

new
Masses

JANUARY 16, 1934

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Masses

Erskine Caldwell

Reports Terror in Georgia

Chicago's Milk Strike

By Carl Haessler

The 100 Greediest Cases

By Bill Smith

The War Lords Go "Left"

A Shanghai Dispatch

Miner's Funeral

A Proletarian Story

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JANUARY 16, 1934

ERSKINE CALDWELL, the noted author who is a correspondent of the *NEW MASSES*, has just stumbled into a season of terror in the backwoods of Georgia. He has wired us the hitherto unpublished facts printed on page 13 of this issue. At least three Negroes have been lynched, five severely beaten, two reported "missing." Fourteen houses have been burned—and Caldwell himself is in danger. Immediately upon receipt of this information the *NEW MASSES* notified the International Labor Defense and the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners, who are now organizing protests against this frenzied lynch terror. We have wired the Governor of Georgia and Sheriff Smith demanding that immediate action be taken to protect the Negroes from a gang of bestial whites intent on perpetrating a Southern St. Bartholomew's massacre.

CALDWELL'S dispatch refers to a "mob"—a term generally misleading in reports of lynchings. The *NEW MASSES* emphasized editorially last week that more than half of the forty-seven 1933 lynchings were perpetrated not by large groups of men—mobs—but by gangs of twenty-five men or less. In fourteen cases police and other public officers participated. According to a letter from Caldwell, the lynch gang consists of a score of men. Such facts apparently mean nothing to the press, which unfailingly speaks of "mobs" when as a matter of plain fact not mobs but handfuls of men, storm-troopers of reaction, are usually involved. The distinction is important, for these gangs are either inspired by, or composed of, local representatives of the upper classes. And the upper classes have painstakingly misrepresented lynchings by saddling the blame on poor whites. Doubtless many confused, desperate poor whites participated in lynchings, but in analyzing each case one traces lynch-leadership to some local community "leader"—banker, landowner. And one sees immediately how lynch activity is inextricably part of the Southern ruling class effort to keep the Negro people in economic bondage.



THE DICTATOR

Esther Kriger

VAN DER LUBBE'S head has fallen. With sudden speed, in the presence of a few official witnesses, and behind a barrier of silence imposed on the German press, the Nazis have forever silenced the one voice that might have some day revealed all the details of the Reichstag fire plot. By the testimony of competent medical authorities, Van der Lubbe, normally of sub-average intelligence, had been subjected to some sort of treatment—specific drugs are mentioned—which reduced him to a state bordering on imbecility, so that he couldn't talk. With Van der Lubbe dead the Nazis must breathe easier. Does any one doubt that but for the world-wide mass

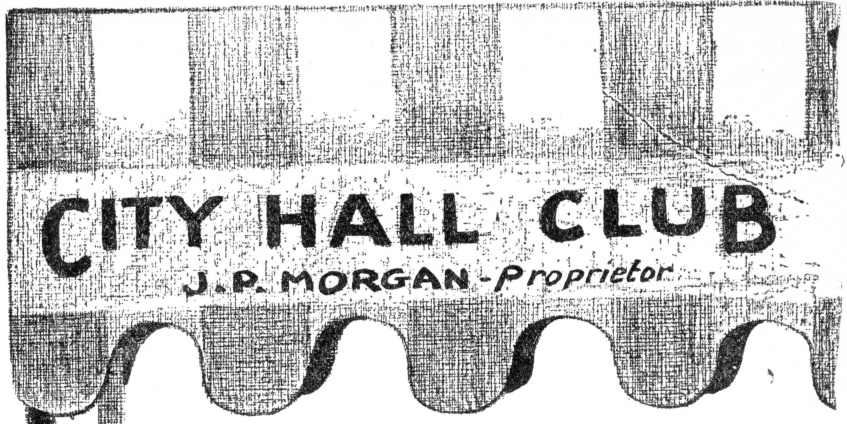
demonstration against the plot, a mass demonstration led by the Communists of all lands, the execution Wednesday in the Leipzig prison would have included the four men that the Nazis really aimed at—the Communist leaders, Torgler, Taneff, Popoff and Dimitroff? The heroic four now face charges of "treason." Once more, nothing will save them except the united mass pressure of the workers of the world. They must be saved!

ONCE again the lying tactics of the Hitler government have been exposed, this time proving that Police Commissioner Goering committed perjury in the German Supreme Court.



THE DICTATOR

Esther Kriger



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Faced with the blasting anti-Nazi charges in the now famous "Oberfohren memorandum" (published in the Manchester Guardian, Aug. 2, 1933), Premier Goering solemnly dismissed it as "a forgery, of course," written "after Oberfohren was dead," adding that he "committed suicide." Nobody was convinced by this attempt to discredit the powerful Oberfohren charge of Nazi guilt, on the other hand the memorandum had not been fully authenticated. With the publication by Gegen-Angriff (German anti-fascist weekly issued in Paris) of a signed statement by Walter Tschuppik, it has become established that Dr. Oberfohren was murdered by the Nazis. Goering himself ordered Captain Roehrbein to "get rid" of Oberfohren; and the loyal Captain with a picked squad of Special Guards entered Oberfohren's house in Kiel while Nazi storm-troopers paraded outside to drown out the noise of the shots. The murder took place six days *after* Oberfohren's article appeared in the Manchester Guardian. Tschuppik managed to wheedle this information out of Roehrbein during their joint confinement in jail. (Roehrbein was clapped into concentration camp when his internal anti-Hitler intriguing became known.) And Tschuppik, formerly editor-in-chief of the largest South German weekly, lost no time in publishing to the world this important proof of (1) the blatant perjury by Goering, (2) Nazi responsibility for murdering Oberfohren and (3) irrefutable genuineness of the Oberfohren memorandum which constitutes one of the major proofs of Nazi responsibility for setting the Reichstag blaze.

CHIANG KAI SHEK'S capture of Foochow, capital of Fukien province, which is likely to be either news or history by the time this comment appears, will be a Pyrrhic victory for Nanking. The widening rift between the various militarist cliques will not be healed by any defeat of the separatist movement in Fukien. Deep down below seethes the rising agrarian anti-imperialist revolution, the oncoming tramp of the Red Armies, the relentless extension of the Chinese Soviets. Way up on top, the sharpening conflicts among the imperialist robbers in China who are tearing the country to pieces to satisfy their avaricious hunger for colonies, drive the puppet militarists across the Chinese scene like chessmen shoved about in a frantic game. In

this issue we print an article, "The War Lords Go 'Left,'" by C. Frank Glass, which gives the background of the Fukien militarist war. In this article are only faintly sketched the two most important factors of China—the Soviet territories, representing the advance guard of the rapidly maturing successful Chinese anti-imperialist agrarian revolution, and on the other hand, the role of the antagonisms of the imperialist bandits in China. The militarist wars at the present stage are the advance rehearsals of the gigantic slaughter soon to come. They are the preliminary sparks of the infernal conflagration which will set the whole Far East into a blaze of war and revolution.

FOR five years, now, Chiang Kai Shek has sent his hordes against the Soviet Districts. Three times the Red Army has defeated this very 19th Route Army which Chiang Kai Shek is attempting to crush. The Soviet territories have run through China like quicksilver. Compressed here, harassed there, under the heat of the struggle they spread out, expand. Six anti-Soviet campaigns have been repulsed—with substantial victories for the Soviets. To crush the Fukien competitors for the favors of either American or British imperialism, Chiang Kai Shek is forced to drain his armies from Northern Kiangsi. This releases pressure on the Northern portion of the Central Soviet Districts. With their deprivations in Fukien (Kuomintang armies live off the country with a vengeance) the peasantry, only a few rice grains from starvation, will now face death from hunger. The fierce hunger of the militarists will consume them. At one time, when imperialist domination was young, the landlord-bourgeois militarists made a profitable game of war, no matter which side lost. There is extant in China an old letter from a certain General Liu to his nephew, another Liu. "My dear nephew, Liu," wrote the older member of the family, "It is not well for members of the same family to be fighting on opposite sides. But we can have the sweet consolation of knowing whichever side wins, our family will not lose."

REPORTS from China already indicate that the silver bullet will soon replace the leaden. Chiang Kai Shek, cables Hallet Abend to the New York Times, is offering General Chen Ming Shu the bribe of the Fukien governorship. To General Tsai Ting Kai

he offers a high post in the Nanking military forces. But though these individual bandits will gain, the landlord-capitalist class of China will lose in victory or defeat. Behind the war lords there stand the heightening imperialist antagonisms. With the fall of these puppets, others will come forward. Nor are the basic sectional interests of the Chinese native exploiters wiped out through bribery. The financial debacle, the catastrophic nature of the economic crisis, is intensified a thousandfold by this new militarist deprecation. A defeat for Fukien brings Chiang Kai Shek face to face with the Kwangtung clique. Behind Kwangtung stands the British imperialist lion. The wave of militarist wars is just beginning. It will rapidly go over into civil war. Against this rising plague the Red Army of China steadily advances, steeling the proletariat and peasantry to end a rule of starvation which lives by perpetual war and by feeding territory to the imperialist invaders.

THE Department of State received last week, and promptly pigeonholed, an official report bearing witness that the Bolivian Indians, also, object to being pawns of American imperialism, particularly when it trains on them the Paraguayan guns mustered into action by British imperialism. The wires brought word that five thousand Aymara Indians converged upon a railroad train and derailed it, about seventy-five miles from LaPaz, on the shore of Lake Titicaca. Government troops and airplanes smothered the revolt, the Indians scattering back to their hill homes in terror of the overhead attack. The report emphasized the swiftness with which the revolt was crushed, but it also relayed the portentous fact that the rebellion was directed against conscription of Indians for the war in the Gran Chaco.

HOW portentous this circumstance may be is easily measured by well-known facts. The possibility of a revolt in Bolivia has been recognized for a long time. The submerged million or so Bolivian Indians are dominated by about 375,000 whites who in turn are the local managers of American bankers and tin and oil trusts owning about 100 million dollars worth of Bolivia. Here is something for Secretary of State Hull and President Roosevelt to remember Bolivia by when they sit down to recapitulate the achievements of "neighborliness" at the recent Montevideo conference in terms

of future business. The Bolivian Indian has been pictured by his plunderers as a coco-leaf-chewing brute who might not enjoy his diet of dried beans, starched corn and frozen potatoes, but who could well make out on it because of his primitive state. The fact is that the Aymaras bear a heritage of a distinct and ancient culture, one which possibly is older than that of the Incas. Perhaps, however, this is unknown to the Guggenheim brothers, the Andes Tin Corporation (of Boston), the National City Bank and other Americans powerful in Bolivia. It is something which Bolivia's own statesmen would like to forget: at the same Montevideo conference, a proposal to grant equal citizenship rights to all, male and female and high and low, was swiftly tabled, one of the foremost tablers being a Bolivian who thought it nonsense since so many Bolivians were, said he, "savages."

LIKE acts on a vaudeville bill, the brain-children of the Roosevelt administration make their bow with a blare of trumpets, do their song-and-dance, and in most cases disappear with little accomplished. The latest of the acts, Civil Works, seems definitely slated to go off the boards by May 1. The appropriation of \$400,000,000 by the Public Works Administration to create

jobs, though limited in number, must be regarded as a victory for organizations such as the Unemployed Councils which have led the unremitting struggle for relief. This is belated and forced recognition by the federal government of its responsibility to the unemployed. And the fact that President Roosevelt has called on Congress for a further appropriation of \$400,000,000, to keep Civil Works alive from Feb. 15, when the original sum runs out until about May 1, accentuates that victory. Such recognitions of responsibility by the federal government have good and sufficient reasons behind them. The N.R.A. has not only not panned out as well as the Roosevelt administration would have liked, but as David Ramsey's article in this issue shows, is definitely in eclipse. The laying off of 580,000 workers in November, as reported by the American Federation of Labor, is a far cry from the many millions who were to be re-employed under N.R.A. The growing bankruptcy of many municipal and state governments is another reason behind Civil Works. Last but not least, the big strike movement of recent months has thrown fear into the federal administration, corollary to the strike movement is the rise in struggle of the unemployed and the farmers.

BY THE first of the year only 447,000 had been given jobs under the C.W.A., in 119 out of 135 industrial centers. This, and the grafting tactics used by those administering the program, show that the victory won in the creation of the Civil Works Program will be lost if it is not pushed. In most cities those hired under the C.W.A. have been forced to wait weeks for their pay. Demonstrations for back pay have taken place in New York, Detroit and other cities. Reports of violations of the 50 cents an hour minimum for common labor are frequent. In addition, the rates paid to white collar and professional workers have been disgraceful—50 cents an hour for architects and draftsmen in Chicago; 70 cents an hour for teachers. There are uses to which the C.W.A. is being put, which workers, both manual and professional, must combat. These include separation of the white collar and professional groups from the main body of the unemployed; division between the skilled and unskilled; further militarization of the unemployed; and the segregation of the relatively small number employed under the Civil Works program, from the mass of the seventeen million unemployed. The jobless must be on guard lest the price they pay for their bread be disunity within their own ranks.

THE literary columnists are mourning the recent death of Robert W. Chambers, one of the last of the fiction hack-masters of the old school. Chambers was one of the first American novelists to exploit the theme of militarism, so popular in our imperialist epoch. For forty years he turned out best-seller historical romances for the "entertainment" of the masses whom he despised. Among his "entertaining" novels is *The Red Republic*, a vile defamation of the heroes of the Paris Commune. The days—or rather the nights—of the Commune he described in these terms: "At night the cafes were crowded with motley throngs who gambled and cursed, and drank with women of the most abandoned and dangerous type. Gold was poured out like water, orgies awakened the sober inhabitants whose expostulations were received with jeers and curses and an occasional playful bullet." In another novel *The Crimson Tide*, published in 1919, he fulminated against Communism. It is the story of Americans who escape from "the brain-crazed

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VOL. X, No. 3

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Published weekly by the NEW MASSES, INC., at 31 East 27th Street, New York City. Copyright, 1934. NEW MASSES, INC. Reg. U. S. Patent Office. Drawings and text may not be reprinted without permission. Entered as second-class matter, June 24, 1926, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y. under the act of March 3, 1879. Single copies 10 cents. Subscription, \$3.50 a year in U. S. and Colonies and Mexico. Six months \$2; three months \$1; Foreign \$4.50 a year; six months \$2.50; three months \$1.25. Subscribers are notified that no change of address can be effected in less than 2 weeks. THE NEW MASSES 173 welcomes the work of new writers, in prose and verse, and of artists. MSS must be accompanied by return postage. The NEW MASSES pays for contributions.



Reds" of Siberia only to find Bolshevism spreading through the United States. For pages and pages he "forgot" the novel's plot to rave at the Reds: "They want to set the world on fire. Then they want to murder and rob everybody. . . . They want loot and blood, that's really all they want. Their object is to . . . turn the murderous survivors of the human massacre into one vast international pack of wolves. . . . They are merely looters skulking through the smoke of a world in flames—buzzards on the carcass of a civilization dead. . . ." Just "entertaining" fiction.

MORE than a quarter of a million copies of the tenth anniversary edition of the *Daily Worker* were bought and paid for by more than a quarter of a million Americans. From the remotest nooks and corners of the country, from shops and factories, from fields, mines, offices, and thousands of homes came pouring in pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters which soon mounted to a grand total far above most sanguine expectations. The size of the edition and the great enthusiasm with which it was received by scores of thousands of workers are a landmark in the history of the revolutionary movement in this country. The paper which for ten long and difficult years has been articulating the desires, hopes and demands of the American working class, and has been in the forefront of every struggle, leading every battle, fighting every open and concealed enemy of the oppressed and exploited masses in the United States has finally come into its own.

IT IS a real proletarian newspaper. Events of importance to the working class—local, national and international—are recorded in its pages. Armed with the Marxian dialectical method, the *Daily Worker* cuts through the apparently bewildering flux of our contemporary world, perceiving significances, tracing causal relations, and anticipating economic and political developments with almost unerring accuracy. Both in its selection of facts and their interpretation, the *Daily Worker* holds unswervingly to the philosophy of Marx and Lenin. Like the Russian *Pravda*, the German *Die Rote Fahne*, the French *L'Humanité*, the Czech *Rude Pravo*, the English *Daily Worker* and the hundreds of other Communist organs the world over, the *Daily Worker*, as agitator, propagandist and collective

organizer of the masses, has embodied the noblest traditions of the working class.

IT WAS clear the opening night that the Theatre Union could get little or no support from the press which had whipped up a great ballyhoo for *Sailor, Beware* and *Men in White*. The new theatre faltered the week after the opening of *Peace on Earth*. By Thursday their was talk of closing up. Perhaps the skeptics were right. Perhaps it was not yet time for a workers' theatre in America. But the Theatre Union stuck by its convictions. Workers wanted culture if it was their culture. They wanted a workers' theatre and they would support one if given half a chance. Between the theatre and its logical audience, however, the uptown press had thrown a barrier of contempt and silence. The big question now was: how to reach this audience? At this point the Theatre Union threw overboard whatever illusions some of its members may have retained about getting audiences in the conventional Broadway manner, and set to work getting a workers' audience by methods familiar to workers. It turned to the workers' press, where it met with a warm and hearty reception. It organized a corps of volunteer speakers, imbued with the idea of the theatre and familiar with working-class organizations, to speak at two or three meetings a night explaining the aim of the Theatre Union to create an established workers' drama in America.

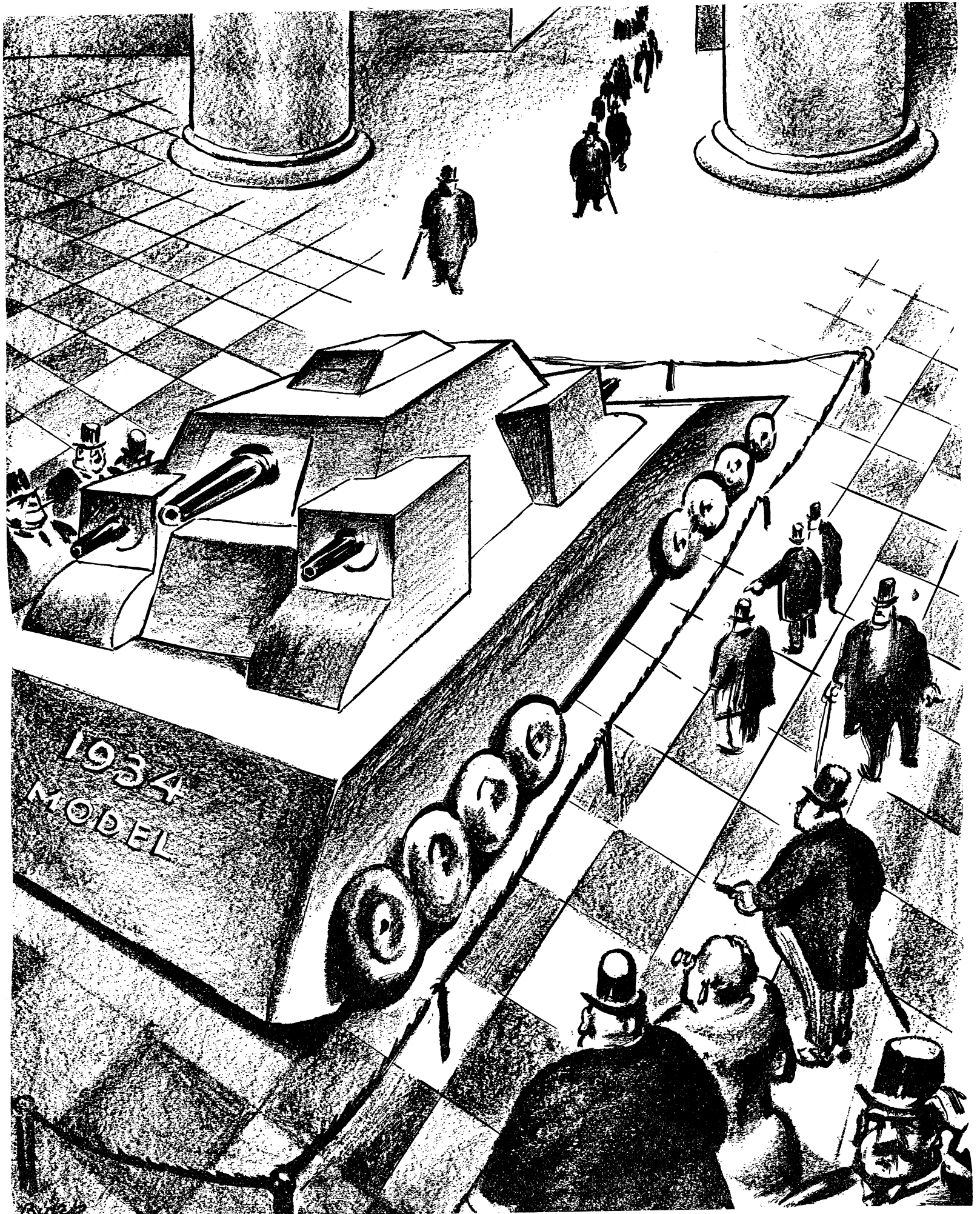
LEADERS of unions and mass organizations were invited to see *Peace on Earth*. They liked it and offered immediate support. They sent out leaflets in their mails. They hung posters in their offices. They made announcements at their meetings. For some of them special leaflets were printed to be distributed among their members. The National Student League, for instance, left a special student circular on every bench of every college classroom in the city. Through such channels, all in all, over 100,000 leaflets were distributed. Once apprised of the existence of a workers' play, suddenly a workers' audience—a thing undreamed of by Broadway producers, an idea sneered at by the critics—began to flock into the Civic Repertory Theatre to see *Peace on Earth*. They came singly, they came in bodies. During the first six weeks of *Peace on Earth* 73 working-class organ-

izations gave theatre parties, bringing 15,126 people into the theatre. Some of them had not been in a "regular" theatre for years; some of them never at all. Until the advent of the Theatre Union many of them had been unable to afford it. Overnight *Peace on Earth*, with "standing room only," became one of the hits of New York. There is something new under the American sun, a workers' theatre, with a militant working-class play, packing the house—with workers! "Do you want a theatre like this? Will you help maintain one in New York?" a speaker asks the audience each night at the close of the play. And this audience, described by such established theatrical figures as John Howard Lawson and Sidney Howard as the most inspiring audience they had ever seen in the theatre, roars back: "Yes, we do! We will!"

