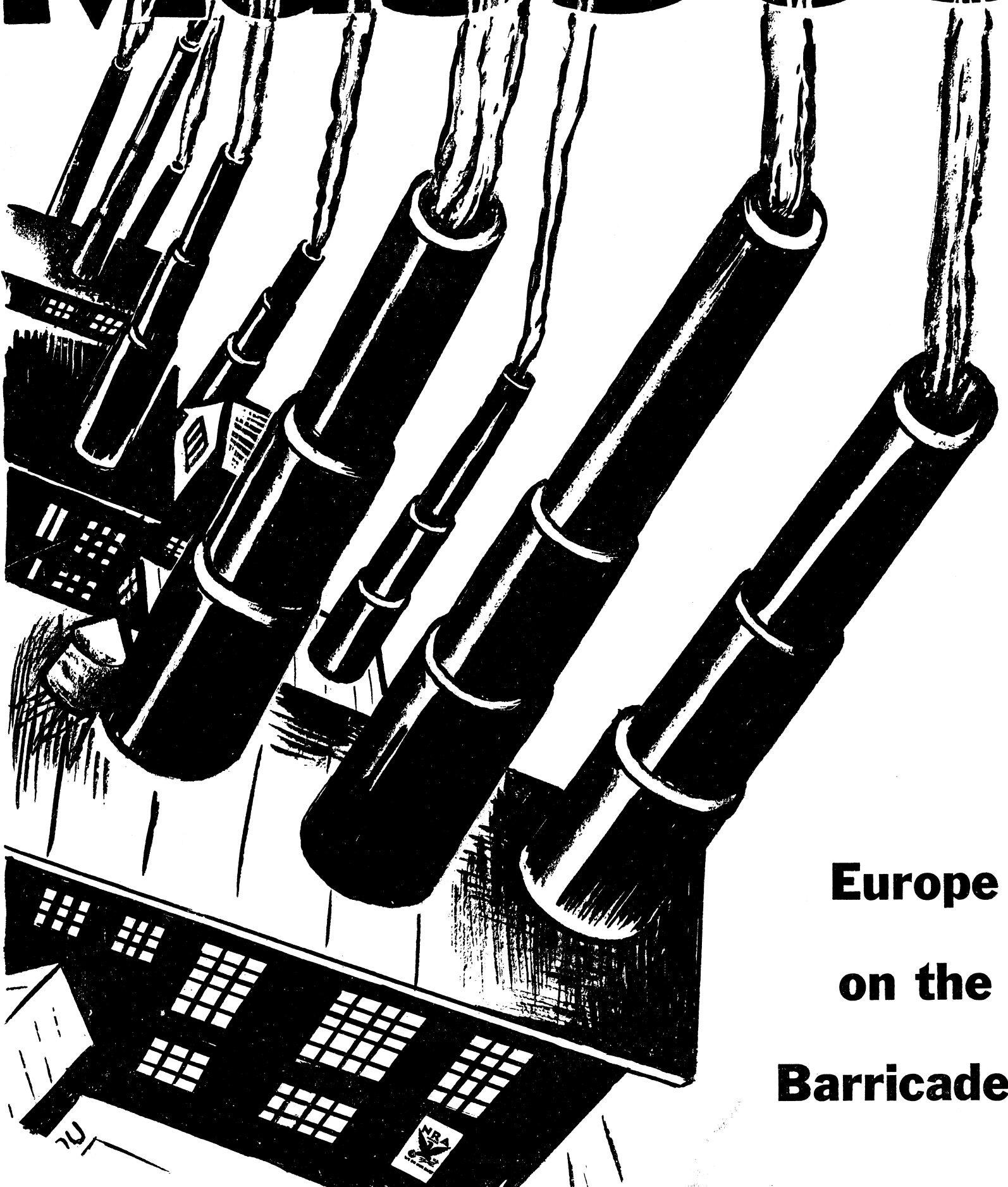


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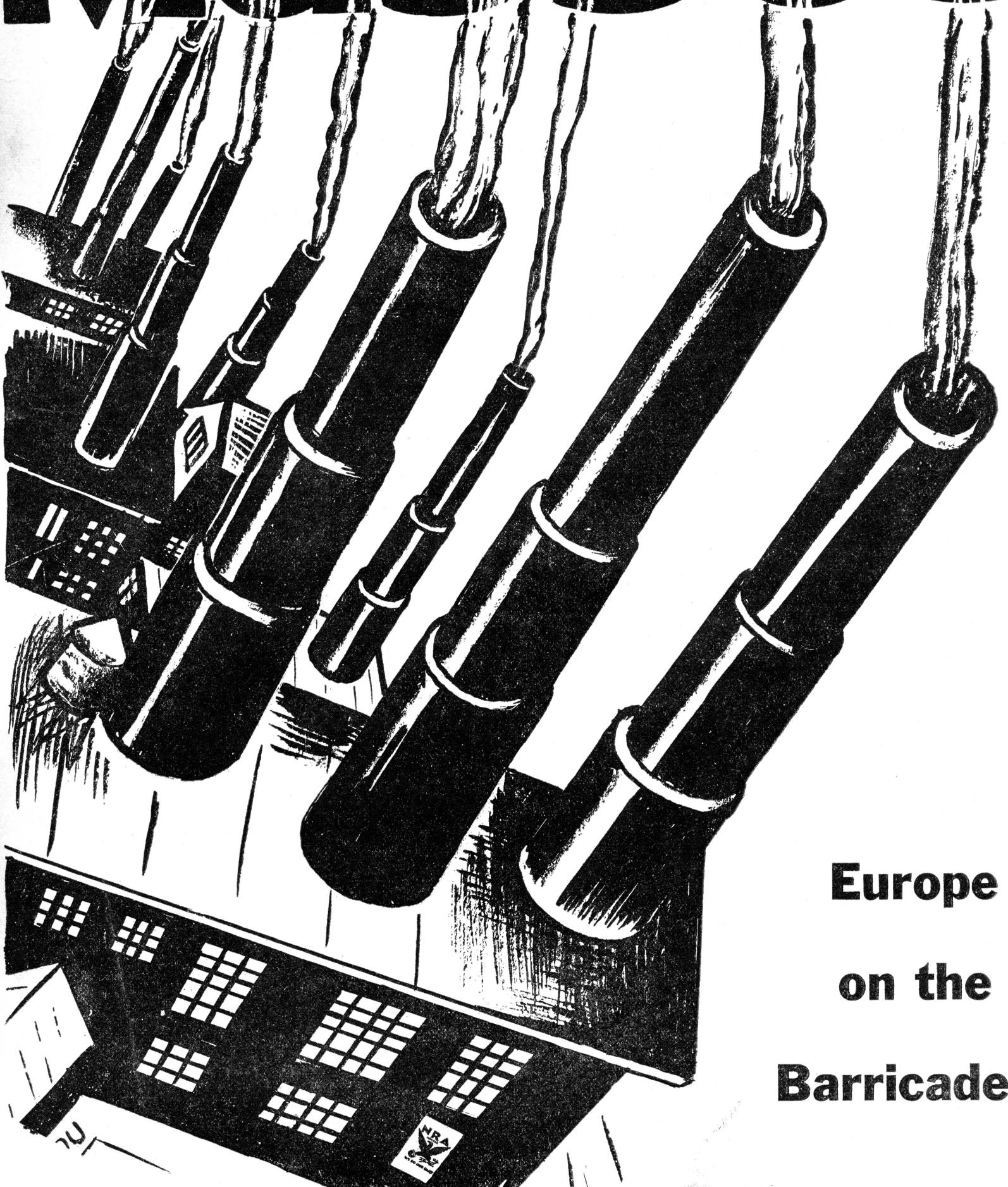
**Europe
on the
Barricades!**

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**Europe
on the
Barricades!**

America Is Moving Toward—

COMMUNISM

says CLARENCE A. HATHAWAY,
member Central Committee Communist
Party, and editor of the Daily Worker.

FASCISM

says LAWRENCE DENNIS, former
Secretary, United States Diplomatic Service,
and Associate editor of the Awakener.

Chairman: FRANK PALMER, Director, FEDERATED PRESS

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by JOSHUA KUNITZ

The Crossing, a poem
by JOSEPH FREEMAN

Phantasy in Blue Eyes
by EDWARD DAHLBERG

new Masses

FEBRUARY 20, 1934

"For justice thunders condemnation—
A better world's in birth."

AUSTRIA! France! Spain! Europe on the barricades. The world is afire with revolution and harbingers of revolution. Labor is breaking the chains, is rising, is storming the heavens. "We are entering a period of a new round of revolutions and wars," the Communist executive declared two months ago. It has begun! Today, tomorrow, or the next day, it will be Great Britain, or Germany, or Italy, or—yes, the United States. The oppressors, the forces of Fascism, their instruments, the military, the press, the radio, the pulpit, their Executive Committee, the State—they meet, argue, decide this today, that tomorrow; but events hem them in mercilessly. They see only one way out: WAR. Mussolini meets with the Defense Council: Intervention in Austria the question. (Two army divisions move to the border.) Berenger meets with the French Foreign Affairs Committee: Intervention in Austria the question. Sir John Simon meets with the Foreign Ministry: Intervention in Austria the question. And in Austria itself the heroic workers battle grimly for life. Defending, attacking, betrayed by the Social Democratic leaders, they wage war, man, woman and child, against the Fascism that closes in on them from two sides: the Nazi and the Heimwehr. The Paris Commune again! . . . Meanwhile the movies, the radios, the press in the United States carry through the jingo National Defense Week, drumming, hammering away, reiterating endlessly that more money, a bigger budget, higher taxes, are needed to bring the army, navy and air fleet to more than parity with all other nations. And across the world in Tokyo the House of Representatives passes the biggest war budget in Japanese history. At the bottom of page three, of the New York Times (Feb. 14) in an obscure four line dispatch from Sofia, we learn that "Twelve former sailors were sentenced to death today by a military court for alleged communistic activities in the Bulgarian Navy." The Dimitroffs of



William Gropper

every country, despite the headsman's axes of international hitlerism, are carrying on: are fighting false leaders, are fighting open enemies—underground today, on the barricades tomorrow, they are changing a world.

IT is still impossible to give a full account or a final analysis of what is really happening in Austria. This seems certain: that the outbreak is a spontaneous reaction to fascist provocation, that the fighting is sporadic, the workers are inadequately armed, unprepared, and have been betrayed by their Social Democratic leaders. They fight like lions against tremendous odds. According to the United Press correspondent, "The workers, in response to a Government ultimatum that they surrender, replied: 'The minute fire is opened upon us, compelling us to shoot

soldiers and making us liable to hanging, we intend not only to kill ourselves but also you and the rest of the city by blowing everything to eternity.'" The Associated Press correspondent tells of a group of twenty-five workers whom he had occasion to talk to "between skirmishes at the Leopoldaur Strasse barricade, in the factory area." Not one of the men had an overcoat or a whole pair of shoes. They looked worn, undernourished, and almost "fanatically determined." They said: "The government is trying to trample us down. That is the reason we fight. We realize our position looks hopeless, but there is only one death ahead of us anyway—it is starvation, or a bullet, or a rope." And, according to the New York Times correspondent, the workers are fighting with only "a few rifles and machine guns against the



Gropper



G. Holzer

steel-helmeted Heimwehr and the police and the regular Austrian troops equipped with howitzers and mine-throwers, tear-gas bombs and other paraphernalia. But it is a last-ditch fight and quite hopeless."

THE responsibility for the slaughter of the Austrian workers can be placed directly at the door of their Social-Democratic misleaders who through procrastinations, tinkering, compromise, cooperation with Dollfuss, and persistent promulgation of the dastardly "lesser evil" theory left the proletariat helpless and exposed to the onslaught of the fascist butchers. Endowing Dollfuss with "democratic" virtues, Otto Bauer, Social-Democratic leader, thus formulated not so very long ago the need for collaboration with the unspeakable Dollfuss: "The differentiation falls today not between democracy and the Proletarian Dictatorship, but rather between democracy and the fascist dictatorship." While the Communist Party, the vanguard of the revolutionary proletariat, was outlawed, while the most militant workers were being disarmed, the leaders of the Social-Democratic Party of Austria, and the leaders of Dollfuss' Christian Socialist Party had as recently as last Friday been clasping hands in public avowal of mutual friendship. Dollfuss played the game only too well. At the last moment the crafty Chancellor frankly spurned the Socialist flirtation and ingratiating proffers to help save Austria, and turned to Prince Ernst Rudiger von Starhemberg and his Heimwehr, adopting their demand for a Mussolini-backed fascist state and supporting them in their anti-Semitic and anti-working class program. Now the troops and howitzers of "democrat" Dollfuss and his fascist henchmen are mowing down hundreds of men, women and children of the heroic Austrian proletariat.

EVEN bourgeois observers, even a man like Frederick T. Birchall, New York Times correspondent in Vienna, can see how the dilly dallying of the Social-Democratic leaders tended to weaken the proletariat. "At the last moment a general strike was called by the Socialists," writes Birchall in the Times. "The general strike call came too late . . . A year ago the summons would have brought a quarter of a million workers into the streets (in Vienna alone) eager to meet their foes.



Kabot

But discouragement followed discouragement, and leadership is lacking. Socialism has again missed the boat." As in Germany, where the Social-Democrats preferred Hindenburg to the Communists ("lesser evil!") so in Austria where the Social-Democrats preferred Dollfuss' "democracy" to proletarian dictatorship ("lesser evil!"), the workers have been betrayed. Despite all obstacles, all hindrances, all betrayals, and all the persistent sabotage of the Social-Democratic leaders, the Austrian proletariat in this time of greatest stress, has demonstrated its magnificent fighting qualities. As the underground Communist Party has toiled for and urged day and night, the working-class has closed ranks—Socialist worker and Communist worker—in united front against the enemy. Our very last information is that the strongholds temporarily abandoned were recaptured by the indomitable Austrian workers, men and women fighting together.

REACTING instantaneously to the uprising of the workers in Austria, the Communist Party of the United States called for a mass demonstration before the Austrian Consulate in New York City. The Central Committee addressed the workers in these terms:

COMRADES! FELLOW WORKERS OF ALL PARTIES!

Our working class comrades, with true revolutionary heroism, are now shedding their blood in life and death struggle against the monster of Austrian Fascism. They are sweeping over the miserable, petty-fogging, Social-Democratic leaders, who, for over a year, have been keeping them from the fight by every conceivable,

degrading trickery! On the barricades, they have flung high the deathless banner of class war against the Fascist curse, the curse of capitalist military dictatorship! In the very fire of battle they are welding the steel of the United Front of the working class! Socialist workers! Workers in the unions, in the A. F. of L. locals! Comrades in the inexorable class struggle against capitalist exploitation and oppression! We too must fling high the banner of international proletarian solidarity! We too must clasp hands in unbreakable United Front against the fascist menace which every day grows more sinister in our country! Today, together, we must mass to show our hatred of Fascism, and our determination to crush it with our Proletarian Unity! All who hate the Fascist curse, mass in meetings, demonstrations everywhere, before Austrian Consulates! International Solidarity with our working-class brothers in Germany and Austria, now facing the Fascist machine guns and bayonets! Let us, in unconquerable working class unity, show them our answer!

WHAT does the Doumergue Coalition government signify but a tactic in the counter-revolutionary offensive of the bourgeoisie against the French working-class? In the last elections the so-called "Left" (Radical Socialists and Socialists) won a majority on a platform of "peace and social reforms," which it at once ignored upon entering office. It passed reactionary measures. It yielded when the "Right," pointing to the Hitler threat as an excuse, demanded increased armaments. But the "Left" and "Right" clashed over the method of balancing the budget; two cabinets collapsed when attempting to cut civil-service wages. Chautemps finally succeeded, to the discontent of both the "Right" (who claimed the reductions insufficient), and the civil service workers (who were already overburdened.) When the Stavisky scandal broke loose the "Right" prepared for a coup. Though compromised themselves — their leader, Tardieu, notorious racketeer, was involved in the Homs Bagdad and N'go-ko Sangha scandals—they organized with semi-fascists the recent violent demonstrations against the "government of thieves," and sufficiently scared the "Left" into accepting Doumergue's Coalition. The steel interests need a strong-arm cabinet for two reasons: to saddle the whole economic burden on the working class, and to be free to pursue an aggressive foreign policy (of which Doumergue's Feb. 13th note to Germany is an example.)



Kabat

WHAT was the role of the Socialists during this testing period? They repeatedly voted *with* the Radical Socialists. They supported reactionary legislation in order, they said, "to save the country from reaction,"—thus presenting a perfect parallel to the Social Democrats in Germany who supported all the lesser evils, and finally supported Hitler because even he was "less of an evil than revolution!" In one instance, when the Chamber called for a vote on Chautemps' civil-service wage-reductions the Socialists, to save face before the rank and file, rose up and left the Chamber in feigned indignation, thus helping the wage-cuts to be passed. Naturally, French workers had no reason to defend the "Left" government when it was attacked. After the evil was already accomplished the Socialists (through their Confederation of Labor) called a general "protest" strike. The Coalition had seized power by unconstitutional violence, but the Socialists took special pains to give the strike a "quiet character," urging workers to be "dignified" and "calm."

