SOCIETY

at Columbus, Ohio, time. In 1881, the industry adopted timetables dividing the United States into four one-hour time zones keyed to GMT. Three years later, 85 percent of America's larger towns and cities had conformed to the system. But it did not become mandatory until 1966.

Pressure for an *international* time system grew after the laying of the Atlantic telegraphic cable in 1866. At the 1884 International Meridian Conference, held in Washington under U.S. auspices, 25 nations agreed—over vehement French objections—to a system keyed to Britain's GMT. It divided the world into 24 zones, each 15 degrees of latitude wide. The Conference's resolutions were not binding. Holland did not conform to the system until 1940. And some nations still refrain from joining. The Ayatollah Khomeini, observing that some Muslim countries "are so influenced by the West that they have set their clocks according to European time," declared, "It's a nightmare."

Yet, Zerubavel notes, such exceptions show that the way we organize time promotes interdependence and rationalism. The real nightmare would be a world fragmented by different standards of time.

Defending Welfare

"Welfare Dependency: Fact or Myth" by Richard D. Coe, in *Challenge* (Sept.-Oct. 1982), 80 Business Park Dr., Armonk, N.Y. 10504.

Rising federal social welfare outlays since the 1960s, many critics contend, have only fostered welfare dependency. But Coe, a Notre Dame economist, argues that while many Americans occasionally use welfare as a last resort, long-term *dependency* has not increased.

Analyzing University of Michigan data on 12,563 people over the 10-year period between 1969 and 1978, Coe found that the number receiving some kind of welfare—Aid to Families with Dependent Children, food stamps, Supplemental Security Income for the elderly poor—equaled around 10 percent of the group each year. But a "surprisingly large" 25 percent lived in households that received welfare at some time during 1969–78. No one, Coe notes, "is immune from an occasional bad year."

Moreover, nearly half (48.8 percent) of the recipients were short-term clients, receiving help in only one or two of the 10 years. About one-third needed help for three to seven years; only 17.5 percent were on the rolls for at least eight years.

Nor were recipients entirely dependent on welfare. Only 30 percent relied on it for half or more of their annual income. Nor were the heavily dependent recipients necessarily long-term clients: Only 1.9 percent of the whole group under study was dependent over the long term *and* for more than half its income.

This small group, divided almost equally between whites and blacks, was heavily populated by single women and their children, who composed 62.9 percent of its total number. Black mothers and children were disproportionately represented, accounting for over a third of the core group, but only 5.3 percent of the people in the survey. But Coe argues that race and sex discrimination, not the lure of welfare, is the cause. And while more than half of all black women in the entire survey group received welfare at some time, only 15 percent of black women became long-term dependents.

Coe disputes the belief of some critics that welfare does more to hurt the poor than help them. The basic function of the system is to help those experiencing temporary hard times to make ends meet. The existence of a small dependent population facing long odds in the marketplace, he contends, does not justify "the wholesale condemnation of the liberal welfare state."

PRESS & TELEVISION

Journalists vs. Businessmen

"Media and Business Elites: Two Classes in Conflict?" by Stanley Rothman and S. Robert Lichter, in *The Public Interest* (Fall 1982), Subscription Dept., 20th & Northampton Sts., Easton, Pa. 18042.

Little love is lost between America's top journalists and business executives. This conflict should surprise no one, say Rothman and Lichter, political scientists at Smith College and George Washington University, respectively. Not only are the two groups at odds on social and political issues, but each views the other as the most powerful group in America.

The differences emerged in the authors' survey of 240 "Big League" journalists (TV networks, the *New York Times*, etc.) and of *Fortune 500* top and middle level executives. The businessmen tended to embrace traditional morality far more than did the journalists. Nearly half the executives, for example, felt strongly that adultery is wrong, as opposed to 15 percent of the newsmen. Half the journalists, but only 12 percent of the businessmen, identified themselves as agnostics or atheists.

Media professionals were also more liberal on economic issues: 68 percent favored government redistribution of income, while only 29 percent of the executives did so. In addition, Rothman and Lichter found that 45 percent of the journalists—twice as many as the businessmen—believed that the U.S. legal system favors the wealthy. (Television personnel surveyed were far more liberal than their print media brethren.)

Differences in social background accounted for much of the business-media divergence, the authors say. Journalists had more "urban, secular, highly educated, and affluent upper-middle-class professional backgrounds" than did businessmen. They were more likely to have inherited wealth or to have attended a prestigious university; 12 percent of the journalists and 28 percent of the executives grew up in blue-collar families.

Underlying attitudes affected both groups' perceptions of reality. Most