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● 总主编：杨立民

● **精读** **6**

● 教师用书

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John G. Blair 教授及 Samuel Weingart 博士对教师用书进行了细致的修改和润色,在此向他们表示感谢。

诚恳欢迎批评指正。

编者

Contents

Lesson One	How to Get the Poor off Our Conscience	(1)
Lesson Two	The Woods Were Tossing with Jewels	(15)
Lesson Three	At War with the Planet	(39)
Lesson Four	Nettles	(52)
Lesson Five	The One Against the Many	(74)
Lesson Six	Death of a Pig	(93)
Lesson Seven	Inaugural Address	(116)
Lesson Eight	A Rose for Emily	(138)
Lesson Nine	The Bluest Eye	(164)
Lesson Ten	Notes on the English Character	(186)
Lesson Eleven	Beauty	(218)
Lesson Twelve	The Hot Gates	(242)

LESSON ONE

How to Get the Poor off Our Conscience

John Kenneth Galbraith

III► Detailed Study of the Text

Part I (Paras. 1—2)

These are the opening paragraphs. The author, without beating about the bush, comes straight to the theme. In stating “our conscience”, the author seems to indicate that he is included in the search of ways of “getting the poor off our conscience”, thus making it sound that he is reflecting on a moral sin we are all guilty of, rather than adopting a condescending way of preaching. The author points out that the search has been “an intellectual preoccupation for centuries” and continues to be so “in our own time”. The word “our” implicitly includes all people who are not poor.

Para. 1

1. I would like to reflect on one of the oldest of human exercises. . .

(1) I want to think seriously about one of the oldest practices of human beings. . .

(2) reflect on one of the oldest of human exercises: 严肃考虑一种人类最古老的活动

2. . . we have undertaken to get the poor off our conscience.

(1) conscience: a sense of right and wrong, with an urge to do right

(2) get the poor off our conscience: 不为穷人的存在感到内疚

3. What does the author want to reflect on?

The author wants to discuss how people have been trying not to feel guilty about the existence of the poor people, to justify the continuing existence of poverty.

Para. 2

4. Rich and poor have lived together, always uncomfortably and sometimes perilously, since the beginning of time.

(1) perilous: involving risk; dangerous

(2) What does the author mean when he uses “perilously”?

The author must have in mind the slave uprisings (such as the slave revolt led by Spartacus in ancient Rome), peasant uprisings and workers’ strikes. If the disparity becomes too great, the poor will rise up against the rich and cause much damage.

5. Plutarch was led to say: “An imbalance between the rich and poor is the oldest and most fatal ailment of republics.”

(1) Pay attention to how the author expresses the idea.

“Plutarch was led to say” implies that it was the actual existence of the rich and poor or

the logic of his analyses that made him come to such a conclusion.

(2) An imbalance between the rich and poor is the oldest and most fatal ailment of republics.
贫富不均乃共和政体最致命的宿疾。

(3) republic: a state or nation in which the supreme power rests in all the citizens entitled to vote and is exercised by representatives elected, directly or indirectly, by them and responsible to them

(4) If the Roman republic suffered from the same problems 2,000 years ago, it proves the author's point that poverty is a perpetual problem.

6. And the problems that arise from the continuing coexistence of affluence and poverty—and particularly the process by which good fortune is justified in the presence of the ill fortune of others—have been an intellectual preoccupation for centuries.

(1) intellectual: appealing to the intellect

(2) intellectual preoccupation: 有思想有学问的人几百年来孜孜不倦思考探索的问题

(3) The main idea of this statement is that for centuries those with high intellect have been searching for explanations to justify the coexistence of the rich and poor.

7. They continue to be so in our own time.

(1) The previous sentence refers to history. This one tells of the present.

(2) What does “so” refer to?

It refers to the fact that the problems continue to be an intellectual preoccupation.

Part II (Paras. 3—9)

This part deals with the five solutions that had been offered in history. These solutions are arranged chronologically.