OF all the parties in France only the Communists fully understood the situation and offered a real solution. As our correspondent, John Strachey, cabled us on Feb. 8th, the French

Communist Party issued a manifesto pointing out "the basis of the crisis is the inability of the bourgeoisie to govern by old methods; it cannot carry out necessary cuts unless it arms itself with new weapons of terror; hence it turns to Fascism as refuge from the mounting revolutionary wave." Pointing to the disastrous results of the Socialist "lesser evil" policy, the Communist Party summoned all Socialist workers to join with their Communist comrades in a relentless united front which can alone defeat Fascism. That the manifesto has taken root is indicated by the response of Paris workers, the fraternization of workers and the soldiers of the 17th Regiment, as well as continued worker-demonstrations against the Coalition semi-fascist threat—Doumergue.

THE Rockefellers approved Rivera's mural until the last moment when he inserted the head of Lenin. The barbarous destruction of the fresco is therefore directed exclusively against the head of Lenin as the symbol of the world-wide struggle of the workers for their emancipation from capitalism and the establishment of a free classless society. The Rockefellers are among the leading exploiters of America. Their vandalism in art is primarily a political

act; it is an act of propaganda in behalf of the capitalist oppression, against the forces of liberation which find leadership and inspiration in Lenin. The massacre of the mural should be a dramatic object lesson to those who still suffer from the illusion that art is something above the social struggle. Art can be truly free only in a classless Communist society. Under capitalism art is at the mercy of the dominating class which, while hypocritically professing to love art, is ready to destroy it whenever it criticizes the existing order. The violence against Leninism in the realm of politics finds its equivalent in the realm of art. Let any one who doubts this consider Hitler's burning of the books and Rockefeller's destruction of Lenin's portrait.

ON Feb. 9th Roosevelt cancelled all existing air-mail contracts, following Senator Black's investigations which uncovered "sufficient evidence of collusion and fraud." Involved in corrupt subsidy- and contract-practices were Hoover's Assistant Secretary of Commerce, McCracken, as well as Hoover's Postmaster General Brown. Col. Lindbergh, who got over \$250,000 in stock and fees from the "infant industry," inserted a self-righteous toe into the situation with a protest to the White House, and got his toe badly stomped on. But the most significant result of this latest Roosevelt vigilance "directed against the interests" is the strategic tie-up now at the disposal of the War Department — automatic control of about 1,200 planes and 800 trained pilots. What a coincidence that all this has happened so curiously near to Roosevelt's National Defense Week! Or does this explain the purpose of the Roosevelt war administration's "uncompromising drive against corruption?"

OF course the airplane manufacturers have been profiteering on army contracts. The Assistant Secretary of War, Woodring, frankly admitted that 19.8 percent profit accrued to airplane firms on the \$61,000,000 spent by the army since 1926. But the actual profits were considerably greater since the 19.8 percent profit was based on costs submitted by the firms instead of on an audit of their books. For example, the Boeing Company admitted a 90 percent profit in 1932; and a five-year net of over \$12 million on an original investment of \$487,119. Wood-

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ring explained: "This is an infant industry. The United States wants to further the interests of this industry so essential to national defense." Wall Street, controllers of the aviation industry are not taking the revelations too seriously. Why should they, since J. Bruce Kremer, one of Boeing's "special assistants" who "kept close contacts with all government officials," was a Democratic National Committee member who played an important role in the Roosevelt machine at the Chicago nominating convention. Instead of worrying, Wall Street is looking forward to the \$200,000,000 which the army and navy will spend for 400 new planes. After all, aviation stocks led the January market advance, the figures ranging from 13 percent gain by United Aircraft to 230 percent gain by Wright Aeronautical. On the one hand, Roosevelt thunders against "the great interests," and on the other steers through a mammoth armament program which floods the treasuries of the same interests with vast funds taxed from the rest of the country. And the liberals, with their usual keenness, are shouting approval as the Roosevelt kettle calls the Hoover pot black.

THE following communication to the NEW MASSES from I. Amter, national secretary of the Unemployed Councils, exposes one of the means used by the capitalist class in its efforts to discredit and divide working-class movements.

It was simple for the capitalist press practically to ignore the conference of the delegation from the National Convention Against Unemployment with Mr. McIntyre, the President's secretary, except to make facetious remarks about the complaint of Comrade J. Paxton of Alabama. The reporter noted only one thing, namely that he asked for a mule. Paxton, however, said a few more things, one of them being that in order to get a C.W.A. job in his territory in Alabama you have to have a political drag. McIntyre pretended to be completely ignorant of such conditions within the C.W.A. administration and taking out a slip of paper said he would look into the matter at once.

However, after reading the report in the Washington papers Paxton issued a statement to the Washington Star, which contained the first report and editorial, in which he said "I want to say that all the mules in the U.S.A. would not keep myself nor my wife from working to better the conditions of the starving millions of this country." And he added a postscript

as follows: "Speaking of mules I think your reporter is a jackass."

McIntyre showed clearly that he believed he would be able to bribe Comrade Paxton, who is a splendid Southern type, by getting him a mule. He thought that he would be able to cause a division between him and the Negroes of the South. But Paxton stated quite clearly "We are getting together—the unemployed in Southern Alabama—in a way to surprise everyone because it is a hot-bed of the Ku Klux Klan and Negro discrimination, and we are going to force them to give us a whole lot better treatment in the South or you will be hearing a whole lot more from the South than you have been hearing."

The Convention itself was a splendid manifestation not only of the unity of Negroes and whites, but of a determination to carry on the fight not merely to relieve the situation of the individual delegate or worker, but for the whole mass of unemployed and part-time workers and for the adoption of the Workers Unemployment and Social Insurance Bill.

DESPITE the nation-wide demand that the C.W.A. program be extended, Roosevelt continues to stick to

his policy of "hard-boiled relief." Under gag-rules the House of Representatives passed a bill appropriating \$950 million for general relief expenditures. But only one-third of this amount is designed for the C.W.A. The rest will be used for *all* relief expenditures until July 1, 1931. Since the present C.W.A. funds are already reported exhausted, the C.W.A. can only continue for five or six weeks after this date with the new funds, unless the whole program is "tapered-off." The tapering-off process has already started. Thousands of workers are being dropped on the grounds of agitation, laziness, drunkenness, etc. C.W.A. workers suffered a general pay-cut of 20 to 40 percent. And white-collar workers on C.W.S. projects suffered 20 to 40 percent cuts through being reclassified. On top of this, most of them had their wages cut an additional 22 percent. Relief administrator Harry L. Hopkins is preparing C.W.A. workers for Feb. 15. From that date on, 500,000 workers are to be dropped every week. The C.W.A. workers are not taking this lying down. Spontaneous protests and strikes are on the increase.

Ivan to the Dnieper

MYRA PAGE

Our hammers ring
Glad shouts on the air
Tempo! Tempo!

My straw boots jig
And stomp concrete
Because we lack machinery
My straw boots jig—
*Nichevo!** Come on!
Davai!* Davai!
Tempo! Tempo!

Yesterday Dnieper
Who was I? Tell me,
Tempo! Tempo!

Ivan Ivanovich
Pashkov
Crafty *muzhik**

Ignoramus
Cheat

Nichevo! Come on!
Davai! Davai!
Tempo! Tempo!

See our cranes swing
Above dark caverns
Tempo! Tempo!
Disemboweled the earth
Conceiving
A new world
in birth
The heavens cry out—

Davai! Davai!
Tempo! Tempo!

Today, who am I?
Tell me, Dnieper,
Tempo! Tempo!

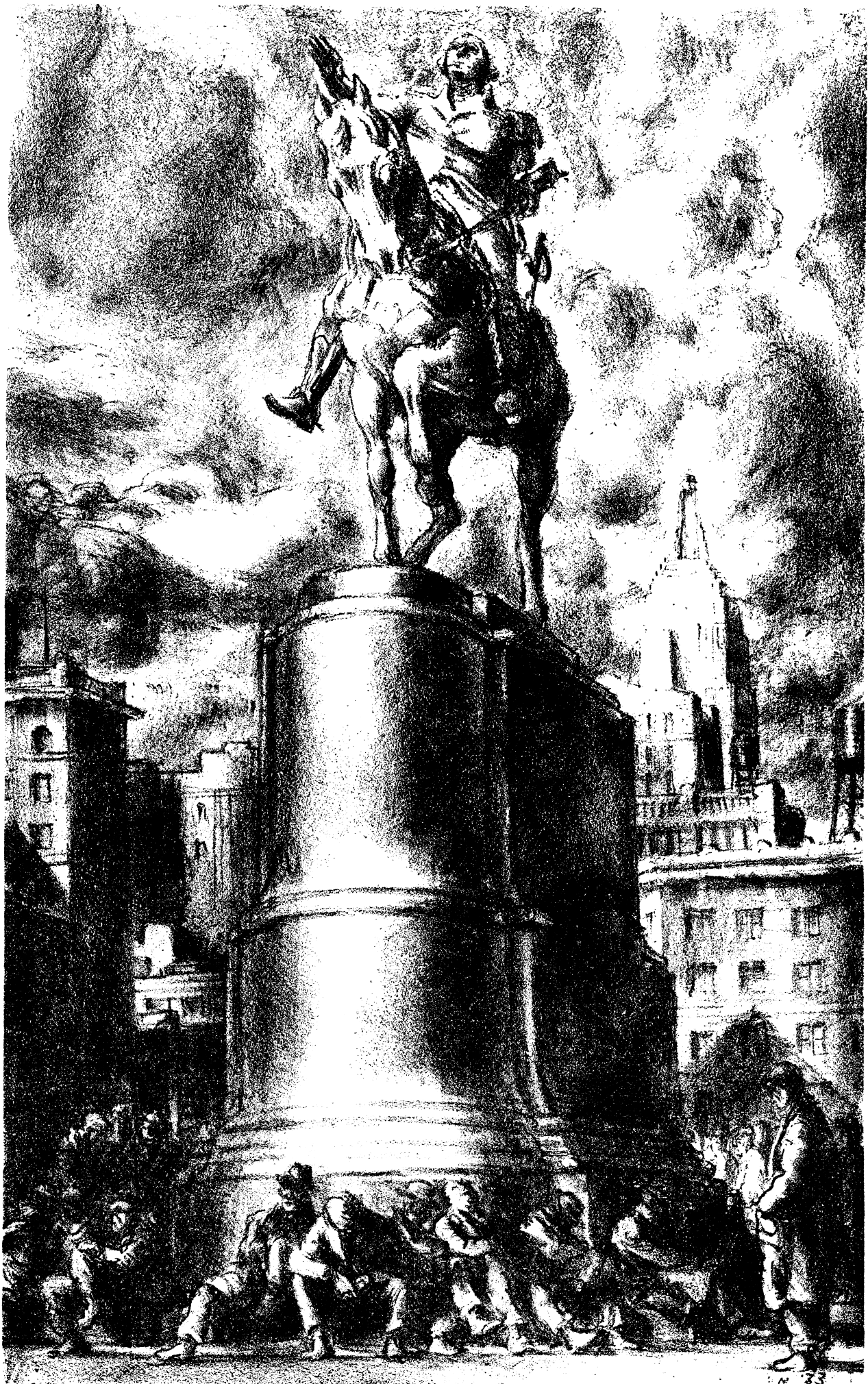
Today—Worker
Champion
Udarnik—I!
A new Ivan
Creating our Dnieprostroï
Bravo! Bravo!
Davai! Davai!
Tempo! Tempo!

Come on, old Dnieper,
Flood your gates
Tempo! Tempo!

My green-eyed beauty
We've chained you fast.
Whirl our turbines
In your depths! Churn
Electric power
For all Ukraine.

Come on old vixen,
Davai! Davai!
Tempo! Tempo!

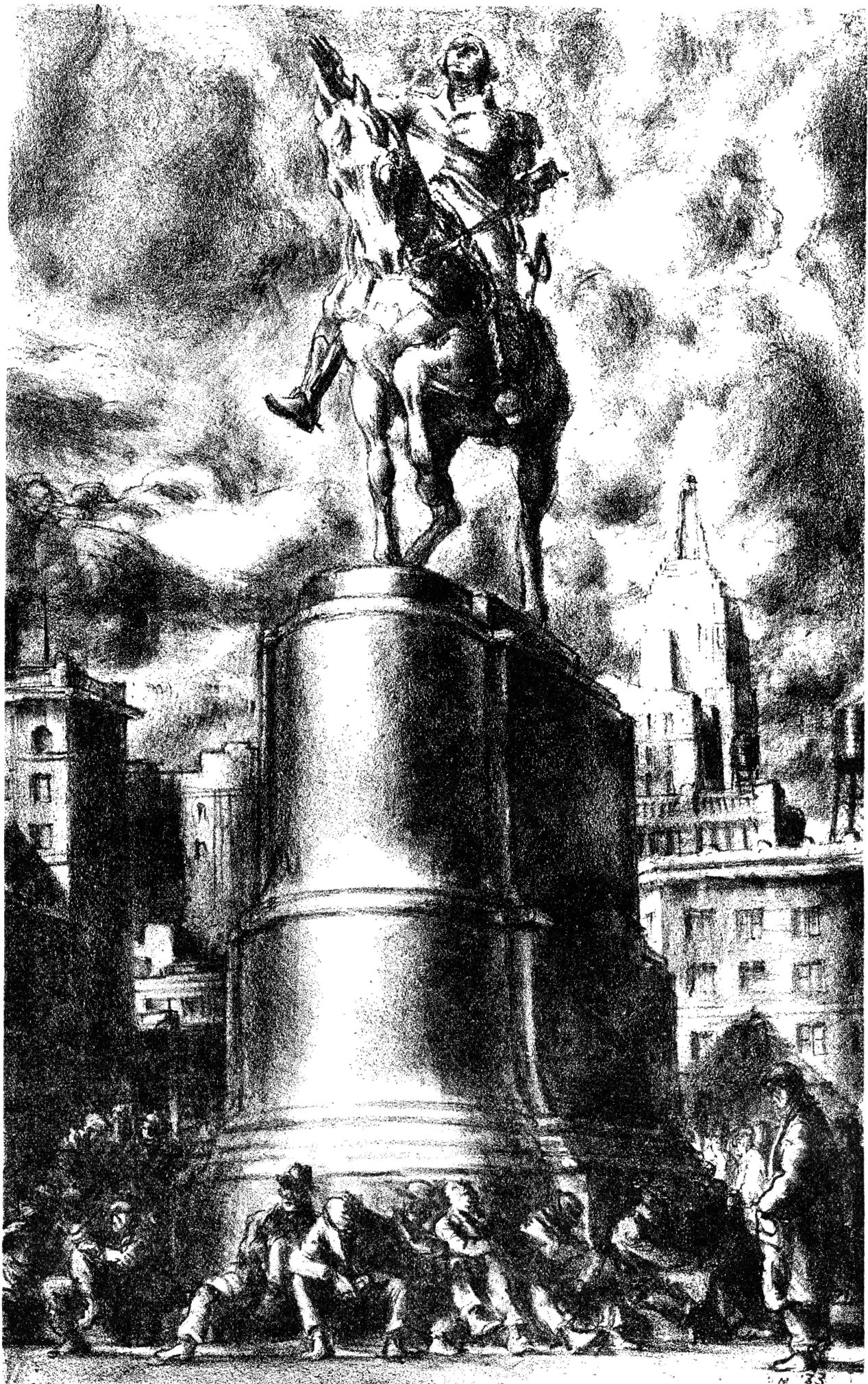
Nichevo: Never mind! Who cares!
Davai: Give! Let 'er have it!
Muzhik: Benighted villager, or backward peasant farmer.
Udarnik: A term used to designate the best of the best.



(A Contemporary Print Group Lithograph)

BIRTHDAY PARTY

Reginald Marsh



(A Contemporary Print Group Lithograph)

BIRTHDAY PARTY

Reginald Marsh

Disguised as Marxists

“THE theoretical victory of Marxism forces its enemies to disguise themselves as Marxists.” When Lenin said this Marxism had not yet gained the tremendous practical victories now evident in the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. The greater the accomplishments, the greater the need of the enemy to camouflage.

Self-labelled Marxists, or gentlemen knighted by the bourgeois press as the true exponents of Marxist revolutionary philosophy, are thrown into prominence for the purpose of thwarting the real Marxist movement—the Communist International. They appear here, there and everywhere. Every country has its batch. Wherever they appear their cardinal tactic is calumny, slander, lies. They coagulate in unstable formations: of different consistency and varying orientations. Today to the left—tomorrow to the right. At times they even manage to be both left and right. But always they proclaim themselves supreme “Marxists.”

One characteristic they have in common: hostility to the Communists. Composed of partylets and fragmentary groups, of generals without armies and renegades from the revolutionary movement, they shout the same slogan in different tongues: “Down with the Communists, down with the Third International.”

Their tactic is plain: to shunt the leftward moving masses from Communism.

