concludes that that is the only intelligent point of view." Other students, whose names I've been asked not to divulge, have substantiated the general atmosphere of intemperate dogmatism on the part of Miss Lockwood and jittery submissiveness from her students.

Vassar's value orientation is not always so blatant, but in one way or another it manages to pervade campus life.

"Mature" Votes for Wallace

The debate between the editors of the *Miscellany News* and the two Yale students grew out of the paper's hearty endorsement of Wallace's candidacy and the program of the Progressive Citizens of America. The *"Misc"* editorial of February 18, 1948, which brought on the Yale challenge said, in part:

> The policy of the present Administration (in large measure supported by both parties) of supporting the utmost reaction in an effort to combat communism (in Greece, China and Korea, for example) has been one of the major factors in creating international frictions which may well lead to war if left to continue unabated.

No mention appeared of the auspices under which the third party was formed, or of the widely dawning fact that it was nothing more nor less than an instrument of Soviet foreign policy.

Miss Sarah Gibson Blanding, President of Vassar, did the unusual thing by submitting to the editors of the *"Misc"* a warm letter of commendation which read in part:

> I want to commend the members of the editorial board for the issue of the *Miscellany News* in which you presented the two editorials concerning Mr. Wallace's candidacy for President.
>
> [The other editorial was a mild dissenting opinion on Wallace based largely on his personal instability and a reluctance to abandon "an already established party," with never a word mentioning his party's Communist sponsorship.] It is extremely gratifying to me when a group of young people demonstrate *the mature judgment that was evident in this issue* . . . [emphasis added].

The same issue of the *"Misc"* reported the findings of a student-faculty poll on Presidential preferences. Eight hundred and sixty-two students (from a student body of 1336), and 55 faculty members (from a staff of 175) replied. On the basis of the poll, the student body was 58 per cent Republican, and about 9 per cent pro-Wallace—that is to say, several times as "liberal" as the national vote a few months later, which gave Wallace less than 2.5 per cent. The faculty, however, whose duty it is to encourage the "mature judgment" and "hard thinking" Miss Blanding endorses, voted 27 per cent for Wallace. Even more noteworthy, 49 per cent of the faculty recorded approval of Wallace's foreign program, even

though some preferred other candidates.

The fervent backing of Henry Wallace by the editors of the student newspaper was consistent with their editorial judgment on a number of matters. On March 17, 1948, an editorial, "Czech Crisis," had this to say on the Communist coup:

> . . . This was no sudden grab for power by a group of fanatics out for their own gain personally. The new leaders are trying to meet a challenge in basic economic reorganization which we can not judge by our own experience. . . .
>
> What is the impact of these events upon the delicate balance of international power? To Russia, which is lagging far behind the United States in immediate economic strength, a friendly Czechoslovakia must seem an added security from attack. . . . When will we realize that a great deal of socialism is essential to the restoration of a devastated Europe suffering from lack of capital?

A year later, February 16, 1949, commenting on the "New China," a new set of editors wrote,

> The peace terms as set down by Mao Tse-tung reveal the vitality of a new political and economic force and must not be misunderstood through fear of Soviet expansion. The eight conditions for peace talks show that the Communists are more concerned with a thorough domestic housecleaning and with an end to coddling of American interests than with a quick peace.

Meanwhile the *Vassar Chronicle*, which was founded only a few years ago and encouraged by alumnae baffled and shocked by the strident radicalism of the *"Misc,"* rhapsodized on the beauty of spring. The *Chronicle* editors refused to announce the Yale-*"Misc"* debate, or even to accept a paid ad for that purpose. After the debate, fear of being called "biased" by a "segment of the campus" prevented their mentioning the anti-Wallace arguments. Not even a straight news story reporting the campus furor was considered to be the "liberal" thing to do. (These attitudes were confided to me by members of the *Chronicle* board, of which I had been a member.)

This faint-heartedness on the part of the "opposition" newspaper did not just happen. One of the favorite shibboleths in modern educational patter is that "all sides of a question must be considered." Although conservatism is acknowledged as a "point of view" (even in the best of circles), to present it in a newspaper, for example, is to state only "one side of the question." It's a different story when the radical hits, and hits hard, the conservative or libertarian position. Paradoxically, that is called "reaching a conclusion from an objective appraisal of the issues." And this topsy-turvy notion is fostered and fed in the classrooms. By the time the student attains the eminence of a *Chronicle* editorship she is sufficiently schooled to feel no qualms in reporting a lecture by Anna Louise Strong. But calling attention to a debate discussing Wallace's Communist sponsorship indicates "bias." Are we to conclude that conservative values offend the campus and that McLiberalism does not? Or just what?

