

## INTRODUCTION

### Higher Progress—the Forgotten American Dream

The order of things should be somewhat reversed; the seventh should be man's day of toil, wherein to earn his living by the sweat of his brow; and the other six his Sabbath of the affections and the soul,—in which to range this widespread garden, and drink in the soft influences and sublime revelations of Nature.

—HENRY DAVID THOREAU, “Commencement Essay,” 1837

Thoreau spoke as a conservative and a traditionalist. For the first American dream, before the others shoved it rudely aside, had been one not of work but of leisure.

—DANIEL RODGERS, *The Work Ethic in Industrial America*

At one time economic progress and technological advances were understood to have a definite goal: abundance. After adequate economic progress was made so that everyone was able to afford the necessities of life, a condition Monsignor John Ryan (the “Right Reverend New Dealer”)<sup>1</sup> described as a life of “reasonable and frugal comfort,” our nation would be able to make real progress, exploring liberty that transcended material concerns and the marketplace.<sup>2</sup>

Scarcity has not always seemed to be eternal—it was not always understood as the everlasting human condition or the foundation of our nation's economy. For the most part, perpetual scarcity is a twentieth-century invention. Before then, most Americans assumed that it would be possible for reasonable people to eventually satisfy their needs as the economy and technology improved and the nation advanced. Traditionally, too much wealth, too much materialism, was understood to impede human progress, leading to greed and envy (twin sins that fed on each other), luxury, indolence, and the slavery of selfishness.

As we began to solve what John Maynard Keynes called the “economic problem,” our time would become more valuable to us than new goods and services we had never needed before.<sup>3</sup> Then we would welcome the opportunity to live more of our lives outside the marketplace. No longer preoccupied with economic concerns, we could begin to develop our potential to live together peacefully and agreeably, spending more of our time and energy forming healthy

families, neighborhoods, and cities; increasing our knowledge and appreciation of nature, history, and other peoples; freely investigating and delighting in the mysteries of the human spirit; exploring our beliefs and values together; finding common ground for agreement and conviviality; living virtuous lives; practicing our faiths; expanding our awareness of God; and wondering in Creation—a more complete catalog of the free activities envisioned over the course of our nation’s history is one of the burdens of this book.

Walt Whitman called such a project “higher progress.”<sup>4</sup> Claiming a vantage point as democracy’s poet that opened to him “Democratic Vistas,” he imagined scenes from an American future in which all would be free to celebrate and sing. Monsignor John Ryan envisioned Higher Progress as increasing opportunities beyond necessary work to “know the best that is to be known, and to love the best that is to be loved.”<sup>5</sup> Struggling to save the Jewish Sabbath in America, Abba Hillel Silver wrote that the Sabbath was “much more than mere relaxation from labor. It is a sign and symbol of man’s higher destiny.” He believed the Sabbath provided a model for Higher Progress (free Saturdays were simply one step forward) because it represented the importance of time for tradition, family, spiritual exercise, and the development of our higher potentials and humane interests.<sup>6</sup>

## Higher Progress and Republican Virtue

The Declaration of Independence’s list of unalienable rights, “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness,” originally identified Higher Progress. When he wrote the phrase “pursuit of happiness,” Thomas Jefferson was concerned with questions about America’s destiny. What is the highest that we can achieve? What would make us truly happy? Where do we go and what do we do when we have done all our chores, performed our duties, and met our responsibilities? What kinds of human activities or states of being lay beyond social responsibilities and material necessity and are worthwhile in and for themselves?

