

position. They insist on remaining a mere pressure group.

One of the obvious weaknesses of this approach is the lack of interest by the rank and file. In the 1956 elections, when the AFL-CIO was asking every member to contribute a single dollar for its political arm, COPE, it collected \$623,158. Only one of every twenty-three or twenty-four union members was willing to contribute even \$1. Various publicists make much ado about "labor in politics" but the fact is that outside of a few areas, such as Michigan, where the United Auto Workers have done a creditable job of infiltrating Democratic party ranks, labor's participation is minute. Politicians are willing to pay a price for labor support because it lends an aura of "liberalism" to their candidacy. The words, "Endorsed by organized labor," are more important in wooing the middle class and liberal vote than that of the workingman. The majority of the workers remain pro-Democratic, not because of their union leaders, but because of the New Deal tradition which gives the older party the stamp of "poor man's party." But workers will not ring doorbells in any large number either for the Democrats themselves or for a labor movement which supports the Democrats. Polls consistently show that labor voting in elections is smaller than that of the middle classes. The rank-and-file worker, wary of the politicians of both parties—"They're all a bunch of crooks anyway," he says—does not feel they are fighting his battles.

James McDevitt, national director of the AFL-CIO's political committee, COPE, discloses that less than 40 per cent of American union members are registered to vote. A survey by the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of its ranks in one Delaware and seven Maryland counties showed that only 20 to 30 per cent were registered. Unionists just do not feel they

have a vital stake in the traditional politics. They vote with their feet, by staying home. They are not roused by their leaders' urgings. In an article in *Harper's*, in August, 1958, Dick Bruner, who worked on the political staff of an ex-CIO union, charged that labor is short of political vitality because:

1. It lacks ideas of its own. On many of the most fundamental political and social issues, it is hard to distinguish labor's position from that of the National Association of Manufacturers.

2. It is pathetically weak on political organizing ability.

3. It has adopted the "mass-market" concept of many big corporations, and its leaders treat the rank and file with cynicism..

The pressure-group policy has been a lamentable failure. AFL-CIO writers, with a little Madison Avenue sleight of hand, can compile an impressive statistic of how many senators "voted right" this year as compared to last, or how many congressmen "voted right" over the past decade. The union leaders can point to innumerable conferences they have held with successive Presidents, and to thirty or more labor attachés that sit in key American embassies overseas. But the unassailable fact is that labor has been steadily losing ground in the last decade; its voice in the halls of government is less than a whisper. Though it has published tons of pamphlets and held scores of meetings and lobbying sessions, it has been unable to modify the Taft-Hartley law. It has been unable, except in one or two cases, to repeal right-to-work laws. It has been unable to reverse the course of the national Labor Relations Board. It has been unable to secure bold legislation in new social fields, such as, for example, health insurance. Where social legislation already exists, labor has been able with its liberal friends to make a few changes for the better in