AS WE go to press the news comes from Moscow that Andrey Biely, one of the most brilliantly original and influential Russian writers is dead. To the student of Russian literature the name of Andrey Biely is indissolubly tied up with that of his friend the poet Alexander Blok. Both were symbolists, both were mystics, both were "decadents," and both, when the Bolshevik Revolution came, hailed it as an event of refulgent mystical significance. Unlike the majority of their literary middle class contemporaries, Biely and Blok remained loyal to the Soviet government to the end of their days, though, needless to say, the Soviet government never did live up to their mystical, slavophile expectations. Known mainly as a poet, Biely's greatest contribution to Soviet letters was, however, in the realm of prose. Echoes of his ineffably rich, subtly ornate, singing prose can be found in the works of very many Soviet writers—Boris Pilniak, Artrem Vesely, Vsevolod Ivanov, and many others. Andrey Biely's premature death at the age of 54 is a grave loss to Soviet literature.

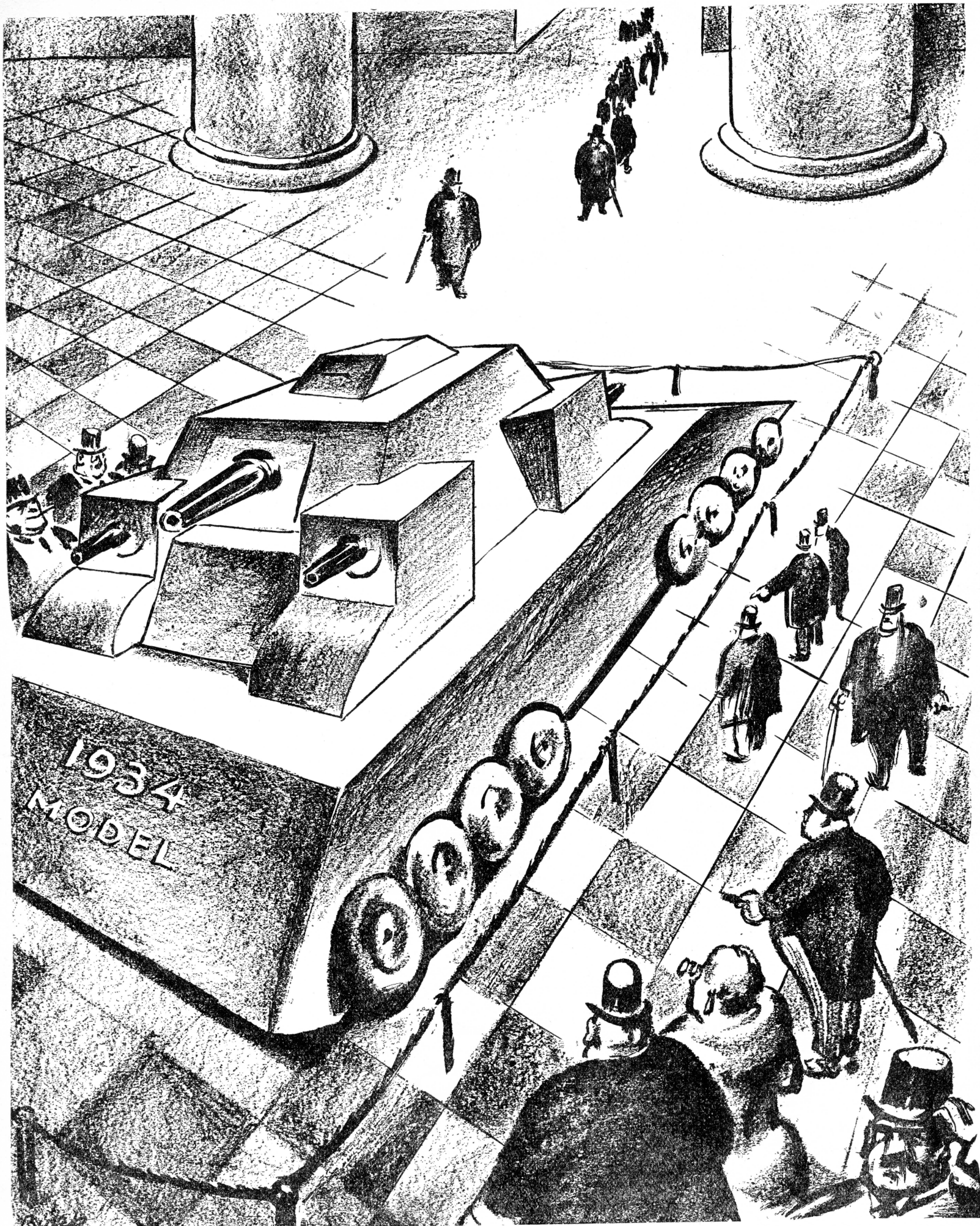
A Plea for Communism?

The editors of the *Nation* salute the editors of the weekly *New Masses* and wish them well—or at least as well as possible short of the immediate establishment of the Communist State, which would in all probability mean the disestablishment of the *Nation*.—*The Nation*, Jan. 17, 1934.



THE AUTOMOBILE SHOW

Jacob Burck



THE AUTOMOBILE SHOW

Jacob Burck

Budgeting for War

ROOSEVELT'S budget message to Congress on January 4, is the most important event in his recovery program since the N.R.A. He informed the country that \$10,569,000,000 will be spent in the fiscal year ending June 30. These expenditures will increase the national debt to over 30 billion dollars—more than 3 billions above its post-war peak in 1919. From June, 1930 to June, 1934, the public debt will have increased 100 percent, and will be more than 20 times above the level of the pre-war debt. Actually, the debt and expenditures will run much higher despite Roosevelt's promises to curtail expenditures in 1934-35, and to balance the budget in 1936. The day after his budget message, it was announced in Washington that the government will guarantee farm and home bonds to the tune of another 4 billion. The country is proceeding, economically, along the classic outlines of an inflationary period, and politically, is heading with express speed towards Fascism and war.

The government will borrow money on a scale not matched even during the war; 4 billion to meet maturing obligations, and over 6.5 billion for expenditures. For some time the government has been depending upon short-term loans. There are now some 8 billions in government loans of less than five years maturity. Furthermore, the Federal Reserve banks already hold some 7.7 billions of federal securities. These holdings can be increased, of course, enormously. But sooner or later the usual borrowing policy will have to be modified to the extent of selling government obligations directly to the Reserve banks—an inflationary step taken by Germany during its financial debacle. Along with these measures must come the devaluation of the dollar to 50 or 60 cents, and the printing of "gold-backs" to realize the "legal profit" of 3.5 to 4 billions on the gold holdings of the Federal Reserve banks. According to the New York Herald-Tribune of January 6, the latter have already stated that they will "coöperate to give the Treasury the entire profit in any dollar devaluation program." Such inflationary measures are dictated to the capitalist class by the exigencies of the situation, and in turn, these measures will progressively lead to

more inflation and finally to starting the government printing presses.

It is significant that three-quarters of the enormous sums, and perhaps more, will be spent on direct and indirect war preparations, and subsidies and loans to the biggest bankers, industrialists and landlords:

Interest on national debt	742 million
A. A. A.	515 "
Army and Navy	510 "
C. C. C. Camps	342 "
Miscellaneous (Farm Credit Association, Tennessee Valley Authority, etc.)	418 "
Public Works	1,227 "
Reconstruction Finance Corp.	3,970 "
Total	7,724 million

But only 800 million, or less than seven percent of the total will be "given" to the unemployed through the agency of the C.W.A.

Priming the pump with so much credit inflation *may* set another artificial boomlet into motion. *If this happens* the new boomlet would cause prices to soar another 20 or 30 percent. This increase in the cost of living would still further diminish the worker's real wages, frozen as they are at the present 10 to 15 dollar N.R.A. levels. Speculation in anticipation of more inflation will cause overproduction, and the piling up of unsold stocks. Since the purchasing power of the masses will not be increased to any considerable extent, the gap between production and market capacity will widen until a collapse, far greater than that of the summer of 1933, will occur. The artificial boomlet will stimulate the growth of mergers, increase the misery of the workers, and accelerate the pauperization of the middle class. A greater inflationary dose would then be on the order of the day.

Whether or not the boomlet takes place, the financial measures of the government, alone, will inevitably lead to greater inflation. The inflationary process will be speeded up by the capitalists themselves. Having concentrated their control of industry with the aid of the

government loans and subsidies, they will demand more inflation in order to pay their debts with worthless paper. The final stage of runaway inflation will eventually be reached, and the workers, farmers and lower middle class will be bled dry. Such a program will involve fascist controls to execute it, to canalize rising protest into capitalist channels, and to fight the radicalization of the working class. And the road to fascism is also the road to imperialist war.

For among the goals of the new deal is a ruthless drive to capture foreign markets in a world whose trade has shrunk to 40 percent of its 1929 total. The depreciated dollar only slightly increased American exports. Behind two significant events that took place last week is the desperate need for markets. The Rockefellers are financing "An Inquiry on National Policy and International Economic Relations." Roosevelt has given the project his blessing, and we can look forward to an "impartial and scientific" survey. Of more practical importance at the moment, was the report in the New York Times of January 7, that "plans for using reciprocal trade treaties and the N.R.A. as instruments in combatting Japanese competition, *both in this country and in foreign markets*" were being perfected.

Since all the imperialist countries protect their trade by special agreements, depreciated currencies, etc., it will be brute force, in the final analysis, that will enable an imperialist power to capture a new market. Unless the imperialists can come to some agreement for a common attack against the Soviet Union, new wars will break out, as the United States attempts to drive England and Japan out of the South American and Asiatic markets.

Professor Sprague has warned the ruling class that failing solution of the crisis, the final breakdown of American capitalism may come two years from now. Aware of the gravity of the situation, the bourgeoisie are pushing ahead with a program of inflation, that leads directly to fascism and war. A year of decisive class battles lies ahead of the American working class and its allies. Whether they will be able to score large victories in their fight against hunger, fascism and war, rests to a large degree in the hands of every class-conscious worker, farmer, and intellectual. The immediate fate of the world will depend upon the kind of fight they put up under the leadership of the Communist Party.

The Hundred Greediest Cases

BILL SMITH

READER, are you willing to help those more fortunate than yourself? Then give generously to this great fund which is used exclusively for America's greediest cases — once upright and respected, they now seek your aid. Every penny you contribute will go directly into their pockets. Not even Federal relief is as important as your hand-to-mouth giving:

Previously acknowledged..	\$198,043,879,010.49
This week's contributors:	
R.F.C.	373,000,000.00
Dividends	198,584,280.00
Interest	87,432,000.00
<hr/>	
Total.....	\$198,702,913,290.49

A Bewildered Manufacturer

CASE 67

HENRY F.

Tall and dignified, he makes automobiles for a living, but now so many people imagine they can't afford one that he is having a desperate time. Yet he is surprisingly cheerful under adversity and keeps hoping that things will take a turn for the better. He has old-fashioned ideas of thrift and hard work and loves to keep open shop. His son Edsel does all he can to lighten his father's burdens, but they need at least fifty millions to get through comfortably and meet their income taxes.

ment almost impossible. Yet he is eager to remain self-supporting and will gladly make use of any trifle he can get his hands on. Send him your left-overs. And remember—nothing is too small—Walter will stretch it to fit.

Ex-Treasurer's Tragedy

CASE 30

ANDREW M.

He has been out of a job since March 4th. Accustomed to play with huge sums, friends say he is at a loss and can find almost no one to do. Very quiet about his family affairs, he putters among a few banks and takes a little watered stock occasionally. Send along your pennies and dimes—he needs at least 75 million yearly to make him happy.

Banker's Dilemma

CASE 66

ALBERT W.

Once the respected head of a nice little syndicate, he is now under a cloud. Albert and his family have only about 900,000 shares of Chase-National between them! Your dimes and dollars are what he needs to carry him through this pitiable period of hardship. Anything you can do to help support him will be taken for granted. With good luck, he can get right back where he was before.

A Senator's Despair

CASE 11

JOSEPH R.

He is a soft-spoken Arkansas lawyer who hardly knows which way to turn. He would like to help others, but he has dependents at home, pitiful public utilities, and naturally they come first. Cares nothing for money himself, just wants the niceties and a sense of security. He needs a few old platitudes for rough wear.

Rail King's Anguish

CASE 99

GEN. WM. A.

This lovable old chairman is paralyzed from the neck up and his Pennsylvania system only pays fifty cents a share! He has suffered two fearful salary cuts that exposed his inner works horribly. Thrown on his own, he couldn't earn a dime, so Uncle Sam has just lent him 77 millions for electric treatments. In spite of all his troubles, the General is still a great story teller. Needs about a hundred million to get on his feet again.

These are only a few cases out of our files—thousands just as worthy *must* have your support if they are to be built up once more into happy, useful leaders. In 1931 we provided 534 cases with over 30 billion dollars—they will need at least as much this year.

College President's Vain Struggle

CASE 23

NICHOLAS B.

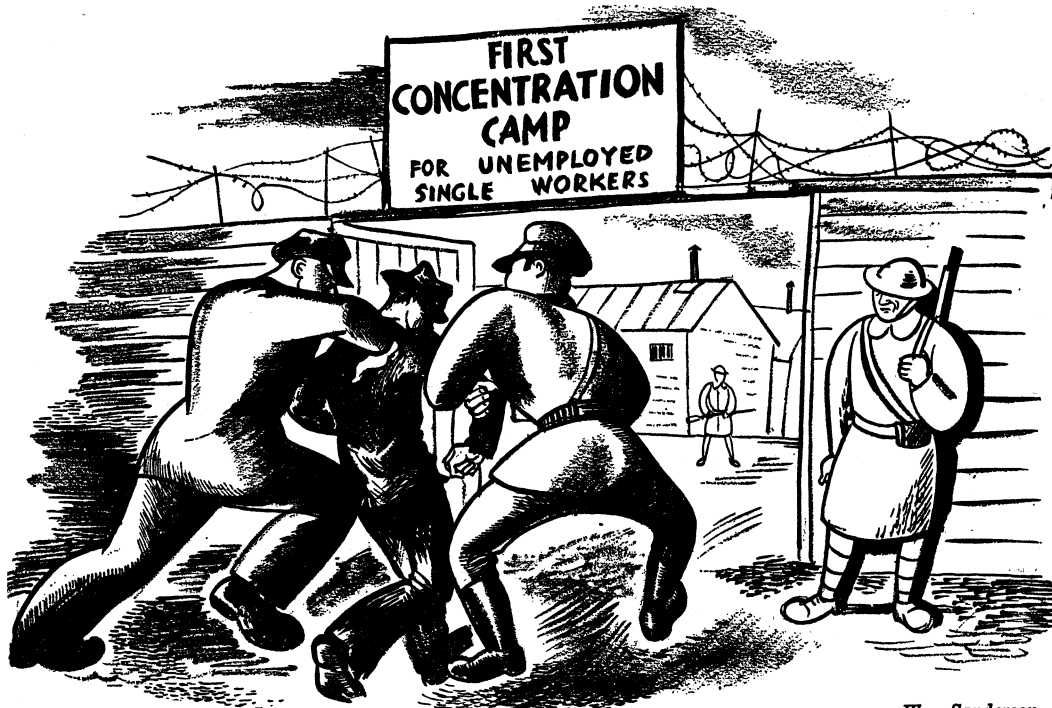
Past 70 and still in full control of his faculties, Nicholas is beset by many problems connected with the profit system. Wonderfully endowed, he can split hairs and carry water on both shoulders, but even so he gets less than 12 million a year to run on. What he needs most of all is protection from radical brainstorms and a pair of rose colored glasses for home work.

Columnist's Brave Fight

CASE 17

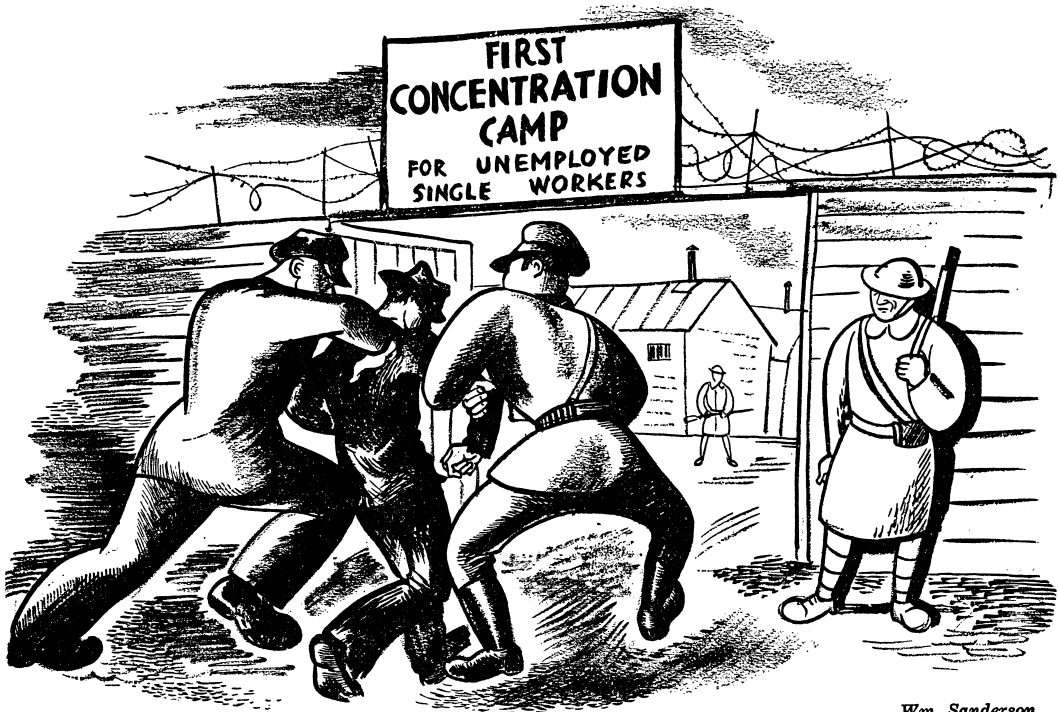
WALTER L.

Walter is suffering from show blindness, caused by looking on the bright side. Fitted by education and early training for social work, his recent malady makes honest employ-



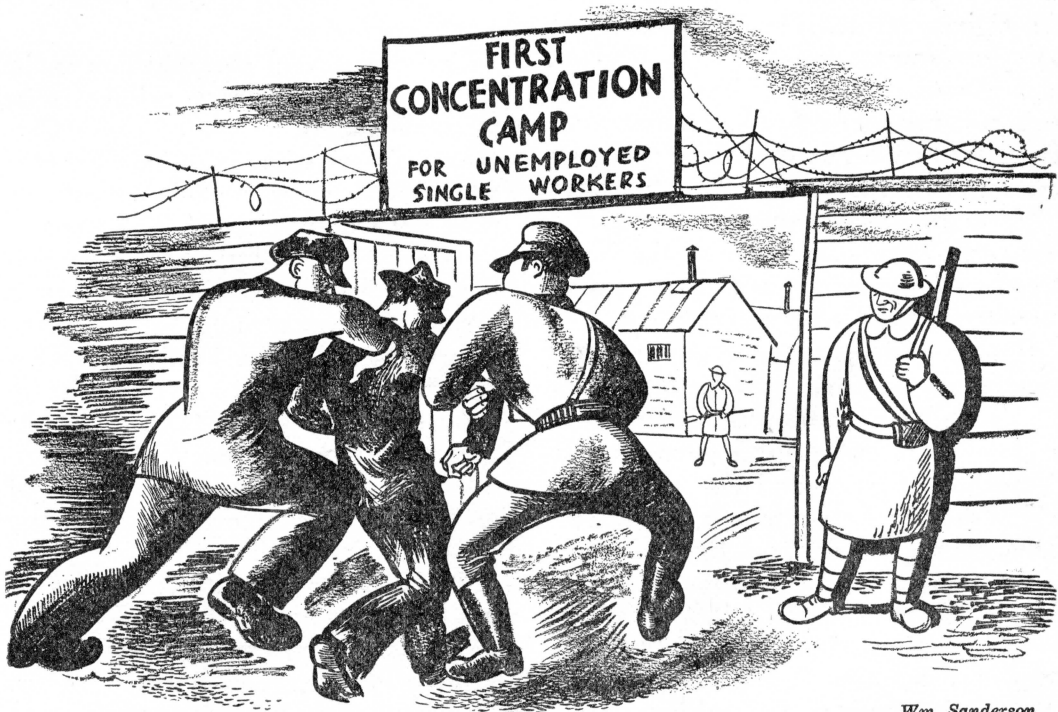
"WE'RE KEEPIN' YOU OUT O' TROUBLE, SEE?"