The same enlightened reason that led to scientific knowledge, the mastery of nature, and rational solutions to economic and political problems led inevitably to the challenges of Higher Progress. It was all a matter of a reasonable approach to life, of a rational chain of means and ends. Scientific knowledge and technology had practical purposes: the mastery of nature to satisfy human needs. The rational organization of society and the state had reasonable ends: peace, security, justice, and the rule of law. Liberal education and a democratic, civil order promoted virtue and good manners—informal living *skills* that included consideration, tolerance, openness, and attentiveness to others.<sup>7</sup>

But such economic, political, and civic ends, vital though they may be, were seldom seen as final or absolute. They were most often understood as means to other, more important ends that were more complete in themselves. They led to the pursuit of happiness—to open-ended freedom and liberty expanding into ever-higher realms of human experience and potential. The customary

practice of virtue ended in good character that Jefferson and others around him recognized in Aristotle's *Eudaimonia* and that still others, more religiously minded, saw as selfless charity ("disinterested benevolence") that was prerequisite for the establishment of God's earthly kingdom.<sup>8</sup>

Higher Progress as the pursuit of happiness was once understood by many in this nation to be something of an arena—a cultural opening in which humans practiced the skills of living together. Government's main responsibility was to make sure that citizens were as safe and unencumbered as possible. Government had absolutely no business supporting one brand of felicity over another.

Similarly, the economy was also understood to be the servant of Higher Progress. Its ultimate purpose was to free humans from scarcity; its goal, abundance. Creating a stable democracy, taming the frontier, establishing successful farms, and building industry all had a purpose, an end: the end of the day, the weekend, retirement, and posterity—and for many, God's kingdom on earth. Until the end of the nineteenth century, few expected that the economy might be the place where humans would realize our full potential—our full, *free* humanity was to be discovered outside the economy, beyond pecuniary concerns.

Gordon Wood concluded, "Indeed, there was hardly an educated person in all of 18th-century America who did not at one time or another try to describe people's moral sense and the natural forces of love and benevolence holding society together."<sup>9</sup> Instead of assuming the modern Durkheimian view that the economy's divisions of labor make society stable and peaceful, most people in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were moral sentimentalists, continuing to believe that the economy owed its existence to stable human associations outside commerce, that "traditional enemy of classical virtue." The regular practice of virtue in pursuit of happiness was the glue that held societies together.<sup>10</sup> Even commitment to hard work, an ethic so vigorously promoted by Protestantism and republicanism, was seldom valued as an end in itself. Religiously as well as rationally understood, devotion to work was virtuous because it was a means to other, higher cultural and spiritual ends. Work provided for the necessities of life—a reasonable and finite undertaking. Work also disciplined the human spirit, preparing selfish and unruly humans in a kind of work-school for the larger liberty that followed a busy and productive workday, workweek, and work life.

However, the ultimate reason for working hard six days a week was not to pile luxury on luxury, wealth on wealth. It was not to outdo others in a splendor of possessions. The purpose of work was not to create more work to do forevermore. More often, work was viewed as part of God's original curse that separated humans from the divine and from each other. It was not until the middle to latter part of the nineteenth century, when in the United States the Protestant work ethic lost its theological supports and rationalist underpinnings, mutating into what Max Weber called "the Spirit of Capitalism," that work became the modern cardinal virtue and its own reason for being, separate from the

complex of republican virtues and Christian theology.<sup>11</sup> Before then, the virtue of work lay in its goals and purposes: building a good character ready for freedom, obtaining the (finite) necessities of life in obedience to God's call or nature's dictates, practicing the moral disciplines of selflessness essential for living in communities, acquiring the wealth needed for charity, and then finding greater opportunities for fellowship, worship, and the free practice of civic virtues.