Para. 3

8. The poor suffer in this world but are wonderfully rewarded in the next.

(1) This idea is not only embodied in the Bible but is also common in Buddhism.

(2) in the next: after they die; when they go to the next world, i. e. heaven or paradise

9. Their poverty is a temporary misfortune: If they are poor and also meek, they eventually will inherit the earth.

(1) meek: patient and mild; submissive

In the Bible, the word “meek” is used in a positive sense, meaning “patient and mild”.

In this statement, the word is used in an ironical sense, meaning “submissive”.

(2) The idea of this statement may come from Luke xvi 19—25, King James version:

19 “There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day;

20 “And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

21 “And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

- 22 “And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;
- 23 “And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.
- 24 “And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.
- 25 “But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented”.

(from the King James version, Luke xvi 19—25)

- (3) There are a number of translations of the Bible into English and the differences between them, though often seemingly minor, have contributed over the centuries to the fractioning of Christianity into a confusing myriad of groups and sects. It is believed that the Revised Standard Version is the closest there is to a single text whose readings are generally acceptable to Protestants and Catholics. The King James version may be considered as the second most important and influential translation into English.
- (4) 他们的贫困只是一种暂时的不幸;如果他们穷困但却温顺,他们最终将成为这个世界的主人。
10. This is , in some ways, an admirable solution. It allows the rich to enjoy their wealth while envying the poor their future fortune.
- (1) Why does the author think this is an admirable solution?
- Because in this way, the rich will not feel guilty and can happily enjoy their present life while the poor will have something to look forward to—their future fortune, and will meekly accept their current misery.
- (2) Does the author really think that this is an admirable solution? Why (not)?
- No, he doesn’t. He is being ironical here. He calls it “an admirable solution” because now the rich can “get the poor off their conscience”.

Para. 4

11. the problem and its solution began to take on their modern form: 贫富不均这一问题及其解决方法开始具有现代形式
12. Jeremy Bentham, a near contemporary of Adam Smith, came up with the formula. . .
杰里米·边沁与亚当·斯密几乎是同时代人,边沁提出了这样一种准则……
13. “By the principle of utility,” Bentham said in 1789, “is meant the principle which approves or disapproves of every action whatsoever according to the tendency which it appears to have to augment or diminish the happiness of the party whose interest is in question.”
- What is meant by “the principle of utility” according to Bentham?
- The principle of utility means that an action is judged by whether it will increase or decrease the benefits of those who are affected by the action.
14. Virtue is, indeed must be, self-centered.

By right action, we mean it must help promote personal interest.

15. When Bentham used “the greatest number”, “the largest possible number of people”, he used them in a relative sense. That is to say, the solution would benefit more people. In this way he could get the poor off his conscience.

Para. 5

16. ... influential in no slight degree to this day...

(1) (Its) influence has not diminished so far. / (Its) influence continues today to a remarkable degree.

(2)迄今为止此影响丝毫没有减弱.....

17. This is associated with the names of David Ricardo, a stockbroker, and Thomas Robert Malthus, a divine.

Why does the author mention the professions of Ricardo and Malthus?

A stockbroker is one who buys and sells shares for those with money to invest; usually stockbrokers themselves make a lot of money. It reminds people of the saying: It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God. (Matt. xix, 24 and Mark x, 25)

A divine is a member of the Christian clergy.

A formula proposed by two with such different backgrounds yet with such similarity of thinking is by itself an irony.

18. The essentials are familiar: The poverty of the poor was the fault of the poor. And it was so because it was a product of their excessive fecundity...

The poverty of the poor was caused by their having too many children.

19. Their grievously uncontrolled lust caused them to breed up to the full limits of the available subsistence.

很遗憾, 他们不能控制性欲, 过度的生育把地球具有的养活人口的能力推向极限。

Para. 6

20. Poverty being caused in the bed...

(1) Poverty was caused by overproduction of children.

(2) 贫困来自过度生育.....