Let us examine the setting in which they operate: a background of capitalist decay, of devastating unemployment, of menacing imperialist conflicts.

The winter of 1934: what do we find? Newspapers no longer conceal, they blazon war. The imperialists are at loggerheads. In the United States they proclaim National Defense Week from Lincoln’s to Washington’s birthday. Hitler schemes *Anschluss* with Austria while the French imperialists, his implacable enemies, frantically try to effect a united front with those of Italy and Great Britain. The League of Nations is discredited and Locarno belongs to the past. (Will Great Britain and France send troops to Austria? Is Austria 1934’s Sarajevo?) In the United States N.R.A. under liberal guise prepares Fascism and war. (Is the New Deal the New Freedom—and

the War to End War—all over again?) Waiting for the spring weather stands Japan. The war-lords put through the biggest appropriation for the military in Japan’s peace-time history. (Will the Jap legions cross the Siberian frontier tomorrow—or the day after?)

In this period, capitalism’s principal support since the World War—the leaders of the Social Democracy—shares the general capitalist decay. They capitulated to Hitler in Germany; they play the game of the imperialists in Great Britain and France. They delayed the action of the Austrian masses, using their infamous tactic of the “lesser evil” until the working-class, goaded to desperation by two Fascist movements, smashed the restraint and broke into rebellion. In this country whole sections of the Socialist Party are disaffected; many join the Communist Party and allied organizations; in the A. F. of L. too the rank and file is in a ferment; revolting against the class-collaboration of the Greens and Wolls, the gangsterism of the Lewises; groping towards class conflict.

Millions of workers and impoverished strata of the middle class are now seeking new roads. The capitalists too seek new roads; roads that may lead the masses to a new No Man’s Land. But the masses see the guideposts of the Communist International—pointing to the example of the Soviet Union. There alone hunger has vanished; exploitation ceased; and the foundation for a classless society has been built.

Vast masses must realize that at this moment of Communist success the capitalists of the world parley, bicker, hedge, compromise, hoping to achieve the unity sufficient to transcend their inescapable competitions in order to attack and destroy the U.S.S.R.; to apportion among themselves its vast steppes newly flowering with gigantic industrial enterprises; its collectivized wheat fields which this year yielded a record crop.

As the masses move to the left the noxious gases of capitalist and reformist propaganda pervade the atmosphere; to dispel the unity and to scatter confusion, distrust, despair. Hitlerism in Germany is described as the greatest setback in the history of the working-class: the reverse side of the medal is ignored, of course; that only a moribund

capitalism, gathering its final strength, would dare try to foist the medievalisms of Fascism upon the working-class awakening to consciousness of power. The compromisers, the bourgeois ideologues, the renegades from the ranks of Communism, the cowardly, the weak, the confused, acclaim in chorus the “collapse” of “both Internationals”—the Socialist and the Communist. The aim is to obscure the growing power of the Communist International which has won Russia for the working-class; which has won Soviet regions in China with 60,000,000 population; the Communist International whose sections in every nation carry on, fighting against war and Fascism, meeting victory, meeting temporary defeat—sometimes erring, always learning, advancing stubbornly, guided by the principles of Marxism and Leninism. This international is decried by the reformists whose own line leads to defeat and betrayal (witness their chauvinist role in the World War; in the revolutions following the war; witness their participation in the game of the imperialists in Britain, their capitulation to the Fascists in Germany: their criminal dilatoriness for which the heroic Austrian workers are now paying so dearly).

As the true revolutionary movement grows, the pseudo-revolutionaries gain the support—either open or covert—of the ruling-class in order to halt the dangerous party. Proclaiming “the failure of both Internationals” (in order to divert attention from the collapse of the Socialist bureaucracy) they instigate a movement for a 2½ international: a repetition of the weary history of 1920-23. Some of these “Marxists” would rather label it a Fourth International to prove they are “more revolutionary” than the Communists themselves.

In the name of unity they attempt to split the leftward-moving masses. These microscopic groups and “parties” held an international conference several months ago in Paris: included were the German Socialist Workers Party, the Dutch Independent Socialist Party, the British Independent Labor Party, the renegade Communist groups like the French Pupistes, the Swedish Kilbon “Communist Party” the so-called Bureau of the Left Opposition (Trotsky-

ists) and even the Russian Socialist revolutionary left group. This conglomeration of insignificant groups condemned the "utter bankruptcy of the policies and the organizations of the Second and Third Internationals." They demanded the "recreating of the international movement of the working-class." They applied the epithets "degenerate, counter-revolutionary" to the Communist International. Pretending objection to Communist "organization and tactic" they really urged a war against Communist principle.

Communists make no claim to be oracles: but applying the scientific method of dialectical-materialism, they can and do foretell economic trends and political consequences. As Earl Browder, general secretary of the Communist Party, U.S.A. declared:

In every country, Social-Democracy endeavors to protect itself against the trend of the masses to Communism by setting up left-wing groupings, by a certain division of labor, whereby they attempt to pacify their followers with left phrases while continuing essentially the same policies of their official parties. This is the problem in England of the struggle against the leaders of the Independent Labor Party, who sabotage the decision for unity. This is the problem in the United States of the struggle against farmer-laborism and against those specialized sub-divisions of the farmer-labor party idea, the Muste group, the renegades, and the third party elements of the bourgeoisie.

Practically every capitalist country duplicates this phenomenon. Yesterday's

liberals become today's "arch-revolutionaries" and join forces with renegades and misleaders. In the United States we discover the emergence of such groups: John Dewey's muddled program for a Farmer-Labor Party, the so-called American Workers Party, the Lovestone and Trotsky fragments, the Common Sense (!) group; all under the guidance of confused, inept, opportunistic, or outright dishonest individuals who croak variations to the same falsehood, "the bankruptcy of the American Communist Party and the Third International."

With the menace of Fascism and war, the need of the masses for unity and support of the Communist International is of paramount importance. And it is at this time these adventurers and counter-revolutionaries combine to try to befuddle and split the potential adherents to the Communist Party. A single army of the working-class is needed, not detachments careening in various directions: a unified force guided by the principles of Marxism, not the unprincipled coalition of enemies to the Communist Party.

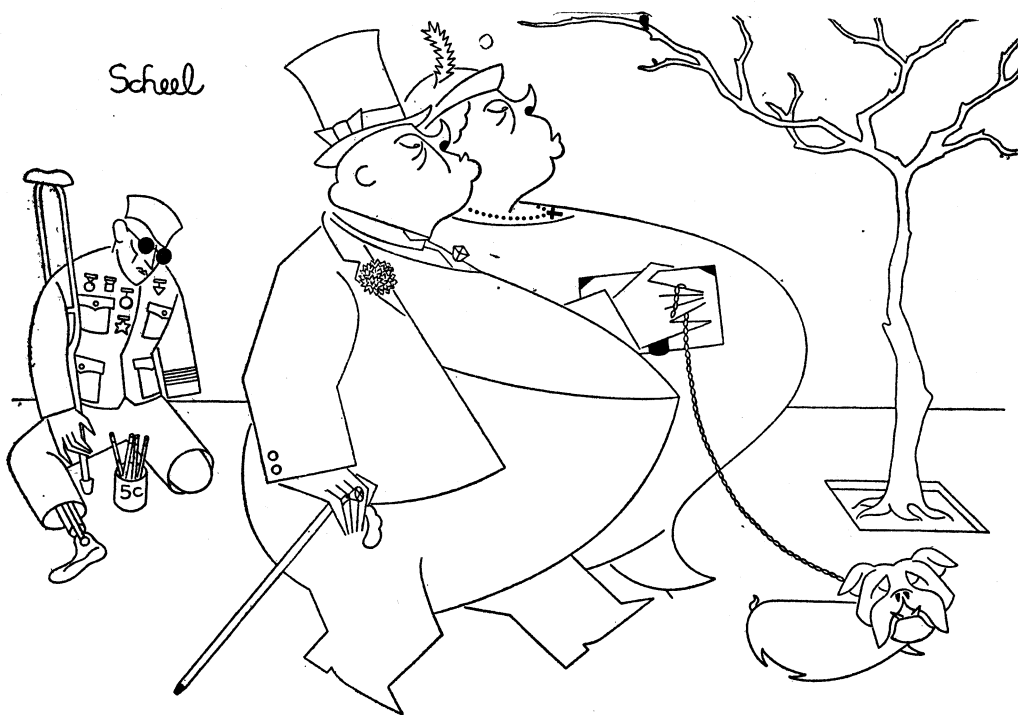
The miscellany of oppositionists has one direction—the high road to reformism and Fascism. But these "revolutionaries" who attack the Communists and their representatives, such as the Dimitroffs and Torglers, will not ultimately be able to send the masses off on a tangent. As the thesis adopted by the executive committee of the Communist International, at their thirteenth plenary session, declared:

Even the most savage terror which the bourgeoisie employs, in order to suppress the revolutionary movement, cannot, in the conditions when capitalism is shaken, for long frighten the advanced stratum of the toilers and restrain it from taking action; the indignation which this terror has aroused even among the majority of the workers who followed the social-democrats, makes them more susceptible to Communist agitation and propaganda.

When the bourgeoisie reorganizes its tottering dictatorship on a fascist basis in order to create a firm solid government, this, in the present conditions, leads to the strengthening, not only of its class terrorism, but also of the elements which disrupt its power, to the destruction of the authority of bourgeois law in the eyes of the broad masses, to the growth of internal friction among the bourgeoisie and to the acceleration of the collapse of its main support—social-democracy.

However, these groups inimical to the revolution—to Communism—may, if not exposed before the masses—confuse and in a degree hinder the march of the proletariat and its supporters from the lower strata of the middle class. The NEW MASSES will in forthcoming issues analyze and lay bare their programs and personnel. Time is short! The new round of revolutions and wars foretold by the Communists has already begun. The world rocks with rebellious demonstration and revolution.

The nearer the final conflict the more sordid the activities of these "Marxists." If they had an ounce of honesty, of sincerity, of true identification with the masses, would they ever unite forces with the capitalists against the Communists? The leaders of the so-called American "Workers" Party, those toilers, Salutzky-Hardman, Dr. Sidney Hook, the Rev. A. W. Muste, Ludwig Lore, V. F. Calverton, the "Marxian critic," (most of them renegades from the Communist Party) who prate of a new party in the name of "unity"—a "native" party, a "national" party, an "American" party, remind one of another party once formed in Germany: the *National Socialist Workers Party*: the Nazis. There the emphasis too was on "National." We warn the masses that these alleged "communists"—these "Marxians," but native "Marxians," appear dangerously like the harbingers of Fascism in this country. We cannot repeat too often Lenin's observation, "The theoretical victory of Marxism forces its enemies to disguise themselves as Marxists."



Theodore Scheel

Scheel



Theodore Scheel

Lying about Labor

IT TURNS out that "Labor is Free." John J. Leary, Jr., writes it, Raymond Moley as editor approves it, and Vincent Astor pays the bills for publishing the glad news. It's all in Today, the house organ of the Roosevelt administration, issue of Feb. 10. There are other items in the issue deserving attention—an astounding outburst of lyrical praise for the (war-program) C.C.C. camps by Sherwood Anderson, and an equally whole-hearted endorsement of Roosevelt by Carl Sandburg, who compares him favorably with Lincoln—but for the present we confine our attention to the Leary-Moley-Astor effort.

Hailed as the new Magna Carta of the working man, N.R.A. has brought verity to the age-old dream of labor—Labor is Free.

This is the conclusion they announce. Now, we don't want to accuse Leary or Moley or Astor of lying—to labor. A lie is defined as a false statement which is calculated to deceive; and no working man or woman who under N.R.A. has joined in any collective effort for more wages, shorter hours, recognition of a union, or any other fundamental right of labor, and who has thought about the results, and the strikebreaking role of the N.R.A., will be deceived for a moment by the Leary-Moley-Astor thesis.

But they do lie *about* labor, they lie to those who haven't felt at first hand the anti-labor blows of the Roosevelt administration; they lie by wholesale and by retail, they lie openly and unabashedly, with the triple enthusiasm of paid liar (Leary), liar by choice (Moley), and liar as beneficiary (Astor).

Lie Number 1—There is not a place in the country where one may not, legally and without fear of interference on the part of the courts, urge by word of mouth and the printed page the formation and maintenance of trade unions.

What about the 15,000 California cotton pickers who were openly terrorized last fall? What about the 5,000 lettuce pickers in the same section? And the 6,000 grape-pickers? What about the Ambridge, Pa., strike brutally crushed by State Police, where a sheriff ordered the shooting of a striker? What about the strike of the 12,000 shoe-workers in New York last fall, when

the courts issued an injunction to any shoe company that applied for one? What about the employees of the Brooklyn Edison Company? What about the Utah miners who were legislated against by a court injunction prohibiting picketing?

Lie Number 2—Company unions have enlisted approximately 1,164,294 workers—the trade unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor claiming the remainder.

Company unions have totalled approximately 5,000,000 men (Labor Research Assn. statistics); A. F. of L. includes approximately 2,500,000. The independent unions and Trade Union Unity League unions comprise 200,000. What does this mean? Comparing company unions with trade unions we find 5,000,000 versus 2,700,000; that is, the *anti-union organizations are now twice as powerful as the trade-unions*. Furthermore, company unions have added about 3,800,000 whereas independent and T.U.U.L. unions have added 200,000 and the A. F. of L. 500,000. In other words under the N.R.A. "Magna Carta" the anti-union organizations have grown more than five times as fast as trade unions. And this is supposed to prove that "Labor Is Free!"

Lie Number 3—Using the A. F. of L. as synonymous with "trade unions," Leary-Moley-Astor say it has "organized or sought to organize all workers in groups, no matter where their employment and regardless of employer."

It is well known that the A. F. of L. jimcrows all Negroes (the Pullman porters are an all-Negro group). For example, discrimination against Negroes wishing to become members in the building trades is a notorious case. And only a month ago the weekly A. F. of L. news service announced that although its executive council *now* believes that Negro workers should be organized, there are no funds available for this purpose! Why not cut some of the \$25,000 salaries and expenses at present flowing into the pockets of A. F. of L. officials? After all, even bank-presidents' salaries have been cut in these days!—But we shall return to this point again.

Lie Number 4—The company union

drive seems for the moment at least to have lost its force.

The newspapers are full of the Weirton situation. For four months the company has been trying to force a company union on its workers without allowing them to vote. And what about the notorious case of the Budd corporation? What about the captive mines in West Virginia now busily forcing company unions? What about the Pennsylvania Railroad at Altoona—in fact, the whole railroad industry where it is difficult to find an exception to the rule of company unionization? As a matter of fact, because of the active coöperation and the silent consent of the N.R.A. Labor Boards, company unionization is undeniably on the increase.

Lie Number 5—All union labor experience proves that, save in time of acute labor shortage such as prevailed during the 1916-1920 war boom period, it is next to impossible to organize the unskilled or semi-skilled men.

The Trade Union Unity League has led unskilled workers in the Metal Workers Industrial Union in a dozen successful strikes. It led the nut-pickers in St. Louis in a series of strikes which won wage increases up to 100 percent. It organized and led the Cannery and Agricultural Industrial Workers Union in California—typical unskilled workers—in a series of invariably successful strikes involving over 60,000 workers. These achievements prove that unskilled labor has been and can be organized. But why doesn't the A. F. of L. want to organize unskilled masses? Is it because secret agreements exist between A. F. of L. and the great oil companies whereby the A. F. of L. leaves them alone? Isn't this true of the power companies also? If not, why do these huge open-shop companies, each an enormously fertile field for unionization, advertise in A. F. of L. journals? Why do they spend money in papers read exclusively by workers? Because they wish to sell them electric power which they have to buy anyway? Because they want workers to buy machinery for which they have no use? Why do these anti-union companies pour money into union (A. F. of L.) treasuries? These questions have never been "officially" answered. Nor has the A. F. of L. discredited the

belief among labor experts that the A. F. of L. neglects unskilled workers because they cannot afford to pay as high dues as the skilled workers. If the A. F. of L. cared to organize the masses it would have to abandon its craft policy. But why does it retain this anti-mass policy? . . . Its long record of shameless sellouts, its strike-breaking tactics, its discrimination against Negroes, its neglect of unskilled labor, its notorious graft and corruption,—prove that the A. F. of L. is shamelessly betraying the already impoverished army of American workers.

And now a few more Moley-Leary statistics. They claim the A. F. of L. has 4,100,000 members. Lewis Lorwin (in his *The American Federation of Labor*, 1933, Brookings Institution) lists 2,532,261 as the A. F. of L. 1932 total. Since the A. F. of L. claims no growth from 1932 until the N.R.A., the 1933 membership is also 2,532,261. Under the N.R.A. the official figures of the A. F. of L. council claim an added 500,000. Therefore its total claimed membership now is 3,100,000 and not 4,100,000. Today has misrepresented by a cool million.