The reward for working hard six days a week was the Sabbath. The reward for a lifetime of hard work was an "Eternal Sabbath" when "man works no more," being too busy singing everlasting hymns of joy. Technology and the hard work of humans might even lead to the kingdom of God on earth—to the millennium of human happiness when, as Jonathan Edwards's disciple Samuel Hopkins confidently predicted, "it will not be necessary for each one, to labour more than two or three hours in a day."<sup>12</sup>

Together with Jefferson and Hopkins, other of the nation's founders were eager to recommend their vision of Higher Progress. John Adams, for example, had suggestions that he included in a now famous letter to his wife, Abigail. He concluded his letter with what has become a familiar passage:

I must study Politicks and War that my sons may have liberty to study Mathematicks and Philosophy. My sons ought to study Mathematicks and Philosophy, Geography, natural History, Naval Architecture, navigation, Commerce and Agriculture, in order to give their Children a right to study Painting, Poetry, Musick, Architecture, Statuary, Tapestry and Porcelaine.<sup>13</sup>

Thus, Adams envisioned America's future as the progress of liberty: his generation concerned with providing a finer freedom to their children by establishing a stable democracy and a secure nation, the second generation employing its new political liberties in practical matters and economic endeavors to ensure the third generation new rights to the most refined of human activities. Ascending into these new freedoms, American democracy would then rise in a Renaissance surpassing anything Europe had yet produced.

In his history of the early years of the nation, John Adams's great-grandson Henry Adams, writing toward the close of the nineteenth century, reiterated the republican vision of Higher Progress:

Leaders like Jefferson, [Albert] Gallatin, and [Joel] Barlow might without extravagance count upon a coming time when diffused ease and education should bring the masses into familiar contact with higher forms of human achievement, and their vast creative power, turned toward a nobler culture, might rise to the level of that democratic genius which found expression in the Parthenon . . . might create for five hundred million people the America of thought and art which alone could satisfy their omnivorous ambition.<sup>14</sup>

Benjamin Franklin, agreeing that “the happiness of individuals is evidently the ultimate end of political society,” offered his vision of Higher Progress:

If every man and woman would work for four hours each day on something useful, that labor would produce sufficient to procure all the necessities and comforts of life, want and misery would be banished out of the world, and the rest of the twenty-four hours might be leisure and happiness.<sup>15</sup>

Franklin added a new dimension to the dream: democratic abundance and leisure. Living freely and rationally, *all* Americans would eventually be able to provide their “necessaries.” Scarcity would be abolished, necessity would become obsolete, and abundance would be ensured. Unlike the old European versions, the American cultural renaissance would then have a firm democratic and egalitarian base. Indeed, that would be its genius.

To be sure, for Jefferson and Adams, “humane and moral freedom” was available mainly to the aristocrat—if not by birth, then certainly by accomplishment. Higher Progress would open primarily to those educated in the liberal arts and wealthy enough to avoid full-time work on the farm or for wages. The mass of humanity still did not have the time, education, or character for Higher Progress. For the time being, most people would need to devote themselves to the business of making a living and founding a nation. Moreover, many of the Founders were devoted to an agrarian ideal, understanding that liberty’s goal was the small freeholder farmer, largely self-reliant, close to fructifying nature, and practicing the Virgilian virtues of simplicity and duty in relation to family, religion, and community as he daily tilled the soil.

Nevertheless, most of America’s wealthiest individuals understood that their privileged leisure represented an obligation to demonstrate Higher Progress to the rest of the nation. Wealth entailed a duty to lead others into an abundant existence beyond material concerns and beyond the marketplace, to a *democratic* culture in which everyone would have the “right to study Painting, Poetry, Musick, Architecture, Statuary, Tapestry and Porcelaine.”

Gordon Wood observed that Jefferson was

by no means unique in his concern for refining the sensibilities of himself and those of the American people. This was a moral and political imperative of all of the founders. To refine popular taste was in fact a moral and political imperative of all the enlightened of the eighteenth century.<sup>16</sup>

Refined tastes and manners would promote the republican virtues of tolerance, mutuality, and openness—the cornerstones of democracy.<sup>17</sup> These were not culturally relative values, because no democratic culture could exist without them—no set of shared beliefs and values (the very definition of democratic culture) could ever be put together. As the nineteenth century wore on and the

nation's economy and power grew, more Americans began to share the vision of progress as the opening of freedom beyond the marketplace.