Wm. Sanderson



Wm. Sanderson

"WE'RE KEEPIN' YOU OUT O' TROUBLE, SEE?"



Wm. Sanderson

"WE'RE KEEPIN' YOU OUT O' TROUBLE, SEE?"

The War Lords Go "Left"

C. FRANK GLASS

SHANGHAI.

THE LATEST separatist movement in China, in Fukien province, where the generals of the Nineteenth Route Army have set up a "People's Provisional Government" in opposition to the Nanking government controlled by Chiang Kai-shek, demonstrates once again the utter inability of the Chinese ruling class to establish even a semblance of national unity. It marks a continuance under new historical conditions of the era of internecine strife which was ushered in by the fall of the Manchu Dynasty and the founding of the Republic in 1911. In a period of accelerated economic decline and bold imperialist aggression, the ranks of the Chinese bourgeois-landlord class, and their military representatives, are riven with dissension.

The new government was proclaimed at Foochow, the provincial capital and an important seaport, on November 20 last. The same day a declaration of the "Rights of the People" was issued. It vested supreme authority in a "National Convention of peasants, workers, students, merchants and soldiers" and outlined a radical program which includes the stamping out of all militarists, mandarins, gentry and landlords. Moreover it grants to the people freedom of residence, speech, publication, assembly and the right to strike. The chairman of the new government is General Li Chi-sen, a Cantonese. General Tsai Ting-kai, field-commander of the Nineteenth Route Army, heads the Military Council, while Mr. Eugene Chen is minister of foreign affairs. Generals Chen Ming-shu and Chiang Kwang-nai of the Nineteenth Route Army are also leading members of the rebel government.

The radical character of the program announced—radical especially because in China, under the bourgeois Kuomintang regime, there exists not a semblance of democratic rights—and the agreement which the rebel government has reportedly entered into with the Red armies in the province, are the purest demagogy. The rebel leaders have felt it necessary to clothe themselves with democratic trappings in order to appease a sorely-oppressed populace and soldiery, provide a basis for popular appeal, and at

the same time further discredit and weaken the open and brutally autocratic Kuomintang regime at Nanking. But it is already clear that for the accomplishment of their purpose—the overthrow of the Nanking government—the rebels intend to rely principally and above all on combinations and alliances with disgruntled warlords and politicians outside their present domain. They are dickering with the Cantonese politicians and warlords and with the Kwangsi generals, and doubtless would welcome support from the northern generals, Yen Hsi-shan, Feng Yu-hsiang and Han Fu-chu.

So far the rebels have met with no success in winning allies, mainly for the reason that possible allies are by no means convinced that the rebels really intend to overthrow the Nanking government, and because—what is more important—they doubt the rebels' ability to do it. Moreover, they consider a radical program a dangerous thing to play with. The masses might take it seriously and of their own accord commence stamping out the militarists, mandarins, gentry and landlords. Taking all the facts into consideration, the outcome of the Fukien rebellion will probably be an agreement between the rebels and Nanking. If no agreement can be arrived at, however, and if the rebels fail to secure allies, Nanking will be able to crush the movement by main force as it has threatened to do.

The mainstay of the rebellion is the Nineteenth Route Army, whose ranks still very largely consist of those Cantonese soldiers who defended Shanghai against the Japanese imperialist invasion at the beginning of 1932. The story of this brave force is little known outside China, but it has an obviously important bearing on the present rebellion in Fukien province. In 1932, the Nineteenth Route Army was threatened with physical destruction at the hands of the Japanese invaders. Today it is threatened with annihilation by the troops of the Nanking government with Chiang Kai-shek at its head.

The Nineteenth Route Army has always been the personal force of its commanding staff and their political representatives, who have used it for the furtherance of their personal ambitions as represented by their factional struggles

against Chiang Kai-shek and Nanking. Thus at the end of 1931, when the Cantonese politicians, including General Chen Ming-shu (then commander of the Army) took over control of the Nanking government at the time of Chiang Kai-shek's brief retirement from the scene, the Army was taken from Kiangsi where it had been campaigning against the Red armies and quartered at Shanghai and along the Shanghai-Nanking Railway to guarantee the security of the new ruling clique. But Chiang, with Machiavellian cunning, secretly sabotaged the new government and made it impossible for the Cantonese politicians to function. Having done this, he emerged from his "retirement" and returned to Nanking to "save the country." The Cantonese clique had to get out or be thrown out. Chiang issued orders for the transfer of the Nineteenth Route Army and, if necessary, its forcible disarming.

But at the end of January, 1932, before these orders could be carried out, the Japanese invaded Shanghai, and for the ensuing five weeks the 30,000 soldiers of the Nineteenth Route Army, plus 12,000 Nanking troops, held at bay a Nipponese force armed with all the diverse machinery of modern warfare. They were pitted against an enemy better fed, better clothed, better armed. In addition to this disadvantage they were the victims of treachery. Their commanders were not interested in national defense against an imperialist invader. Above all they were interested in preserving their forces for future factional struggles against Chiang Kai-shek. They considered it a misfortune that their army was compelled, by the circumstance that it happened to be on the spot, to spend itself in a task of national defense. Chiang Kai-shek, on the other hand, considered this an extremely fortunate circumstance.

It was Chiang's secret hope, once hostilities had commenced, that the Japanese would succeed in utterly annihilating the army of his rivals and with it whatever influence they possessed. He did everything possible to ensure this result. Neither Chiang nor anyone else, however, knew beforehand that the Nineteenth Route Army would fight. Chang Hsueh-liang had surrendered his

whole Manchurian empire to Japanese imperialism without firing a shot in its defense. The Nanking government itself was following a policy of non-resistance and capitulation in regard to the Japanese invasion. But the unexpected happened. Chinese soldiers, accustomed only to fighting against poorly-armed peasants, stood up to a foreign invader and engaged for five weeks in a struggle of epic heroism.

Immediately preceding the outbreak of hostilities, Chiang Kai-shek sent a regiment of military police from Nanking to Shanghai to replace a Nineteenth Route Army unit holding a strategic position, so as to ensure an easy entry for the Japanese invaders. But they arrived amid a hail of bullets. The fighting had already begun. From that moment, Chiang deliberately plotted the destruction of the Nineteenth Route Army. He issued one of his memorable circular telegrams: "I am ready to die for my country and am awaiting the order of the government to fight." But for "strategic reasons," instead of ordering Chiang to fight, the government—i.e., Chiang himself and Wang Ching-wei—removed the capital from Nanking to Loyang several hundred miles away from the scene of military operations. The move was made, Wang Ching-wei announced, "in order better to resist Japanese aggression." No aid of any kind was given to the troops defending Shanghai. Chiang and his cohorts placed their factional struggle against the dissident elements represented by the Nineteenth Route Army above and before the interests of national defense.

The crucial moment in the Shanghai hostilities was reached on February 18, the date of the arrival of fresh Japanese reinforcements, the Ninth Division under General Uyeda. The Chinese lines, battered and fearfully weak in spots, had been steadfastly defended for three weeks and remained unbroken. The arrival of General Uyeda brought Japan's forces in the field up to 40,000 troops and marines, supplemented by several squadrons of bombing planes, 50 tanks, some 40 warships and hundreds of artillery pieces. Against this formidable array the 42,000 Chinese defenders were able to bring only rifles, machine-guns, trench-mortars and hand-grenades.

General Uyeda issued his ultimatum to the Chinese forces—not to the Nanking government—ordering them to withdraw to a line twelve miles distant from Shanghai, threatening a large-scale offensive if they did not comply. Neither

at this time nor later did Chiang Kai-shek and his government send any reinforcements, arms, munitions or supplies to aid the Chinese defenders, although they were sorely needed. Chiang kept an entire artillery brigade on the Tientsin-Pukow Railway far from the scene of the fighting and his personal fleet of some half dozen Junker fighting planes he kept hidden in an unknown spot. A number of Chiang's generals repeatedly urged that the marching order be given. They were consistently told to wait. Chiang maintained this "neutral" attitude when General Uyeda started his big push, when the Japanese launched their systematic air attacks, and throughout the whole period of the fighting.

The first indication that the Chinese defense was crumbling under the terrifying Japanese assaults came when the

Nanking troops, holding the Kiangwan sector, beat a retreat. The Nineteenth Route Army soldiers pushed them back from the rear, not hesitating to use machine-guns to do so, and saved the day by a narrow margin. But retreat and final defeat was in all the circumstances inevitable. It was no accident that the first breach in the Chinese line was made near Liuho, a sector held not by Nineteenth Route Army men but by Nanking troops.

On the evening of March 1, General Tsai Ting-kai gave the order to retreat. No aid was coming from Nanking, not even money to pay the soldiers, who had received no pay for five months. A full third of the Nineteenth Route Army had been annihilated. General Tsai Ting-kai and his confreres wanted to preserve what was left as a weapon for



COMMUNIST PRISONERS BEFORE THE WAR LORDS

Myra Morrow



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future factional struggles against Chiang Kai-shek and Nanking. But the order to retreat met with flat refusal. The soldiers, taking seriously their task of national defense, had pledged themselves to fight to the last man. They meant it. Scores of soldiers were shot as traitors because they wanted to continue the fight.

The heroism of the Nineteenth Route Army aroused tremendous sentiment among the civilian population at the rear, which in various ways organized substantial aid for the defense. One of the foremost organizations supporting the fight from the rear was the Masses' Anti-Japanese Federation, which included strike committees of workers from Japanese-owned cotton mills, student unions, writers, newspapermen, nurses and some physicians. The Federation was among the first organizations to open hospitals for the care of the wounded. Hundreds of its members, principally factory workers on strike, volunteered as soldiers and carriers in the army to replace men killed in battle. Some of these volunteers were among the men who held Woosung Forts to the very last, until surrounded by Japanese troops and completely annihilated.

The conflict between the bourgeois-feudal leadership of the Nineteenth Route Army and the rank-and-file soldiers was brought sharply to the fore not only in the heat of battle on the front lines, but even more sharply at the rear, both during and after the fighting, by the arrest, beating and murder of wounded soldiers and civilian helpers. These incidents were an extension of the conflict which first became obvious when officers shot down men defying the order to retreat. Wounded soldiers were dragged from the hospitals and executed for demanding payment of their wages, a share of the \$3,000,000 contributed to the Nineteenth Route Army by patriotic Chinese at home and abroad—a sum never yet accounted for—and compensation for the disabled and dependents of the dead. Young Chinese revolutionaries, members of the Masses' Anti-Japanese Federation, who carried on propaganda among wounded soldiers, were arrested and murdered. News of these happenings led to demonstrations of protest among wounded soldiers in several hospitals. In each instance savage repressions were visited upon the demonstrators.

The rank-and-file soldiers of the Nineteenth Route Army emerged from the

Shanghai fighting with a deep-seated hatred of both their own commanders and the regime of Chiang Kai-shek. The commanders themselves nursed a more bitter hatred of Chiang than ever. But Chiang carried through the plan which the Japanese invasion of Shanghai had interrupted. More than before he wanted the Nineteenth Route Army out of the way. It was the army of his rivals. It had proven itself "unreliable" in the fighting by defying orders to retreat before the Japanese. There had been found in its ranks discontented elements believed to have been "contaminated" in earlier contacts with the Red armies in Kiangsi. It would be risky to have such an army quartered near Shanghai's industrial area.

Chiang ordered the Nineteenth Route Army to remove to Fukien, to engage in a fresh campaign against the Red armies. Its commanders had no option but to comply. They filled up their decimated ranks with poverty-stricken peasants from Hunan and neighboring provinces and departed. The Army was to support itself from provincial taxation, supplemented by a monthly subsidy from the Nanking government. Later, Nanking passed responsibility for payment of the subsidy to Canton. But after last June the Army received funds neither from Nanking nor Canton, and despite the perpetual levying of fresh taxes the provincial revenues of Fukien were insufficient to maintain the Army. The soldiers again received no pay and this led to the open disaffection of several units. They refused to fight. Some soldiers deserted to the Red armies.

It was this state of affairs which precipitated the establishment of the rebel government in Fukien. Fearing, with good reason, a spread of disaffection in the ranks with the consequent loss of their force, the generals of the Nineteenth Route Army, who had succeeded in bringing practically the entire province of Fukien under their control, decided to make a bold move to break their provincial confinement and, if possible, make themselves masters of the country.

But the soldiers of the Nineteenth Route Army, betrayed, repressed, deprived of all human rights, will never again be a dependable force for reactionary purposes. They have nothing in common with the aims of their generals, whom they detest with a bitter hatred. Nor will they be deceived by the radical program given out at Foochow. These peasant soldiers have learned some of

the most important lessons. Sent against their fellow-peasants in the Red armies of Kiangsi, they learned that the masses of the population avoided them like the plague and helped the Red armies. Throughout the Kiangsi campaigns they were surrounded by millions of enemies—the whole population—who spied upon them, did propaganda work among them. Many were astounded. They had been told the Reds were bandits. Those upon whom the light of understanding dawned deserted to the Red armies. The anti-Red campaigns failed one after another.

The Japanese invaded Shanghai. The soldiers suddenly learned that the whole population was back of them, just as the people of Kiangsi supported the Reds. Wounded soldiers in Shanghai hospitals repeated a thousand times—and I have heard these statements made—"We realize now that fighting the Reds was fighting *against* the people, while here in Shanghai we have been fighting *for* the people."

It is soldiers with thoughts such as these who constitute the military arm of the Fukien rebellion. Herein lies, perhaps, the rebels' principal weakness. Even if the rebellion dissolves or is crushed, similar movements will inevitably succeed it, until that day when the helm in Chinese affairs is grasped by the firm hand of the revolutionary proletariat.

RED MESSENGERS

There were six men,
A moon, and a dusty road.

There were stars, too;
But giant trees held a somber canopy
Against the sky and only liquid of the moon
Soaked through.

The road was a thread of dust
Snarled against the side of a blade-like hill.

They walked neither fast nor slow,
They moved in the shadowed night
Like giants in a trembling wind.

On the backs of the men were books,
In the hearts of the men was fire,
On the tongues of the men
Were live words of revolution.

Beyond the blade-like hill
Lay the valley of toil and despair,
And six men bearing words of revolt
Moved towards the valley in the shadowed
night
Like giants in a trembling wind.

JIM WATERS.

A Story That Got Lost

ERSKINE CALDWELL

"If a white man is murdered, telegraph it in; if a Negro is murdered, mail it in." This is the newspaper code in Georgia. Erskine Caldwell's exclusive story below came to the New Masses by wire; and we have asked him to follow it up with a longer one for next week.

AUGUSTA, GA.

THE DISCOVERY of the mutilated bodies of two Negroes near Bartow, Georgia, last week, unreported in the daily press, has revealed a reign of mob rule that in a month's time has cost the lives of three Negroes and the suspected deaths of two others. The dead are Ernest Bell, Will Walker, and an unidentified Negro. At least five others have been severely beaten and fourteen houses have been burned.

The body of Ernest Bell was found in a well, where he had been thrown after his body was mutilated. The body of the unidentified man was found in a fallow field with numerous bullets in the head and with the throat cut. Walker died in an Augusta hospital after being fatally injured by a Bartow policeman. According to a coroner's jury, the other two men were killed by parties unknown.

Sam Outlaw and Blevin Williams, Negroes of Bartow, are now being held in the Jefferson County jail in Louisville by Sheriff J. J. Smith to prevent threatened lynching.

There is a persistent report locally that two other men, both Negroes, have been lynched and their bodies thrown into a creek near Bartow. Sheriff Smith states that he has been unable to find the bodies. C. S. Bryant, a well-known farmer living in the vicinity of Bartow, was threatened by the mob when he attempted to remove Will Walker to the hospital. Bryant appealed to Sheriff Smith and two days after being wounded Walker was taken to Augusta, where he died the following day. When the body of Walker was brought back to Jefferson County, Sheriff Smith placed it in the county jail for safekeeping. Members of the Bartow mob came to Louisville and demanded that they be allowed to see the body. Sheriff Smith states that when he was convinced that the members of the mob merely wished to identify it as being that of Will Walker, he al-

lowed them to view it. The spokesman for the mob stated that they made the trip to the jail for the purpose of assuring themselves that Walker was dead.

According to Sheriff Smith no action will be taken against members of the mob unless further lynching takes place because no white man can be found who will testify against members of a mob in a case involving Negroes. He points to the action of the coroner's jury which investigated the cases of the deaths of three men, and which returned the verdict usual in such cases locally—"Death at the hand of parties unknown." Sheriff Smith has promised to appeal to the Governor of the state for militia to protect the lives of those Negroes in Bartow who are alive today, if he thinks additional lynching will take place. At the present time, however, there can be found no evidence to show that the mob intends to cease activities.

The fact that no arrests have been made has been explained here as being due to the conditions that make it extremely difficult to convict a white man in a local court on a Negro's word.

This reign of terror which began in Bartow during the early part of December, and which reached its present state

during the first week of January, has spread over Jefferson County. Negroes in all sections of the county express fear for their lives. Feeling has grown intense. Sheriff Smith states that he intends to take Sam Outlaw to the South Carolina state line and release him to flee for his life.

Outlaw cannot at present stand on his feet because of the injuries he received at the hands of the Bartow mob. Local Negroes do not believe that the removal of Outlaw will appease the mob, however, and they feel certain that further lynchings will take place.

The weekly newspapers of this county, in which are located the towns of Bartow, Louisville, Wadley, and Wrens, have made no mention of the deaths of these men. The daily papers of the state have failed to report the actions of the mob, and the news-gathering agencies have made no effort to report the situation to their members in other states. No local correspondents for the dailies can be found who have made reports, perhaps because of a rule in the book of instructions sent to local correspondents by the daily newspapers of Georgia: *"If a white man is murdered, telegraph it in; if a Negro is murdered, mail it in."*

Bartow is a town of four hundred persons, about half of whom are Negroes. It is located in a rich farming and lumbering district. Its institutions for white people consist of a high school and four churches—two Baptist, two Methodist.

The Milk Racket's Sick

CARL HAESSLER

CHICAGO.

LIKE most other branches of capitalist agriculture, the milk business is sick, particularly in the big cities. Suffering from the common ills of the profit system—overproduction, unknown demand, competition from substitutes or alternatives, dwindling purchasing power of the consumer—the dairy racket is ailing in addition from special complications of its own. These include swollen returns to the milk trust, peculiar conditions surrounding the milk wagon drivers' and inside workers' unions, the ins and outs of city health inspections of dairy farms and the ease with which the independent cash-and-carry system, if protected from big business violence, can make inroads on the

highly artificial distributing structure of the trust.

The Chicago milk strike, which broke out in a blaze of violence Jan. 7 and "officially" ended Jan. 10 with the underlying issues unsettled, is only the latest of many bloody and fiery outbursts in the hundred mile radius that constitutes the city's so-called milkshed. The area comprises 26 counties in three states—Illinois, Wisconsin and Indiana. Four big milk companies—Bowman, Borden, Wieland and Wanzer—dominate the distribution to consumers. The Pure Milk Association with 18,000 farmer members dominates the production end. In addition, there are hosts of marginal distributors that have developed in the last three years into a for-

midable menace to the trustified established machinery. As was to be expected, the long depression has worked havoc in the milk business as everywhere else.

Now the strike is over. Nothing fundamental has been settled. Three men will fix producers' prices and create machinery to sell to distributors.

In the years when wheat, corn, hogs, fruit and vegetables brought good prices on the market many farmers, even in the Chicago dairy belt, raised these crops as well as investing time and money into milk production. At that time the Pure Milk Association set up a sort of milk production quota for its members, involving a uniform output throughout the year and fixing the maximum output any member could produce for the Chicago market. In 1930 when the question of surplus milk was becoming sharp as unemployment and wage slashing reduced milk consumption in wage-earners' meagre homes the association closed its books, that is, refused to take in any new members. The following years as the surplus problem became still more acute it opened a fancy cheese factory west of Chicago to absorb the ruinous flow of excess milk. This milk could easily have been sold in Chicago—but not at the price fixed by the milk trust.