Today states that "union labor has always opposed welfare work," the company union policy. But welfare work is an A. F. of L. principle, as the class collaboration between employer and worker, instituted by the A. F. of L. at the Pequot sheet mills in Salem, Mass., conclusively proved several years ago. The A. F. of L. urged its members to buy stock in the company; and each time agitation arose A. F. of L.

officials urged the members not to strike. Employees were "partners" with the company. A strike meant production-loss, and therefore a loss to the strikers themselves. It took some years before the rank and file opposition overthrew this underhand scheme directed against the workers' living standards. In the face of this Pequot system, which the A. F. of L. desperately tried to institute elsewhere, it is clear that Today's statement is a plain lie. For the A. F. of L. acts for class collaboration between worker and employer. The A. F. of L. and the anti-worker company union hold in common a "welfare" policy which must redound to the disadvantage of labor.

And now, Today's "conclusion." "Labor is, in fact, as well as in theory, free." In addition to the factual disproof to which we have subjected all of Today's key arguments, we suggest that Messrs. Leary, Moley and Astor try to explain this: Since Johnson admits that N.R.A. cannot and will not prevent the anti-labor company unionization, and since company unionization is increasing twice as fast as trade unionization, how in the name of logic, truth, or plain common sense can Today expect its readers to accept the conclusion that labor is free? The truth is rather that the N.R.A. behind a gesture of guarantees to labor has in practice fostered the most overwhelming anti-labor activity which American workers have ever suffered; that instead of Labor being "in fact as well as in theory free" it is now confronted with legal, demagogic, and terroristic obstacles such as it has never

had to fight before. And not the least of its obstacles is the barrage of vicious propaganda such as Today's deliberate falsifications of the truth about the present condition of American labor.

PREACHERS, BE STILL!

(Written after listening to a radio sermon attacking Communism)

Man's creation resembles God's in this: good many of its works were made amiss, (the hieroglyph beside the dinosaur); or else, a short prosperity outlived survive in dwindled and retreated selves (as you, who from your pulpits wag and claw, are to the hovelled turtle correlate.)

Poor retrogrades of Jesus and Isaiah, we're made uneasy when we see you come forth from your Sabbath, the outcast day, forth from your church, contemporal Pompeii. Keep to your cloisters, tend the whitish souls, pale, puffed and tender, mushrooms that grow well in mold and shadow, church damp and decay.

Go back, take back the ceremonial stones, your loaves and fishes that have petrified. We have another miracle to do to build a commonwealth so just the envious are envious of themselves and stagnant hope and hatred bitten back, and justice balked and hungering ambition can no more gather for discharge in war. Then we will have a unity, wherein a man dissolving will absorb the whole. (Christ spoke of it but put it off to Heaven.) 'Tis man and Nature's co-work and will be earth's maturest creature, Mankind whole.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

The Little King

ROBERT FORSYTHE

PERHAPS THE most remarkable thing in the world is a Liberal. Just as there are women who are never happy unless they are being jilted, there are certain classes of politically minded people who thrive on disillusionment. This must be true or it would be impossible to account for Liberals at all. They are always hopeful that the new messiah is going to bring such qualities of honesty, courage and resourcefulness to his tasks that the system will begin to work. From a shattered belief in Theodore Roosevelt, they proceed directly to Woodrow Wilson, who breaks their hearts in the grand manner. One might think that an experience of this sort

would cure even a Liberal but it is only a few years until they are chasing after Ramsay MacDonald. At the moment they have found a new idol in Franklin Roosevelt and a lesser one in the Hon. Fiorello H. La Guardia, Mayor of the City of New York.

If you sat down and mulled over the problem, it would be difficult to invent a better model for the adoration of a Liberal than Mr. La Guardia. It was rather definitely established what Fiorello's future fate would be when Oswald Garrison Villard started to back him. Mr. Villard is an estimable gentleman and he is always the first to acknowledge that he was wrong and he has an in-

fallible instinct for picking great hopes who turn sour on him. If there is ever any betting on things of this sort, our advice is to watch Mr. Villard's choice. He is particularly adept at it because he has given his life to it.

Fiorello's background was ideal for Mr. Villard. As a pacifist he might not have cared for Fiorello's military record but he could excuse that on the ground that all other Liberals were flying about during the war doing equally noble things. The more important consideration was that Fiorello had come back to New York after it was all over and had begun to get himself elected as a Republican from a district which had hitherto been con-

trolled by Tammany. At Washington he was a hard worker and an effective speaker and one of the first champions of Prohibition repeal. This required no great courage from the representative of an Italian election district but it made a great impression in a Congress which could scarcely still its hiccoughs long enough to vote dry with almost complete unanimity. He was not at the same time knocking over any marble pillars in the House of Representatives with outcries for Sacco and Vanzetti, who were also Italians, but that could be overlooked for the larger fact that the Hon. Fiorello was very severe with the bankers of Wall Street. He fought the sales tax and the National Economy League and demanded justice for the Veterans. His reward for this was a defeat in the Roosevelt landslide of 1932, when he continued to run on the Republican ticket and didn't get enough of his constituents notified that he wasn't *that* kind of a Republican.

He had been swamped when he ran against Jimmy Walker for Mayor in 1930 and he was around out of work last year when O'Brien was up for election. After some conflict between the gentlemen from the Union League who wanted General O'Ryan to run and the others who wanted Fiorello to run, the Hon. Mr. La Guardia became the Fusion candidate and was elected. He was supported by the regular Republican machine, by Wall Street, by all right-thinking economy organizations who were not behind that other son of the people, Honest Joe McKee, and by such Liberals as Paul Blanshard, the ex-Socialist, Mr. Villard, John Hay (Jock) Whitney and Mr. Ogden Mills.

Disdaining the pomp of an inauguration at City Hall, he took the oath of office at a private residence and let it be known at once that he was a battler by nature and never ran away from a fight. He proved this almost immediately by receiving a delegation of unemployed women and facing them with the utmost courage. Having first informed the ladies that if they thought they could frighten him they were never more mistaken in their lives, he said that the plight of the unemployed was very close to his heart. He became a trifle exasperated by the continued presence of the delegation wishing to know in just what concrete manner his heart was touched, but he carried it off with a neatness which charmed the reporters by assuring the leader of the delegation that he would give *her* a job any time she wanted it.

Having thus disposed of the unemployment problem, he next asked for sweeping power to balance the budget. It was true that he had won the election support of the teachers and other city employees by promising that there were to be no further cuts in their wages, but he had found since that there were several notes at the bank and the teachers and cops and firemen would have to be patriotic enough to get along with a little less. The teachers suggested that the bankers might be patriotic enough to get along with a little less and Fiorello informed them that if they thought

they could bulldoze him they had another thought coming.

When he sent his proposed bill up to Albany, Governor Lehman replied that Fiorello would undoubtedly make a nice dictator but if it was all the same to him why didn't he use the powers of the Board of Estimate which he already controlled. Fiorello answered in the press that he had never run away from a fight in his life and wasn't going to start with this one. When next seen he was in the Governor's office at Albany working out a compromise whereby the Board of Estimate retained its powers. However, Fiorello let it be known, if the Legislature thought it could monkey with the bill he was introducing to take away from the civil employees their civil rights, they'd find themselves in a battle they wouldn't soon forget. The Assembly then rejected the bill.

By this time it was plain that Fiorello was a true Liberal. Just to make entirely sure of it and to establish a model which Liberals of all time might follow with profit, he became involved in the taxi strike. What follows is a primer of Liberalism as it has been operating through the ages.

First Phase: During the O'Brien administration the city had levied a 5-cent tax on cab fares. The tax had been held unconstitutional by the courts but the companies had retained the money. The drivers insisted that it belonged to them and Fiorello agreed with them. Thus bolstered by the Mayor of the great city itself, the drivers struck on February 3rd for better conditions. Fiorello announced that he believed in the strike and would forestall any attempt at strike breaking by refusing to issue new licenses.

The First Phase: Humanitarianism.

Second Phase: He warned the strikers, however, to be orderly:

Don't get rough or I'll get rough myself—and I can get plenty rough.

The Second Phase: Firmness.

Third Phase: He appointed Morris L. Ernst as his negotiator and the owners and representatives of the strikers met. The papers of Monday, February 5, bore the headlines: "Taxi Strike Is Settled as La Guardia Intervenes." However, it was soon found that the strike wasn't settled at all. The men were offered half of the tax money collected and 40 percent of future takings, but they insisted on union recognition, abolition of the black list and a minimum wage guarantee. Fiorello heard this news in Washington on Tuesday and was not amused. Informed that the men felt they had been sold out by the agreement, he said:

I don't think they'll turn down the agreement finally. There are 10,000 men waiting to be licensed to take their places as drivers.

The Third Phase: Irritation and the first sign of the iron fist.

Fourth Phase: Fiorello recovered rapidly

and a further announcement was forthcoming in Washington:

What I want is to get a living wage for the men and profits for the owners of the cabs. I told General Johnson of the necessity of getting the industry organized. I found him enthusiastic and eager. I expect action.

The Fourth Phase: The compromise which defeats the strike just when it is about to be won.

Fifth Phase: The appearance on the scene of General Johnson, the man who had "settled" the Weirton strike and the Budd Company strike, was a happy augury. Mr. Ernst was particularly pleased:

Upon the establishment of any union the collective bargaining provisions of the National Recovery Act will apply.

Meanwhile the food workers paraded up and down in the coldest period in New York history trying to bargain with the hotels.

The Fifth Phase: Arbitration, with that great friend of the working man, General Johnson.

Sixth Phase: Fiorello was angry at the men who refused to accept the sell-out agreement. He was now definitely through with the men who didn't like it when they had the strike won and somebody talked them out of it:

I'm going to crack down on all these men who refuse to return to work. They may find themselves deprived of their licenses and they may have a hard time getting them back.

The Sixth Phase: The circle is complete. Strike-breaking force is now to be used *against* the men.

Having completed the typical Liberal cycle of I Am Your Pal—Here Is Your Settlement Which Settles Nothing—Take It or I'll Knock Your Block Off, Fiorello returned to his campaign of slashing the schools for the benefit of the bankers.

There he is—the Liberal personified, and particularly the Liberal in power, twice as ferocious as anybody else in the same position. As witness Woodrow Wilson and the Red Hunts and his vindictiveness toward such men as Eugene Debs. The talk of inventing Fiorello is naturally an academic problem because he has already been invented by Otto Soglow. Fiorello is almost an exact replica of the Little King, without the robes. They have the same thick, pudgy frames and the same extraordinary ability to do nothing in an important way. The Little King will ride miles and occupy the time of thousands of his troops and of all his subjects for the purpose of unveiling a picture of a fish in an art gallery. Fiorello is forever dashing forth in an army tank to crush an insurrection of squirrels in Central Park. But such things are only part of the kinship of Fiorello and the King. What they more profoundly have in common is the knowledge that they have both been touched with a strain of Mussolini and Napoleon. Not to mention Battling Levinsky.

How Russia Treats Crime

JOSHUA KUNITZ

"IT IS gloriously absorbing work," engineer Chernov assured me. He is a former "wrecker" and one of the 140,000 criminals brought here by the OGPU (the famous State Political Department) to build the Bielomorsky Canal. "I am through with my term, but I should feel like an irresponsible ingrate if I left now. My wife, I'm afraid, will have to wait a little. I want to be right here, on the spot, when the Canal is opened."

That was in December. The following summer the OGPU announced the completion of the White Sea Canal System—an inland waterway which provides a short, direct, three-day route between the White and Baltic Seas and thus makes it unnecessary for Soviet vessels going from Leningrad to Archangel to take the seventeen-day voyage of 2,800 miles around the Scandinavian Peninsula.

The thought of such a canal had troubled old Russia for centuries. It is typical of the present rulers to have decided upon the project in 1931, a project six times the magnitude of Dnieprostroy and transcending even the Suez and Panama canals, and to have completed it in 1933. "What the Romanovs could not accomplish in three centuries," bragged Chernov, "we'll execute in eighteen months!"

To have concentrated an army of 140,000 thieves, wreckers, murderers, embezzlers, drug addicts, prostitutes in one place and to have drawn enthusiastic work out of them was no pigmy undertaking. Elsewhere such a project would have been dismissed as too fatuous to merit serious consideration; in the Soviet Union, however, it has worked, and worked well. Small wonder the Communist press, besides pointing to this convict-built canal as one of the "engineering feats of the century" and "a giant stride toward the economic mastery of the Soviet Arctic," has been extolling it primarily as "a splendid vindication of the civilized Bolshevik method of handling delinquents and criminals."

Shock Brigade No. 4 was to receive the banner of honor which it had won from Shock Brigade No. 7 in the course of socialist competition. Clusters of prisoners, waiting for the celebration, were ambling about the barracks on the lookout for Comrade Bolshakov, the OGPU Commander of the Second Labor Division, who was to bring the banner and perform the ceremony. Suddenly I was struck by a mighty tumult from around the corner and a second later I beheld the laughing face and twitching hands, legs and torso of Comrade Bolshakov flying in all directions over the tilted heads and upraised arms of a cheering, milling, moving, swelling crowd. They were swirling slowly toward the club-barrack

—three-four hundred convicts, and no guards. But for the one tiny holster which was dangling impotently from the bouncing body of Bolshakov, there was not a weapon in sight.

Soon a meeting was in progress. Flustered and panting, Bolshakov, before officially congratulating the brigade and handing them the unfurled banner, delivered a talk on the Bielomorsky Canal and "Our" Conquest of the North, which for compactness, sweep, and restrained eloquence excelled anything I had heard in that land of chronic oratory. The speaker was not talking down to his audience, he was addressing comrades with whom he was engaged in one common task. And the "comrades"—lacerated, warped, distorted creatures; thieves most of them, murderers some—sat there with eyes, ears, and mouths open, punctuating every mention of a Soviet victory with prolonged, hard, horny claps.

With one large gesture, Bolshakov first placed his subject in the proper Soviet frame, pointing out that Bielomorsky Canal was just as much part of the general economic and cultural plan of "our" Union as were the building of the Dnieprostroy, the collectivization of agriculture, the liquidation of illiteracy, or the erection of the Stalingrad, Kharkov, and Cheliabinsk tractor plants.

Furthermore, even here in the North the Bielomorsky Canal was not an isolated phenomenon. "We" were subduing the Arctic and conquering the Polar sector. "Our" explorers—Wiese, Schmidt, Samoilovich, Fersman, Ushakov; "our" icebreakers—Malygin, Krassin, Sedov, Sibiriakov; "our" airmen—Chukhnovsky, Alexeev, Krasinsky—were removing the last white spots from the Soviet map. New Soviet names were speckling the Arctic—Island Bolshevik, Island Pioneer, the Red Army Strait. Let the capitalists swallow that! Within the last few years, declared the speaker, Soviet explorers unearthed enormous deposits of apatite on the Kola Peninsula, of coal on the Yennisei, of iron ore near Murmansk and in Moncha Tundra. Tremendous water power possibilities were discovered throughout the Polar Sector, and some of the northernmost hydro-electric stations were already being completed. The once neglected North was now providing the Soviet Union with phosphates, nepheline, titanium, zirconium, strontium, quartz, molybden, cement. New cities, new industries were springing up as if by magic. "Our" science was even forcing the frozen Polar soil to yield vegetables, fruits, flowers. And this was just the beginning!

Finally, this canal. The capitalists had been boasting of their Suez and their Panama. Well, this Canal which practically transformed the Scandinavian Peninsula into an island by

cutting it off from the continent was not a whit worse than theirs. And "you men" by building it in a little over one year were giving a black eye to the entire capitalist world. This Canal was destined to play a decisive role in the rapid development of Carelia and the Kola Peninsula. Carelia had suffered from a lack of navigable rivers. The single track Murman railway had been built hastily and badly during the last year of the World War and was not up to the demands of the expanding industry of the North. Soon, however, much of the freight would be shifted to "our" Canal—lumber from all the surrounding territory, apatites from Khibinogorsk, aluminum and cement from Kandalakshi, fish and furs from Murmansk and Archangel. Furthermore, our dams should yield enough hydro-electric power to deluge the North with electricity. In a couple of years Carelia, one of the most forsaken nooks in the old Romanov empire should be transmuted by "our" efforts into a modern, highly industrialized member of our great Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. This was something to be proud of!

In conclusion, after paying fervid tribute to the Shock Brigade as a whole and to every brigadier individually for the wonderful work they were doing "for the country, for socialism, for the exploited classes," Bolshakov raised the red banner and said very simply: "Here is your banner, you have earned it."

The audience was in an uproar.

Virtually all of the administrators, engineers, physicians, accountants, chauffeurs, teachers, artists, even guards—seventy percent of them—were from among the very prisoners. Only a few of the top posts were held by members of the OGPU.

The prison barracks were astonishingly different from anything I had learned to associate with penal institutions in America. With due allowance for the universal shortage of living quarters in the Soviet Union, the barracks—light, relatively clean, and decorated with educational posters, wall newspapers, and portraits of shock brigades—were certainly far from the black, vile, vermin-infested hell-holes which Joseph F. Fishman, for many years the only inspector of prisons for the United States Government, reports the overwhelming majority of American jails to be. They were not "repellent human dumping grounds," nor "initial breeding places of corruption," nor "crucibles of crime" where prisoners, thrown in promiscuously, were given ample opportunity to master every kind of vice and perversion.