## Higher Progress and Labor

Vigorously opposed by industry and the business world, the shorter-hours movement initiated by American workers challenged the new "Spirit of Capitalism" that was seeking to transform wealth and work into ends in themselves, divorced from Higher Progress. Following its inception during the first half of the nineteenth century, labor's shorter-hours movement sustained the republican and millennial visions of Higher Progress, of civic virtue and "disinterested benevolence," gradually transforming them from the dreams of republican patriots, agrarian aristocrats, religious leaders, romantic poets, and utopians into practical democratic possibilities for all, in a process that lasted well into the second half of the twentieth century.

Shorter working hours was the cause that awakened the labor movement in the United States, providing laborers with a modicum of working-class identity. Throughout labor's century-long shorter-hours campaign, workers were led by a vision of freedom and progress that drew heavily from existing republican expectations and millennial hopes—visions of a future in which work was reduced to a minimum and ordinary people, liberated from necessity, would spend the best part of their lives as only the wealthy had before, pursuing Higher Progress.

Such a vision was manifest at the beginning of the American labor movement in the struggle for the ten-hour day. In 1827, displaying what historians have called "the earliest evidence of [labor] unrest" in the United States and employing the Revolutionary rhetoric of the preceding generation, Philadelphia journeymen carpenters resolved that "all men have a just right, derived from their Creator, to have sufficient time each day for the cultivation of their mind and for self-improvement."<sup>18</sup> Giving voice to the carpenters' sentiment, William Heighton envisioned American progress as the reduction of working hours from "12 to 10, to 8, to 6, and so on," until "the development and progress of science have reduced human labor to its lowest terms."<sup>19</sup>

The history of labor from then until World War II unfolded, at least in part, as the "progressive shortening of the hours of labor."<sup>20</sup> George Meany once observed, "The progress toward a . . . shorter work week is a history of the labor movement itself."<sup>21</sup> Other issues were certainly important. But only higher wages competed with shorter hours for the attention and passion of organized workers.

Labor's shorter-hours campaign came to embody a distinctive working-class vision of Higher Progress, similar to, but distinguishable from, millennial, republican, and romantic hopes. The movement had clear rhetorical and ideological ties to the Declaration of Independence, republican virtue, and "the kingdom of God in America."<sup>22</sup> However, laborites added a sharp critique of

the new forms of exploitation and oppression that were emerging with technological advances and with changes in work and the labor market. Whereas America's Revolutionary generation had struggled to overthrow the tyranny of England and claim their natural right to govern themselves, workers after the 1820s attempted to throw off their new industrial chains, demanding their fair share of the wealth they produced and their "just right, derived from their Creator," to sell as much or as little of their own time as they wanted—to be free of bosses and "wage-slavery" and have some time each day to call their own.<sup>23</sup> What laborites called their "Ten Hour System" developed as a distinct alternative to laissez-faire capitalism—to what for decades they called the "selfish system."<sup>24</sup>

Workers embraced the Higher Progress that Jefferson, Adams, Franklin, and the other Founders guaranteed as "the pursuit of happiness" and made it their own. Moreover, they turned the vision into their own reform cause, shorter working hours, that unified workers for over a hundred years. Supporting practical reforms such as the ten- and eight-hour day, workers reshaped the vision of Higher Progress, adding new dimensions and expressing a more democratic hope for the future. American workers translated the republican aristocrats' hope for refined culture and the theologian's speculation about the spiritual possibilities of increased leisure into the down-to-earth terms of their daily lives. For working men and women in Fall River, Lowell, and Boston, Massachusetts; New York; Philadelphia; and Cincinnati, Ohio, Higher Progress was a tangible reality: getting out from under the boss's thumb a little sooner each day, having a few additional minutes down at the saloon with friends, and finding a little extra time at home with the family.

Higher Progress might very well advance civilization, facilitate virtue, promote a cultural Renaissance, and even bring about the kingdom of God in the long run, as some of the Founders envisioned. But in the meantime relief from the tyranny of the job and the increase of daily freedom to live a little outside work were welcome improvements.