Reduced consumption because of city poverty and increased pressure on the milk market because the bottom was dropping out of the market for other farm products, set the stage for the spectacular struggles that have just culminated in train robberies, sinking of milk trucks in streams, dosing of milk with kerosene and other spoiling materials, shootings, burnings, beatings, wrecking of dairy machinery, bombing of non-trust plants and distributing centers.

There will be no settlement of the intermittently flaring milk disturbances until farmers get higher prices for their milk and city consumers pay less.

The 11c a quart set by the Agricultural Adjustment Administration code for consumers in Chicago was not a "fair" price. Nor was the \$1.45 per 100 pounds (about 4c a quart) offered to the farmers by the trust fair to them.

At the A.A.A. hearing in Chicago, the end of November, independent dealers testified that they were making more than the trust paid and charging the consumer less, but on a cash-and-carry basis. One independent, who did not himself retail, but sold wholesale to groceries and other retailers, testified that after figuring in all overhead and usual

costs of all sorts he could sell to the retailer at less than 5c a quart, cash-and-carry. If he delivered to the retailer he would have to get 5.8c a quart to break even. Actually he got 7c a quart, the retailer charging consumers 9c. The independent was making a profit on his original \$10,000 investment of 500 percent a year and on his present investment of \$100,000 from plowed-back earnings of 50 percent a year.

What profits the trust has been making are still a secret, though the government recently audited the books of both the trust firms and of the Pure Milk Association.

The trust has also made it appear that the drivers' union wage scale of \$40 a week was responsible for the high Chicago prices. It constantly exaggerated the labor cost in its statement to the public. So did the Pure Milk Association. The facts are that the union (an A.F. of L. organization), while run in a highhanded manner by Steve Sumner and his associates, who get enormous salaries and are, some of them, holding life jobs, is obtaining only a modest wage for its members, judged by American standards and the nature of their work. The real racketeers are much higher up.

Unemployment among union members has also been a complicating factor. As milk consumption fell and fell on their routes because the family purses were drying up, the milkdriver's sales failed to justify his weekly wage. He was laid off. Routes were combined. He could go on the union's relief list or he could—and sometimes did—enter into direct competition with the trust that had cut him off from his job. He owed no loyalty to the trust that had fired him. He had many friends among his old customers. So he bought himself a delivery car, painted it white, went to an independent distributor and soon was underselling the trust.

Partly because of this and partly because of the artificially high price maintained by the trust in the Chicago market the door was thrown wide open for independent competition, both in wholesale distribution and retail selling. Independents sold at 9c and even 8c, while the trust sold at 11c.

An obscure phase of the entire Chicago situation, paralleled also in the Philadelphia milkshed, is the real relation of the Pure Milk Association to the trust. Alderman Sutton of Chicago has stated for publication that the strike which has just ended was a frame-up

between the association and the trust.

"I think this strike is for the purpose of killing independent dealers," he said. "I think it is evident that the large dairies and the Pure Milk Association are working for that purpose."

Supporting that view, which is hotly denied by the men running the association, is the fact that the trust made no attempt to distribute milk except to hospitals and schools, as permitted by the association. The trust's drivers have been caught by the police in acts of violence against independent plants and their employees. The greatest number of arrests are of drivers of the Bowman firm, largest component of the trust. They were all union men.

Another supporting fact is that the association in large advertisements in the daily press, entitled "The Milk Strike—How it Happened and How it Can be Settled," openly declares:

"Two spontaneous strikes broke out in the Chicago milkshed this year. Both were quelled by us, without help."

Persistent efforts to find out from the public relations officer of the association just how the strikes had been quelled brought forth no definite answer. Part of the answer may be found in the circumstance that those earlier strikes were put down by a great show of force by sheriff's deputies and police while this strike has seen very little activity on the part of the law until a federal injunction was issued on the third day of the strike.

The same advertisement bears further testimony to possible collusion between the officers of the Pure Milk Association and the trust in its leading demand for settlement, reading: "We only ask that one fair price be paid by all milk distributors to all milk producers."

As a fair price would require maintenance of a quota system which would probably freeze out those supplying the independents, the association probably figures that its elaborate quota structure, supported by the trust, would go on.

The dairy farmers are getting the worst of it. Their association officials have more than comfortable salaries. The trust is making rich profits. The consumer is paying higher prices and drinking less milk than need be.

In the future lies the breakdown of capitalist individualist farming with the institution, as in the Soviet Union, of collective and then state farming, the farm workers as much proletarians as the city workers and all sharing in the steadily increasing living standards when capitalism is wiped out.





Miner's

A SHORT STORY

Funer

BY EMERY I

DURING THE trip we spoke about Pete Bly, the miner whose funeral we were heading for, so that I would know what to say about him at the grave. . . .

Pete thought he was a big shot when he was young because there are few miner families where even the grandfather was a native. Young Pete's father kept boasting that a member of the Bly family was one of Washington's generals until Pete, too, took on a superior air towards the other, mostly immigrant, miners. In the poolrooms he hung out with the state troopers and the chain storekeeper.

But General or not, a rock in the mine hit old man Bly, and crushed his chest. That was when Pete first made his famous statement, which he repeated as often as ten times a day while he sweated in the mine or in the saloon: "I, Pete Bly, do not want a miner's funeral." And every day he went down the mine, he said that it would be just a few times more.

When one sees his father's bloody crushed face, and from his flattened chest two broken ribs sticking out of the greasy, coal-dusty clothes as if they were cigar ends in his vest pocket, one gets to hate the mine.

Pete's urine was not clear and they didn't take him on as a state trooper. Besides, his widowed mother and the Bly family house tied him to the place. Later he married. "There is nothing for a miner to enjoy except a wife and whiskey," he said. So it was that Pete stayed.

"But then, why is it strange that Pete should get a miner's funeral?"

He married the prettiest and most popular girl around the place, a Slav miner's daughter. Pete became a Catholic for the girl's sake, though by that he lost the friendship of the Protestant chain storekeeper. Even those few Polish and Slav miners in his shift who were Catholic, advised him against the Catholic religion. They told him he had better turn to the Socialist faith. They brought him down all kinds of newspapers and books, but Pete did not look at them. He wanted that girl. The Union organizer, who was a friend of the parson and card partner at the par-

ish, became his godfather, his witness, his pal—his everything.

Then this rotten faker, the organizer, every time he visited the place slept at Pete's. And if he was not around, the parson went in and out of the house. She was a rotten woman. "Who does she like better, the union, or the Catholic religion? Since it is certain that she doesn't like mining," the miners asked each other.

The German super called her in to help him out while his wife spent a few summers in Europe. The excuse was that she was cooking for the super's children.

So while the woman became rounder and nicer day by day, Pete, the proud Pete became a broken old miner in five or six years. His kidneys troubled him more and more. His legs became swollen and the damp mine only made his health worse.

But he insisted that he would not die a miner, especially when in the speak-easy, the old General Bly spirit would rise within him. He would clench his fist and slam it down on the table. But, beside that, he did nothing. We knew that Pete was only boasting among us—that at home Pete was very modest, that the woman sent him to bed in the small room before the sun had fully set on Sundays if the organizer or the parson was there.

Children came, one after the other, three of them. All girls. And Pete was sad because he had no son. "Well, what do you expect?" said the people, remembering the visits of the parson. "You can't get pants from two skirts."

Well, then, when the good times were over and the fat pay envelopes that we got after the war got thin, there came talks of strike. The argument was over the check-weighing. The company wanted its own man at the scales and we wanted ours. We belonged to the United Miners' Union then. One fine day, the company gave in, let the man be one whom the Union appointed. Somehow or other Pete was appointed. The miners' wives kicked that it wasn't on the level and that the fat organizer's paw was in it.

But, we said, what the hell—not everybody can be at the scales. Pete,

after all, was one of our men, a union man, a miner since he was a kid, and his father was one of us too. (He won't be so dead tired, maybe he will be able to handle the woman better. And it would do his kidneys good if he didn't have to

dig ten to twelve hours in the mine.) So we agreed right, let Pete be at the scales. We voted for it, by a large margin. Let the affair an official state funeral.

For a while every



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SHORT STORY

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Funeral

BY EMERY BALINT

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right, let Pete be at the scales, and we
voted for it, by a large majority to give
the affair an official stamp.

For a while everything went well.

Pete wired his house for electricity,
painted it inside and out, wall-papered
it. He bought a piano for the girls, and
a big phonograph instead of the little
one.

The pay got less and less, while we
brought up as much coal, or more.

Slowly we began to dislike Pete.

He bought silver for the kitchen and
cut glass bric-a-brac for the china closet.
He became one of the chiefs of the
church through his pull with the parson.
In the evenings the foreman played
cards to the phonograph music at Pete's
house. If the union organizer was down
at the place, he would play German
songs on the piano and sing. Sometimes
they pushed the furniture aside and put
on such a dance until midnight that the
poor tired mining folks around the place
couldn't sleep from the noise.

Then Pete bought two suits for him-
self and he sent the oldest girl into Pitts-
burgh to High School. He wanted to
make a lady out of her.

But all that is not important. The
point is that Pete became a company
man.

An enemy.

The union organizer was an enemy,
too. We knew it, but he was clever. But
Pete was a stupid, silly miner who had
never been out of the place. He betrayed
himself. He didn't dare speak to the
miners. His whole life consisted of the
woman, whiskey and card playing at
home—but only with the foreman, the
parson and the union organizer.

He must have thought that while he
was in it, he would get some money,
educate his daughters, sell his house and
go to Pittsburgh. . . And he would not
die a miner's death.

He didn't come to union meetings any
more. He sent his dues in by his little
girl.

This went on for four or five years.
We could not get rid of Pete. Time
after time they cut our pay—from a dol-
lar fifty to a dollar ten—down all the
way to fifty-five cents and even at that,
Pete short-weighted at the scales. And he
insisted on being not, "Hey, Pete!" but
"Mr. Bly," even by those miners with
whom he used to work under the ground.

Then when the union became so weak

that the big boss saw that he could do
whatever he wanted, he kicked Pete out,
along with the union.

They put another man, at less pay, on
the scales and said to Pete, if he wanted
to, he could go back to the pick again,
but only on open shop basis. Pete looked
for the super, his "friend." He wanted
to speak to him personally, but the super
didn't even let him in his private office.

But no! Mr. Bly would not take a
pick in his hand. He would not go down
in the mine. He would not die a miner's
death. He didn't want a miner's funeral.
It didn't worry him that the mine be-
came open shop, but that, he, Mr. Bly,
was fired!

The money was going. The woman
was grumbling. The oldest girl learned
to dance so well in Pittsburgh that she
became a ten-cent hostess in a dance hall,
and Pete was ashamed whenever she
came home for a few days.

The two younger girls went into the
city to work, and their mother advised
them never to come back, because no
miner would ever marry Pete Bly's
daughters.

And Pete, too, was thinking that he
would leave his wife and his house and
go into Pittsburgh to work in the fac-
tory.

But he stayed. Maybe the woman
held him back. We miners didn't know.
We avoided him like a flea.

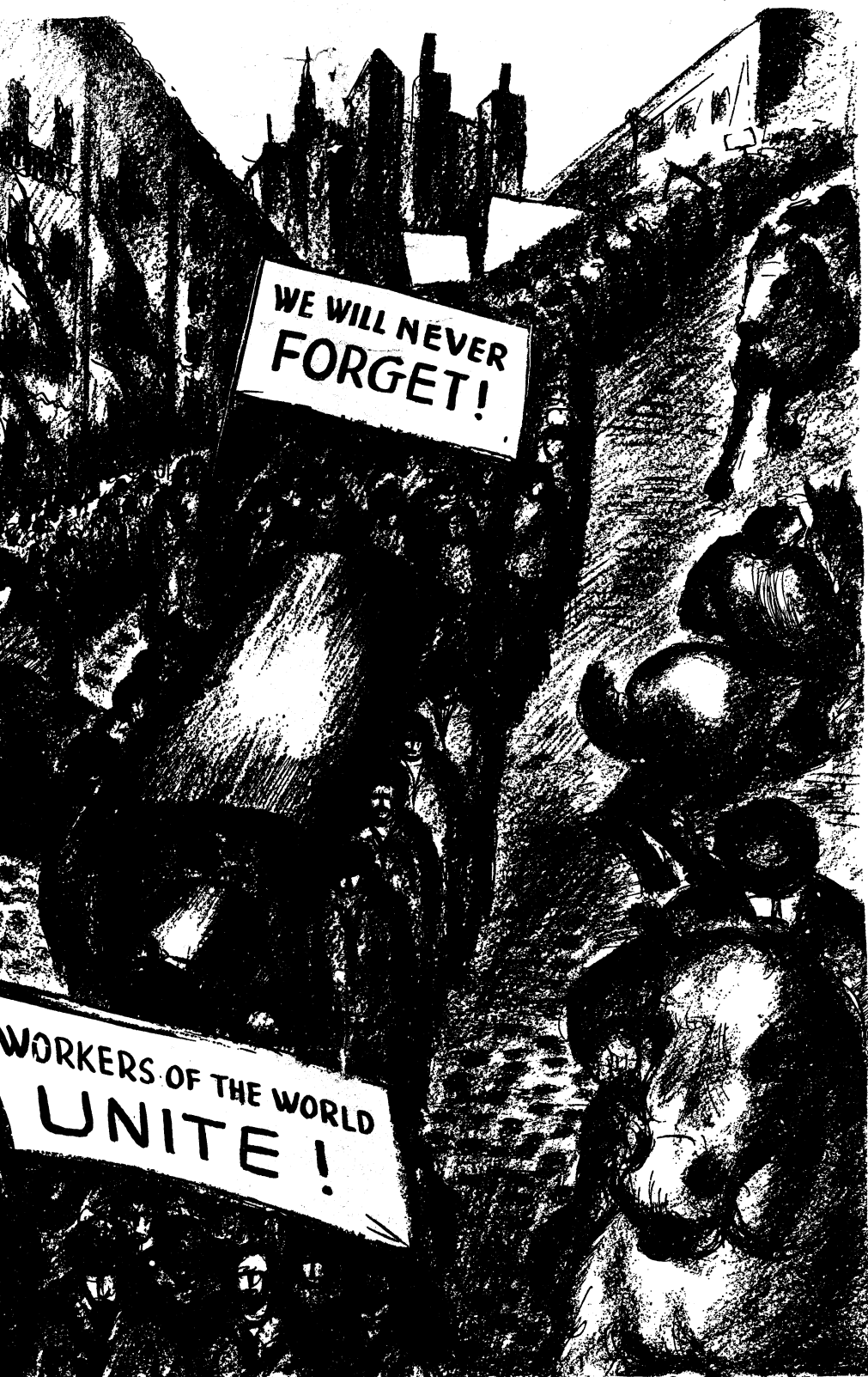
Pete used to go into town and pick
up a few odd jobs here and there. He
helped paint the outside of a house; he
helped a butcher build an ice box. He
stood by the saloon door and waited for
work.

The woman was pretty wrinkled by
now, but the bachelors still went up to
her house on pay day, and there, to the
tune of the old phonograph, they would
enjoy themselves and drink the whiskey
that the woman brewed.

The United Miners' Union was ruin-
ed. And Pete was ruined along with it.
We suffered a great deal. We were
down, but not out! We were beginning
to organize a real union, the National
Miners!

* * * * *

"Well, and Pete still got a miner's
funeral?"



Miner's

Funeral

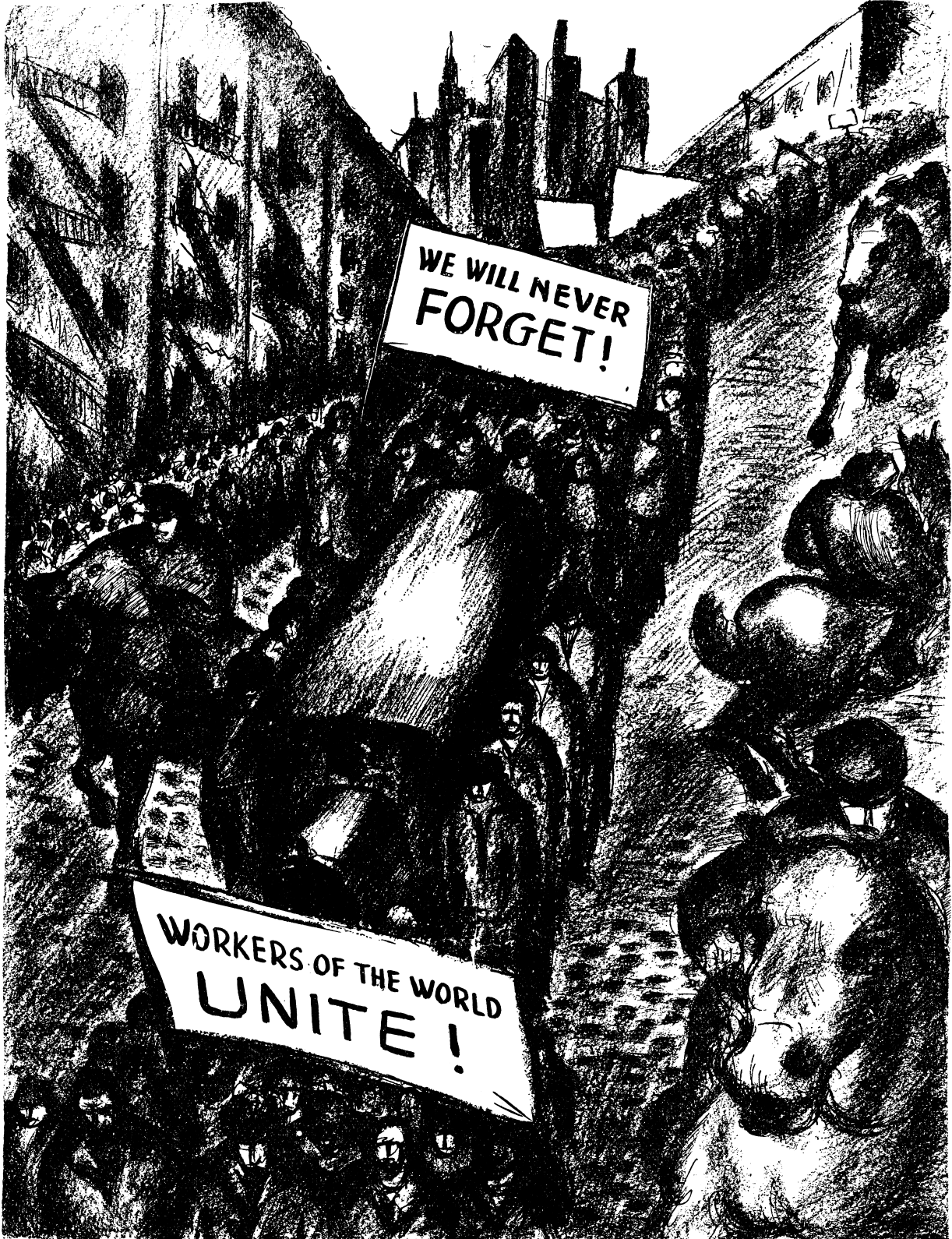
A SHORT STORY

BY EMERY BALINT

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For a while everything went well.



It's about two years ago that our strike began. Our mining place was an especially important concentration point for the National Miners' Union because the company's best mine was here. The miners from four or five other places came here to picket. Even before dawn, flashlights flickered like lightning bugs through the town, on the hills, in the roads. First came the deputies in civilian clothes, the yellow dogs, and they took their places. They signaled to each other with the lamps. The miners met in front of the General Store. They could not go among the houses because they were company property.

But a state road cut through the property. That didn't belong to the company. We were allowed to march there. The miners from the other places met on the edge of the town, and, as it began to dawn, they joined our group. Women, children, Slavs, Negroes, Italians, Hungarians, natives, immigrants, all marched together. When it became light, the picket line started. There usually were from six to eight hundred people. In front of the General Store there were a bunch of troopers. They had left their machine-guns in the trucks. Deputies and gangsters lined the side of the road, one at every fifty feet. They chewed gum or tobacco, a club in one hand and the other on the gun in their pocket. They looked at us scornfully as we passed.

Near-by, the scabs passed us in twos and threes with lunch boxes in their hands and picks on their shoulders. If one of us on the picket line shouted over to them, the nearest yellow dog would rush upon him with his club. In a second, four or five other gangsters landed on him and took him off in a patrol wagon. At such times, the line would pause but only for a moment, because the captains' voices would shout: "Order!" "Keep marching!" "Don't let them provoke us!"

Stones were flying at the pickets from behind a house, and a few of them hit us. The gangsters laughed. Miners and their women with four and five year old children marched silently onward. Four or five times they marched back and forth from the edge of the town to the mine, about a mile each way, and it was not an easy thing to do for the little kids and the hungry men.

