

European Notebook

The 25th Hour

By Ernest Germain

The merit of literature consists among other things in its power to reveal truth by conveying the feeling of reality to those who are still incapable of understanding it scientifically.

The 25th Hour is the story of a simple Rumanian peasant, Johann Moritz, his wife Suzanne and several other petty-bourgeois types: the priest Koruga; his son a poet and novelist, Traian; and his wife, the journalist Nora West.

Johann Moritz seeks above all to escape the crushing poverty of his village. He wants to emigrate to the United States, but the father of Suzanne bullies her and compels her to remain where he can protect her.

MISFORTUNE WITHOUT END Comes the war and the persecution of the Jews. A policeman who covets Suzanne denounces Johann Moritz as a Jew and has him arrested.

One day an SS monomaniac notices Johann Moritz and discovers in him "a racial Nordic type of exceptional purity."

HE SEES NO WAY OUT But Gheorghiu presents this misery as an inevitable product of "our technological civilization."

For several years the reunited family continues to taste the joys of the American camps — "We cannot consider individual cases," an American officer tells them.

DEHUMANIZATION

It is immediately evident that the different characters in this book are nothing but symbols of specific social forces. The father of Suzanne, a brutalized bourgeois; the policeman who "converts" Johann Moritz into a Jew;

The 25th Hour is therefore a novel about the dehumanization of man. American readers might find this description of human existence today too dismal or extravagant.

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California Jobless Increase Reported

LOS ANGELES — Mid-February reports on unemployment in California disclose a total of 493,000 jobless out of a total labor force of 3,935,000.

The average monthly unemployment figure for 1949 is given as 417,000. The figure for one year ago, February 1949, was 486,000.

Letters from Readers

Why Starvation in The Richest Valley?

I have just read an article in Newsweek magazine purporting to give a report on how conditions in the San Joaquin Valley of California are exaggerated.

Cochran Debunks Ex-Radical Stoges Of Bureaucracy

LOS ANGELES, April 17 — A large audience was on hand here last night to hear Bert Cochran, chairman of the Socialist Workers Party Trade Union Committee, discuss the outlook for labor in 1950.

In his presentation, Cochran traced the history of the labor movement in recent years, with special emphasis on the State Department's intervention into the movement through the misleadership of the labor bureaucracy.

He debunked the false realism of the ex-radicals who, "hypnotized by the artificial stimulation of the post-war boom, have come to believe that the workers won't go for socialism and have therefore jumped on the bandwagon of the bureaucrats."

Considerable literature was purchased by the audience and many interest cards were filled out by those wanting to find out more about the SWP program.

Cochran's stay in Los Angeles, part of a nation-wide tour by the SWP leader, was filled with meetings with trade unionists in the area. His visit here opened with a welcoming social at which he reported his observations on those sections of the party where he has already visited.

If They Don't Admit It, Maybe No One Will Know

Truman said last year that unemployment could be considered "critical" when it reached 5,000,000. Now that that number has been reached, the administration is playing down the "critical" angle.

Sidewalk Supper



Mr. and Mrs. Garrett Barry and their five children eat supper on a Chicago sidewalk after being evicted from their apartment. Cause of the eviction was Barry's inability to pay the high rent demanded by the landlord.

Letters from Readers

earnings at gin mills while the kids stay home and starve." The State Department of Employment recorded 544,000 working in agriculture one month and 419,000 two months later.

A full blown agricultural crisis can exist and yet some "authorities" will look the other way lest they see the things to come. They are afraid of a return to the days of the "Grapes of Wrath" and those days are very close, only it will be on a larger scale.

Simon Klein Was Too Old Editor: Capitalist society has no mercy on its helpless victims. The ruthless coldblooded nature of the capitalist beast is reflected even inside the sacred portals of its religious institutions.

End of Rent Control Would Cut Living Standards 5% Appearing before a Senate committee holding hearings on rent control, William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor, declared that removal of controls would be the equivalent of a 5% reduction in wages.

Green cited Department of Labor statistics to show that rents had increased at least 25% in those areas in which rent controls had been lifted.