21. ... the rich were not responsible for either its creation or its amelioration.

The rich were not to blame for the existence of poverty so they should not be asked to undertake the task of solving the problem.

22. However, Malthus was himself not without a certain feeling of responsibility: He urged that the marriage ceremony contain a warning against undue and irresponsible sexual intercourse—a warning, it is fair to say, that has not been accepted as a fully effective method of birth control.

What warning did Malthus urge that the marriage ceremony should contain? Why?

Malthus urged that the marriage ceremony should contain a warning to people not to have excessive sexual intercourse and too many children. By “irresponsible”, Malthus meant that

sexual intercourse should not be conducted out of lust, without thinking of consequences. Malthus hoped that in this way, birth control could be accomplished. But the author said that the warning had not been accepted. The author agreed that Malthus meant well but ironically implied that it was naive to expect that humans would be convinced by the Malthusian argument.

23. In more recent times, Ronald Reagan has said that the best form of population control emerges from the market. (Couples in love should repair to R. H. Macy's, not their bedrooms.)

Does the author agree with Ronald Reagan on the method of population control? How do you know?

No. This can be seen in the statement in brackets, which is highly ironical.

24. Couples in love should repair to R. H. Macy's, not their bedrooms.

(1) repair to: to go to (a place)

(2) This statement ridicules Reagan's view that the best form of population control comes from the market. The author thinks that such an idea is wide of the mark.

(3) 一对对热恋的新婚夫妇应该上梅西百货公司过夜,而不是回到他们的新房。

25. Malthus, it must be said, was at least as relevant.

(1) This statement is full of irony, implying that both are equally irrelevant.

(2) 应该说,马尔萨斯的建议至少沾点边。

Para. 7

26. In economic life, as in biological development, the overriding rule was survival of the fittest.

(1) overriding: prevailing

(2) 在经济生活中,如同在生物进化过程中一样,主导的规律是适者生存。

27. The elimination of the poor is nature's way of improving the race.

Nature makes the human race better by weeding out the poor. Another example of Galbraith's irony.

28. The weak and unfortunate being extruded, the quality of the human family is thus strengthened.

由于弱者与不幸者被清除,人类大家庭的素质因此得以提高。

Para. 8

29. The American Beauty Rose can be produced in the splendor and fragrance which bring cheer to its beholder only by sacrificing the early buds which grow up around it. And so is it in economic life. It is merely the working out of a law of nature and a law of God.

(1) It is merely the working out of a law of nature and a law of God.

It is only the result or effect of the law of the survival of the fittest applied to nature or to human society.

(2) 美国这朵玫瑰花后以其华贵与芳香让观众倾倒、赞不绝口。而她之所以能被培植出来,就是因为早期其周围的花蕾给掐掉了。在经济生活中情况亦是如此。这是自然规律和上帝意志在起作用。

Para. 9

30. It declined in popularity, and references to it acquired a condemnatory tone.

People began to reject Social Darwinism because it seemed to glorify brutal force and oppose treasured values of sympathy, love and friendship. Therefore, when it was mentioned, it was usually the target of criticism.

31. We passed on to the more amorphous denial of poverty associated with Calvin Coolidge and Herbert Hoover. They held that public assistance to the poor interfered with the effective operation of the economic system—that such assistance was inconsistent with the economic design that had come to serve most people very well.

What was the view of Coolidge and Hoover in the 1920s?

They opposed public assistance to the poor because they held that such assistance was incompatible with the function and operation of the current laissez-faire economic system. Public assistance meant government intervention and such intervention would hinder or even damage the efficient working of the economic system.

32. How does the author introduce the first five solutions in history? What kind of expressions does he use for the transition from one solution to another?

The author follows a chronological order. He begins with the solution proposed in the Bible. Then he introduces utilitarianism, which became dominant “much, much later” at the turn of the 19th century. Then in the 1830s, “a new formula... became available...” This is followed by Social Darwinism “later in the nineteenth century”. Finally, with “in the course of the present century”, he introduces the last solution.