They were distinctly places designed for the reeducation and rehabilitation of the inmates. Every effort was apparently being made to safeguard the youngest, the more impressionable, and more promising from the corrupting influence of the hardened and degraded. Repeaters, incorrigibles, confirmed parasites and cynics were kept severely separated in specially organized "detachments of negative elements."

Within these strictly drawn lines, prisoners were allowed absolutely free intercourse with their fellows. Nowhere, not even in the case of the incorrigibles, was there the least attempt to degrade or break the spirit of the prisoner: no solitary confinement, no hounding, no humiliation, no wanton wounding of sensibilities; discipline, but no tyranny; strictness, but no abuse.

The entire prison camp was composed of eight major divisions, each division having its own labor collectives and shock brigades. Members of the same collective worked together under trade union conditions and at trade union rates. The collectives constituted self-governing bodies, with democratically elected chairmen, secretaries, executive boards, and with the right to try infringements of moral codes adopted by themselves. As a rule, collectives worked well, and a fifty or even a hundred percent performance in excess of the established norm was a commonplace occurrence.

Prisoners were offered every possibility for amusement and recreation: cultural circles, orchestras, dramatic groups, literary groups, lectures, dancing, physical training. Illiterates had their illiteracy "liquidated"; those who had no trades were given professional training; those who had completed their sentences were guaranteed jobs on terms identical with those granted all Soviet workers.

Altogether, the terms of confinement were rather short—the average about two and a half years, and it was within the power of every prisoner through good work to reduce his term by one-half.

To prevent sexual perversions characteristic of prison life, the inmates, after specified periods of probation, were allowed furloughs with full pay to visit their families. Prisoners were also allowed to marry, and in some cases to live with their families outside the labor camps. I did not find here the admirable practice of the Lefortovo prison in Moscow of allowing convicts to spend week-ends with their visiting husbands or wives in special rooms provided by the institution.

Rather than punishment and retribution, atonement and expiation, the central principle was education, reclamation, rehabilitation. By this I do not mean to say that the place was Elysium. Some of the inmates looked morose, and were incommunicative. One prisoner, a peasant, only grumbled: "It's no use talking; it won't change matters anyhow." On the other hand, some of the convicts seemed rather contented and irrepressibly garrulous. There were quite a few who like engineer Chernov had completed their sentences, but had been so captivated by the thrilling business of building the magnificent waterway that they remained voluntarily, just to see the job through. Several of these impressed me particularly.

There was, for instance, Kovalev, a short, stocky, bald-headed man of about forty, with a huge proudly glittering badge on his chest bearing the legend: *Udarnik Bielomorstroia*. over the importance of his work as was

While here he had been trained as laboratory assistant. I had never seen a man so inflated Kovalev. He surveyed his bottles, and retorts, and lamps, and faucets with the air of a Caesar in his undisputed domain. After he explained to the minutest detail every step in the testing of concrete, he confided to me that any error on his part would pretty near ruin the whole canal. He then began to boast of the *Bolshevik tempo* displayed here in the North, and pointing his finger admonishingly at me, he said earnestly: "And don't forget the element we are doing it with!" He who was for over twenty years the chief of a lawless gang.

Another was Babakin, a fellow in his early twenties, a homeless waif and a dreaded desperado in the Ukraine. He was now the poet laureate of his brigade. This lithe, curly-haired, bright-eyed young devil, was the darling of the place. Everybody knew him, and everybody knew his poetry. The fact that a few of his verses appeared in the anthology *We Are Uniting the Seas*, published by the Bielomorsky Educational Department of the OGPU was a source of infinite pride to him and his brigade. "Hey, Babka, read him the latest one," urged his comrades. Babka, which is the affectionate form for Babakin, was at first a little shy, but was finally persuaded. In his poem which he read with a great deal of gusto, the poet was bidding farewell to his "thief's life," his "cards," and his "Finnish knife," declaring that "my past is like bonfire smoke," and finishing up with an invocation to the White Sea "whose cold freshness has filled me with glee."

I called on Rappaport, the chief of the OGPU of the construction works. During our discussion he remarked:

"Take the scores of thousands of homeless waifs who had, through no fault of their own, become bandits, robbers, thieves, dope fiends; take the ignorant poor peasant who had hardly had the opportunity to learn the distinction between right and wrong; take the exploited, starved, browbeaten workers—it is criminals from these classes, unfortunates bequeathed to us by the old regime, that we are primarily interested in rehabilitating and restoring to normal social functioning. It is because they are not alien to us that they respond to our slogans, are infected with our enthusiasm, and yield to our influence. You say there is crime in the Soviet Union. To be sure, there is; we have not yet achieved communism. But we are attacking the problem in a fundamental way. First, by eliminating the economic and social causes of crime; second, by reclaiming the human material still reclaimable.

"Mark you, this holds true even of our class enemies; not to the same extent, but it does hold true. You see, our convict camps are not isolated from the rest of the Soviet Union. What is happening outside has a direct effect on the psychology of our prisoners. It would be one thing if in the outside Soviet world there were a basis still left for bourgeois enterprise and kulak activity, for

unrestrained exploitation and profit-making, an opportunity still left for obtaining social power and prestige through the accumulation of wealth. Then, perhaps, the change in the kulak's and speculator's psychology would be considerably impeded. However, the realization that his economic functioning as a grasping, predatory owner of private property is at an end, affects in some unconscious or conscious way his feeling and thinking processes and renders him much more pliant in our hands. Clearly, we are rather wary of him, we don't trust him too much; but by and large we feel that in having removed the economic basis for kulak-bourgeois development, we have removed the individual kulak's and speculator's sting. Please don't misunderstand. As revolutionists, we would not at all hesitate to do away with or shoot down a few hundred or a few thousand kulaks, if we felt that it was necessary for the preservation of the revolution. It is not a question of vengeance or retribution. We are Bolsheviks, and we know that if we do not make an end of them today, they will make an end of us tomorrow. The reason we don't shoot them is that we feel that with the foundation removed from under them, the kulaks and speculators can be made into useful members of our society. When you go farther north, you will find thousands of kulaks who have been exiled to those regions—Khibinogorsk, Kandalakshi, Murmansk, etc. Many of them have worked so well and so loyally that they have been restored to citizenship. They are no fools. They know that it is best for them and their children if they make peace with the proletarian regime, if they become proletarianized themselves. Yes, even kulaks are touched by the pathos of the creative phase of the revolution. Even saboteurs become heroes of socialist construction."

Soon after I came back to this country, the following cable appeared on the front page of *The New York Times*:

Moscow.—Sweeping amnesties were announced today for political and common-law prisoners employed on the White Sea Canal, which was recently completed by the OGPU and visited by Joseph Stalin.

A total of 12,484 prisoners were freed and 59,516 sentences were reduced.

Five hundred of those released had their civil rights restored and their records of political crime rubbed off the OGPU books.

The vice chief of the OGPU, M. Yagoda, and five other OGPU officials who had been prominent in the work, were decorated with the Order of Lenin, as were two former "wreckers,"—engineers freed by last year's amnesty because of previous good work.

Fifteen prisoners, including two women, one wrecker and one habitual thief, were decorated with the Order of the Red Banner.

There has never been an amnesty on this scale in Russia. . . .

Later I discovered that Chernov, Kovalev and Rappaport were among those who had received decorations from an appreciative workers' government.

Letters from America

The Cab Line

Dear Editor:

I DRIVE for the Parmelee Cab Company. My cab stands parked behind a dozen others playing for the break of the Greenwich Village Ball at Webster Hall. Dirty gray smoke puffs from the exhausts into the biting cold of the winter dawn. So the Flatbush fusileers and the Bronx boulevardiers begin to straggle down the steps headed for the end of all romance—home!

Dispirited looking dead-heads loiter around the slowly departing groups. They offer, in the most approved Hollywood style, protection to an occasional unescorted lady reveller.

I race the motor and hug the line close. You've got to stay flat against the rear bumper of the cab ahead when there's a move or some hungry hound will chisel any opening visible.

Two cars get away. The village does not ring so merrily with coin this merry morn. Etched in the narrow street the cabs loom sinister and provocative to my worried eyes anxious for the move.

I sit on the box uneasily speculating on the chance of grabbing a call. The ball of my right foot dances on the gas pedal. I think, "Christ, will these phonies ever get going! Such lousy technique! A little more 'savvy' on the part of the poets and not so many girls would be hoofing it to the subway. We'd all get away. But the Cavaliers are afraid they won't get their money's worth—The line holds tight.

More lovely ladies flow from the hall: creamy white breasts and shoulders colored in orange, yellow and blue scarves. More gallant gentlemen saunter from the dance: legs, thighs, bellies, buttocks ablaze with deep purple velvet, rich Lincoln green, shining silver swords. Ugly East Eleventh Street takes on a touch of "fairy land" with this mass of flamboyant color. What a pity a hackman fighting for that last call from a dance hall can't appreciate beauty en masse!

Alas, my thoughts turn introspective and bitter. Life at this moment means only one thing—to get first on the line and get a long haul before it is too late. The Hackman's Horror—low bookings and dead mileage seizes strong hold upon me. All night long I've danced a weary "clutch and brake, clutch and brake" to get the money on the meter to meet the minimum bookings demanded by the boss. He grabs sixty percent of the receipts the clock shows for the night's work. The clock is shy two bucks needed to meet the minimum demands. To fall down on the job means another dreary tramp from one stinking garage to another hunting for a new job.

The cab line moves once, twice and then stops dead. I'm all washed up! Three hours killed on a hack line only to drive away empty. Jesus, if a man could light a match to the lousy hearse—walk away never to see it again!

There's no life in my arms or legs as I pull away to start the long drag to the garage in the Bronx. My head begins to ache dully as much from a flat feeling of futility as from the stink of gas fumes coming through the floor board.

ABE MOSCOU.

A Back Page Nifty

Dear Editor:

I hear the voice of Little America singing. By special arrangement, by Mackay Radio, by a sputter and whistle of little dots and dashes, pouring by special arrangement into the very special front-page lap of the New York Times, I hear the voice of Little America. Aboard the S.S. Jacob Rupert, Bay of Whales, Antartica . . .

I come from the world below,

Whiskey, oh! Johnnie, oh!

There, in air which is freezing, over ice and snow which are to some extent already frozen, I infer that a man—Byrd his name, Admiral his title—seeks bravely further evidence in support (or otherwise) of a proposition universally admitted these many years. Hence faintly previous. But touch the hem of his geographical expression he will; push around through snow and ice he must; and speak of it diurnally he does, in accents of far thunder and at a length of a column and a half. "It is difficult," the voice comes whispering back to the Times over all the weary miles . . .

Up from where the winds do blow,

Whiskey for my Johnnie!

"It is difficult to grasp the grief and danger residing in this wonderfully serene place."

* * *

But here in this sheltered civilization, how refreshing to hear at such length and one might almost say instantly, these epic voices from Little America, speaking in thrilling first-hand report of the inconceivable, of grief and danger and hardship and cold. In a word how stimulating to the jaded palate of modern life these actual details of primal encounter and, in another word,—

*During the recent freezing weather Craigh-
tos Dennis of Meadowbrook, W. Va., froze
stiff while riding the rods of a train*

but acknowledge a debt of gratitude to the alertness and efficiency of an organization which makes possible—

*and lived to tell of it, says an Associated
Press disp*

so really unprecedented a coordination of, let us say, humanity's trials with humanity's appreciation, or, to speak with perhaps more precision,—

*Trainmen used a chisel to free him from the
coat of ice which almost enveloped him, ac-
cording to the writer full stop*

of the activities of pioneers at the very outposts of civilization with the anxious eye and

hushed interest of civilization's very core. In these humdrum days we are not as a nation,—
AND LIVED TO TELL OF IT
unfortunately, in close enough touch with adventure of any sort to be able to afford missing the slightest of its implications wherever it may be found. We owe we know not what, therefore, to the watchful public service of—

*FROZE STIFF WHILE RIDING
THE RODS*

the—uh—watchful and—uh—Oh what the hell. What's that? Frozen to—eh?

* * *

There are voices and there are voices, and there is news which is fit to print and news which is fit to print only (if at all) after the main chorus and the advertisers, the heart-balm chorus and the tips to shoppers have been cued handsomely into all the many many editions. And so, on this same January 20, there comes among others the thin and very second-hand voice of a chippie who caught himself a freight, and froze himself so stiff they had to get him off the rods with a chisel (*says an Associated Press dispatch from Toledo, Ohio*). A nine-line voice, well buried in the ads and carryovers—and getting buried at all, it seems, only because it gave the Times a lead for a true nifty: *CHISELERS WORK ON CHISELER*, says the Times over its buried item. Well, that just about strikes the nail a smart clap on the head and sums up the business, doesn't it. He chiseled him a ride; they chiseled him off, get it? Nifty and you couldn't ask for a word more. These editors, well, they have to know where to draw a pencil.

OTIS C. FERGUSON.

From a Chemical Plant

Dear Editor:

Working here in a chemical plant in Long Island City, where the same chlorine gas which took the lives of many of our working-class brothers and fathers on the battlefields during the last war is used in an even more concentrated form; sweating during the summer days and freezing in winter—"all that the bourgeoisie has acquired by wealth the proletarians have to conquer by hunger and with their bare bodies," Karl Liebknecht—) working here these two years, and thinking maddening thoughts, I have seen the revolutionary press gain in strength, despairing even with it in its weak moments, for we who are under the wheels of capitalism must not lose sight of our destiny, of our role in history even for a single moment, until right now when the bourgeoisie press is running a high fever, and just as there will come a time—and come it must—when the ascendancy of the proletariat into power will negate the existence of capitalism and all that goes with it, so even now the increase in power of the revolutionary press is surely and step by step negating the influence of the venal press of capitalism.

And so we, who are under the wheels, salute you.

ALEXANDER GODIN.



BURCK

Jacob Burck



BURCH

Jacob Burch

Blue Heaven

JOHN L. SPIVAK

CHARLOTTE, N. C.

WHEN I walked into the small, cold room on the third floor of 202½ North Tyron Street there were half a dozen elderly members of locals affiliated with the Charlotte (N. C.) Central Labor Union. Four of them were killing time playing cards with a dirty old deck on a rusty, rickety table. While we talked some four or five others dropped in, carpenters, bricklayers, steamfitters. The youngest was about forty and the oldest was well on his way through the sixties.

Except for occasional and rare jobs most of them had not worked for two years.

"No, sir," one kindly old carpenter explained. "It's not just us union men. There's about 25,000 workers in Charlotte's population and half of them are unemployed—12,000 of them registered down the city hall. There used to be more but the N.R.A. and the C.W.A. put almost 4,000 of them back to work, for the time being, at least."

"How do you live?" I asked.

"Charity. Each family gets \$2 a week—that's for five people."

I made some quick calculations. "That's about 6 cents a day per person, isn't it?"

"Just about." He dealt the old cards.

"There's only one thing that gets me," said a bricklayer with a very faint note of indignation, "and that's the government using the C.W.A. to supply cheap labor."

"It ain't the government," some one broke in. "It's them local officials. You see," he explained patiently to me, "all of us gets charity from the C.W.A. or the Salvation Army or the Family Service. The city don't give us nothin', see. They won't even give school books to our kids. Well, when some one wants to hire us we ask the union scale and they laugh and call the C.W.A. or the Salvation Army and ask for some one to be sent to do the work. They say they can only pay fifty cents a day or a dollar a day and we have to take it. If we don't we don't get no more charity, see?"

"But your union—"

"Oh, we ain't got no more. Nobody pays no attention to us. We just hang around, that's all."

I was sitting with my back to the door. I became aware of a dry, hacking cough mingled with a rasping noise. The door was open and I turned in time to see a thin, scrawny Negro top the stairs. He clung to the banister and stood there, his mouth open in an agony of pain while that weird, rasping sound issued from his mouth. He reminded me of someone I had seen somewhere, and suddenly in a flash I remembered an assignment I once had in a war veteran's hospital where those who had been gassed were being treated.

There was that same look, the same drawn face in this Negro's eyes that those soldiers had whose lungs had been burned out of them by poison gas.

Suddenly he began to cough. He bent forward and quickly pulled a soiled handkerchief out of his old coat pocket. He held it to his mouth. When he took it away it was filled with blood.

I thought I was seeing a man in the last stages of tuberculosis but one of the bricklayers said casually:

"Asbestos mill. They don't live long once they go to work there."

The Negro finally caught his breath and with a weak smile slumped into a chair one of the men pushed toward him.

"Thank you, sir. It's gettin' harder all the time makin' them stairs," he said in that peculiar, rasping voice. "I done come to see Mist' Jackson. Y'all expect him here?"

"He'll be here d'reckly," someone said.

I wanted to ask what the bricklayer meant when he said they did not live long when they go to work in an asbestos mill but you can't ask a man who is dying how long he thinks he will live; and while I was trying to find out without being too brutal, one of the players said between dealing the cards:

"See this nigger? Four months ago he was as husky as a truck driver. Look at him now. Probably ain't got more'n half a year to live now."