Every morning the picket line marched: women, children, miners, Negroes, Italians, Quakers, Catholics, natives, immigrants, side by side in the shadow of

the machine-guns among the yellow dogs, sometimes bombarded with stones.

The miner boys looked at each other. They knew who were throwing the stones. The supers, storekeepers, doctors and a few well-to-do families lived in the town and their children were home from school on vacation.

The few scabs didn't amount to much. Instead of the usual twenty carloads of coal, only four carloads are brought up from the mine. There stand the empty cars on the tracks.—We will win and then we will repay them. Just stick it out!

After the picketing there would be a meeting in front of the relief kitchen.

Then after the meeting, the miners would get into line, with the women and children first, and the coffee would be dished out.

On one cold morning, there was our friend Pete with his hands in his pockets, shivering, ragged, cold. The miners looked at him. Maybe he was spying. Maybe the woman threw him out. Maybe he's hungry and that's why he came among us. This yellow bum wanted to share with us the little food that the workers from the city had sent. The food was sent for those who were striking, and not for yellow traitors like Pete. But Pete didn't mind the angry eyes turned towards him, he just sat down on the damp grass and listened to the speaker.

When one of the speakers, a miner, spoke of how the United Miners had cheated us at the scales, everyone looked back. Pete was nodding his head as if saying to himself, "True, true, that's how it was."

After the meeting, he didn't go to the kitchen for food but slowly walked away.

"Well, now he's going to report to the company," some said. "Let him go if he wants to."

"The company has more than one spy whom we do not suspect. Pete isn't dangerous any more. He's down and out," said Charlie, an old experienced miner.

Next morning, when it was light enough for us to recognize each other, on the picket line, we saw that Pete was marching with us. We let him come. Later the yellow dogs grabbed a young worker out of line just in front of Pete, and they clubbed him so that he collapsed in a pool of blood. Then they hauled the tottering boy to the wagon and roughly threw him in. Pete stopped.

He was not used to scenes like that. He stopped and stared, so that those coming behind him had to shove him forward to his partner. After the picketing, Pete again sat down on the grass and listened to the speakers. When the coffee was passed out, one of his old buddies offered him a tin. He wanted to talk to Pete. But Pete swallowed the coffee, and only answered with a short, "Yep," or "Nope."

One miner said to him sarcastically: "Hey, Mr. Bly, once upon a time there was a union man at the scales, who used to gyp the miners. What happened to him, Mr. Bly?"

Pete nodded and said softly, "Yes, once upon a time."

But the miners didn't hurt Pete. They were sorry for him. He was broken down and that Pete is no longer the old Mr. Bly.

Next morning, in the darkness before dawn, a figure with a pick axe stepped silently into the picket line. Our captain flashed his lamp on him, and we saw that Pete had brought his pick with him. The captain grabbed him by his vest and dragged him out of line.

"What do you want with that pick you damned fool?"

"I know what I want. I'll get that yellow dog this morning, leave it to me."

They dragged Pete out of the line, and ordered him never to set foot in the picket line or in the strikers' camp.

"Agent provocateur!" they said. And they thought that they had exposed and settled Pete for good.

But next morning, it was hardly light when we saw in the distance a miner walking by the side of the road with a pick on his shoulder. He went alone and didn't carry a lunch box.

When he came nearer, we recognized Pete. He went straight to the mine.

Of course he was a company man. The miners exchanged looks and swore.

Pete passed, looking neither right nor left and went in with the other scabs, through the gate, into the mine.

About a quarter of an hour after, a blood curdling yell came from the elevator tower. The marchers stopped, the yellow dogs turned pale, ran together. A few of them ran through the gate towards the tower from which the yells were now becoming fainter. Troopers dashed into the mine on their horses. The picket line broke up. The yellow dogs, frightened, ran behind the fence around the mine and slammed the gate behind them. The pickets climbed up on

the fence, ran up on the mound, from which they could see into the mine, some of them climbed up on the trains loaded with coal so that they could see what was going on around the elevator tower. Men were running around the elevator, in and out, and finally they brought a man out on a stretcher with his face a bloody mess.

We could not recognize his face, but every miner knew that it was Pete lying on the stretcher.

We only found out later what had happened.

Pete reported at the office that he wanted to work. The scabs were standing around the shaft and filing into the elevator. The elevator filled up, but he managed to stay out. No one thought anything of it. He would probably go down on the next trip. When the cog wheel was turning with the chain, Pete grabbed the pick off his shoulder and shouting, "Take that you son of a — scabs!" hurled it at the chain. The wheel stopped, but the pick handle snapped back and landed in Pete's face so that it knocked one of his eyes out.

The elevator stopped somewhere in the middle of the shaft. The scabs heard Pete's blood curdling yell above them. They could not tell what had happened as they hung there between heaven and earth.

They took Pete to the hospital where they operated on his face for months. Finally they sent him back to the woman, all patched up. One eye was missing and he could barely see out of the other. His face was full of scars. His jawbone hurt if he opened his mouth to speak or eat. One of his ears was torn away, and he jerked his shoulders nervously.

The doctors said that one of the bones in his face couldn't knit. It was infected and Pete would not last long.

* * * * *

While Pete had been in the hospital, the woman fixed herself up. One of the rooms she made into a speakeasy. The older girl came home and when she couldn't receive all the guests by herself, she brought two more girls from Pittsburgh. Not only the bachelor miners went there, but thousand dollar cars from out of town stopped in front of the house, and often, the phonograph and piano were playing even in the day time. And so Pete's house became famous.

When Pete, all battered up, came home from the hospital, the woman didn't know what to do with him. The

Catholic priest declared from his pulpit that God had punished Pete because he rose against the company. He said, "He wanted to strike the hand that fed him for years."

After Pete signed the papers that gave the house over to his wife, nobody cared about him any more. If he was hungry, he made himself something to eat or ate the left-overs. He steered clear of the front of the house where the guests came in and the upper floor where the girls' rooms were. He sawed wood slowly, or picked the feathers from a chicken or watched the whiskey still in the cellar. But most of the time he was in the back yard, leaning back in a chair, gazing towards the sky with his bad eye. Maybe he was watching the clouds if he could see that far. Maybe he found happiness in watching their soft forms drift past. Maybe he envied the birds, the flies and the wasps—

Maybe Pete was thinking—

We miners didn't speak to him, we don't know what was in his mind before he died. We would have been ashamed to be seen around the house. Only the bachelors and the Republicans went there. The county seat is five miles away, and the whole town is Republican. Besides we were busy with important things after the strike. The new union could work only in secret, the campaign for union members went slowly too. The miners regarded Pete as if he had died already, they had other things on their minds.

Well, yesterday, the woman sent for us. She said that we should bury Pete because he was a pagan like us. He died without the last rites and the priest would not bury him.

Besides, Pete's last will was—he wrote it down on a piece of paper, "I want a miner's funeral."

The union discussed the matter last night. Pete was not a union man. But, we decided that we would bury him, the band would play too, but the speech must be made by a better speaker than any of us. We could not say anything good about Pete.

So ended the story that my miner comrade told me.

* * * * *

We arrived at N., the mine place, and drove straight to Pete's house where about twenty-five miners were waiting for us already.

The woman had a black dress on and she hurried us nervously. Her face was

over-decorated with make-up and it was evident that she wanted to have the whole thing over with as soon as possible. It spoiled the "business" of the house.

The girl wasn't interested at all. She didn't show herself. Six miners picked up the light soft wood coffin, the eight musician miners got up from the other side of the road, and the procession started.

The woman walked slowly behind the coffin and her lips were moving, perhaps she was praying.

The road was hard and frozen and the roadside was covered with snow. The shale heaps looked like black ice cream with whipped cream poured over them. The miners trumpet blared in the valley and the bass drum beat the slow funeral march and the echoes were thrown back from the mounds all around. People came to their doorways. Many ran back for a coat or a shawl and joined the march when they saw that Pete was getting a miner's funeral.

We listened for the tolling of the knell from the Catholic Church. We were almost in front of the church; the sexton could have seen us long ago, but still he did not sound the knell. So we knew for a fact that Pete, the Catholic Pete, would not even get the tolling of the knell from the Catholic priest—

As we neared the church, we noticed that the woman was becoming nervous, glancing right and left.

Suddenly, she lifted her skirt up to her knees so that it would not be in the way, turned about and without a word ran back, leaving the funeral.

Pete was forsaken on his last trip by those for whom he had forsaken the miners.

At the open grave I spoke of how instructive Pete's life was to the miners. It was an example of *what not to do*, *how the miners must not live*.

Then frozen earthclods knock-knocked on the coffin and we stood with bared heads until the snow and earth had covered poor Pete's coffin.

* * * * *

That evening, at the meeting, someone suggested that Pete's funeral should be put on the order of business. The majority of the miners objected. We haven't time; more important things must be discussed.

And it was true. Pete was buried in the afternoon, and in the evening, nobody cared about the matter any more.

Letters from America

The Sailor and the Envoy

Aboard the S.S. Washington.

Dear Editor:

THE last trip one of the deck stewards said "Two big shots this trip home. The American ambassador to Russia and the Russian ambassador to the United States." The "American ambassador" didn't register on my mind. But the Soviet ambassador, that was different.

In the messroom at noon the news of our noted passengers was broadcast. The reaction was good. The fellows began wisecracking. One said, "When you see him tell him we have a Soviet ambassador aboard here too." They meant the ship's delegate from the Red trade union, the Marine Workers' Industrial Union.

That afternoon in Le Havre, France, Ambassador Troyanovsky came aboard the S. S. Washington. We envied the quartermaster on the gangway. Sailors going around the decks kept asking whether the ambassador was aboard yet. Finally he walked up the gangplank, a short stocky man with dark, roughened but fine-looking face. His shoulders broad and heavy, worker-like. For a day or two he wasn't seen. Reports said he was in his cabin.

New Year's Eve was raining and cold. The strong running tide and the wind coming in through the narrow channel made it difficult for the captain to get the ship turned round. The Irish pilot's boatmen in the small boat waiting for the pilot to come down and be taken from the ship were soaked and blue in the face. The boatmen and one of the sailors were swapping talk. "We got the Soviet ambassador to the States aboard this trip," the sailor said. "Yeah, we know it," from the boatmen. "What do you think about him?" asked the sailor. "Same as you do, or you wouldn't ask such a question. He's all right," said an old Irishman cocking his eye and cracking a smile. The pilot came down and dropped into the small boat. We headed out to sea. It started to rain. My partner and I, both American sailors, were soaked.

When we passed the grand saloon we stopped and looked in at the warm merry-making passengers. "Where's the Soviet ambassador?" my partner asked. I pointed him out. A giddy-looking woman was leaning over a table towards him and snickering. He grinned quietly. A grin it was, all right, no sweet diplomatic smile put on together with the tie and vest.

To the two of us standing out in the rain and cold, and for the rest of the gang, it is just another night, a miserable night.

Amid the hilarity the Soviet ambassador sits quietly. Now and then he grins. Maybe he is thinking of socialist construction and of

how healthy the Moscow workers look. Maybe he thinks of the new life growing in the land he has left behind him.

It is cold standing here. I shiver a bit. Again I look in at Comrade Troyanovsky. Easy to call him Comrade when you are thinking. The stocky little man comes from the U.S.S.R. to the United States representing his country, his class—my class. My mother will be happy when I write her we brought the Soviet ambassador over on my ship. So many more workers will feel like that too.

The cook made a mess of a large salad for the passengers. So for three days we got the salad in our messroom. It was a red and green color and it was immediately named "Soviet Salad." Whenever it appeared on the table everyone was animated, tossing wisecracks as to how the Russian ambassador brought a barrel of the salad aboard with him, but as he was seasick he sent it down to us. All the way across the Atlantic the ambassador was in all our thoughts, all our play, though we seldom saw him. Some of us didn't see him at all.

One old sailor paid a very fine compliment. He said, "The Soviet ambassador has certainly got a fine-looking wife." The old fellow hadn't seen the ambassador the whole trip, but he saw a good-looking woman going along the deck and he felt she must be the ambassador's wife. He felt it would require such a woman to be worthy of him. It happened the ambassador's wife was not aboard ship.

Early Sunday morning in a drizzling rain a tug came alongside us in New York harbor. It was loaded deep in the water with newspaper and newsreel men and men from the broadcasting stations. They rigged up their cameras and microphones on the main deck, covering their equipment with their raincoats.

Ambassador Troyanovsky and Ambassador Bullitt stood in the entrance of the smoking room. The cameras whined. Ambassador Bullitt smiled nervously, puffing at a cigarette. Ambassador Troyanovsky gave a serious, short speech. When he finished his talk the broadcasters asked him to repeat it so that the sound discs could be recorded. Ambassador Bullitt repeated his speech with the identical emphasis and words. Ambassador Troyanovsky was taken back for a moment. He didn't memorize speeches. He said what he knew and what he felt. He made another speech entirely different from the first. He explained that it seemed artificial to repeat the same words like that.

That's all this time. Next trip I'll write about the workers I saw the Nazis shoot down in Hamburg. Maybe I'll tell you how the American sailors are distributing the *Brown Book* in Germany, too. Lots of luck to the

A. B.

South Calls to North

New Orleans.

Dear Editor:

A man could live out his days so dumbly, like many million workingmen, to breathe his last breath on a charity bed in some city hospital. But knowledge and hunger can mount a man with boldness and courage and set him before his fellows to lead them. Then the gentlemen who endow hospitals come to mow him down.

Now they are trying to railroad Albert Gonzales, leader of the Plaquemine Parish trappers to the gallows. Gonzales led the trappers when they fought to get better wages from the fur contractors. The endowers of hospitals haven't forgotten this.

A young scab trapper, Melvin Ledet, received a slight hip wound when someone is supposed to have fired into his father's camp. District Attorney Leander Perez accuses Gonzales of the shooting and charges him with shooting and wounding to commit murder, and lying in wait with a deadly weapon.

Gonzales can prove that he was in a New Orleans garage the night of the shooting. The trappers say the whole rigmarole is an attempt to destroy the Trapper's Union. At first Judge Claude Meraux at Pointe a la Hache denied bail and indicted Gonzales for capital offenses.

But now he has won a temporary liberty on a bond of \$10,000. We have learned painful lessons and we know from the past that the contractors, working through the government, will make every attempt to destroy his life. We workers must not let them. You in the North must help. The endowers must know that a million men on a continent stand guard, defending their own.

PETER SANCHEZ.

Klan Meets a Check

Austin, Texas.

Dear Editor:

The dirt farmers and the tenant farmers never fell for this scheme of plowing under part of the crop. When they got their checks and brought them to the landlords and the stores to be cashed, the landlords kept them. They said it would be used against the farmers' debt. After that the farmers said they wouldn't plow under their crop anymore. But the Ku Klux Klan got after them and there were other methods of terror too. This year the Ku Klux Klan says the farmers are going to plow under again. And the farmers say they won't. They are not afraid. They say they learned from the farm strikes in Montana and Michigan and Iowa and this time they will know what to do.

EDWARD HALL.

The Students Learn

CARL A. BRISTEL

THE CLASH of the class struggle has begun to reverberate in the ivied halls once hushed in academic detachment. The chaos and tragedy inherent in American life are increasingly disturbing the student as he learns his destiny under Capitalism is to provide grist for the mill of breadlines and flop-houses. With his growing realization that his problems are indissolubly bound up with those of the working class, he is shedding his traditional indifference, becoming articulate, a factor in the revolutionary struggle for a rational existence.

During Christmas week, the Capital was invaded by hundreds of delegates from all over the country, many from places as far away as California and Texas, when the National Student League, the League for Industrial Democracy, the National Student Federation of America and the National Conference on the Student in Politics, met in Washington.

The National Student Federation of America, an ultra-conservative union of student councils in some 250 colleges, held a five-day convention in the swanky Mayflower Hotel. This "convention," primarily a round of luncheons and dances interspersed with the mellow wisdom of cabinet officials, was of no significance except in one important respect. At a dance tendered to the delegates three Negro students officially representing Howard University, appeared on the floor with their partners. The Tulane University delegation immediately protested, threatening to leave if the Negroes were permitted to remain. When the situation was "explained" to the Howard delegates by the chairman of the dance committee, they agreed to leave. Upon hearing of this discrimination the National Student League laid plans for immediate protest: to solicit support of the students gathered in Washington for the other conventions and to picket the Mayflower Hotel on Saturday in the event that the Negro delegates were again barred from the dance hall that evening. Fear of public denunciation had its effect upon the Southern snobs. The Howard delegation was admitted to the ballroom without a murmur.

The N. S. L. opened its convention at the Andrew Rankin Memorial Chapel, Howard University, with 237 delegates present. The convention formulated a concrete plan of co-ordinated activity on a national scale during 1934—based on a thorough analysis of the problems confronting students on and off the campus. The plan stressed three major issues: war, racial discrimination and educational retrenchment. Throughout the country the war machine in the colleges is swiftly intensifying its preparations for a new conflict; students are being suspended and expelled for opposing militarization of schools. Educational facili-

ties under pressure of the crisis are being ruthlessly curtailed. As a member of an oppressed minority, the Negro is victimized by retrenchment even more than the white student.

Fully aware that these problems are not peculiar to the colleges, the National Convention voted to affiliate with the League of Struggle for Negro Rights and to cooperate more closely with the American League Against War and Fascism so that the struggle against the R. O. T. C. may be seen not as an end in itself but as a part of a basic struggle against preparations for a new imperialist war.

The N. S. L. and the League for Industrial Democracy joined forces in a parade to the White House to present a nationally-circulated petition for the abolition of the R. O. T. C., and the allocation of all war funds to education. A delegation of five students representing the student sub-section of the American League Against War and Fascism went to the White House to present the petitions to Colonel Howe, the President's secretary.

Colonel Howe was asked to state the opinion of the administration concerning the expenditures for the R. O. T. C. while schools are closed everywhere for lack of funds.

"Hm, a very interesting question," replied the Colonel. "But I confess that I've never heard it mentioned or discussed before and can't say that the administration has committed itself on the issue."

In response to a request made by the N. S. L. for permission to present a plea for the unification of both organizations, a telegram was received from the League for Industrial Democracy inviting three representatives of the N. S. L. to address its convention: a dramatic moment in the history of the American student movement.

The spokesmen for the N. S. L. analyzed the predicament of the student in contemporary America, criticized the reformist character of the L. I. D., stressed the need for a united student movement and concluded with a proposal for unification. Both organizations could be dissolved, to be superseded by a new organization based on a program substantially similar to the present N. S. L. program; an organization composed not of "potential splitters" or "embittered factionalists," but of wide masses of students motivated by a community of purpose. No discussion on the question was permitted until the three leaders of the N. S. L. and the representatives of the press had left the convention hall. As reported later, the vote taken was fourteen for unification, twenty-eight opposed. The national membership of the L. I. D. was represented at the convention by only seventy delegates. Supporters of the N. S. L. proposal among these delegates suggested that since the representa-

tion was so small, and, therefore could hardly give a fair expression of the organization's attitude toward such an important question, a referendum be held in every L. I. D. chapter. This plea for democratic procedure was voted down by a similar majority. Finally, a committee to consider the proposal was elected.

The National Conference on the Student in Politics convened in the auditorium of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce Building. Advertising itself as "a deliberative, not a legislative meeting of students," it included among its sponsors Morris Raphael Cohen, John Dewey and Charles A. Beard. The following question was advertised as the basis of discussion in the pamphlet issued as publicity for the Conference: Have students a responsibility in such matters as the imminence of war and the N.R.A.?

From the start of the Conference it became manifest that an organized attempt was being made to throttle discussion from the convention floor. The sessions were crowded with speakers who talked at the delegates. To preclude the conversion of the Conference into a lecture-hall, leaders of the N. S. L. and the L. I. D. agreed to unite for the period of the Conference. As a consequence of this united front both organizations were able to exert such influence in the exchange of opinions that militant resolutions embodying to a large extent the program of the N. S. L. were adopted in every discussion group.

Another significant consequence was the failure of Young America (formerly the American Student Union), which had regarded the National Conference as the opportunity for launching itself as a new organization. It was exposed and discredited as bearing the ear-marks of a fascist youth movement, the vagueness of its program alienating even those who might have been attracted by its philosophy of middle-class "revolution."

The N. S. L.—L. I. D. minimum program endorsing the American League Against War and Fascism and opposing the curtailment of educational appropriations, racial discrimination, and the fascist tendencies inherent in the N.R.A. met with overwhelming approval. But Professor Clyde Eagleton, Chairman of the Conference, prevented the assembly-at-large from officially adopting this program and it was referred for final consideration to the executive committee despite vigorous protest from the floor. Here the program was thoroughly emasculated, the L. I. D. leaders splitting with the N. S. L. on two very important issues. To ingratiate themselves with those exponents of the New Deal on the executive committee, the L. I. D. leaders effectively blocked endorsement of the American League and the resolution attacking the N.R.A.

Entering the Blind Alley

DAVID RAMSEY

This is the second of two articles on the New Deal by David Ramsey.