Widespread rent increases, Green predicted, "will inevitably be reflected in the demands of organized workers for higher wages." The Senate committee is considering whether or not to extend controls, and for how long.

Problems of American Politics

The March-April issue of Fourth International, theoretical magazine of American Trotskyism, features four articles on key problems of American politics:

1. "American Radicalism Today" by James P. Cannon. This appraisal of the various radical parties and groupings brings the record, up to date. Has persecution sapped Stalinist morale? What are the perspectives facing the Wallaceites? Is the Socialist Party facing final dissolution? How will abandonment of independent class politics affect the Shachtmanites?

In answering these questions, Cannon considers political problems of wide general interest to American labor. Can the unions, for instance, "capture" the Democratic Party? This hope, now stirring union circles, is objectively weighed by Cannon in the light of some sobering experiences in the political history of American labor.

Read this Marxist consideration of some of the big political problems facing the unions today made by the National Secretary of the Socialist Workers Party at the recent meeting of the SWP National Committee.

U. S. Puppets Wage War Against Filipino People

(Continued from Page 1) was merely a deceitful cover for continued colonial domination.

The task of liquidating the social status quo wherever the Huks succeeded in upsetting it, was now entrusted to the Philippine government, first under President Sergio Osmena, then under President Manuel Roxas, today under President Elpidio Quirino.

DISMAL FAILURE Despite this assistance, the efforts of the puppet government to wipe out armed opposition have met with dismal failure.

Repressive actions by the military and the Philippine Constabulary are swelling the forces of discontent and rebellion. The Huk ranks have grown by leaps and bounds.

The Huks are everywhere and nowhere. While Quirino makes a public pledge to wipe them out within a year or resign they have pressed to the very outskirts of Manila. On several occasions recently the capital has been attacked for an expected Huk attack.

Quirino's defense secretary, Ruperto Kangleon, has estimated that there are upwards of 16,000 Huk units under arms, but the number is probably far greater.

Washington's response to this desperate plea was the two-year renewal of the military assistance pact. And so American arms and munitions are continuing to flow into the Philippines to perpetuate a state of affairs which the great mass of the people — twenty million of them — are determined no longer to tolerate.

Even with the help they are furnishing, the American imperialists are frankly skeptical of the

ability of the Quirino government to suppress the popular uprising and make the Philippines safe for the parasitic landlords and their American partners.

Thus Life magazine, on April 17, prints an editorial entitled "Let's Do It." Noting a declaration by Secretary of State Acheson to the effect that the Philippines are essential to U. S. security and that the U. S. would "go to war if necessary" to save them, this Life publication says there is no reason to think the Philippine government can liquidate the Huks unaided.

Because of the high strategic value which Washington places on the Philippines, there seems to be more likelihood of all-out U. S. military intervention there than there was in the case of China, where, considering all the circumstances, it was too vast and too risky an undertaking.

THE MILITANT ARMY

Although it is still too early for any reports from members of the Militant Army, the orders for the special May Day edition of The Militant published last week indicate that it is due for a favorable response from class-conscious workers celebrating labor's traditional holiday.

In case you slipped up getting your order in early, extra copies are still available. They're three cents each in bundles of five or more.

Literature Agent Dixon Woods of San Francisco reports "a very good sale of The Militant and Fourth International at a Stalinist public meeting on trade with China where Mrs. Paul Robeson spoke. Many people were particularly interested in the C. L. Liu article on China in the January-February issue of Fourth International.

Besides covering this Stalinist meeting with literature presenting the Trotskyist view on events of great world interest, the San Francisco comrades "hit the nail

on the head again with the April 10 issue of The Militant on the verdict in the Harry Bridges trial. The Longshoremen held a mass meeting in defense of Bridges where all three defendants spoke to an audience of about 5,000 people.

Los Angeles Literature Agent Bert Deck writes that "Shirley M. has been added to the regular Militant sales army. She has been selling up to nine copies a week at one of our campuses. We expect good results from this work."

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Form with fields for Name, Street, City, State, Zone, and a note: "Send me a copy of Fourth International, featuring 'Problems of American Politics.' Enclosed is 25 cents."