The coughing Negro nodded in agreement.

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"You get lent from the asbestos in your lungs an' you're done for. Ain't nothin' nobody can do about it. Gets you a hemorrhage, that's what it gets you. Why, if you get a little splinter under your finger, unless its cut out, it just forms a hard knot like a brick an' stays there. I figger that's what happens when it gets in your lungs, too. Strong white folks can live workin' in them mills five to seven years but us niggers breaks quick."

"That's right," one of the men said casually, "I seen lots of them die."

"Why did you take the job?"

"Had to get some kind of work."

"Didn't you know it was dangerous?"

He nodded slowly. "Nothin' else to do. People go to work there only 'cause they have to. I had to," he added simply.

Albert L. Jackson, business agent for the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America came in. He was labor's representative on the local N.R.A. Compliance Board.

The Negro rose. "I come to tell you, Mist' Jackson, 'bout this here asbestos mill. They's sho stretchin' us out."

"Yeah, I know. What are you doing here? You look pretty sick."

"Yes, sir. I been down to the health department and I figgered as how I'd stop off an' tell you before I went home."

The Negro walked out. We followed him with our eyes.

"That's the stretch-out system for you," said Jackson. "And now they're working it in the asbestos mills."

He explained the stretch-out. Mill workers used to earn \$6 a week. Under the N.R.A. code the minimum wage was set at \$12 so the mills simply "stretched-out" the work. A mill hand was given exactly twice as much to do for the extra pay the code got him. It was a killing, exhausting grind and it was common all through the textile area in the South. Employers in other industries were following the textile lead and stretching their workers.

"The mills haven't lost anything by the code," he concluded. "They're getting \$12 worth of work out of them."

"I thought you were on the Compliance Board," I said suggestively.

"I am but I'm only one man. And now this nigger. Why, there's one case before the board where the asbestos plant before the code went into effect, used to run one side of one twisting machine and pay \$18 a week. This was considered a good day's work. Now, under the code, the worker is forced to run both sides of the machine for \$15 a week. In other words, the worker is now getting \$15 for \$36 worth of work. That's the way it is in all mills. It's especially bad in an asbestos mill because if you work there any length of time you've signed your death warrant."

I left him and went to the Charlotte Health Department.

"What about asbestos mill workers?" I asked Dr. G. L. Rey, the city health officer.

He shook his head. "They can't last more than five to seven years if they're white. Then they die. They last as long as seven years, don't they, Dr. Hand?"

He turned to another physician sitting across the desk from him.

"I don't know. I've heard of some cases that lasted that long. Most of 'em don't. Niggers sure don't."

"How do you mean?"

"You see," Dr. Rey explained, "the nigra seems to be naturally disposed to tuberculosis. He is more subject to it than the white man. And as for asbestosis—that's the medical term for this disease—nigras can't stand even a fraction of the time a white man can."

"Once it gets into your lungs there's nothing anyone can do about it. It just stays there until the lung becomes infected and that's the end. Why, I had a nigra here this morning. He hadn't been in the asbestos mill more than

three or four months and he's finished now."

"How about masks?"

"I tried. I wrote to the U. S. Public Health Service and the Department of Agriculture. I urged local officials here to pass an ordinance or a state bill to make the mills supply masks to the workers. Nothing's come of it. Might cost the mill owners a few dollars."

From Dr. Rey I learned that the Negro lived in Blue Heaven.

Blue Heaven is one of the four decrepit areas where Negroes live in Charlotte. Like the others, it begins on the outskirts of the city where the pavement ends. The red, rutted clay road leads to the homes in Blue Heaven, board shacks resting on brick pillars ranged in rows like bath houses at a Northern beach.

Children were playing on the road, a mother, holding a sleeping baby, sat on the steps of her shack, staring expressionlessly at the distant railroad tracks. Men in old blue denim overalls eyed me curiously.

I stopped one and asked if he knew where the man who worked in the asbestos mill and was pretty sick lived.

"Oh. You goin' to take him away?"

"No. I just want to talk to him."

"Well, he lives right in that yellow house yonder, near the top o' the hill."

There were three sparsely furnished rooms in the sick Negro's house, running railroad fashion. The boards on the inside were as bare and depressing as the faded ones on the outside. His wife and two ragged boys looked fearfully at me. They had heard "a hemorrhage was catchin'" and were afraid I was from the Health Department, come to take him away but the sick man recognized me. He sat in an old chair holding the same bloody handkerchief to his mouth.

News had spread that a white man had come to see him and Negroes passed repeatedly staring at the house curiously.

"What do you expect to live on now?"

"I don't know. Maybe the Salvation Army'll give us something to eat."

It is strange what a difference it makes in a man's attitude when he has nothing to hope for, when he knows he is dying and there is no reprieve. He talked frankly, plainly, about the mill, the Negroes who are forced to work there because whites avoid it like the plague; of the threats to discontinue charity if he did not take the asbestos mill job; of the stretch-out system since the government stepped in—

"There's white folks workin' there, too.

Them charity organizations don't care who they send when a mill says it wants hands."

"Don't they kick?"

He smiled wryly. "No, sir. That's the funny thing about these here white folks. They never kick about nothin'."

"I tol' him not to work in that mill," his wife said, shaking her head helplessly.

"We'd a-starved if I hadn't," he said simply.

"Why aren't the children in school?"

"One ain't got no clothes. All he's got's them overalls like you see an' no shoes. An' the other ain't got no school books. They got to buy their own books if they want to go to school. The city don't give nobody nothin'."

We sat for a long time talking. A freight train loaded with textiles and asbestos rattled past. The mills were working, full shifts. Business was picking up, everybody said cheerfully . . . and this Negro was sitting there waiting to die.

"Why do they call this Blue Heaven?"

"I don't know. They jes' calls it that."

He was silent for a while. Then he added, "Maybe it's 'cause everybody's blue. I know I'm blue."

It was dark when I walked down the scarred road from Blue Heaven where everybody's blue.

A Lynching? We're Too Busy

(A particularly atrocious lynching occurred in Kountze, Texas, in December. A white woman was found shot and lynch mobs were whipped up against David Gregory, a Negro. A constable shot the unarmed Negro in the head. The dying man was then put in a car and driven around for hours by the sheriff. The sheriff said later that Gregory was dead before he turned him over to the mob; dead or alive, Gregory was burned by the lynch mob. Mrs. J. H. Winfrey of Austin reports the following telephone conversation on Dec. 16 with former governor James E. Ferguson. The conversation was taken down in shorthand.—THE EDITORS.)

MRS. W.—Is this Mr. James E. Ferguson?

Mr. F.—Yes, this is him. Who is this speaking?

Mrs. W.—I am Mrs. Winfrey, and I am calling you to ask if you will see a committee this afternoon on a very important matter.

Mr. F.—Why do you want to see me?

Mrs. W.—We have some information regarding the lynching at Kountze, Texas, which we believed you would be interested to hear.

Mr. F.—I thought you talked to my wife about that yesterday. (Mrs. Ferguson is Governor.)

Mrs. W.—One of our committee did finally get in to see her, but the interview was unsatisfactory as the Governor's attitude to-

ward the problems presented to her was so evasive.

Mr. F.—Well, there is nothing I can do about it. The man is dead and we can't bring him back to life. Besides we are too busy to fool with such things. There's a limit to what one person can do.

Mrs. W.—We felt certain that in the face of the rising tide of mob violence and lynching the Governor as the head of our state and you as her closest adviser would be deeply interested in so serious a matter as this Kountze lynching and would be able to advise us how to help bring justice to these lynchers of an innocent man, and the terrorizing of others, to say nothing of destruction of property of helpless people since the local authorities are doing nothing about it. Even the sheriff who turned the man over to the mob is still in office.

Mr. F.—(Shouting angrily) That's just it. You want to put us all on the rack, and I am not going to stand for it! If you and your crowd really want to do something you can get out some petitions to prevent people committing horrible crimes which will stir people up to mob violence.

Mrs. W.—No one of us can be responsible for another individual's crime unless we have some warning beforehand. But in the case of many lynchings—as is true in this case—the whole state knew for six days that Kountze, Texas, was in the hands of a mob which local

authorities could not or would not control.

Mr. F.—Well, there's nothing we can do about that. We're too busy.

Mrs. W.—You refuse then to give us a hearing, when I tell you that we have important information regarding this case, and tell you that the Negro citizens of Kountze are still being terrorized and nothing whatever is being done about it?

Mr. F.—That's all up to the local authorities. And besides I told you we were too busy to fool with anything like that. We've got plenty other problems to solve.

Mrs. W.—You refuse then to make any statement as to yours and the Governor's stand on mob violence and lynching?

Mr. F.—Of course we don't believe in mobs or lynchings, but there is nothing we can do about it to prevent them. I tell you that's all up to the local authorities.

Mrs. W.—There are many things we had hoped to present to you and the Governor and I am sure the hundreds of people who know we came to see you regarding this matter and the extremely vital problem it represents, and who are awaiting news of your attitude about this case, will be deeply disappointed at the indifference of both of you.

Mr. F.—I can't help that. There's nothing we can do. The less said about such things the better. We might just as well close this conversation. I won't discuss it any further! (Mr. Ferguson hung up the receiver.)

Notes on Revolutionary Poetry

STANLEY BURNSHAW

ANYONE investigating the accumulated revolutionary poetry is impressed by two apparently inexplicable facts: (1) much of it shows a cleavage between subject-matter and expression: a lack of integration causing an irrefutable poetic flaw; and (2) much revolutionary poetry seems to move in the direction antithetical to the creation of a powerful mass literature.

An explanation of these facts may be obtained by applying a fundamental critical tenet with which most contemporary critics and poets readily agree: the inseparability of form and content. In collecting material on this point for a volume of criticism I found plenty of testimony from past and present-day writers, but no "proof." Such various viewpoints as those of Flaubert, Newman, T. S. Eliot, Edmund Wilson, Edmund Spenser, Matthew Arnold, Ludwig Lewisohn, Frederick Prescott and numerous others stated that form cannot be considered as separate from content, and let it go at that. I. A. Richards went a step further. He tried to prove by analyzing the physiological neural reactions during the reading experience that all of the elements in the response run together; and that sound cannot conceivably be separated from meaning. His investigations constitute the only "scientific" proof, for he found that the reading experience of a given word is not a single reaction but a *stream of reaction* simultaneously involving the following six factors: (1) visual sensation of the printed word; (2) the images inextricably linked up with these sensations; (3) relatively free images; (4) references to other things; (5) emotions; (6) affective-volitional attitudes. Richards was left stranded with the conclusion that "the old antithesis between subject and treatment ceases to be of interest. They are not separable or distinct things." (*Principles of Literary Criticism.*)

But even more substantiation of this conclusion may be found by investigating the process of poetic creation. We know that the creative process may be simply stated as *image-making*, and that an image is the outcome of the attempt to find a suitable name for some phenomenon which has no name in our language. The poet makes a fusion of two elements which the new un-named phenomenon calls forth in his mind. To say how this fusion is made, where (i.e., in what division of consciousness) it is made, or under what circumstances the fusion takes place would require many pages of documentation confirmed by examples . . . and yet the whole procedure in image-making can be expressed by a simple algebraic formula. Let us take a most elementary example: the poet hears the wind making a noise which is strikingly different from any other wind-noise he has heard; he "hears" this either in actuality or in memory.

Wishing to describe this phenomenon he at once finds the simple word "wind" not only hopelessly inadequate but plainly incorrect, for merely "wind" is not what he is describing. Other elements in the sound-phenomenon call out of his store of sensory impressions certain approximations. The stimulus, being the initiator, *begets* its approximate-word. And in this case let us say that it makes him think of a human voice sobbing or moaning or crying. As a result he writes: "sobbing wind" or "the wind cries," making thereby a fusion of two elements: an *image*, that is to say, a *copy* of the nameless phenomenon. Image originally means copy or likeness; and this is precisely what the poet has made: he has made a likeness of the new phenomenon by having conjoined two elements of his experience. And this fusion—this symbol—may be expressed by the following formula: "x: wind as a human voice: sobbing."

The process responsible for making the single image is identical for the entire poem. For the whole poem is merely a configuration composed of units which are themselves inclusive images. It is a single all-inclusive image composed of secondary inclusive images, which are themselves composed of tertiary inclusive images, and so on. To find the true formal structure of a poem one analyzes it into its large and small groups of images.

The important observation for the present inquiry is not, of course, our algebraic formula but the magisterial fact that the stimulus-phenomenon expressed in poetry *begets its image*, actively evokes its word-names. A different word constitutes a difference in the image: in the copy of the new phenomenon. And the corollary follows: when a word is changed the precise meaning for the reader is changed since the reading experience is a new and different one. To say that a poet changes a word to "improve the form without changing the content" is simply an impossible statement: by changing "the form" he at once has changed "the content."

The confusion has arisen because many have lost sight of the fact that a poem is not a mixture of two elements: one formal, the other contextual; a poem is an entity growing out of a configuration of words. One may approach it with its message in mind and purely by a device of analysis refer to the "content," or by a similar device of analysis, to the "form."

But these things are merely abstracted from the poem. The poem exists as a whole.

Bearing these facts in mind, there is no excuse for making the common error of taking form to be synonymous with technic or sound-pattern. Technic has to do with generalizations regarding word-combinations: questions of spacing, sound-pattern, syntax, punctuation, etc.—devices which are recognizable and self-

existent regardless of meaning. It is a simple matter to confuse technic with form, as for example in discussing what is called the sonnet—allegedly fourteen lines in a certain rime-scheme. But the sonnet sound-pattern is not one but a number of sound-patterns including the Meredithian sixteen line, and as many differing rime-schemes as for example, Spenser, Milton, Shelley, and Hopkins cared to use. The sonnet cannot mean anything if it is merely sound-pattern, since we should have to say, "there are many sonnets which are many sound-patterns." But this does not define the sonnet. Why are these prosodic explanations unsatisfactory? Because the sonnet is not a form of sounds but a mode of expression. It is a "cleft unity," or "bi-partite" treatment, or "ebb and flow," or "statement and solution," to use some of the commoner designations. And form must be similarly looked for in the mode of expression whenever form is applied to the analysis of poetry. For example, if you describe T. S. Eliot's most characteristic form-tendency as loosely rimed or unrimed free verse you really describe nothing; but you give a clue to Eliot's poetic form if you speak of his method of juxtaposing unrelated units of mood whose configuration is a desperate nostalgia for a past epoch. Or in Hart Crane's case: his poetic form cannot be indicated in terms of sound-patterns but in a unique method of telescoping images. Or Emily Dickinson. If you say the form consists in regular sound-arrangements carelessly, awkwardly used you do not distinguish her from countless others. But if you observe that she brings a fresh approach to experience by, in inverse ratio, giving to vast phenomena immediate domestic names, you are actually describing something about the form of her poetry. No clearer illustration of accurate usage of these terms can be adduced than the current Soviet designations as to the direction of literature: "nationalist in form, proletarian in content." The mode of expression indigenous to the cultural group will determine the form; proletarian ideology, the content. Significantly no mention is made of technic.

These theoretical considerations have been emphasized because of their direct bearing on certain confusions which have seeped into revolutionary poetry. No single poet has been wholly guilty, but there are tendencies in the air and revolutionary poets have occasionally succumbed, some in passages, some in phrases. The following stanza, for example, from one of the most gifted writers:

Horatius Power,
white-haired millionaire, pince-nez on fire,
screaming:

"The banks are broken, Gas has fallen,
Consolidated Ice and Frigidaire dropped down
Chicago River—

river swimming rats, the poor,
(pity the poor,
but not the undeserving torso,
right arm raised in blood whose hand is bleeding
at my door)

No virgin safe tonight, pack up your girls,
call the militia, O my gold, my daughters
of Lebanon's green waters flowing in triple-plated
glass

sealed in limousines, Atlantic speed
in liners overseas . . .

Eastward my sirens, weave, weave,
grass green Aegean bonds at six per cent—
did no one hear the poor?"

One can adduce other examples, among these
a poem of several hundred lines. One can
present passages from revolutionary poems,
which are plainly precious:

...The nervous leaves rustle voices of sadgreen
light . . .