AT THE beginning of January the new deal was in a blind alley. Unemployment was increasing, and the workers and farmers were worse off than last year. Roosevelt will have to go in for more inflation if the present economic breakdown is to be checked. Greater inflation and fiercer war preparations are inevitable as the American ruling class prepares to fight for a new redivision of the world, in order to find an outlet for its surplus capital and goods.

In fact, the entire economics of the new deal rest upon inflation. The acuteness and extent of the crisis had made the internal debt (estimated to be from 175 to 200 billions of dollars), an intolerable burden to the banking and credit structure of American capitalism. The role of gold as the foundation of capitalist credit diminished, as its function as the indestructible natural form of value grew. Hoarding, in 1932 and the early months of 1933, assumed menacing proportions as the bourgeoisie came to feel that only hard cash had any value. Depositors withdrew enormous amounts of gold and currency for hoarding purposes. For the week ending March 1, 1933, currency in circulation increased 732 million dollars—the largest increase on record. At the same time there were gold exports of 200 million dollars to Europe and also a withdrawal of 100 million dollars in gold by American depositors. These events forced Roosevelt to shut the banks, and shortly afterwards to take the United States off the gold standard. The closing of banks with about 5 billions of deposits, and limitations on withdrawals of perhaps 10 billions more, involved the wholesale expropriation of small depositors. (About half of this huge sum is still tied up in closed banks, and in banks subject to limited withdrawals.)

When the United States was forced off the gold standard, Roosevelt set two monetary objectives—dollar devaluation and a rise in the general price level. He put an embargo on gold shipments abroad, and repudiated the payment of United States gold certificates in gold bullion or coin. The dollar fell in relation to the foreign exchanges by some 20 percent. After the speculative boomlet, caused in part by the depreciation of the dollar, collapsed, Roosevelt and his advisors decided that a 20 percent depreciation of the dollar was not enough. They falsely attributed the decline in production—and the decline in agricultural prices to over-valuation of the dollar. Even before the boomlet broke down, Roosevelt had refused, at the world economic conference in London, to stabilize the dollar. Consequently with production and farm prices falling—after July 15, 1933—Roosevelt de-

cidated that a possible 40 to 50 percent depreciation was needed. Today the dollar has been depreciated more than 35 percent.

The present monetary policy was outlined by Roosevelt as follows: "It is definitely our policy to increase the rise (in commodity prices) and extend it to those products which as yet have felt no benefit." He plans to restore the price level first and then stabilize the depreciated dollar. Roosevelt is striving for a stable dollar—stable in terms of internal purchasing power and a fluctuating exchange, the fluctuations to be governed by the price of gold fixed by the American government. He is attempting to depreciate the dollar absolutely in terms of gold currencies by fixing higher dollar prices in gold.

The exotic experiment has been a beautiful flop so far. To put it baldly, it is based on an absurd economic doctrine that even most bourgeois economists cannot swallow. Warren's conception of a commodity dollar is an amalgamation of two crack-brained schemes—Cassel's notion that the crisis is due to a shortage of gold, and Fisher's delusion that the prices of commodities can be altered mechanically by raising the price of gold. Limitations of space will not permit a complete refutation. But it can be stated dogmatically that the primary cause of the crisis is the gap between production and the market. The monetary phases of the crisis are in themselves directly due to this fundamental cause, and are subsidiary to it. Once set into motion, however, monetary crises can accelerate the cause of the crisis. The course of Roosevelt's experiment proves this. The further depreciation of the dollar has been primarily due to the flight of American capital to London, estimated to total between 1.5 and 2 billion dollars. The daily fluctuations of the dollar have not followed as a causal sequence of the R.F.C.'s bidding up the dollar value of gold.

Nor has the dollar depreciation on foreign exchanges led to a general rise in the internal price level. Prices have fluctuated irregularly, because of speculation in commodities in anticipation of the possible printing of greenbacks. And significantly farm prices have fallen. The experience of England in 1931 shows that monetary depreciation does not necessarily involve a raising of the price level.

The relative advantages of the depreciated American dollar has been reflected in a small rise in exports, but balancing this are the increases in the dollar prices of all imported commodities. The truth of the matter is that Roosevelt cannot raise prices to their 1926 level through gold purchases unless he resorts to other inflationary measures. Gold buying cannot determine absolutely the dollar prices of commodities. It can alter the *relations* between the dollar prices of commodities and

their world prices, but internal prices have remained unaffected in the face of slackening production and reduced sales.

This is the key to the present fight in the ranks of the bourgeoisie over monetary policy. The banks want Roosevelt to devalue the dollar to some stable level—to 50 or 60 cents, and continue the present policy of giving large subsidies and loans to banks and industry. (From January to July, 1934, the R.F.C. is to hand out \$3,373,000,000.) They prefer reducing the gold content of the dollar to a stable level. They insist that Roosevelt's present policy is speeding up the process too rapidly, that runaway inflation will set in. Not that the bankers are afraid of such inflation. The German experience shows that the bankers can utilize a runaway inflation to squeeze the last drop of blood out of the middle class—and especially the working class. Prices soar while wages straggle behind, and runaway inflation means runaway profits for the bankers and big industrialists. But at the moment the big bourgeoisie feel that there is as yet no necessity to start the printing presses. Consequently a section of finance capital opposes Roosevelt's antics, because he is upsetting the bond markets and has accelerated the flight of capital. The big bankers think that Roosevelt may be forced to premature printing of money, if he continues with his pet gold-purchase plan.

The question as to when Roosevelt will be forced to resort to printing money is difficult to answer. There has been credit inflation since 1932, that is, the reserve banks have bought hundreds of millions of dollars of government bonds in order to broaden the base of Federal Reserve advances to banks. And under the Emergency Bank Act of March 9, 1933, the reserve banks were authorized to issue two billion dollars of Federal Reserve notes. These are distinct from the regular notes which must be backed by at least 40 percent gold. This is a form of inflation—using government bonds instead of gold as a basis of credit expansion, but a form that is leading nowhere. Four years of the crisis have proven that these expansions of credit are not the answer to the problem. They show that the crisis has not been caused by a contraction of credit—a favorite bourgeois theme—but is due to the contradiction between overproduction and underconsumption.

The inflationary policies of Roosevelt have only increased this contradiction, since they actually cut the purchasing power of workers and the white collar groups. There was some reemployment and some increases in hourly rates, but the systematic program of part-time work—spreading the misery wider—made the position of the worker worse than under Hoover. Both the Bureau of Labor Statistics

and the National Industrial Conference Board have found that the weekly wages of the worker have declined with the shortening of the working week. Accompanying this reduction in nominal wages (Business Week reported on November 11 that payrolls for the first 9 months of 1933 were really 3.2 percent lower than for the corresponding months of 1932.) was a sharp rise in the cost of living.

On December 1, 1933, the Fairchild Index of Retail Prices (textiles, clothing, and house furnishings) was 26.8 percent higher than the May low. The Bureau of Labor Statistics Index for retail prices in November was almost 20 percent higher than in April. And prices are still rising. Zelomek, the retail-price expert of the Fairchild Publications, predicts another twenty or twenty-five percent rise by next summer. The conservative National Industrial Conference Board estimated that living costs were 10 percent higher in November than in April. But if its inadequate estimate for the rise in costs of food, clothing, and rent are adjusted, the actual rise in living costs would be about 15 percent. Several recent surveys in cities like Washington show even larger increases.

Department store sales reflect the reduced purchasing power of the working class. For the eleven months of 1933, department store sales declined six percent as compared with the corresponding months in 1932. The failure of sales to keep up with last year's level despite a 25 percent increase in prices, indicates a decrease of more than ten percent in the amount of clothes, furniture, etc., that was purchased. The same situation is revealed by chain grocery sales. Workers are consuming less food because their real wages have fallen. The situation is becoming worse as a result of more part-time work and rising unemployment since September.

The Department of Labor reported on December 19, that from October 15 to November 15 employment in manufacturing industries had declined 3.5 percent and payrolls 6.2 percent. Unemployment had increased at more than three times the seasonal rate. It was the largest monthly increase in the last ten years. The A. F. of L. bureaucracy admitted that 580 thousand workers lost their jobs during November. During the first half of December the number of layoffs was larger than last year. The fifth winter of the crisis finds the worker subjected to increasing misery and starvation, since the C.W.A. takes care of only a fraction of the sixteen million unemployed, an army that constantly grows. J. C. Atchison, a spokesman for the manufacturing interests, has disclosed the fact that the share-the-misery plan is the motive behind the new deal. He told the workers, through the press, that "none of them are getting high or adequate salaries, but they are getting something for their efforts."

If the worker has not been helped by the "new deal," has the farmer benefitted? Analysis shows that the farmer is still in the hopeless rut of mortgage foreclosures, low prices for his products, etc. There was a brief rise

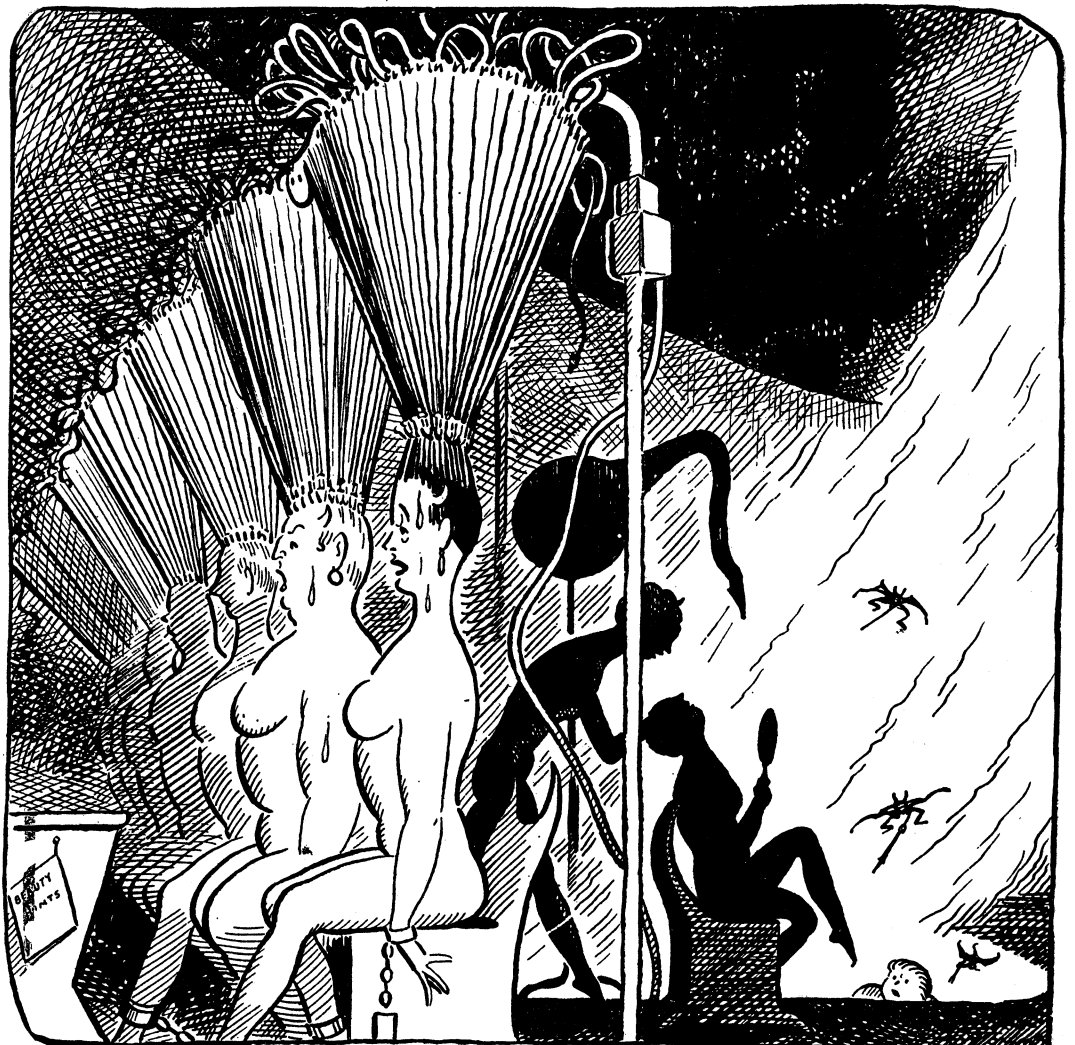
in farm prices after March, but they have fallen since their high in August. On December 10, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics reported that in terms of the 1910-14 index, the average prices of farm products had fallen from 76 to 70 while the prices paid by farmers had risen from 103 to 117.5. The drop in the purchasing power of the farmers was from 72 to 59.

The government has paid the big cotton farmers \$109,686,526 to reduce their acreage. The result has been that the crop this year is 13,177,000 bales or 175,000 bales larger than last year, and 200,000 tenant farmers have lost their means of livelihood. The refinancing of farm mortgages is also in the interests of the large insurance companies and banks. Small farmers and tenants are being expropriated as the government pursues its policy of using farm credit to control production. Monopoly capital is trying to solve the agricultural crisis by destroying crops, plowing under land, and converting the small and middle farmers into a landless peasantry.

Roosevelt's major success has been in increasing the profits of the ruling class. On November 25, *The Commercial and Financial Chronicle* gave a true picture of the situation when it said that "increased dividend distribution by corporations continue (to be) the order of the day." The National City Bank of New York published a report in November

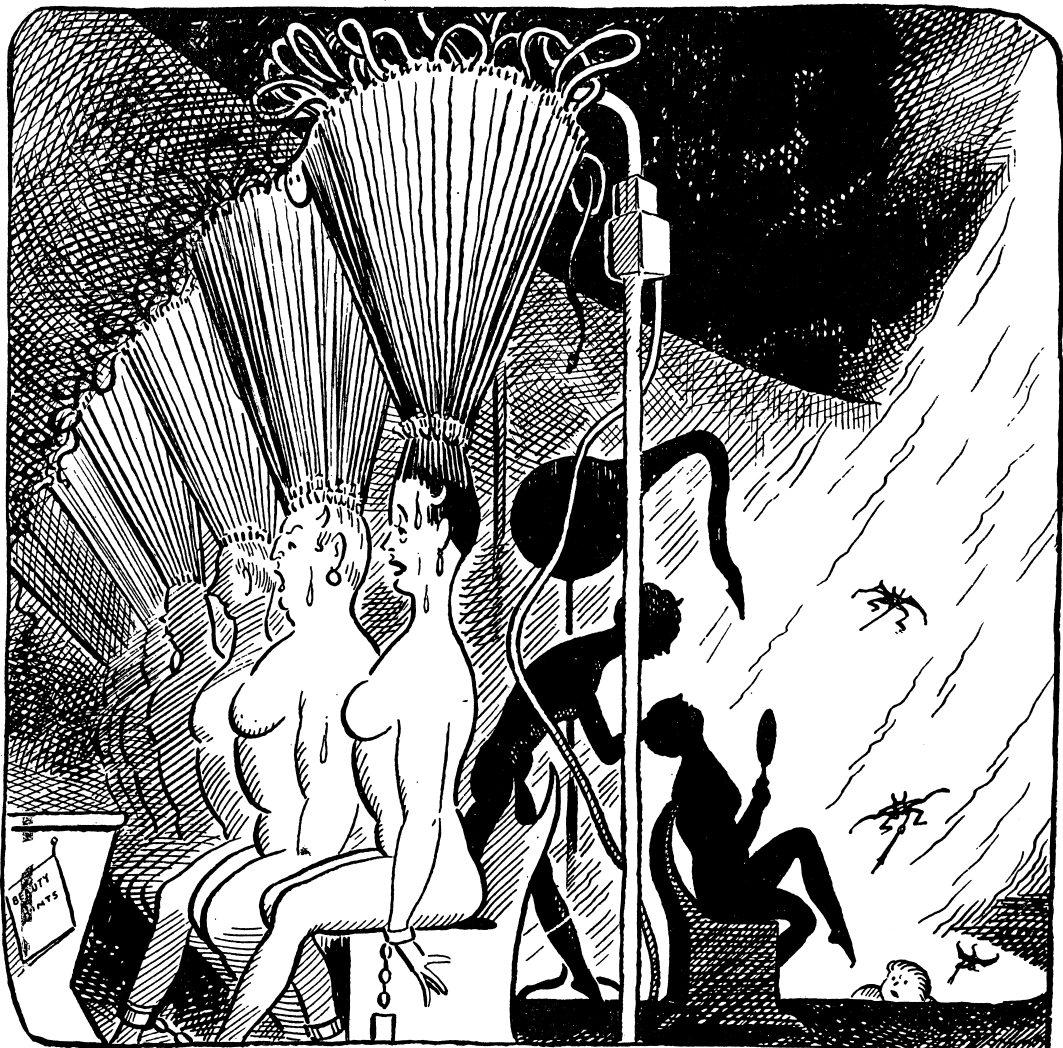
on corporation profits. It disclosed that 205 industrial corporations having an aggregate net worth of \$7,443,000,000 showed net profits of \$129,576,000 in the third quarter of 1933. This compares with a profit of \$86,878,000 in the second quarter and a deficit of \$14,831,000 in the first quarter. The indicated rate of profit was at the highest point since the middle of 1931. Profits for the first nine months of 1933 were \$200,367,000 in contrast to \$30,266,000 in 1932—an increase of almost 600 percent. That these figures are accurate can be seen if we check them with a report issued by Moody's Investors Service on November 16. It lists the net earning of 453 corporations for the first 9 months of 1933 as \$373,802,000 as against \$87,603,000 for the same period last year. The earnings of the industrial corporations increased even more. One hundred and eighty-five industrial corporations reported profits of \$180,165,000 for the nine months as against a deficit of \$8,812,000 last year. These profits, at least 50 percent higher in the third quarter than in the second, were rolled up in the face of 10 weeks of declining production.

The new deal has therefore succeeded in re-establishing the super profits of American capitalism. To maintain these profits, Roosevelt must go in for more trustification and inflation at home, and imperialist adventures abroad, speeding the nation toward war.



THE STRETCH-OUT GOES TO HELL

from Art Young's INFERNO



THE STRETCH-OUT GOES TO HELL

from Art Young's *INFERNO*

Correspondence

Malcolm Cowley Explains

To THE NEW MASSES:

Before your readers get an accurate picture of it, a few additional comments will have to be made on the correspondence between Josephine Herbst and Bruce Bliven. Some people might get the impression that Miss Herbst's article was unconditionally ordered; it wasn't. Here are the exact words in which I wrote to her on November 3:

"It happens that I am the only editor in the office today, so I won't be able to show your letter to Soule or Bliven. I think it is pretty safe to say however, that we would like to see a short article on the Farmers' Conference. If you could do the job in 1,500 to 2,000 words, it would be right up our street."

The article which we asked to see reached this office on November 27 and was read immediately. It had three faults from our point of view: it was too long—much exceeding the length suggested in my letter; it was not well organized, being written more in the style of a newspaper report than of a magazine article; and it spent a good deal of space editorializing about the plight of the farmers instead of reporting the convention.

That the article was held until December 12 before being returned was chiefly my own fault. I thought the news about the Farmer's Conference was important and ought to be printed, and I thought that if I could make enough cuts in the article to bring it down to the length suggested in my original letter, the other editors would be glad to see it printed, even though The New Republic's schedule for the early weeks of December was extremely crowded. But I was too busy getting out the winter book number to tackle the job, then I was out of the office for a week, and finally Bruce Bliven returned it. That the article was held the two weeks to keep it from being published elsewhere is a lot of baloney. I was very glad indeed to see it come out in THE NEW MASSES.

I thought your first weekly was fine, John Strachey's article on Fascism in America being especially good. Sincerely yours,

January 2, 1934.

MALCOLM COWLEY.

Josephine Herbst Replies

To THE NEW MASSES:

Baloney or not, the fact remains that keeping the article two weeks did make it untimely for any publication except THE NEW MASSES, which had not been publishing in the preceding 3 months. I never had an idea it was "unconditionally ordered." Few articles are nowadays. Does that change the obligation to be considerate of the material? It was thought well enough of to be further referred to in a letter on another subject, dated November 10: "We are still very anxious to have the piece about the Chicago Conference."

They were anxious to have it until "the deplorable conditions" seemed to contradict Bliven's articles and to make the two incompatible to one and the same magazine. Before the article was written the reading of these demands to a liberal group in the middle west had produced only surprise, laughter and finally indignation. By listing the conditions that were the subject matter of the daily talk of the convention I hoped to make the situation plausible to a group not accustomed to ponder about the poor masses of farmers.

To make it scholarly in The New Republic manner, space would have been needed, and space is the one thing they did not want to grant. Bliven even imagined that the entire subject could be covered in 1,000 words. They did not kill the material by refusal outright to print it. That is not the liberal way. No, they disagreed about it, hesitated,

then granted such a limited space as to make it impossible to present to any advantage. And anyone knows that if they had wanted the material, the highly competent staff would have found a way to utilize it in spite of their alleged reasons against it. Yours,

Jan. 6, 1934, Erwinna, Pa. JOSEPHINE HERBST.

