about such problems as lack of authority to meet responsibility, unforeseen costs, disruption of production, lack of adequate equipment, conflicts with other units, and the like, and that in doing so they were motivated "by the desire not only to please but also to preserve comfortable routines of work; if the subordinate alerts the boss to pending trouble, the former is apt to find himself on a committee to solve the problem"; alternatively, if the employer is less responsive to suggestion than he should be, he is out of a job entirely. In a similar way, the existence of a high degree of specialization within an organization increases the danger of suppression of information because of professional jealousy on the part of the specialists and rivalry between the units to which they belong. "It is likely," Wilensky writes, "that staff experts communicate most freely with colleagues in the same specialty, second with colleagues in the same unit of the workplace, then with subordinates, and last—with greatest blockage and distortion—to superiors and rival agencies."

IN HIS fascinating analysis of intelligence failures and their causes, based upon dozens of monographic studies in the public and private sectors, Wilensky finds that the most disastrous miscalculations are those which have occurred in the field of government operations, especially foreign policy and national security. Decision making in the modern nation-state, whether totalitarian or democratic, is affected by stereotyped thinking about other nations—like Hitler's belief that Americans were only capable of making razor blades and refrigerators, and American underestimations of Japanese capabilities before Pearl Harbor—and, to an even greater extent than is true of business, by hierarchy, specialization, interunit competition, and excessive insistence upon secrecy. Students of modern diplomacy would not find it difficult to cite examples of the way in which policy has been influenced for the worse by the operation of



Realism

Today I will say nothing.
 I won't be drawn into any conversation.
 I won't be drawn in.
 I'm not a fly;
 I only have two legs
 And cannot turn my eyes completely over,
 To see what my mind is doing.
 I will take out my sandwiches, my paper,
 Sit down and say nothing.
 I think before I answer,
 What do you think they say;
 I won't be drawn in.
 I think nothing.
 I haven't been listening, I answer.
 I'm reading my paper, eating my sandwiches.
 So they go on talking.
 Today I will not move.
 No movement.
 I'm no machine, I cannot repeat every day
 What I was doing the day before.
 Stop eating.
 Stop reading.
 Start listening.
 Why don't you help, they ask.
 I haven't been moving, or eating, or reading,
 But listening.
 They go on working.
 Today to them, I'm invisible.

—NORMAN JACKSON

these forces. One need go no further than the final report of the French National Assembly's investigation of the causes of the collapse of 1940, which is filled with references to reports on German and Soviet strength and intentions in 1938-1939, written by French diplomats in the field, which were later proved to have been entirely accurate but which were blocked by subordinate officials

in the Quai d'Orsay before they reached the ministerial level, where they might possibly have done some good.

Wilensky himself prefers more recent illustrations than these and comes down heavily on the egregious malfunctioning of the United States decision-making apparatus during the Bay of Pigs affair, as a result of failure of communication between

the participating agencies and rejection and suppression of information that did not accord with the CIA's optimistic predictions. He makes the additional, perhaps debatable, point that fiascoes like the first Cuban crisis can have, and in that case did have, the dangerous effect of narrowing the government's freedom of action when new crises arise.

WILENSKY does not believe that the kinds of intelligence failure that are rooted in structural problems can be fully eliminated; they are universal dilemmas of organizational life. But their incidence can possibly be reduced and their impact lessened in various ways at various costs. Among other things, Wilensky suggests that we have an urgent need, in industry, in the university, in the military establishment, and in our foreign-policy agencies, for generalized advisers at the top, officials who have a healthy suspicion of the information that comes to them through the normal channels and who are inventive enough to supplement or correct it with soundings of their own. Because of the not infrequent and generally risky tendency in organizational life to consult men who are specialists in one field about problems that lie outside their sphere of competence, he believes that it is safer to employ experts in task forces—teams of diverse specialists brought together to work on given problems and disbanded as soon as solutions have been found.

More specifically, he believes it possible that policy determination in foreign affairs in the United States could profit from the use of an analogue to the Council of Economic Advisers, "a small top-level group of free-floating, highly trained, academically oriented, general advisers, operating outside Defense, State, or the CIA, relatively free of bureaucratic rivalry, responsible to the President and the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, and assigned to tap social science and history for a comprehensive, long-run interpretation of problems and prospects abroad."

The author does not always give credit to those Federal agencies which have in fact been seeking to use boards of the kind that he describes, nor does he seem always to appreci-

ate the special problems of defining an effective role for *freischwebende Intellektuelle* in difficult fields like foreign relations and arms control. Even so, his main point is well taken. To avoid salad-oil scandals, or worse, in national security policy, it is important to improve the channels of critical intelligence by every possible means, to use experts more effectively than they have been used in the past, to avoid clotting the free flow of ideas by excessive secrecy, and to devise the best possible tools for the correction of the stereotypes and pre-

conceptions that can affect the thinking of even the most capable executives. In a play on Eliot's most quoted line, Wilensky says that failure to accomplish these things may mean that "The bang will come, preceded by the contemporary equivalent of the whimper—a faint rustle of paper as some self-convinced chief of state, reviewing a secret memo full of comfortable rationalizations just repeated at the final conference, fails to muster the necessary intelligence and wit and miscalculates the power and the intent of his adversaries."

Opening the Unions To Negro Craftsmen

KENNETH GOODALL

THE NEGRO AND APPRENTICESHIP, by F. Ray Marshall and Vernon M. Briggs, Jr. Johns Hopkins Press. \$8.

Negroes have long been unwelcome in the unions that control jobs in the high-paying construction industry. But this study, initially released early this year by the U.S. Department of Labor, is the first to document the pattern of exclusion on a wide scale. The professors did their research in 1965-1966 when both were in the economics department of the University of Texas. Although they write with scholarly restraint, their findings, reiterated as they survey ten large American cities, build into a cumulative portrait of rigid union discrimination, compounded by failures of our public-school system.

The President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity discovered in 1965 that of 9,604 apprentices in five big building-trades unions in major urban areas, only 159 (less than two per cent) were Negroes, and ninety of these were in the comparatively low-paying Carpenters. Random figures in Marshall and Briggs's city-by-city analysis are equally grim: two nonwhite apprentices admitted to a Philadelphia Plumbers local during 1963-1965; a total of seven Negro apprentices in seven selected craft unions in Cleveland in the fall of 1966; only sixteen

apprentices admitted in 1963-1966 by eleven unions in Pittsburgh; no Negroes in any union apprenticeship program in Atlanta except the Carpenters up to the time of the study.

THE READER searches almost in vain through these pages for an action wholly honorable. As in many a contemporary novel, with few exceptions the characters in this cast play anti-heroic roles to varying degrees. First of all, there are the white union members who, from fear of the loss of their jobs (or their relatives' jobs, for these unions are nests of nepotism) or from plain prejudice, have for at least fifty years resisted the attempts of Negroes to enter their ranks. There are the plumbers, for example, who walked off their jobs in the Bronx in 1964 when a contractor attempted to hire four non-white (and, of course, non-union) journeymen at the instigation of the New York City Commission on Human Rights, and the workers who walked out in Cleveland in 1963 when two Negro plumbers were hired, even though their union leaders had agreed to admit the two men to work.

Then there are the union leaders who, forced by Labor Department regulations in 1964 to select apprentices on a nondiscriminatory basis and on "qualifications alone," devised