Still, the very practical benefits of shorter hours did not rule out a larger vision for laborites. Increasing leisure promised workers liberation from an economic system that was fundamentally exploitative (the "selfish system"), opening up new democratic forms of civic engagement and individual expression—what Heighton called the "cultivation of the mind and for self-improvement."<sup>25</sup>

## Higher Progress Realized through Shorter Hours

The history of American workers' and the labor movement's struggle for "the progressive shortening of the hours of labor" is this book's central, recurring theme that binds its narrative together and grounds the story of Higher Progress in the reality of economic and political developments. Like the Mississippi River in Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*, it organizes the book, providing a



center from which depend visions of progress and dreams of freedom, such as Walt Whitman's *Democratic Vistas* and Frank Lloyd Wright's Broadacre City.

In the book's four labor chapters, workers and union leaders speak for themselves, describing their hopes for freedom's future and envisioning an alternative to laissez-faire capitalism. In the new freedom shorter hours represented, workers hoped to develop better ways of living together beyond competition, consumerism, and perpetual self-seeking, without having to change existing governmental forms or economic systems. Working within a constitutional democracy and a capitalist economic order, workers hoped simply to work less and less (buying back their time), thus gradually freeing themselves from the constraints that are inherent parts of those systems. Instead of changing political and economic orders, most hoped simply to move beyond them, using them, as Walt Whitman suggested, as stepping stones to a "larger liberty."<sup>26</sup> Labor's opponents came to recognize this desire to escape as the very essence of worker radicalism—a revolutionary possibility lurking within existing constitutional and free market forms.

The freedom of leisure was no abstract speculation for American workers. They began, as Jacques Rancière observed, to "live into" their new freedom, experimenting with various possibilities, revising and enlarging their vision of what their new leisure meant for them and might mean for future generations, and enjoying their lives in ways never before possible.<sup>27</sup>

Through the nineteenth century, poets, religious leaders, utopian writers, and visionaries shared labor's vision of liberation from the "selfish system," providing vital support for labor's practical efforts to reduce working hours. Such writers as Henry Ward Beecher, Charles Dudley Warner, Edward Everett, and John Spalding, the Catholic bishop of Peoria, continued to speculate about what freedom from work would mean and what could be done in the new leisure opening up for all people. Organizations, institutions, and professions began to make provisions for the coming leisure: enlarging the public sphere; building camps, parks, and playgrounds; and founding community centers, theaters, schools, libraries, forums, and lyceums. To serve the new mass leisure, a vigorous parks and recreation movement formed and began to build community and recreation centers, vacation resorts, and community sports complexes—free public places for free people. Luminaries such as Frederick Law Olmsted designed facilities such as New York's Central Park to serve and promote the nation's "sense of enlarged freedom."<sup>28</sup> Frank Lloyd Wright deliberately devoted his career to building for America's coming freedom.

The twentieth century saw such dreams appearing to come to fruition, such preparations justified. Early in the century observers recognized that working hours had been cut nearly in half. Higher Progress then came to the forefront of the nation's attention during the 1920s, where it remained for decades. During much of the twentieth century, abundance seemed to be just around the corner, disturbing some who fretted about "economic maturity," "overproduction," and ordinary people having too much time on their hands, delighting



others who continued to look forward to progress and equality in the arenas of life beyond the marketplace.

Just as Whitman and so many others had expressed distinctive and diverse ideas about the promise of Higher Progress during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, new voices joined during the twentieth, swelling in a magnificent chorus, singing the praises and possibilities of Higher Progress. Bubbling up from the ranks of workers and their organizations, the chorus was taken up by social critics and middle-of-the-road politicians, visionaries and intellectuals, educators and professionals, scientists and naturalists, artists and poets, utopian writers and environmentalists, radicals and inventors, businessmen and industrialists, theologians and philosophers, librarians and cooks, architects and musicians, and craftsmen and amateur sports enthusiasts.