The ideological atmosphere at Vassar may perhaps be more easily understood in the light of an episode in 1949, when I was a one-year graduate. Late in January I read to my dismay that Miss Blanding was listed as sponsor of the Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace, to be held on May 25 at the Waldorf Hotel. From its inception the conference had been denounced in every quarter for what it was—"a sounding board for Communist propaganda," as the State Department put it. On February 2 I wrote a letter to the *Chronicle* emphasizing the nature of the conference and remarking that Miss Blanding's sponsorship compelled one of two conclusions: either she was anxious to further Communist propaganda, or she was too naive, too misinformed, or perhaps too unintelligent to fulfill her responsibilities as the president of a college.

The letter was finally printed—seven weeks later. In the interim I had to make two trips to Vassar. The first was to "talk over" the situation with the editors of the *Chronicle*, who, after unsuccessfully urging me to withdraw the letter, informed me that it would appear only after I had talked with Miss Blanding.

The Teacher Taught

The second interview was with Miss Blanding. I gave her a 28-page memorandum I had drafted on the background and history of the principals of the Conference, and also the steps leading up to its organization—demonstrating that the show was to be a Communist extravaganza. I shall dwell on the interview in rather more detail than would seem warranted, as I know of no better way to capture the anomalous situation of a college president having to be instructed in one of the primary issues of the day by a graduate of just one year before. Here are extracts from a memorandum I scribbled hastily the day after the interview on March 14:

Miss Blanding's rationalizations for sponsoring this rally ranged from platitudes about "liberalism" and "peace" through "trying to stop the Communists by learning their methods." The following points were made by the two of us:

Miss B: How can the CSWP [the sponsoring group for the Waldorf Conference] be called a Communist front when the government hasn't cited it as such?
Answer: This is a brand new organization, and as you know, the Attorney General is always months behind. Individuals must use their own judgment concerning its true affiliations and purposes. The report I drew up . . . quotes the House Committee on Un-American Activities' definition of a front, and goes on to show how the World Conference fits each point to the letter.

Miss B: Believes in promoting intercultural discussion and that's all this conference is doing. Believes world peace can be attained only if ideas are exchanged, etc.
Answer: The "exchange" of cultural and scientific ideas is traditional Communist double-talk for Communist propaganda.

Miss B: Feels that a way of understanding and of fighting the tactics and ideas of "leftists" is to be "in" on conferences so as to see what they're getting at (a direct contradiction to her first contention that the Conference was not a Communist front).
Answer: The party line is pretty well known by now and the support Miss B. is giving it by letting her name be used as a sponsor and a speaker is too high a price to pay. Besides, it's palpable nonsense to say one must sponsor a group in order to find out what goes on in it.

Miss B: Replied that she is acting as a private individual.
Answer: That may be so, but as President she carries the weight of Vassar College behind her whether she likes it or not, and alumnae and students might think an organization is perfectly respectable if they see her name on its letterhead.

Miss B: . . . As for my letter, it showed my sincerity but was emotionally unstable. [Move over, Nancy Fellers!] Remarked that she could have done a better job of putting across my point. . . . Said near the end she had proved herself not naive about all this and that she *did* know what she was doing.

When my letter appeared five days later, I was informed by an editor that Miss Blanding had given the *Chronicle* "permission" to print it. (In their answer to Nancy Fellers the *Chronicle* editors wrote: "There has never been any attempt at censorship of an editorial policy by the college, and this paper would resist vigorously if there ever were such an attempt.") In the same issue was the announcement that Miss Blanding was withdrawing her sponsorship of the Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace. Miss Blanding's statement explained that she now doubted that

> . . . those who attend this Conference or who appear on its program will represent a sufficiently broad point of view. . . . I have come reluctantly to that conclusion since I am aware that by so doing I will give comfort or even aid to that small but increasing group of Americans who appear to be willing to abandon our tradition of democracy, freedom of ideas, their expression and their interchange. . . . While withdrawing from the conference I urge all citizens to hold fast to their belief in the democratic process and to recognize that the fear of freedom is a danger which is insidiously creeping into our national life.

Not a word deploring the nature of the Waldorf Conference itself. Not a hint that by resigning she was herself affirming the democratic process.

Nancy Fellers was not the first to note that traditional beliefs are relentlessly undermined at Vassar, that protestations of "academic freedom" are only camouflage for systematic attempts to implant a new set of values. In the field of religion, for example, Dr. James Pike, former Poughkeepsie clergyman and now Dean of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine (New York City), has written:

> The main-line Christian faith [is] the only view toward life not receiving an adequate hearing at Vassar College. . . . [It is] my conviction that at the college "the dice are loaded" against the common Christian faith held by all the principal churches.

Of course I am not suggesting that all Vassar teachers play at this game. There are many notable exceptions. I would only indicate the net impact of a Vassar education. As Mary McCarthy exulted, a Freshman arrives,