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LEONARD E. READ *President, Foundation for
Economic Education*

PAUL L. POIROT *Managing Editor*

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TOWARD A POINT OF NO RETURN

ROBERT C. TYSON

THERE ARE many great industries in this land and though each of them has its own accomplishments of which to be proud and its own special problems about which to be perplexed, there are some problems that are common to all our industries and to all our individuals.

One way of thinking about such problems is in terms of a "point of no return." I was once a passenger aboard an airliner flying across the ocean. It actually happened to be a speedy and quite uneventful trip. Nevertheless, when someone said we had passed the point of no return, it gave me a bit of a pause. It meant we were committed to continue onward, for good or ill. To turn back had become impractical, if not impossible.

There was time for conjecture as we flew on and on and the words, "point of no return," kept coming back into my mind. It

could be that the phrase had applicability and significance to the affairs of individuals, of nations, and indeed of the civilizations that have come and gone across the pages of history. All of us as individuals can recall certain decisions we made — perhaps long ago — but which, once made, irrevocably and inexorably dictated much of our individual destinies. And nations, too, can make fateful decisions as one once, for example, was made at Munich. Are we in this land of ours perchance also marching toward a point of no return? It can be a disquieting thought.

In just our own life spans there have been profound changes in the political, the economic, and the social institutions and attitudes of America. I shed no nostalgic tears at the passing of the so-called "good old days" as such. I seek, instead, for the central theme of this evolution. Its outward manifestation is perhaps the ever-growing power and costliness of our central government, with corresponding subordination

Mr. Tyson is Chairman of the Finance Committee of United States Steel Corporation. This article is from an address before the Texas Mid-Continent Oil and Gas Association, Dallas, Texas, October 7, 1958.