Educators such as Dorothy Canfield Fisher, president of the Adult Education Association in the 1920s, and later Robert Hutchins, legendary president of the University of Chicago, advised teachers and administrators to retool their schools to teach people “the worthy use of leisure” and provide the skills and public facilities that would soon be in demand. Led by Hutchins, American colleges began to rediscover the reason that liberal arts had been the heart of higher education for over two millennia: the practical need to teach free people the arts of freedom.

Conservative business people such the British soap-king Lord Leverhulme and America’s celebrated cereal maker W. K. Kellogg took the initiative, instituting a six-hour workday in the 1920s and 1930s. Walter Gifford, from 1925 to 1948 president of AT&T, one of the largest corporations in the United States in the twentieth century, recognized that “industry . . . has gained a new and astonishing vision.” The final, best achievement of business and the free market need not be perpetual economic growth, eternal job creation, and everlasting consumerism, but “a new type of civilization,” in which “how to make a living becomes less important than how to live.” Gifford predicted:

Machinery will increasingly take the load off men’s shoulders. . . . Every one of us will have more chance to do what he wills, which means greater opportunity, both materially and spiritually. . . . [Steadily decreasing work hours] will give us time to cultivate the art of living, give us a better opportunity for . . . the arts, enlarge the comforts and satisfaction of the mind and spirit, as material well-being feeds the comforts of the body.<sup>29</sup>

Labor leaders, having fought for the five-day workweek and the six-hour workday in the 1920s and 1930s, reaffirmed their commitment to “progressive shortening of the hours of labor” to rally their forces after World War II.<sup>30</sup>

Radicals and socialists such as Helen and Scott Nearing, Norman O. Brown, and Herbert Marcuse, praising idleness and play and forming communes, saw increasing leisure as a form of bloodless, democratic revolution. They saw progressively shorter hours as the practical way for Americans to free themselves

from the tyranny of corporations and what had become a charade of a free market, to regain control over their own destinies. Such critics hoped that abundant leisure and public education would enable ordinary citizens to study and understand public issues and, recognizing their own best interest, reclaim the political power rightfully theirs. With increased leisure, they might begin to understand that perpetual work and everlasting scarcity were the creatures of capitalism and corporations rather than laws of nature. Thus, increasing free time might translate into the political power necessary to counterbalance the building tyranny of concentrated wealth.<sup>31</sup>

Naturalists and environmentalists were inspired by Higher Progress. Aldo Leopold suggested that there was a “law of diminishing returns in progress.”<sup>32</sup> Industrial and economic expansion steadily encroached on nature, gradually destroying it and prospects for its renewal. Many, including Sigurd Olson, agreed.<sup>33</sup> The natural world offered opportunities that could never be manufactured: natural beauty, companionship, solitude, joy, and a sense of belonging. An economy that produced leisure instead of ever more consumption was the last best hope for a sustainable economy and for the preservation of the natural world. Parks, wilderness preserves, and national rivers and forests held open the possibility that humans could discover an alternative relationship with nature, one based on wonder and celebration rather than exploitation and development.

Sociologists such as David Riesman asked, “Abundance for what?” and for a while during the early 1950s believed that increasing leisure offered the opportunity to rebuild families and reenergize communities weakened by urbanization and industrial development. Poets such as Vachel Lindsay; playwrights and theater builders such as Percy MacKaye, Paul Green, and E. C. Mabie; painters such as Grant Wood and Thomas Hart Benton; architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright and Ernest Flag; musicians such as Shin’ichi Suzuki and Andrés Segovia; chefs such as Julia Child; and craftsmen such as Gustav Stickley and Elbert Hubbard envisioned a world in which citizens wrote their own poetry, staged their own local dramas, performed pageants, played and sang their own music together as naturally as they spoke their mother tongue, cooked gourmet meals for each other, and helped design, build, and decorate their own homes in their free time.