New Victory

RADIOGRAM

NEW MASSES NEW YORK
SECRETARIAT OF INTERNATIONAL UNION
REVOLUTIONARY WRITERS CONGRATU-
LATES EDITORIAL BOARD CONTRIBUTORS
AND READERS OF NEW MASSES WITH NEW
VICTORY OF THEIR MAGAZINE STOP WE
ARE HAPPY THAT VOICE OF NEW MASSES
WILL NOW RING FOUR TIMES OFTENER
AND WIDER THAN IT USED TO DO IN
PAST
SECRETARIAT IURW
MOSCOW

An Appeal for Funds

To THE NEW MASSES:

When the hunger marchers left Washington last year, their parting words were: "We'll be back!" And this year they are going back. On February 3, 4 and 5 the voice of the organized unemployed will again be heard in Washington when a thousand delegates convene in answer to the call of the National Committee of the Unemployed Councils. The Washington Convention Against Unemployment aims to formulate a program which will advance the fight for the Workers Unemployment and Social Insurance Bill, to stimulate organization of struggle for direct relief, and to unify the unemployed movement.

The National Committee of the Unemployed Councils is calling a convention in Washington in which every unemployed organization, regardless of affiliation or lack of affiliation with the unemployed councils, as well as all unions and other workers' organizations have been invited to participate. The National Committee looks upon this convention as a step toward unifying the struggle of the workers against unemployment.

It is now only a few weeks before the convention and the National Committee finds itself in a serious situation so far as funds are concerned. The refusal of the federal government to furnish any accommodations whatever for the unemployed in Washington places before the National Committee the problem of food, housing and a meeting place. Three thousand dollars must be raised at once.

We therefore appeal to all those who understand the importance of a militant national program for the unemployed and who desire to see the passage of the Workers Unemployment Insurance Bill to help us overcome the difficulties we are facing at present. We appeal to all organizations and to all liberals and sympathizers of the unemployed movement for financial assistance to carry the convention through.

The time is short. Act at once to assure a successful convention in Washington. Send contributions to the National Committee Unemployed Councils, Room 437, 80 East 11 Street, New York.

Sincerely yours,

I. AMTER,
National Secretary.

Magil On Eastman

Detroit, Mich.

To THE NEW MASSES:

Being reasonably busy editing the Auto Workers News and helping to build a mass Auto Workers

Union, it was not till recently that I saw a copy of the November Modern Monthly, containing the second instalment of Max Eastman's ingenious horror story, *Stalin's Literary Inquisition*. The lies and distortions of this literary Ham Fish have been sufficiently dealt with in the two articles of Joshua Kunitz in the NEW MASSES, and in Joseph Freeman's series in the Daily Worker. But since Eastman mentioned my name in his article, and since only I know all the facts of the question with which he has linked my name, I think it necessary to add my bit to the labors of Kunitz and Freeman. Eastman writes:

"It is well known—at least a well known rumor remains undenied—that Comrade Magil did commit such a blasphemy (*i. e.*, criticizing Auerbach, secretary of the now defunct Russian Association of Proletarian Writers [RAPP]—A.B.M.) and was compelled by our local drill sergeant to write a long letter to Moscow 'acknowledging his mistake'—and that means crawling on his belly—in criticizing Auerbach and the now infamous RAPP, and that the letter was no more than mailed and well out on the Atlantic, when the order arrived from Moscow for a general repudiation of RAPP and an international open session for spitting upon Auerbach. Poor Comrade Magil sacrificed his intellectual manhood for nothing, but there is no record of his having asked himself the simple question: *Why?*"

Of course, one might ask such equally simple questions as where these "well known rumors" come from; but since Eastman is a man of considerable talent, no doubt many of them are original. Here, as throughout his article, Eastman has evidently been guided by the principle that the truth is more honored in the breach than the observance. To clear up the matter let me state categorically:

1. It is not true—well known rumors to the contrary—that at the Kharkov Conference of revolutionary writers and artists or elsewhere I criticized Auerbach or RAPP. I did not know enough about either to make any criticism.

2. It is not true that, at the orders of a "local drill sergeant" (the well known rumors are not always specific in the matter of names), I wrote a letter to Moscow "acknowledging my mistake."

What is true is the following:

At the Kharkov Conference in 1930 differences developed between the majority of the American delegation and the leading comrades of the International Union of Revolutionary Writers. These differences had nothing to do with the conflicts in the Soviet literary movement or with the basic political and organizational principles of the IURW. They centered chiefly around the methods of the IURW in establishing organizational contacts with the United States and around the question of the attitude toward individual figures in the revolutionary literary movement. For the ideas developed by the majority of the American delegation in regard to these questions and for the manner in which these ideas were presented I bear chief political responsibility.

On the question of organization contacts, the comrades of the IURW conceded from the first that they had made certain mistakes. On the second question there was no agreement reached at the Conference itself, though subsequent discussions cleared it up considerably. However, the resolution formulating the tasks for the United States—whose contents Eastman has so glibly distorted—was adopted unanimously by the American delegation and by the entire Conference.

As for myself, after committing the heresy, according to Eastman, of supposedly criticizing Auerbach and the RAPP, I was asked by the comrades of the IURW to act as its representative on my return to the United States. This I did till the spring of 1932,

when illness forced me out of activity for several months.

After my return to this country, I was in fairly frequent communication with the comrades of the IURW. Soon, as a result of further experience in cultural work, I began to realize that the attitude of the majority of the American delegation, for which I was chiefly responsible, on the role of individual had been schematic and inflexible—what we call ultra-left sectarian—an attitude which, in the given situation in this country, would lead to the alienation of the so-called fellow-travelers and to the isolation of those who called themselves Marxists from the mainstream of the revolutionary cultural movement. In the course of a letter to the IURW that dealt with other matters, I referred—voluntarily (of course, to an Eastman it is unconceivable that an “agent of Stalin” should do anything voluntarily)—to this mistake, acknowledging my major responsibility for it.

On the question of belly-crawling and sacrificing my “intellectual manhood for nothing,” talk of intellectual manhood sounds rather strange from the man who in the famous Masses sedition trial of 1917, when faced with a jail term, repudiated his principles (shades of the “Stalinites,” Dimitroff, Torgler, Popoff and Taneff!) and went Star Spangled Banner.

I recently had the opportunity of listening to this apostle of the intellectual manhood lecture at the Detroit City College on “The Future of Liberalism.” The lecture was rather in the nature of a dirge, seasoned with suitable wit and quotation. Eastman lamented the fact that the concept of liberty had died out both in the United States and Soviet Russia. (Ergo, the incomparable Max did not have to say the New Deal equals the dictatorship of the proletariat.) He urged his audience to read his own expurgated edition of Marx and a book by the right wing British Laborite, Fred Henderson. And he greatly amused his listeners by showing that the ideas of Will Rogers were identical with those of Marx, with the difference that Rogers has the advantage of a superior literary style. It was a very instructive lecture.

A. B. MAGIL.

From Art Young

To THE NEW MASSES:

Did you see that interview with me in the Herald-Tribune? I ought to take interviewing more seriously, and express my highest and best thought. But instead I find myself chattering. However I am never so chattering as to say “I’m not against the present Government” as quoted.

Of course to those who know me, that statement is obviously a distortion of my words.

How can any man hope or think it desirable to save the dying monster that has brought the world to its present misery: capitalist government?

I’m strong for the spirit of THE NEW MASSES and would like to draw more cartoons for you as the weeks and years go on toward victory. Yours, Jan. 5, 1934.

ART YOUNG.

A High Note

To THE NEW MASSES:

The NEW MASSES struck a high note in interpretative reporting. Above all, its quiet, competent indictment was noteworthy. Best luck. Sincerely, Jan. 3, 1934.

MICHAEL BLANKFORT.

Needed: A Classless Society

To THE NEW MASSES:

It gives me pleasure to enclose my subscription for 15 weeks of your periodical.

My ideas regarding the political parties of this nation have changed, as one after the other gave further proof of their inability to cope with the present emergency.

I am, at the present time, becoming interested in Communism, and am anxious to learn further regarding the theories behind it. So far, my interest

has been justified. A classless society is the needed requirement of this day. Of course, this means a new social order.

Hoping that I may derive as much enjoyment out of your further issues as I have this one, and that I may learn further of your party, I remain,

Yours in the interests of Communism,

Jan. 5, 1934.

MYLES TRAVERS,

Prophetic Enthusiasm

To THE NEW MASSES:

The format, type and arrangement in the weekly are a vast improvement; and the scope and penetration immeasurably better than anything yet on the scene. It is my earnest belief that no American can begin to understand what is happening to him and his country without it, and certainly he can not attain full intellectual stature if he ignores it. The response I am getting among the people I show it to is one of revelatory and prophetic enthusiasm.

Green Valley, Ill.

W. D. TROWBRIDGE.

January 6, 1934.

Make the Thomases Tremble

To THE NEW MASSES:

I am writing this after just finishing the first issue. The initial flush of enthusiasm is still with me. I cannot commend the Board of Editors adequately for the construction of magazine, which I had hoped would play a leading role in the ripening revolutionary struggle.

Strachey, Young, Herbst, and Matthews are better than ever, and Mike’s poem is really the first revolutionary poem that succeeded in arousing an emotional response from me. (Not really a criterion.)

However, since I have begun a congratulatory letter, and since I rarely write letters (my abominable spelling is never exposed when I lecture), I might make a few suggestions which I, as a middle class radicalized intellectual, might desire to see in subsequent issues.

I would pay 20c an issue to see an article by Strachey on “*What We Mean by Social-Fascists.*” A lucid, simple explanation, such as Strachey can do, would be a tremendous help.

I would pay 15c an issue to see Sender Garlin write on “*The Socialist Party’s Position on Art.*” Or is it out of your purview. If so, let Hicks review some part of it in his excellent book section. It’s still worth an extra nickel.

Generally, I want more of a charge against the reformists. You will reach a large section highly sympathetic to them. Open up and make the Thomases tremble.

More on the position of the wavering professional intellectual than on the economic status and possibilities under the C.W.A. and the like.

Our major task is to see that THE MASSES’ circulation is worthy of its contents, a large order to fill, but this fact might be pointed out, let every pleased reader become a pleased active propagandist.

ROY A. DENNETT.

Floyd Dell’s Sentiments

To THE NEW MASSES:

I’ve just been reading the first weekly issue of THE NEW MASSES. I think it’s very good indeed. I particularly liked the editorial “*No Rights for Lynchers.*” Those are my sentiments, exactly.

Best wishes for the weekly.

Jan. 2, 1934.

FLOYD DELL.

A Fraternal Note

To the NEW MASSES:

When I opened the first issue of NEW MASSES I noted that you, like the Editors of The Nation, had featured an article by John Strachey on your front cover. You probably know that Strachey has also agreed to write for the Herald-Tribune.

Following out the policy you might, in early issues,

play up articles from Norman Thomas, Upton Sinclair and Walter Lippmann. All are well known and each has a large following.

Fraternally,

Jan. 2, 1934.

SCOTT NEARING.

A Correction

To THE NEW MASSES:

I hope you’ll correct an error that occurred in an editorial in your January 2 issue on page 5, in which you mentioned two JRC mags (New Force and Leftward) which are no longer in existence, but failed to mention Left Front, organ of the midwest John Reed Clubs, which is still going strong. Not only that, but L. F. was the first of the regional JRC mags. Yours,

Chicago, Jan. 4.

BILL JORDAN.

A Wow

To THE NEW MASSES:

Never enjoyed any periodical so thoroughly, THE NEW MASSES is a Wow! HENRY LAVEN, M.D., Forest Hills, N. Y.

Jan. 6, 1934.

Forest Hills, N. Y.

It Augurs Well

To THE NEW MASSES:

Enclosed is postal money order for \$7 (seven dollars) (and am I tired of going to the post office!!!) for two subscriptions to two friends of mine.

Be sure and start these two subscriptions with the current week (No. 2, I mean, not the initial one). Say, it was a swell number, Marguerite Young and Strachey took honors I think. The editorial comment was incisive and excellent, makeup good, and the whole thing augurs well.—Yours,

Jan. 2, 1934.

M. H.

The CONTRIBUTORS

C. FRANK GLASS, who has been a correspondent in China for three years, saw the Shanghai invasion at close range.

BILL SMITH is writing in Provincetown, Mass.

JIM WATERS, house painter, labor organizer and poet, has contributed frequently to the NEW MASSES.

ERSKINE CALDWELL, author of *Tobacco Road*, now at the Masque Theatre, is a correspondent of the NEW MASSES. He spends half his time in Maine, the rest in Georgia.

CARL HAESSLER, one of the founders of the Federated Press, is Chicago correspondent for the NEW MASSES.

EMERY BALINT is the author of a trilogy, *Alpha, Beta, and Gamma*, novels of working-class life.

IRVING LERNER is active in the Workers Film and Photo League.

MARGARET WRIGHT MATHER, a lineal descendant of Cotton and Increase, doesn’t like sons of witches.

J. VOGEL is a member of the John Reed Club of New York.

WILLIAM SANDERSON has illustrated many books.

MYRA MORROW paints, and draws book jackets.

WILLIAM GROPPER is staff cartoonist of the Jewish Daily Freiheit.

ART YOUNG has just published his latest book, *Art Young’s Inferno*, put out by the Delphic Studio.

ESTHER KRIGER is a New York artist.

B o o k s

Der Schöne Archibald

POEMS, 1924-1933, by Archibald MacLeish.
Houghton Mifflin Company. \$3.00.

MY ORIGINAL idea was to write a letter to Mr. MacLeish, a friendly letter, asking him if he really liked the idea of being a dirty Nazi. But there have been too many letters written. And I doubt if he would have read my letter anyway, for he doesn't like critics. He wrote a piece about them in the Hound and Horn—it was supposed to be a review of Stephen Spender's poetry, but it wasn't—and he said Marxian critics were sows and he was a lady up a tree. And even if he did read my letter, it wouldn't do any good, for Archibald is a Nazi, at least a kind of ur-Nazi, whether he wants to be or not.

So, instead of writing a letter, I'd better write a serious critique of the poetry of Archibald MacLeish. I won't go back to the days when he was a promising lad at Yale; I'll start, as he does in this volume, with *The Hamlet of A. MacLeish*. When this poem was published, somebody headed a review with that fine line of T. S. Eliot's, "I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be." Of course Mr. MacLeish knew all the time that he wasn't Hamlet. That, in a way, was the point. Eliot had started the fashion of denigrating oneself and one's age by comparing them to dead heroes and past ages, and the *Hamlet* was MacLeish's *Waste Land*. One gathered from it that he felt awfully sick about something or other—though he artfully contrived to keep one from guessing just what. It was somehow connected with writing poetry in the twentieth century:

Why must I speak of it? Why must I always
Stoop from this decent silence to this phrase
That makes a posture of my hurt? Why must I
Say I suffer? . . .

. . . ease myself at the soiled stool
That's common to so swollen many!

It would be cheap to reply, "Why, indeed!" especially when the answer is apparent. Mr. MacLeish belonged to a generation that had many misfortunes, not least of which was being labeled by Gertrude Stein the lost generation. (It is a relief to discover that Miss Stein was not half so worried about their being lost as they were.) He had to write about his troubles because there didn't seem to be any other subjects. And he developed an astonishing skill in making his troubles sound as if they were worth writing about. There was the comparison-with-the-past trick, already noted in the *Hamlet* and actually used in many earlier poems. There was the concern with death in such a poem as *Voyage* ("Trade we are cargoes with the dead for sleep"), which is dedicated to the well-known author of *A Natural History of the Dead*,

Mr. Ernest Hemingway. There was the device of referring to the uncertainties of science and the mysteries of metaphysics, as in *Einstein*. All these devices Mr. MacLeish mastered, and when he really abandoned himself to his melancholy he could turn out a pretty sad poem. I confess that I wept the first time I read *You, Andrew Marvell*:

And Spain go under and the shore
Of Africa the gilded sand
And evening vanish and no more
The long pale light across the land

Nor now the long light on the sea

And here face downward in the sun
To feel how swift how secretly
The shadow of the night comes on

I wept, but that was a long time ago, and MacLeish and I have both changed. So far as his change is concerned, he hinted at it in a volume called *New Found Land*. Much of the old nostalgia was there, but there was one poem, called *American Letter*, that caused a good deal of rejoicing in heaven. It was all about how it is a strange thing to be an American and he would like to be in southern France, but—

This, this is our land, this is our people
This that is neither a land nor a race. We
must reap
The wind here in the grass for our soul's
harvest:
Here we must eat our salt or our bones starve.
Here we must live or live only as shadows.

The critics threw their hats into the air, for another expatriate had been saved. MacLeish was settling down on American soil. (He did buy a farm in New England, I think.) And soon he was surpassing the critics' fondest dreams: he threw himself into the main stream of American life. Indeed, he became a veritable man of affairs, a member of the staff of *Fortune*, an authority on housing and technocracy, a person who could speak sternly to the young men of Wall Street. The critics stood aghast! (I didn't actually see them, but that's what I hear.) Could this stalwart young American, they cried, be the same man as the pathetic wanderer of the waste lands? Surely, they said, this new, healthy, American MacLeish must give us a fine poem that comes out of the very heart of the country!

Conquistador was Mr. MacLeish's answer to the critics' prayers, and some of them were convinced it was just what they had ordered. Others were not so sure. Those who liked the poem praised its technique (especially if they had not read Ezra Pound's *XXX Cantos*) and spoke of its vitality, its eloquence, its sustained power, and what not. Lincoln Kirstein said that what we needed were heroes (he had used the same idea in an article on James Cagney) and that Mr. MacLeish had

given them to us. The people on the other side of the fence looked around for the heroes and couldn't find them. The story of Cortez' march might be heroic, they pointed out, or it might not, but in any case it was here presented through the eyes of an elderly and infirm version of Mr. MacLeish. There were many nice details, they admitted, but they thought the poem, taken as a whole and on its own grounds, was rather limp and nostalgic and very much in the old manner. And they wondered why, if he was so deeply interested in twentieth-century America, Mr. MacLeish didn't write a poem about it.

Archibald has never felt the same about the critics since. In several poems (reprinted, perhaps unwisely, in this collection) and in several letters to the *New Republic*, he has tried to clarify his position. To some extent he has succeeded: he is at least certain that all Marxian critics ought to be shot. Beyond that his ideas are a little hazy. He devotes half his time to demonstrating that poets shouldn't write about social questions and the other half to writing about them. A great deal has been written about *Frescoes for Mr. Rockefeller's City*, and by now anyone can spot the elements that came, in Michael Gold's phrase, out of the fascist unconscious. One notes especially the attack on the Old Men of Wall Street (why is he so sure the young men are different from their papas?) and the splendid piece of dialect writing that, according to Carl Sandburg, is a contribution to the growth of an American language. But this is old stuff now, and I think that, instead of quoting from the *Frescoes*, I shall close with a few lines from another new poem, called *1933*:

You had best—if you ask me—
Push on from this place to the seaward

Laying your course close in
Where Tiresias' sirens sing of the

Dialectical hope
And the kind of childish utopia

Found in a small boy's school

* * * * *

You have only to push on
To whatever it is that's beyond us

Showing the flat of your sword and they'll
Lick the sand from before you!

Well, what do you think about it, Archibald? Do you suppose that somewhere the American Hitler is pasting those lines on his looking-glass? Are you applying for the job of chief sand licker?

MARGARET WRIGHT MATHER.

Unhistorical Novel

JONATHAN BISHOP, by Herbert Gorman. Farrar and Rinehart. \$2.50.

It is difficult to escape the impression that Mr. Gorman has told the story of the Paris Commune, primarily in order to clarify and stabilize his own *Weltanschauung* in these bitterly troubled times. It is not at all uncommon for one in doubt to return to the past in search of light on the present. And the

author's conclusions, delivered chiefly through the mouth of his hero, Jonathan Bishop, a young, wealthy, and patriotic American are: that the good of humanity is not worth the sacrifice of a single life, that evolution, not revolution, is the only rational solution to mankind's ills, that the coöperative commonwealth is the explicit denial of all individualism—and Jonathan is vociferously individualistic. These sentiments are interleaved in a story which moves quickly, almost glibly, but which lacks the faintest genuine understanding of the forces at play, and probably because of this also lacks power and conviction. Gorman's presentation of the problem and of the actual events is so crude, so dry of all sympathy with the struggling proletariat, that his novel never achieves the pulse which would restore the feverish months of the Commune to life once again.

GILBERT DOUGLAS.

The Steel Heel

LABOR AND STEEL, by Horace B. Davis. International Publishers. \$2.

“THE steel industry is not only a basic industry—it is the key industry of the nation. Dominated by a single firm [United States Steel], which in turn is directly controlled by the leading financial interests in the country, steel expresses in industry the policy of the American financial oligarchy,” declares Mr. Davis in his introduction to this encyclopedic treatment of the problems of labor in steel. Because of this the power which the steel barons exercise is of importance not only to their two and a half million serfs but also to the entire American working class. That which affects steel workers today reaches all workers tomorrow.