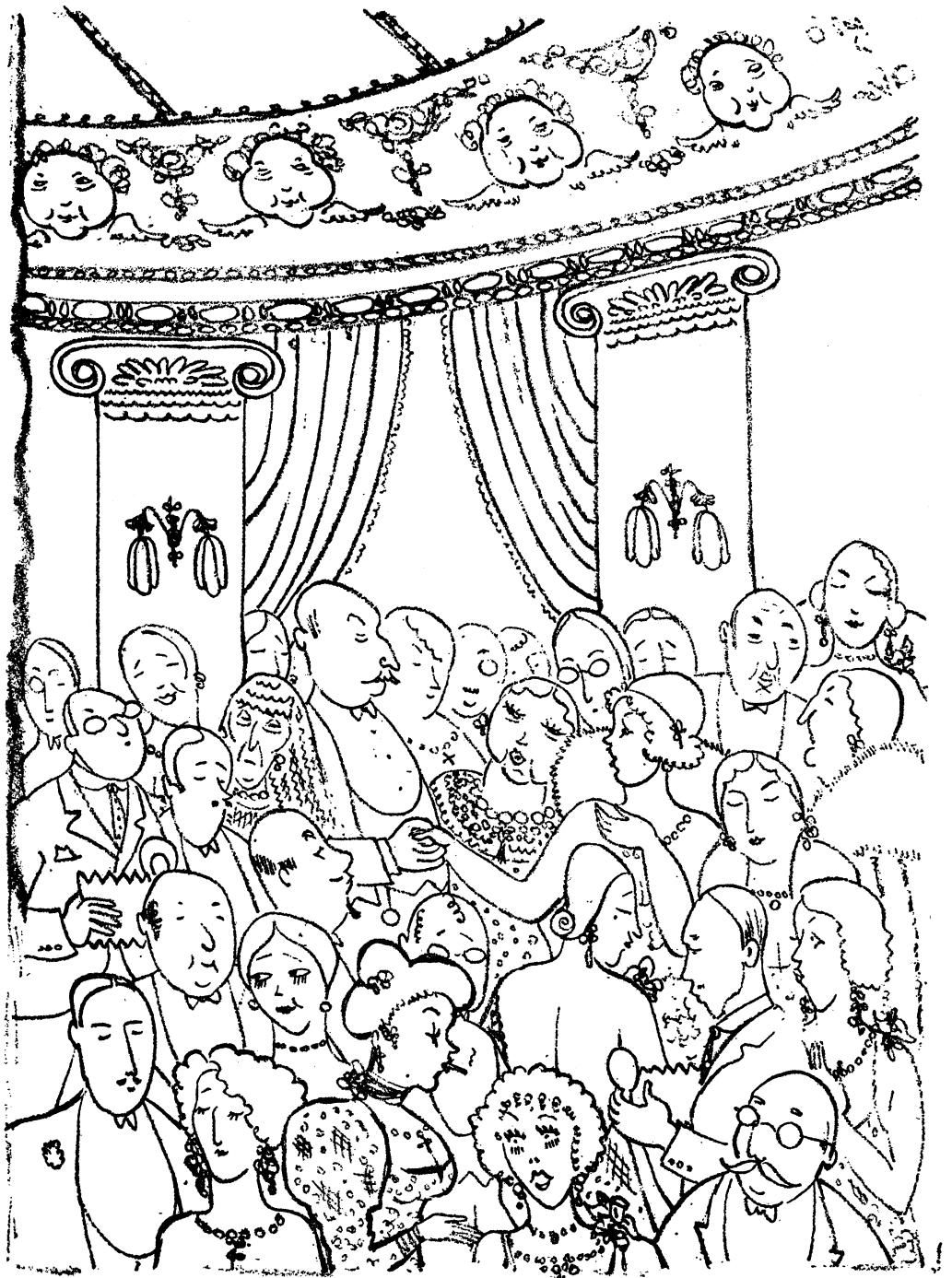
...The waterfront nearby smells like a black
restless wind . . .

...The soft sunsetwinds blow rosegold odors . . .

It must be added, however, that the real
harm is still potential. And since in America
we have no "school" of revolutionary poets
building together a body of vanguard verse but
many poets working separately, there is a need
for pointing out the indissoluble dilemma
awaiting poets who follow, let's say, the form
of T. S. Eliot. These revolutionary writers
will be attempting to write affirmations while
thinking in negative modes of expression.
They will be trying to express revolutionary
content in the terminology of its very op-
posite: a defeatist reaction. Obviously, the ir-
reconcilable dichotomy must result in a flaw;
in fact, in a double flaw because these poets
will not only fail to write a successful poem
but will fail to achieve revolutionary propa-
ganda since poor art is poor propaganda.

Immediately some writers will protest the
foregoing analysis. They may say, for example,
"Aragon has written an important revolution-
ary poem (*U. S. S. R.*) in Surrealist form—
and the subject-matter of Surrealist verse is
hardly proletarian or revolutionary!" The
difficulty here can be solved by a precise use
of terms. Aragon utilized certain of the tech-
nical devices employed by Surrealism; he did
not use the Surrealist mode of expression
which, as we know, is inseparable from the
Surrealist disinterest in intelligibility and con-
tempt for communicating ideological concepts.
Aragon has written a revolutionary poem in
which he has incorporated certain technical
devices used by Surrealists.

But there may be other protest against our
application of form-content indivisibility. Some
writers may say: "Since all past literature is
not revolutionary in content all of its forms
are non-revolutionary, and therefore we must
make a clean break with all past literature."
The conclusion would be correct if the prem-
ise were not immediately disprovable. One
finds in past literature a definite stream of
writing which is clearly revolutionary in rela-
tion to its background. Furthermore, a large
part of the writing of the past remains as
valid and significant today as when it was first
written: penetrating perceptions of human re-



FIRST NIGHT

Pearl Binder

lationships, insights, affirmations and judg-
ments implicit in narratives, characterizations,
dramatic episodes, etc. To deny to contem-
porary revolutionary poets the right to use
certain modes of expression used by revolu-
tionary poets of the past, is to deny the con-
tinuity of revolutionary thought.

So much for the confusions arising out of
the misconception of form and content, al-
though it bears directly on revolutionary
poetry critics as well—particularly on such a
remark as the following: "MacLeish is Amer-
ica's *greatest* poet even though he is a Fas-
cist." If words are to have any precise mean-
ing such a statement is hopelessly wrong.
Greatness involves not only artistic competence
but human values in terms of the progress or
retrogression of civilization. The same critic
would have to say, given two groups of men:
one stammeringly advocating a better world,

the other eloquently advocating a worse so-
ciety, the better speaker is the "greater."
"Comparative eloquence regardless of ideology
determines relative greatness!"—again a con-
fusion because form and content have been re-
garded as separable.

And now to the second point which follows
from the first. Much of our revolutionary
verse seems to be going in a direction anti-
thetical to the creation of a powerful mass lit-
erature. There are two bases for this conten-
tion: (1) by utilizing reactionary, negative
thought-forms the revolutionary poet drives
himself into an impossible form-content di-
lemma from which no integrated product can
issue; (2) there has been a tendency among
certain of us to hold monologs with our-
selves. These latter poets are obviously sin-
cere, genuine and talented; they are busy
working out their individual problems; and

they utilize modes of expression suitable to this ultra-private purpose. No one would pretend that they have not achieved excellent things—but let us be sure to add to our commendation that such obscure and subjective poetry cannot effectively serve in the creation of a powerful mass literature. Of course contemporary life is infinitely complex and the complexity will reflect itself in verse. But never before have poets been equipped with Marxist methods; and to an understanding Marxist clarity burns through all the obfuscations of contemporary society. A Marxist poet has no reason to be obscure. If he chooses obscure, oversubtle terminology he cannot expect to be a vitalizer of revolutionary mass poetry. Let him remember that if literature is to be a weapon it must not be a thin, shadowy, overdetailed implement but a clear, keen-edged, deep-cutting tool.

Appeal for clarity hardly advocates tin-pan-alley doggerel. It is infinitely more difficult to write simply and clearly than sophisticatedly; far greater discipline and technic are needed; for instance, the easy path of random image-association would demand expert exploitation. But if we achieve clarity and directness we create a literature interesting not primarily to intellectuals, sophisticates, and specialists but to masses. As research has shown, simplicity and directness are essential ingredients of early communal poetry. They are also frequently ingredients of the greatest works of poetry, the greatest art—and therefore result in the most effective propaganda. There are countless ways of writing simply. However, there is no need for discussing the details here. Clarity, simplicity, directness, intelligibility—these are in the direction of affirmation: and as such, in the direction of revolutionary poetry wishing to be concretely effective.

Although only at the beginning of its career, revolutionary poetry offers an encouraging picture. There is surely no dearth of talent. One can arbitrarily designate a number of different approaches to the problem: the individual human document taking the form of a resolve of some sort, or an outcry against circumstances, or an apostrophe to some individual, group, or object. There are poems of specific controversy. Poems of symbolic fancy. Dramatic slices of life. Description of events or of locale. There are such different modes of expression as may be found in the poems of Fearing, Bodenheim, Kreymborg, Freeman, Schneider, Gold, Kalar, Lewis, West, Gregory, Funaroff, Rolfe, Spector, Hayes, Mad-dow, etc.

But two types of revolutionary verse remain largely unexplored: first, satire. All of us agree that the possibilities are limitless. Daily it becomes increasingly clear that our enemies are making it easy for our satire; they seem to be posing, waiting to be caricatured. And yet little has been done with this incomparably effective method.

My second suggestion is harder to define. All about us are human characters who are inevitable outgrowths of our particular age

and locale. They have their roots in the present; they are in reality significant myth-figures despite the fact that they breathe and talk. Just as the important characters in Homer, Dante, Milton, Shakespeare are mythopoetic figures (unmistakable symbols of their age and locale) so these various, recognizable contemporary characters offer possibilities of a great mythology of revolutionary figures. This use of "myth" and "mythology" has, of course, nothing whatever to do with make-believe. Myth is used here in its precise sense: these characters are mythological because they embody an inner consistency, a logic of action and character making them real and inevitable. These types become the touchstone of their time and locale. And they offer us today a supreme opportunity for creating vital, effective, as well as lasting poetry. Barbusse remarked that propaganda must be organically integrated in the whole work of art. Surely revolutionary mythopoetic poetry shows perfectly how one can be effectively subversive merely by telling the truth.

In summary, there are four "appeals" in this essay. First, let those poets wishing to be effectively revolutionary free themselves from the modes of expression of the poets of despair

and decay. Such models are not in our direction. They speak, at best, in exquisite whispers. At most they are to be admired for their feats; but to submit to their macabre spell, or to emulate them?—hardly! Second, let us turn our backs on oversubtle, overdetailed, oversophisticated, obscure writing. Let us forge a clear, sharp weapon of poetry to make it effective beyond our cubicles; let us speak in immense, clear tones which can be understood by multitudes, realizing that this program requires supreme artistic effort. Third, let us bear in mind that a terrific instrument, satire, has been neglected. And fourth, let us consider the creation of a vital mythopoetic literature.

Such appeals may well strike certain readers with cynical amusement. A great poetic literature does not automatically follow a "call to pens" or public appeal, for poetry grows according to laws independent of deliberate exhortation. But revolutionary poets working apart must realize their collective effort. Aware of one another and of their common direction, they must blend their voices into a thundering revolutionary chorus, a concerted shout that will not relent until their vision has grown into reality.

Correspondence

We're Back in Wellesley

TO THE NEW MASSES:

My attention has just been called to a clipping from THE NEW MASSES headed "Wellesley College" Library and signed "Periodical Librarian." I wish to apologize for the tone of this communication and to say that it was sent without my knowledge or authorization. We have no desire to prevent our students from reading THE NEW MASSES. I shall be obliged to you if you will give this letter the same publicity you gave the one from our Periodical Clerk.

Very truly yours,

ETHEL D. ROBERTS,

Wellesley College Library, Librarian.
Wellesley, Mass.

A Student's Protest

TO THE NEW MASSES:

If I had not been entering the mid-year examination period when you published the petty affront of the College Periodical Librarian, I should have written immediately to let you know that she is not an accepted spokesman for our college. It is not merely an apology that I wish to present, however, but a condemnation of the attitude it represents. Although such ill manners in a professional capacity are inexcusable, the situation is much more serious because it defeats the only purpose that makes such an institution as Wellesley an asset to society; namely, to provide a broad background that will give insight and perspective and training in sifting out the important issues in a situation so that young women can take a more efficient and active part in social reconstruction.

In a period when the prevailing economic system has collapsed, it is imperative that the young people who must construct a new one have every assistance in formulating a new economic philosophy as a basis for action. The NEW MASSES is the only revolutionary weekly where the news is reported by

people who have a solution for the mess we are in and one of the few periodicals ideologically apart from the intellectual maze in which those in power are lost. As a member of the student body, I resent having this opportunity to learn denied us by the autocratic whim of a prejudiced and narrow minded librarian.

Yours for intellectual honesty,

E. A. M.

Reply to Lawes

TO THE NEW MASSES:

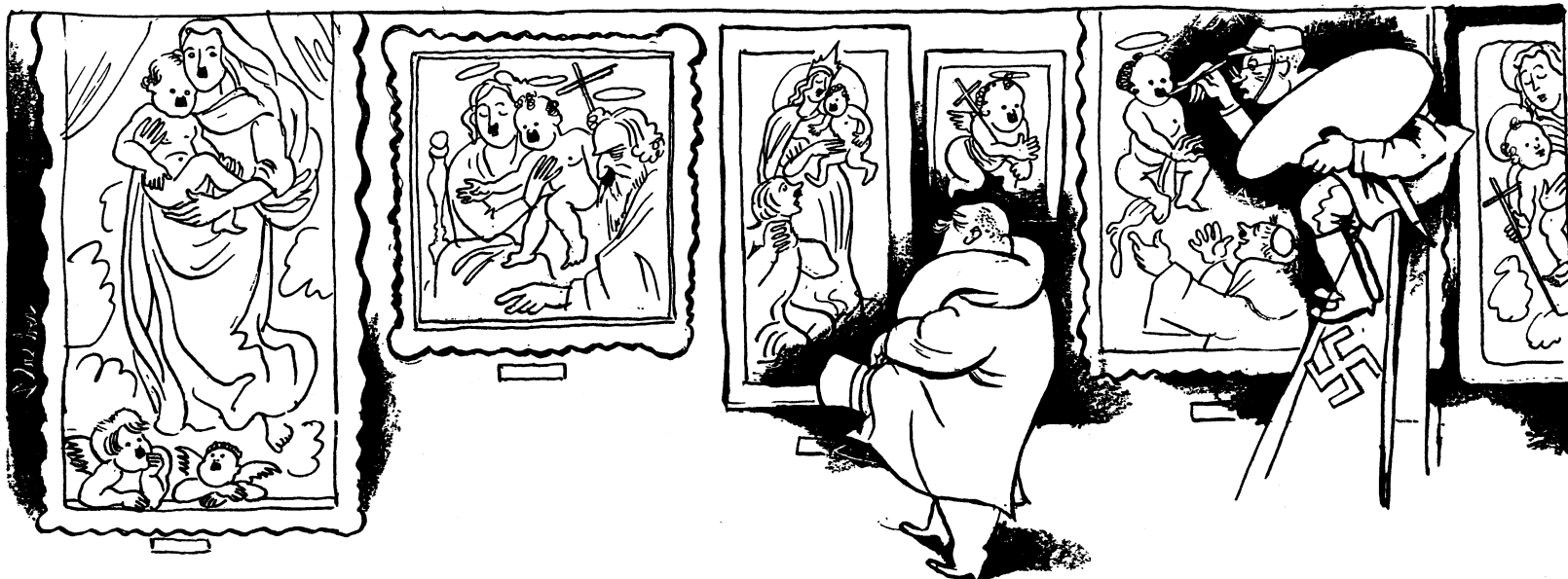
Enclosed is a copy of our reply to Warden Lawes of Sing Sing on the question of his refusal to admit working class publications into the prisons for political prisoners.

WILLIAM L. PATTERSON.

LEWIS E. LAWES, Warden,
Sing Sing Prison,
Dear Sir:

Your letter of February 6th raises very important political questions. These cannot be discussed within the confines of a letter nor between two individuals. They are questions of a fundamental political character which must be brought to the attention of the masses of the American people, to the intellectuals and the middle class.

Granted that every man in your prison has been convicted of the violation of a penal law, it is nevertheless equally true that certain of these laws bear directly upon economic and political questions and are obviously enacted for the purpose of protecting the class interests of those who make the laws. There are men in your institution whose only "crime" is their activities in strike struggles, participation in demonstrations of unemployed workers, struggles against decisions of the Department of Labor on the question of deportation of foreign born militants, struggles to secure for the Negro masses the constitutional rights supposedly theirs. In



"WAS HABEN SIE DA AM SCHNABELN?"

George Schreiber

other words, they are convicted of attempting to unite those on the bottom and to better their conditions.

To say that you "cannot recognize political prisoners as such" is to very hypocritically attempt to evade the obvious fact that they are political prisoners, in view of the above irrefutable statement.

To deny to those men publications issued by organizations of which they were a part, and which have a constitutional right of existence, is to discriminate against "labor and workers' publications."

Liberty Magazine, the Saturday Evening Post, the Literary Digest, the Nation, the New Republic, all take very definite positions upon political questions and rarely an issue appears without some political questions being treated at length. These publications you have banned are to a more or less degree opposed to the existing order. But the right of opposition is also constitutionally guaranteed, and it has been treated very definitely by Jefferson, Lincoln and Wilson, as well as by other leading American statesmen who have repeated that the right of revolution is inherent in the American people.

This discrimination on your part is arbitrary and of a definite political character. The question of whether or not there should be censorship in a prison is not one that need be discussed here. The class character of your censorship becomes at once apparent; and this we unqualifiedly object to.

