On Kemler's Profile of Lehman for the Nation

Kemler's article, irrespective of its "slant" and of my personal views, appears to me to be poorly organized and poorly written. But that is not of concern here.

The article, although grudgingly generous in places, strikes me as unfavorably. In many sections, it makes the Senator look like a dabbling fool - albeit a well-intentioned one - , and it somehow gives the impression that Senator Lehman has gained all the respect he commands by mere accident.

From a political point of view, the first objectionable part of this article is its first sentence. The sentence may sound cute, but I do not believe it is true. May it be stated that there is a very major group in America - composed of arch liberals, Jews, Negroes and many national minority groups - who not only deeply respect the Senator, but who also listen to him avidly and study and support his views. For these people, Lehman is a figurehead of true, as opposed to lip-service, Americanism.

Furthermore, Lehman commands respect and a hearing from his liberal colleagues in the Senate. He is recognized as one of the few men in government who will say exactly what he thinks with little respect to its political implications. This habit, which at times causes his staff some anxiety, has the effect of giving his words a greater weight.

The author has possibly taken Lehman's admittedly poor speaking ability as an indication that he has little to say and no audience to say it to. This conclusion is false. So much for sentence number one.

The section of the second paragraph about Humphrey and the Internal Security Act makes Lehman appear a dupe.

Throughout the article, Lehman's stand on the McCarran-Walter Act is portrayed as an obsession; as his only raison d'être in politics - and a hopeless one at that.

Kemler has made Lehman's victory over Dulles appear to be largely the result of one untactful remark by the latter... and he implies that the remark had some truth in it anyway.

The depiction of Lehman's office as a Mecca for Jewish leaders, Negroes, etc., who can look nowhere else for a champion, is uncomplimentary and relatively irrelevant.

I hope the article will be changed or not published.
Kemler lacks insight into his subject when he fails to realize that Senator Lehman is a humanitarian, rather than a politician. He is far more interested in helping the little man than in seeking public acclaim.

It is possibly a political weakness that Senator Lehman works very earnestly, but quietly. Lehman is far more interested in the results themselves than in the recognition deriving from them.

He is, in fact, very much like Shaftsbury (Lord Ashley) who was a great social reformer in mid-nineteenth century England. He feels personally responsible for the faults of his society, and he is determined to remedy them, regardless of the political costs of doing so.

That Kemler has failed to understand anything of the personality of Senator Lehman has made his article in fact and in appearance superficial.