Part III (Paras. 10—11)

This is a transition. Roosevelt's New Deal and the social welfare policies of the presidents after WWII seemed to indicate that the government was assuming responsibility for aiding the poor. But recent developments as of the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 showed that the attempt to get the poor off our conscience was not at an end. It was only suspended temporarily.

Para. 10

33. What was the Roosevelt revolution? Why does the author call it a revolution? Is he for or against the revolution? How do you know?

The Roosevelt revolution referred to the social welfare policies initiated by Franklin D. Roosevelt in the New Deal.

In 1935, Congress passed the Social Security Act which for the first time in American history assigned specific responsibility to the government for providing assistance to the least fortunate people in the country. This was a revolutionary step because it broke away from the traditional concept that the federal government was not responsible for social welfare. The Social Security Act of 1935 laid foundation for the current social welfare system of the United States.

The author is for the revolution.

This can be seen from the basic tone of the paragraph and from statements like “this was a

truly great change”, “we were, indeed, doing something about them”.

34. Roosevelt and the presidents who followed him accepted a substantial measure of responsibility for the old through Social Security, for the unemployed through unemployment insurance, for the unemployable and the handicapped through direct relief, and for the sick through Medicare and Medicaid.

(1) substantial measure of responsibility: 在很大程度上负有责任

(2) unemployment insurance: 失业保险

(3) the unemployable and the handicapped: 无法就业者和残疾人

(4) direct relief: 直接救济

(5) Medicare and Medicaid: 医疗照顾和医疗补助

35. How did people feel when a number of social welfare measures were put into practice? Were they right in thinking so?

People felt that the policy of ignoring the poor and refusing assistance had been abandoned. The government was making efforts to relieve the misery of the unfortunate, so they did not need to pay attention any more.

They were not completely right. While it was true that many measures had been implemented and were working, the desire to get the poor off our conscience still lingered on, waiting for a chance to come back.

Para. 11

36. And so we are now again engaged in this search in a highly energetic way.

So once again we are trying hard to get the poor off our conscience.

37. It has again become... an economically not unrewarding enterprise.

(1) not unrewarding: double negative, for emphasis, used in an ironical sense, that is, money can be made by contributing to the process of ignoring the poor

(2) 它再一次成为……经济上收入不菲的一个行业。

Part IV (Paras. 12—20)

In this part, the author makes a critical analysis of the five current designs to get the poor off our conscience and points out that the first four are inventive descendants from Bentham, Malthus, and Spencer. The author further shows that these designs are very popular in Washington D. C. at the time he writes the article in the 1980s.

Para. 12

38. What is the argument of the first design?

The argument runs like this: Most of the assistance to the poor has to be undertaken by the government, but the government is in essence incompetent and ineffective and will make a mess of the job. Therefore, the government should not be asked to aid the poor.

39. What is the essence of the first design?

The essence of the first design is to take away the responsibility to aid the poor from the

government and to put an end to the social welfare policies since the New Deal.

40. It is then argued that the government is inherently incompetent, except as regards weapons design and procurement and the overall management of the Pentagon.

接着指出除了武器的设计和采购以及五角大楼的整体管理外,政府天生就是无能的。

41. Being incompetent and ineffective, it must not be asked to succor the poor; it will only louse things up or make things worse.

Since the government is incapable and inefficient, it should not be asked to undertake the task of aiding the poor. Otherwise, it will make a mess of the job or make the situation worse.

Para. 13

42. The allegation of government incompetence is associated in our time with the general condemnation of the bureaucrat—again excluding those concerned with national defense.

对政府无能的指责,在我们这个时代,是与对官僚的笼统谴责联系在一起的一——与国防有关的人士又不在此列。

43. In Paragraphs 12 and 13, the author, on three occasions, mentions the Pentagon or national defense. Why does he make these references?