Understanding our lives as the subjects of our own community-based literature, drama, fine arts, and quotidian discourse, we moderns had the potential to transfigure the commonplace, elevating everydayness with the do-it-yourself creations of democratic artist and artisan. Higher Progress’s free, creative endeavors would join people in vigorous, free civic engagement, creating communities held together by virtue, tolerance, conviviality, and perhaps even affection.

The days of the Grand Master, the Diva, the Star, the once-in-a-lifetime Genius, and the Great American Novelist, and of the masses passively watching and consuming what paid cultural experts and professionals produced, were

passing, being replaced by an age of ordinary excellence and the everyday practice of what had previously been the preserve of the few. Famous painters, poets, chefs, actors, and musicians were becoming more notable for sharing their skills—for making it possible for everyone to practice them—than for mere displays of their brilliance.

The days foreseen by John Adams were arriving when America's children devoted more and more of their lives to "Painting, Poetry, Musick, Architecture, Statuary, Tapestry and Porcelaine," to what William Heighston envisioned as the "cultivation of the mind and . . . self-improvement," and to what John Ryan imagined as the opportunity to "know the best that is to be known, and to love the best that is to be loved." The day of democratic community and culture was dawning. Real progress was just beginning.

Most of this book is devoted to recalling a *sampling* of that chorus of voices, re-presenting the diverse visions of how abundance and increasing freedom from work would soon open the original American dream to all. The sampling will, of course, be selective and limited; a complete catalog of voices supporting Higher Progress would be vast—and impossible to gather at this point of historical scholarship. Readers may be concerned with what has been left out. But no more so than I. Having had to cut the book nearly in half for the final proof, I am keenly aware of things omitted, still on my computer's hard drive awaiting publication.

For example, I have had to be selective in my choice of radical voices, including Juliet Stuart Poyntz, the Bread and Roses strikers, Sidney Lens, Norman O. Brown, and Herbert Marcuse, while omitting others, notably Eugene Debs. I made these choices in an attempt to shift the historical understanding of American radicalism from the traditional focus on the radical's desire to change governmental forms (to socialism or communism—typically more European than American) to a focus on what I argue is more typical of American worker radicalism, contained by *progressively* shorter work hours. As Herbert Marcuse suggested, "Advanced industrial society is in permanent mobilization against" the working-class threat to abandon capitalism an hour at a time—a threat that was regularly repeated and acted on in America from the 1820s and into the 1970s.<sup>34</sup>

I also had to make choices about what parts of labor history to include, concentrating on the AFL (American Federation of Labor) and on auto workers and steel unions in the CIO (Congress of Industrial Organizations) after World War II. I also chose to focus attention on the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (the ILGWU, which is part of the book's core narrative) instead of the CIO itself because its membership was mostly women and it was one of the most important and largest industrial unions in existence, leading the way to shorter hours. Moreover, since David R. Roediger and Philip Sheldon Foner do an excellent job covering the history of the CIO on the shorter-hours issue in *Our Own Time*, I decided to rely on their account, offering my own only when I had something new to say.<sup>35</sup>

Worker's voices are also somewhat muted. Concerns about the length of the book prompted me to remove a good deal of new material about the Kellogg's and Goodyear six-hour workers whom I have been interviewing since 1988.

Even though I have left important voices out of this account, I hope to have included a broad enough sample to make a beginning in re-presenting the forgotten American dream. The historical visions of Higher Progress were built on the foundation of workers' quest for shorter hours. Such visions became, in turn, essential supports for labor's century-long campaign. But when these visions were obscured by the rise of Full-Time, Full Employment, the shorter-hours movement collapsed.<sup>36</sup> Re-presenting Higher Progress in the following history, limited and selective though the result may be, is a necessary first step toward reawakening both the dream and the very real process that sustained it for well over a century.