What is the policy of the American financial oligarchy in steel? It is low wages—wages lower in many instances than those paid for similar work in England, wages which have been reduced during the crisis even more than those in industry as a whole. (It is interesting to note here that a drastic wage-cut which was to have gone into effect last spring and which would have initiated a nation-wide wage-cutting drive was called off because of the strike of the Detroit auto workers! It is long hours and sweated labor—the ten-hour day with all the modern refinements of speed-up is still in effect for a majority of the workers of U. S. Steel—coupled with “staggered” jobs and unemployment. It is “relief” carried out on such a niggardly scale that “employed” workers find it necessary to quit their “jobs” and go on the public relief lists—when that is possible. It is ruthless tyranny, using the velvet glove through “welfare” schemes to keep the steel slaves “contented” but unhesitatingly using the mailed fist to crush them when they are not.

“The feudal domain of Steel,” as Mr. Davis calls it, is amazing to anyone who has not lived in steel towns. Civil liberties are practically unknown, with the steel corpora-

tions controlling the police, the courts, and the organs of public opinion. In Aliquippa, Pa., controlled by the Jones & Laughlin Steel Corporation, Communists were tarred and feathered and driven out of town. When that failed to break their spirit three of them were charged with sedition and sentenced to long terms in prison. Weirton, W. Va., controlled by the Weirton Steel Company, a subsidiary of the National Steel Corporation, is the largest unincorporated town in the United States. Its 27,000 inhabitants—mostly steel workers, of course—are thus deprived of even the usual appearances of “self-government” permitted under the capitalist democracy. The chief of the company police in Weirton informed an organizer for the Steel & Metal Workers Industrial Union that “a machine gun was ready for him any time he was seen in town.”

To further bolster up their power the steel barons deliberately pit nationality against nationality, race against race, so that the ranks of the workers may be divided and demoralized. Watching over all the workers, regardless of race or nationality, is a huge spy system to ferret out “dangerous thoughts” and to weed out those who think them.

This need not discourage the militant workers nor union organizers. “Against this terror the workers are helpless only because they do not choose to assert themselves,” says Mr. Davis, pointing out that, “The American steel workers have a tradition of struggle which goes back more than eighty years.” In 1849 puddlers in Pittsburgh went on strike from December until the following May and nearly forty-five years later there occurred the epic Homestead strike, when strikers fought an all-day battle with armed Pinkerton detectives. Strikes burst out sporadically before the World War, to be climaxed by the Youngstown strike of 1916, in which the strikers won all their demands. The greatest of them all, of course, was the 1919 strike, in which 365,000 workers, under the leadership of William Z. Foster, struck in the face of what was perhaps the greatest terror organized in this country in peacetime, and which was crushed as much by the treachery of the A. F. of L. officials as it was by the open violence of the companies and the government.

It is in dealing with situations such as these that the book's greatest weakness appears. It fails to dramatize the important events in steel's history—the steel trust's calm robbery of the federal government while prating of its “patriotism”; the steel companies' practice of selling their goods to “enemy” countries during the war while whooping it up for their workers to enlist and fight; the heroic struggles of the poorly organized steel workers against tremendous odds. This failure to arouse the reader over the corporations' hypocrisy and over the courage and actual sacrifice of the workers is apt to blunt the book's appeal to those to whom it is mainly directed—the workers.

But this is rather a minor objection to a

book which shows how steel jobs are steadily vanishing with the contraction of markets, the development of labor-saving machinery, and the competition of other metals; how “The ship-building industry was asked to contribute, and probably did contribute heavily to the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt, who had long been known as a ‘big navy’ man and who on assuming office promptly started building warships in a fierce race with Japan and Great Britain”; how “workers slaved in the mills in order that U. S. Steel common” might “rise from a low of \$8.38 per share in 1905 to a high of \$366.45 in 1930”; how these workers have been betrayed time without number by officials of the A. F. of L. union in the industry—the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel & Tin Workers; and how today the only active and honest organizing campaign is being conducted by the left-wing Steel & Metal Workers Industrial Union.

Actually, it is almost impossible to review the book, so wide is its scope and so detailed its treatment—a treatment for which, in the financial sections, Kalmun Hecht of the Pen & Hammer deserves great credit. To thoroughly appreciate the book—buy a copy!

JAMES STEELE.

Fog in the Mountains

Past Masters, by Thomas Mann. Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.50.

MANY of these essays are on huge subjects: *The Suffering and Greatness of Richard Wagner*; *Nietzsche and Music*; *Tolstoi*; *Freud's Position in the History of Modern Thought*; *Culture and Socialism*. They are written broadly, almost impersonally, and with the responsibility of greatness. But they were written over a long period of time; they reflect the various fortunes of the German nation. If the reader feels himself among mountains, it is in many weathers, with many changes of perspective. Even words are fluid and shifting in meaning. Terms like Revolution and Romanticism, Progress and Reaction, are so detached from permanent reference that at times they become little more than useful containers. What of unity and assertion is felt in the book comes not from Mann's ideas, but from his position, so to speak, in space. He stands quite consciously at the terminus of capitalism and bourgeois culture; he pays his tributes to the nineteenth century, to the giant burdens under which it staggered, to the inevitable destruction which it faced, with a calm and hopeless loyalty.

Mann analyzes the nineteenth century most thoroughly in his essay on Wagner, one of its completest representatives, and like it, “social-revolutionary in youth, in age paling into the ritual and thaumaturgic,” set up finally as an imperial institution. Mann follows his master Nietzsche, who broke with Wagner because he refused to cure his romantic sickness, because he humored it with luxury and upholstery, because he concealed the conflicts within himself behind endless melody and conscience-

less art. The essay makes a useful distinction between two kinds of Romanticism: the nostalgic, irresolute, death-bound Romanticism of Wagner, with its easy flight to beauty, and the "revolutionary" Romanticism of Nietzsche. "The name of revolution," he says, "belongs only to the will that leads futurewards by the path of consciousness and resolution." He makes Nietzsche "a hero of that *ascesis* of the inner world which is the ethical side of revolution."

This Nietzschean struggle is opposed equally to the Enlightenment, the nineteenth century belief in ideas, which is the complement of Romanticism, and creator with it of moral decadence. In the political sphere it is expressed as atomic democracy. As a result of this opposition, Thomas Mann accepted during the war the Allied attack on *Kultur* as the only possible spiritual basis for battle. Although he knew of the manipulation of propaganda by "highly unspiritual" interests, he felt that the German people were a folk and not a nation, and that they should defend against democracy their concept of a non-political aristocratic culture. After the defeat, however, Mann came dramatically to the support of Social-Democracy because it had saved capitalism and the bourgeoisie when no one else was able or willing to. In the essay on Culture and Socialism he writes, "Life, with all that it holds of present and future, is beyond any doubt on the side of socialism. No mind turned lifewards—be it only on deliberately moral grounds, and without reference to its romantic and perhaps death-bound nature—but is driven to side with it and not with the party of bourgeois culture." But he is afraid of the death with which Marxism, as a child of the Enlightenment, may be tainted, and afraid that the "communist doctrine of salvation" does not do justice to the "fuller-blooded, deeper, more tragic conception of life," which the Enlightenment cannot understand. Mann wants a compromise between Greece and Moscow, a mingling of Marx and Nietzsche.

Mann is pushed to this realization of the future of the proletariat by a far greater danger to culture than lies in the arguments of Herr Settembrini. To a Marxist the most satisfying passages in the book occur in the essay on Freud with its brilliant polemics against fascist ideology. Mann welcomes the emphasis in Freud on the daemonic, the subterranean in man, because he thinks it is on the road away from intellectual sterility toward the deepening of consciousness of life, toward greater self-control and understanding. But he sees the dangers in this tendency, and makes a distinction similar to the distinction he made for Romanticism, a distinction between psychologism and myth. The myth is being used as an instrument of reaction by those who hate the future, by the decadent bourgeoisie, the chthonic crew, the Fascist priests of the dynamistic orgasm. "Backwards is the cry," he says of contemporary philosophy, "back into the night, the sacred primitive, the fore-known, the life-bearing; backwards into the romanti-

cal, pre-historical mother-womb. That is the language of reaction." Those who speak the language are completely bound to the past, but they put on the garb of youth and revolution. But psychology, Mann believes, is revolutionary, not only for the individual through its increase of consciousness, its development of will, but for society. Our present society, in so far as it is stable at all, has the stability of a weak-willed neurotic who has adjusted himself to his repressions. The will must break down these inferior forms, and create temporary disorder for the sake of a higher order.

The ideas in these essays are very loosely held together, and because the volume puts the ideas of some twenty years on the same plane without regard to chronology, they are often confused and contradictory. Mann speaks in dialectic terms, but his historical method is not clear, and the welding of opposites often produces strange progeny. Mann's ambiguous attitude toward the proletariat makes greater unity and clarity impossible. But at the same time he is so completely and critically class-conscious as a member of the bourgeoisie that many of his observations are extremely illuminating, and easily assimilable in a Marxist interpretation. OBED BROOKS.

Notes on Pamphlets

BROOKFIELD PAMPHLETS, by Virgil Geddes; 2. *Towards Revolution in the Theatre*; 3. *The Theatre of Dreadful Nights*; 4. *The Melodramadness of Eugene O'Neill*. *The Brookfield Players* \$.25 each.

Mr. Geddes is very angry, and that is an excellent thing. He has the courage to say that most intelligent people can endure the drama, just as they can endure the movies, only because they school themselves to apply lower standards than they would think of applying to the novel or to poetry. He knows, moreover, that the capitalist system is responsible for the low level of the drama, and he predicts the emergence of a revolutionary workers' theatre. Yet, in *The Theatre of Dreadful Nights*, he appeals to the New York play producers to raise the level of the drama—which is precisely as sensible as it would be to appeal to Mr. Morgan to inaugurate a socialist state. This means that Mr. Geddes is primarily useful as a gadfly. But he can sting, as the pamphlet on O'Neill shows, and, if he is a little indiscriminate about his stinging, that will do no harm. Most critics of the theatre spend their time buzzing, and sting only when a *Peace on Earth* is produced.

Two new pamphlets published by the Workers Library (2c each) explain what the New Deal means for the farmers. George Anstrom's *The Government Takes a Hand in the Cotton-Patch* is a model of simple, clear, sound analysis. Speaking always in terms of the concrete situation of the share croppers, it reveals the true character of the present crisis. John Barnett's *Farm-Dollar Blight* touches on the Agricultural Administration Act, infla-

tion, and other proposals for dealing with the farm situation. It also is simple and trenchant. Israel Amter, in *Why the Workers' Unemployment Insurance Bill?* (Workers Library, 2c), explains not only what unemployment insurance is but also how it can be won. Gil Green's *Youth Confronts the Blue Eagle* (Youth Publishers, 2c) deals with child labor, inadequacies and violations of the N.R.A., the failures of the A. F. of L., and ways of organizing young workers. *Equality, Land and Freedom* (League of Struggle for Negro Rights, 5c) contains the draft program submitted by the national council of the League, a bill of civil rights for the Negro people, and draft by-laws. It is a document of great interest and of historical importance in the struggle for Negro emancipation.

POEMS, by H. H. Lewis. B. C. Hagglund, publisher, 25c.

Lewis steadily improves, and, despite irritating mannerisms, is to be reckoned with. His particular gift is for epigram, terse, violent, earthy. Longer poems don't hold up very well, are effective in separate lines and not as a whole, but some of his four and eight line stanzas have the bite of a steel trap. Of course he needs discipline, but not the kind of discipline the nice critics prescribe. He is finding his own discipline in his contact with the soil and with farmers and workers, and when he has subjected himself to it a little more he will be a poet.

WHY COMMUNISM? by Moissaye J. Olgin. Workers Library, publishers, 10c.

This is an excellent pamphlet, not only for workers but also for intellectuals and other members of the middle class who are becoming interested in Communism. In brief scope and in simple, forthright language Comrade Olgin explains why the crisis has come about, what it means, and what the proposals of the capitalists for escaping from it actually involve. He then goes on to describe how the Communist Party functions and how it differs from reformist organizations. This is a pamphlet you can unhesitatingly recommend to friends who want to know what Communism really is.

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The Theatre

Peace on Earth

IN THE early weeks the financial records of the Theatre Union were kept in red ink. The reviews in the capitalist press were generally unfavorable. The capitalist press does not in this period openly attack a frankly working class drama like *Peace on Earth*. But the reviewers for the capitalist press adopt a snooty tone. Brooks Atkinson of the Times and Joseph Wood Krutch of the Nation, overlooking entirely the requirements of ordinary reporting that were obviously involved, competed with one another in their efforts to appear superior when *Peace on Earth* had its premiere. . . . Here is the way Mr. Krutch disposes of *Peace on Earth* in his most recent catalog of brevities on the current theatre: "Rather flat-footed propaganda against capitalist war; much liked by those who like that sort of thing." . . . Not knowing which way to jump, the New Republic straddled the fence, undergoing considerable discomfiture while giving itself a ride on the topmost rail.

Yet interest in *Peace on Earth* grew, as first-hand information got around in working class neighborhoods and meeting places and amongst intellectuals of the "left" persuasion, by means of word-of-mouth advertising.

Differences of opinion on one point or another were to be expected. The essential fact for these people was that *Peace on Earth* was their own kind of play. This dramatized protest against imperialist war was addressed especially to them by playwrights and a producing organization that were making common cause with them. The "superior" attitude of the critical caterers was either quickly forgotten or resented as both hostile and impertinent.

The main object of this week's contribution on the theatre is to urge the people who saw one of the early performances of *Peace on Earth* to see it again, without fail. If *Peace*

on *Earth* was an interesting and stimulating experience then, it is a stirring one now.

There come to mind several previous productions of plays that jabbed a lancet into a social ulcer. Some were highly encouraging and deserving of support. But nothing like this has happened before in American drama. Even now it is the only thing of its kind in America. However, that is not quite an adequate way of stating the case. The Theatre Union, the non-profit united-front producing organization that is responsible for *Peace on Earth*, which is its initial offering, gives every indication of being established permanently. Furthermore, it is being demonstrated nightly at the Civic Repertory Theatre that an ever-growing audience for this type of play exists. And other plays of this order are being written. Therefore, if *Peace on Earth* is the only thing of its kind it is also merely the first. More than 40,000 workers and students have already seen it. The attendance record may well reach 100,000 before it gives way to the Theatre Union's second play, which is now in preparation.

The production has been strengthened technically and has been generally integrated to a notable degree since the first night. And the acting company has responded to the increasing enthusiasm of the audiences. This response is plainly seen in the increased poise, confidence and definiteness of the performances.

Parts of the production are complicated as to cues, especially in lighting and other mechanical phases. In the early days of the play there was some confusion here. This has been eliminated. As far as the counter-response of the acting company to the audience is concerned, one factor in particular is worth mentioning. I was present at the premiere. And there the character and feeling of the audience was pretty well dominated by

the presence of the Broadway critics and other-hand-picked professional or semi-pro investigators into the state of American culture. It was altogether a cold house. Of the audience of today, composed as it is mainly of workers and close sympathizers, the opposite is true. The play has the effect of arousing it to a fine degree of solidarity. In the last analysis this is the outstanding feature of the occasion.

The applause at every climax of the drama becomes applause in the usual sense only in part; primarily the applause amounts to a theatre full of people joining in vociferous protest against imperialistic war, which is the play's theme. The play has the double effect of unifying and instigating. Nowhere else in the American theatre is this experience to be found.

The theme and story of the play are not to be endorsed unreservedly. There is weakness in the fact that the play is intended to focus the feelings of the audience on a certain university professor who is to be tried and executed for allying himself with the working class, in connection with a longshoremen's anti-war strike, and in the interest of abstract social justice. There is undoubtedly too much emphasis on Professor Peter Owens' individual sacrifice.

Apparently the authors lacked confidence in their ability to achieve the desired dramatic and emotional effect by basing their emphasis more directly on the working class itself, through its organized representatives in the play. In this connection it is illuminating to see that the most exciting fighting climax in the whole drama—the best "theatre"—comes at the moment when the German seaman goes over to the side of the American dockers and join their strike, on discovering that they have

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been imported as scabs to load, not soap, but gun cotton. It is important to observe that these characters have very little personal identity in the drama—and do not need it.

In spite of any or all reservations, *Peace on Earth* proves the possibilities of a workers' theatre movement. It is so many-sided an event that at the moment an insistence on the drama's weaknesses would be at the risk of drawing attention away from really essential considerations.

WILLIAM GARDENER.

YEGOR BULITCHEV AND OTHERS, the Artef production of Gorky's play, at the Heckscher Theatre. Directed by Benno Schneider, settings by Solotaroff. Translated into Yiddish by L. Feinberg.

Those who have eagerly awaited an American production of the first play in Gorky's new trilogy will be well rewarded by a trip to the Heckscher Theatre in Harlem some week end. The quality of the language, which is said to have contributed largely to the enthusiastic reception this play received on the Soviet stage, has lost none of its vigor and color in Feinberg's excellent translation into the Yiddish. Though the first act is uneven

in its development and at odd moments the stylization seems to submerge the characters, the direction and staging by Benno Schneider remain masterful, presenting New York with a mature and brilliant performance that easily outdistances the pulp of Broadway and Second Avenue.

Yegor Bulitchev and Others chronicles the end of a world as it was viewed by the Russian middle classes in the early months of 1917. Specifically, it is the story of the rich merchant Bulitchev, dying of a cancer, and of his family hovering about like vultures waiting to swoop down upon his fortune. But Gorky has infused this material with a profound insight so that he has succeeded in evoking from this clan the image of a class betrayed by its own corruption.

In the treatment of the Russian revolution as it was seen through the eyes of those it was called upon to destroy, Gorky's play has presented us with an answer to both the liberal aesthete and the sterile sectarian. Gorky has created a fresh, vigorous work with an impelling imagery that shames the sophomoric indulgences of Eugene O'Neill, and the American best.

And the fifteen curtain calls the cast received at the opening performance was far

more than the enthusiasm of a sympathetic audience. They were a testimonial to the mature acting of the entire cast and to the outstanding performances of Goldstein, Drute, Low, Gostinsky and Babad. The brilliant staging created group compositions that will not soon be forgotten. N. A.

The Screen

PHILIP LINDSAY, author of the novel *Here Comes the King* and historical adviser on the film, *The Private Life of Henry VIII*, writes:

"We have been pushed too close to the shoddy, vulgar, and brutal things of today; we are tormented by memories of the last war, frightened at the menace of another war; we have gone to the film for relaxation, for inspiration, for pleasure, and we have returned shocked and a little ashamed of our civilization. In future, however, we will be shown the great achievements of man in the past; we will see the heroic deeds and splendid women, and thus we will be taught that our civilization is not a crude, sudden growth—not a 'system,' as the Communists, in defiance of history, will call it—but that down the centuries man has been striving forward. . . . That is what costume films can make us realize. . . . Costume films . . . will bring back a sense of honor and honesty. . . . Costume films will bring color into life. . . . We need romance terribly today. Half of our present sense of futility is based on the lack of these old values that man has most carefully formed and treasured for centuries."

It is an expression of the ideology that governs the bourgeois film generally and its costume films specifically. It is because Garbo is as popular as she is, because Rouben Mamoulian has a reputation as a "Field General of the Films," and because *Queen Christina* (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer) is the first in a procession of historical costume films that special attention must be paid to this picture.

Had the director (and producer) stuck to the facts of history Greta would have been presented as the ugly, sickly, and sexually abnormal Queen of Sweden who had to abdicate her throne because of the threatened revolt of the peasants against the extravagance and oppression of the nobility. They wouldn't have wasted good footage on trivial love scenes (*à la* Eric von Stroheim) that didn't and couldn't exist between Christina and her Spanish lover (John Gilbert). The film would have shown us that people who dared protest against the exploitation of the peasants were tortured, quartered, and beheaded. It would have been a film with guts. It would have been a costume film with honesty and integrity. It would have (it is true) pushed us closer "to the shoddy, vulgar, and brutal things of today."

Both Mr. Lindsay's statement and Mr. Mamoulian's film are self-portraits.

IRVING LERNER.



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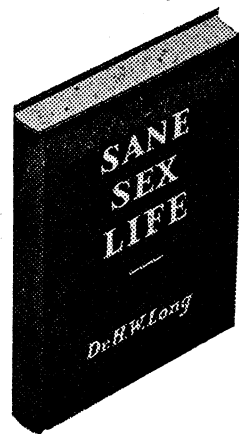
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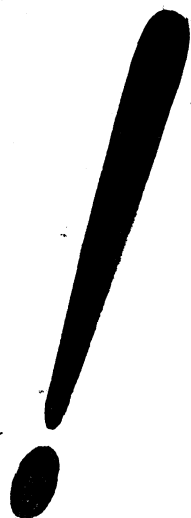
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