The author wants to point out the ironical fact that those people who attack the government or the bureaucracy will not include the military establishment. They want the government to do less or nothing in social welfare but more on “national defense”. The author is highly critical of such a view. He opposes huge military expenditures.

44. The only form of discrimination that is still permissible—that is, still officially encouraged in the United States today—is discrimination against people who work for the federal government, especially on social welfare activities.

What are the words used in this statement that are worthy of notice? Why?

Only (form), still (permissible), officially (encouraged).

The implication is that most forms of discrimination in the United States are legally impermissible today. This shows the progress made in the United States. But there is still one form which is not only permissible but officially encouraged. The readers' curiosity is aroused and they are eager to know this form of discrimination. At the same time the author's critical attitude is also revealed.

45. We have great corporate bureaucracies replete with corporate bureaucrats, but they are good. . .

我们有庞大的企业官僚机构,充斥着企业官僚,但他们是好的……

46. We have great corporate bureaucracies replete with corporate bureaucrats, but they are good; only public bureaucracy and government servants are bad. In fact, we have in the United States an extraordinarily good public service—one made up of talented and dedicated people who are overwhelmingly honest and only rarely given to overpaying for monkey wrenches, flashlights, coffee makers, and toilet seats. (When these aberrations have occurred, they have, oddly enough, all been in the Pentagon.)

(1) What is the basic view of the author?

The author, on the whole, is positive about public service and government employees. He thinks that the American government has recruited many talented and dedicated people. His criticism is directed at the military establishment.

- (2) ... only rarely given to overpaying for monkey wrenches, flashlights, coffee makers, and toilet seats.

……出高价购买活动扳手、手电筒、咖啡壶以及马桶坐圈以获取回扣的情况极为罕见。

- (3) When these aberrations have occurred, they have, oddly enough, all been in the Pentagon.

奇怪的是,这些过失如果发生,全都发生在五角大楼。

- (4) What is the tone of this statement?

The tone is sarcastic.

47. We have nearly abolished poverty among the old, greatly democratized health care, assured minorities of their civil rights, and vastly enhanced educational opportunity.

- (1) What is the author's estimation of the welfare system?

The author thinks highly of the welfare system. He writes that "we have nearly abolished poverty among the old", "assured minorities of their civil rights".

- (2) What do you think of his estimation?

The author may be too optimistic in his estimation. It is true that the United States has gone a long way in overcoming social inequality and discrimination against minorities. But serious problems still exist and are difficult to resolve. What is most disturbing is that there have always been people inside and outside government who are trying hard to terminate or at least reduce spending on social welfare.

Para. 14

48. What is the second design?

The second design is to allege that any form of public help to the poor will hurt the poor themselves. Such help will destroy poor people's motivation, make them lazy and break up their marriages. This is another typical argument put forward today by the conservatives in the U. S. in the discussion of social welfare reforms.

49. Does the author agree to the argument?

No, the author thinks that the accusations are groundless. He further points out that those who support the design have no way to prove that the damage of the aid to the poor is greater than the damage to them caused by a loss of public assistance.

Para. 15

50. Still, the case is made—and believed. . .

In spite of the fact that there is no proof to such argument, the argument has been put forth and accepted by many.

51. This is perhaps our most highly influential piece of fiction.

(1) It is a very popular story and has been accepted by many but it is not true.

(2) 这种说法也许是我们最有影响的一个虚构故事。

Para. 16

52. What is the argument of the third design?

The third design is when you give public assistance to the poor, you take money away (through taxes) from the rich and give it (in the form of public assistance) to the poor. The result is the rich become less willing to work hard and create wealth and the poor are encouraged to remain idle.

53. How does the author refute this argument?

The author uses two rhetorical questions to counter the argument. He implies that it is not the case that most poor people would prefer social welfare to paying jobs. As for corporate executives, they are working very hard, showing no sign of lack of incentive. To say they are being lazy because they are not paid enough is an insult to the business executives. (The author is using a clever retort here.)

54. Or that business people—corporate executives, the key figures in our time...

corporate executive: 企业经理人员

55. Belief can be the servant of truth—but even more of convenience.

(1) Belief can be useful in the search for truth. But more often than not it is accepted because it is convenient and self-serving.

(2) 信念可以是真理的仆人——但更多的情况下,只是一时之需。

Para. 17

56. What is the fourth design?

The fourth design argues that transferring money from the rich to the poor through the government has bad effect on freedom. By freedom, the designers mean spending as much money as one sees fit and giving the government as little as possible.

57. The fourth design...is to point to the presumed adverse effect on freedom of taking responsibility for them.

第四种方案……是指明如果政府替穷人承担责任,可能会对自由产生不利影响。

58. In the enduring words of Professor Milton Friedman, people must be “free to choose”.

(1) enduring: lasting; permanent

(2) The phrase is used ironically.

Para. 18

59. This is possibly the most transparent of all of the designs: No mention is ordinarily made of the relation of income to the freedom of the poor.

Why does the author say this is the most transparent of all of the designs? In what way is it most transparent?

Transparent means clear or obvious. The author is being ironical when he uses the word “transparent”. He means that it is most obvious that when these people talk about freedom they only have in mind the freedom of the rich.

60. There is, we can surely agree, no form of oppression that is quite so great, no constriction on thought and effort quite so comprehensive, as that which comes from having no money at all.

我们完全可以同意,没有哪种压迫形式比身无分文更厉害,也没有哪种对思想和行动的束缚比一无所有更全面彻底。

61. How does the author refute this argument?

He raises two points. One is poverty does the greatest harm to the freedom of the poor. When you are penniless, how can you be free to choose? The other is when you compare the gain of the poor and the loss of the rich, you will find the gain is far greater than the loss. Freedom is, on the whole, enhanced.

62. Freedom we rightly cherish. Cherishing it, we should not use it as a cover for denying freedom to those in need.

我们珍惜自由是对的。正因为我们珍惜自由,我们就不能以此为藉口,不给最需要自由的人自由。

Para. 19

63. Finally, when all else fails, we resort to simple psychological denial.

最终,当一切办法都无济于事时,我们就干脆装作没看见。

64. This is a psychic tendency that in various manifestations is common to us all.

We all have the tendency to close our eyes to unpleasant things or refuse to think about them. This tendency may take different forms.

65. It causes a great many people to avoid thought of the arms race and the consequent rush toward a highly probable extinction.

(1) Many people refuse to acknowledge the seriousness of the nuclear arms race which may in the end lead to a nuclear war and the destruction of the world.

(2) "A highly probable extinction" refers to the possible outbreak of a nuclear war, by plan or by accident, which will destroy the whole world. The author believes such an event is not merely possible but probable.

66. Whether they be in Ethiopia, the South Bronx, or even in such an Elysium as Los Angeles, we resolve to keep them off our minds.

(1) South Bronx: a notoriously poor district in New York city

(2) Elysium: Greek word for paradise, an ironic use by the author

(3) 不管他们生活在埃塞俄比亚,还是在纽约市的南布朗克斯区,甚至是在洛杉矶这样的天堂,我们都决心不去为这些人操心。

Para. 20

67. These are the modern designs by which we escape concern for the poor.

This statement serves as a summing-up of the previous paragraphs dealing with the five designs. It reemphasizes the nature of the designs—to make people escape concern for the poor.

68. All, save perhaps the last, are great inventive descent from Bentham, Malthus, and Spencer.

(1) save: (*prep.*) except

(2) inventive descent: The first four designs are merely modern, clever versions of the

theories put forward by Bentham, Malthus, and Spencer.

69. Ronald Reagan and his colleagues are clearly in a notable tradition—at the end of a long history of effort to escape responsibility for one's fellow beings.

(1) Ronald Reagan and his colleagues are mentioned because when Galbraith wrote this article, Reagan was in the White House. In the 1980s, during Reagan's time, conservatism prevailed and supply-side economics was dominant. After the Great Society in the 1960s, social welfare system suffered the first setback under the Reagan Administration. A contraction in social welfare set in. Hence Galbraith's ironical remark.

(2) "Notable" is used in an ironical sense.

70. So are the philosophers now celebrated in Washington: George Gilder, a greatly favored figure of the recent past, who tells to much applause that the poor must have the cruel spur of their own suffering to ensure effort. . .

(1) Irony is used in this statement: "greatly favored", "to much applause".

(2) George Gilder advances the view that only when the poor suffer from great misery will they be stimulated to make great efforts to change the situation; in other words, suffering is necessary to force the poor to work hard.

71. . . the entire federal welfare and income-support structure for working and aged persons, including A. F. D. C. , Medicaid, food stamps, unemployment insurance, Workers' Compensation, subsidized housing, disability insurance. . .

(1) A. F. D. C.: 对有未成年子女家庭的补助

(2) food stamps: 食品券

(3) Workers' Compensation: 工人(失业)补助金

(4) subsidized housing: 住房补贴

(5) disability insurance: 伤残保险

72. Cut the knot, for there is no way to untie it.

这是一堆解不开的疙瘩,只能快刀斩乱麻,统统取消。

73. By a triage, the worthy would be selected to survive; the loss of the rest is the penalty we should pay.

(1) "Triage" is the French for "selection". In English it is used primarily in medical or military contexts, meaning very badly injured or wounded individuals who seem unlikely to survive are left aside in order to treat those more likely to survive

(2) 按照救治的先后原则,生存者应是经过挑选的有价值的人;其他人的灭亡是我们必须付出的代价。

74. . . he is enjoying, as indicated, unparalleled popularity in high Washington circles.

……如上所说,他在华盛顿高层当中享有无比的威望。

Part V (Para. 21)

This is the concluding part. In this part, the author points out that public assistance to the poor is in the interest of the conservatives. The ending seems undramatic but it is in line with the mild

irony of the whole piece.

75. Compassion, along with the associated public effort, is the least comfortable, the least convenient course of behavior and action in our time.

同情心,加上与之相关的社会努力是我们这个时代最麻烦、最令人不快的行为和行动方针。

76. Also, it is, in the end, the most truly conservative course. There is no paradox here. Civil discontent and its consequences do not come from contented people—an obvious point. To the extent that we can make contentment as nearly universal as possible, we will preserve and enlarge the social and political tranquility for which conservatives, above all, should yearn.

(1) Why does the author think it is the most truly conservative course?

The conservatives want to maintain the status quo in the United States. They want to maintain and promote American social and political systems, American institutions and values. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to give public assistance to the poor, to keep them contented, so that there will be no unrest and rioting. In this sense, social welfare actually serves the conservative goal. The author here is using the word “conservative” in more than one sense, meaning carrying on tradition and maintaining stability.

(2) Why does the author say “There is no paradox here”?

The conservatives oppose social welfare and government support for the poor. Yet they want social and political stability which, according to Galbraith, can be achieved by making the poor contented through public support. So public support actually serves the greater goal of the conservatives.

III► Key to Explanation

1. By right action, we mean it must help promote personal interest.
2. The poverty of the poor was caused by their having too many children.
3. The rich were not to blame for the existence of poverty so they should not be asked to undertake the task of solving the problem.
4. It is only the result or effect of the law of the survival of the fittest applied to nature or to human society.
5. People began to reject Social Darwinism because it seemed to glorify brutal force and oppose treasured values of sympathy, love and friendship. Therefore, when it was mentioned, it was usually the target of criticism.
6. The desire to find a way to justify the unconcern for the poor had not been abandoned; it had only been put off.
7. Government officials, on the whole, are good; it is very rare that some would pay high prices for office equipment to get kickbacks.
8. It is a very popular story and has been accepted by many but it is not true.
9. Belief can be useful in the search for truth. But more often than not it is accepted because it is convenient and self-serving.