Your institution seeks to perpetuate the existing national and racial hatreds. The Soviet Union has concretely shown the tremendous possibilities of regeneration contained in a system which has as its reason for being, education, correction, cure. It approaches this question as a class question, from the viewpoint of the working class it represents. The literature you ban has the same point of view.

As I have said at the beginning, this question of class censorship within the American prisons must be taken to the class which is struggling for full democracy. Its democratic rights are abridged on the outside through the open violation of the Constitution. By virtue of this violation they are imprisoned. Their democratic rights are abridged on the inside of the prisons.

We shall raise the question of "political prisoners" as such to the level of a national campaign.

WILLIAM L. PATTERSON,
National Secretary,
International Labor Defense.

An Answer to Lerner

To THE NEW MASSES:

I Was a Spy was inadequate and distorted because it concerned itself with the pathos of an in-

dividual and failed to relate this individual to the significance of her own acts and to the thousands of soldiers who were affected by them. Within its limits, however, it was a sincere and competent piece of work. I indicated, in my review, how this sincerity and the limitations of the theme, made the picture more effective and dangerous in disarming the audience in the fight against war, in diluting our resentment against the war mongers.

NATHAN ADLER.

Economy Hits Arizona

To THE NEW MASSES:

The economy act which cut off so ruthlessly the pensions of disabled soldiers initiated a reign of near-hell in healthful Arizona where so many gassed and otherwise totally incapacitated soldiers had flocked because of the mild, dry temperatures.

The Government, undoubtedly with the intention of eliminating undeserving parasites, acted under theoretically good rules which in practice were not only unjust but grimly cruel. The unfortunates were often totally disabled. Some were bed patients, others, many of them too old to work, were wholly dependent on their pensions, and some of these had large families consisting of several young children. It was another case of the innocent suffering with the guilty, and in its wake came suicides, starvation, and the subsistence of entire families at public expense.

The billions appropriated put many to work, but—can a totally disabled soldier, maimed by steel or disease in the line of duty, work? Those billions will have to plant a lot of trees before they satisfy the obligation of a Government to the men who fought for it in four wars!

Phoenix, Ariz.

GEO. W. LEWIS.

A Correction

To THE NEW MASSES:

A question has been raised as to the relation of my housing article *Mansions in the Sky* in the New MASSES of Jan. 30 to a memorandum on Relief Housing submitted to the Unemployed Councils by Meyer Schapiro and Simon Breines. I wish to state that my article was based on an unpublished manuscript by Mr. Breines summarizing the memorandum in question. I originally intended the article as an unsigned editorial presenting the analyses and proposals of Schapiro and Breines, but through my negligence it appeared as a signed article prematurely and without their authorization.

DAVID RAMSEY.

From Joseph Freeman

To THE NEW MASSES:

Prolonged illness—incurred as a result of extremely strenuous work during the past three years—has made it impossible for me to participate in the administrative-editorial activities of the weekly *NEW MASSES*.

I had hoped to be back in the office before this, but under doctor's orders I am compelled to stay out for an additional number of weeks.

Whenever possible, I shall utilize this time to contribute articles or verses to the weekly *NEW MASSES*; but in fairness to the comrades who are carrying the burden of administering and editing the magazine, I should like you to publish this letter, so that the credit for the unusually fine work done should go where it belongs—to the other members of the editorial staff who from week to week have, under difficult circumstances, issued a brilliant publication.

I am sure I need not stress the fact that, illness apart, I feel myself part and parcel of the *NEW MASSES* staff, to which I hope to return soon in good working order. With warmest fraternal greetings,

JOSEPH FREEMAN.

The CONTRIBUTORS

ROBERT FORSYTHE has contributed to the *NEW MASSES* before; his work appears, under other names, in many periodicals.

JOHN L. SPIVAK, author of *Georgia Nigger*, is making a coast-to-coast investigation of conditions and his reports will appear in the *NEW MASSES* regularly.

OAKLEY JOHNSON, formerly an instructor at the College of the City of New York, was expelled for radical activities.

WALLACE PHELPS, secretary of the Writers' Group, John Reed Club of New York, is one of the editors of *Partisan Review*.

HOWARD N. DOUGHTY, JR., is a member of the faculty of Harvard University.

LANGSTON HUGHES is president of the League of Struggle for Negro Rights and the author of several volumes of verse.

MORDECAI GORELIK, prominent scenic designer, is connected with the Theatre Collective.



“WAS HABEN SIE DA AM SCHNABELN?”

Books

Portrait of the Gangster

THE YOUNG MANHOOD OF STUDS LONIGAN, by James T. Farrell. Vanguard Press, \$2.50.

THE cumulative effect of *Young Lonigan* (published 1932) and its sequel, *The Young Manhood of Studs Lonigan*, is exceedingly impressive. These two novels by James T. Farrell are the truest and most ruthless commentary upon street-Arab adolescence and manhood ever written in America. *Young Lonigan* is a study of a Chicago gang of boys from which our political life stems. Grown to maturity these drugstore cowboys, poolhall sharks, and killers on the make become ward heelers, racketeers and political leaders.

Since the characters belong somewhere in the upper brackets of the propertied classes, poverty is not the theme and the "mean streets" are not the milieu of either of these books. The special genre of brutal longings, the dehumanized, competitive desires, which characterize Studs Lonigan, the protagonist, belong to all America, and the sources from which they spring touch all shores and levels of society. The mind of the book, and not of the author, can be illustrated to some extent by the following: The reviewer, as a child, remembers looking into the window of a high-class cigar store and watching a thin, phthisical man, with a macabre, nicotine complexion, seated at a table, smoke one cigarette after another and drink milk and eat hershey bars to sustain himself. This was in 1907 or 1908, and it was one of those horrendous endurance-contests to which the exacerbated wealthy as well as the shipping clerk go for their catharses.

Since then the American psyche has reaped the pentecost of new technological discoveries. There is the cartoon, with sound effects, out of which jump abstract ghouls, mice, ghosts, the dismembered imaginings of bad dreams; Walt Disney's confectionery fables for infantile minds. Then there were the Lloyd comedies of a few years back in which lovable, tortoise-shelled Harold invariably succeeded in whipping up the sadistic impulses of the "totalitarian" audience by precariously balancing himself on the ledge of a thirty story window. This is the background without which we cannot understand the neuroses of Studs Lonigan, Weary Reilley, Paulie Haggerty, Davey Cohen, Barney Keefe and others.

These Chicago Attilas, when not attending the Catholic parochial school, raid candy stores, steal milk, and attempt to set in motion race riots in order to give their lives the dramatic atmosphere of western pulp stories. Their sleazy pugilistic mores, their vandalistic and predatory habits of mind are harrowingly portrayed in a mimic war scene on a vacant lot. Standing in trenches which they have dug,

these boys, protected by a Hooverville assortment of tin cans, boxes and barbed wire, hurl large rocks at one another. The raw, competitive motive of the American streets, which runs through our business, science, and art, is again made manifest in a football game in which the "home team" almost kills the fleet-footed Schwartz in order to win the game. And the same impulse of the street canaille is seen in a snapshot of Armistice Day on a Chicago El.

When the playmates of Studs Lonigan have flowered into manhood, "the Alky Squad of 58th Street," they become dipsomaniacs, contract venereal diseases, and die of tuberculosis. They are driven by the same kind of jungle appetites as compel Archibald MacLeish's Wall Street conquistadors to outstrip their competitors in power and prestige.

The one moment of relief and respite in the book comes when Studs, cowed by the death of Arnold Sheehan, decides to join a Y gymnasium so that he can trim down his alcoholic "aldermen" and live to be a centenarian. However, this feeling of penitence is fugitive, for at the close of the book Studs Lonigan is lying in the gutter, drunk and unconscious, after a New Year's rape party.

The two novels make a definite and original contribution to American literature. Unlike Jack Conroy's prose, which is the remnants of writing that has been done in the past five to seven years, Farrell's Americanese is enormously skillful and deeply fused.

Farrell's novels are the intransigent documents of a fellow-traveler, and doubtless will not please certain snipers in the ranks of the pseudo-Marxists—these sharpshooters, with one essay and one review in their belts, who have never made any deviations for the simple reason that they have never written one creative or critical line that will last. It is altogether regrettable that some of the more original and sensitive minds in the movement have not yet done a book on the Marxist approach to American literature and spared us some of the leftist hemorrhages.

It is true, there are no strikes or demonstrations in Farrell's novels. Besides that, there is scarcely a figure or a character that can be salvaged, and yet these books are highly serviceable to both workers and intellectuals.

If Mr. Farrell has taught us nothing more than how hooliganism arises, grows, and festers in this horrific America, and if he has shown us nothing else but where to look for the vandals, the Pelleys and Art Smiths, the American Storm Troopers, he has instructed us well and profoundly. Some day, in our future, classless society, readers will examine *The Young Manhood of Studs Lonigan*, and say, "Look what we were, and see what we have come through!"

EDWARD DAHLBERG.

Yugoslavia Awakes

THE NATIVE'S RETURN, by Louis Adamic. Harper and Brothers. \$2.75.

George Plechanov, the well known Russian Marxist scholar, once prophesied that good journalism would eventually become a legitimate brother of good literature. In a sense his prophecy has already come true. Artistic *reportage* in France, or *ocherkism*—sketchism—as they refer to it in Soviet Russia, is now occupying a prominent place in the literary scene of these two countries. Artistic *reportage* in the Soviet Union, for instance, is an organic outgrowth of the literary shock brigade movement. Worker-correspondents write sketches depicting intimately their lives in the factories, mines, and collective farms. Well known writers frequently employ the sketch form to describe in detail the particular farm or factory they investigate.

In America, on the other hand, "journalism" is still a curse often hurled at writers, particularly proletarian writers. When the work of a revolutionary writer (Jack Conroy's *The Disinherited*, for instance) cannot very well be attacked by our arty critics as being "crude propaganda," it is usually dismissed as "capable reporting" or "high class journalism." Some of our revolutionary critics, unfortunately, are also guilty of this practice.

That good journalism can have all the qualities usually attributed to "authentic literature," is once more proven by Louis Adamic in *The Native's Return*. Adamic is unquestionably both a talented writer of distinguished prose and a keen observer of life. His latest volume is at once a vivid portrait of his native Yugoslavia and a competent analysis of its economic, social, and political order.

Fresh from the industrial scene in America, Adamic was captivated by the primitive, almost medieval life of the peasants in his native village of Blato. With the zeal of a man who rediscovered the country of his childhood, particularly after a turbulent career as worker, hobo, soldier and author, he sat down to record the folklore, customs and superstitions of his people. His *My Cousin Toné Marries* and *Death Waits for My Uncle Yanex* are both fascinating and stirring. Likewise his flashes of the colorful Yugoslav landscape—the Montenegro mountains, the peasant Riviera, Dalmatia—are as real and alive as the photography in an Eisenstein film.

There is no doubt that Adamic's story of primitive life of the Yugoslav peasants is somewhat over-romanticized. On the other hand, it must be said to his credit that the exotic, primitive, and picturesque did not obscure from his vision the sordid life of the people in this Balkan kingdom—one of the many results of a peace treaty designed to further the ends of European and American imperialism. Because of his knowledge of the three main Yugoslav languages—Serbian, Croatian, and Slovenian—Adamic was able to

talk to people, enter into their confidence, and learn the most minute details of their lives. It is thus that he discovered that the naïve, robust and, industrious peasants whom he admired and eulogized, are gradually being driven to extinction by the ruthless policies of the Yugoslav dictator, King Alexander—"the Yugoslav Al Capone." He discovered that thousands of revolutionists and opponents of the government—Communists, workers, students, and liberals—are being subjected to the most inhuman tortures by the hirelings of the dictator. He also discovered, to be sure, the rising wave of revolution among the oppressed Yugoslav workers and peasants.

Perhaps the most significant and dramatic part of *The Native's Return* is the description of the revolutionary movement in Zagreb, the main city in Croatia. It was there that a peasant told him: "I don't know what is going to happen exactly. We are part of the European mess, world mess. Maybe there will be another war. . . . Then we peasants—I think peasants everywhere—will revolt. . . . Sometimes I daydream and imagine the Red Army starting from Moscow a million strong. We join them—then to the devil with all this! We become part of Russia—independent republics within a great union."

I quote this passage at length for it sums up the spirit of the peasants not only of Yugoslavia but throughout Europe. This certainly is true of the millions of peasants in my native Ukraine who are now suffering under the yoke of Polish Fascism. It is passages like this, dispersed throughout the book, that make *The Native's Return* not only an excellent travel book but also an important social document. It is an indictment not only of Yugoslav capitalism but of capitalism throughout the world. As to Adamic's own point of view, a quotation from his concluding chapter, I believe, will speak for itself: "I see why the Russian Revolution is necessary, from the standpoint not only of backward, peasant Russia, but of the world at large. . . . It saved Russia from falling prey to the hounds of European imperialism. . . . I see now that the salvation of Yugoslav people and other small nations in that part of the world lies, clearly

and inescapably, in the direction of Russia."

As to America, it, too, says Adamic, will have to go left. If nothing else, "the vast industrial equipment which we Yugoslav immigrants have helped to create in America will make her go left and revise her social system." Those who were disappointed by Adamic's pseudo-revolutionary attitude expressed in his previous two books, particularly in *Dynamite*, will agree, I feel certain, that he is growing both as a craftsman and social thinker.

LEON DENNEN.

A New Pioneering Realism

JUST PLAIN LARNIN', by James M. Shields. New York: Coward-McCann, 344 pages. \$2.00.

That there are radical and even revolutionary members of the Columbia University faculty we do not doubt: but that there are Columbia professors who, sent officially to re-organize a southern city's school system, would themselves and through their appointees attempt an educational revolution with the conscious expectation of a social overturn—all of them condemning the present economic system, denouncing the unfair treatment of Negroes, and showing sympathy for Communists—that *this* should be so is hard to believe; at least while Nicholas Murray Butler is in charge there. (Ask Donald Henderson; ask the Upton Sinclair who wrote *The Goose-Step*.) But this is the supposition upon which James M. Shields builds an interesting and novel tale.

For instance, in his initial report to the head of the Columbia University Department of Education, Dr. Leander S. Kalb remarks that the churches and the big tobacco interests dominate the town, and "if either begins to smell out the results of independent thinking . . . in the schools"—meaning that good school teaching would lead to workers' strikes and probably more—there would be opposition to the curricular and other changes he had in mind. And Kalb's chief appointee, school principal Lewis P. Chenault, introduces a teacher in the newly established night school by saying that this teacher had two years be-

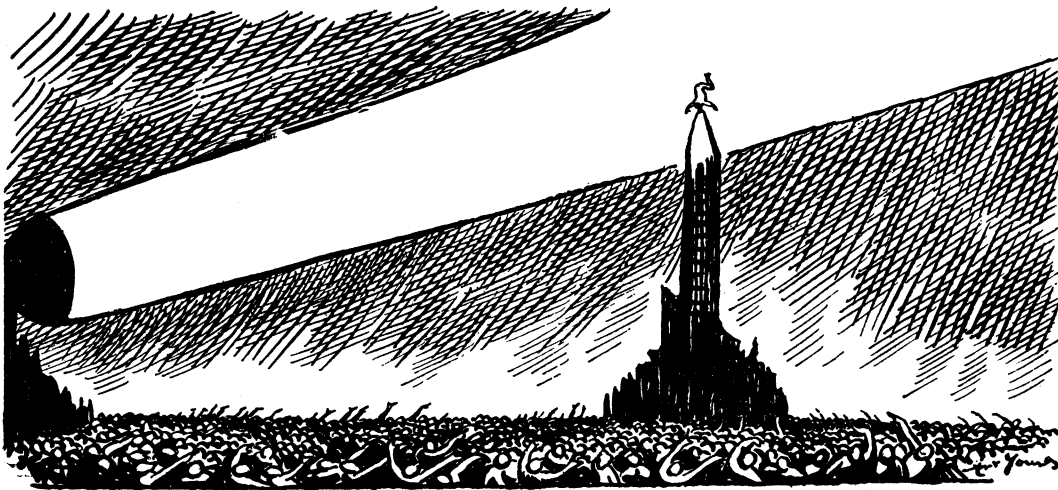
fore "protested about low wages and long working hours" and that therefore "the bosses got rid of him."

So much for the introduction of somewhat romantic and exceptional factors: as though Columbia University were not with the bosses, would not smell out Kalb and Chenault and get rid of them.

But the author of *Just Plain Larnin'* is thoroughly familiar with the American school system,—this we know without the publishers' assurance that he has taught school for thirteen years. He exposes the stiff pedagogical structure, the inane methodology, the vicious financial control, the conscienceless crushing of children's lives. He shows us, almost casually, as the story unfolds, the schools for the children of the well-to-do, for the children of the poor tobacco factory workers, for the children of the despised and robbed Negro people. He shows the strait-jacketing of the teachers in these schools. He shows the stupid, pitiful, maddening farce-tragedy of "educatin'!"

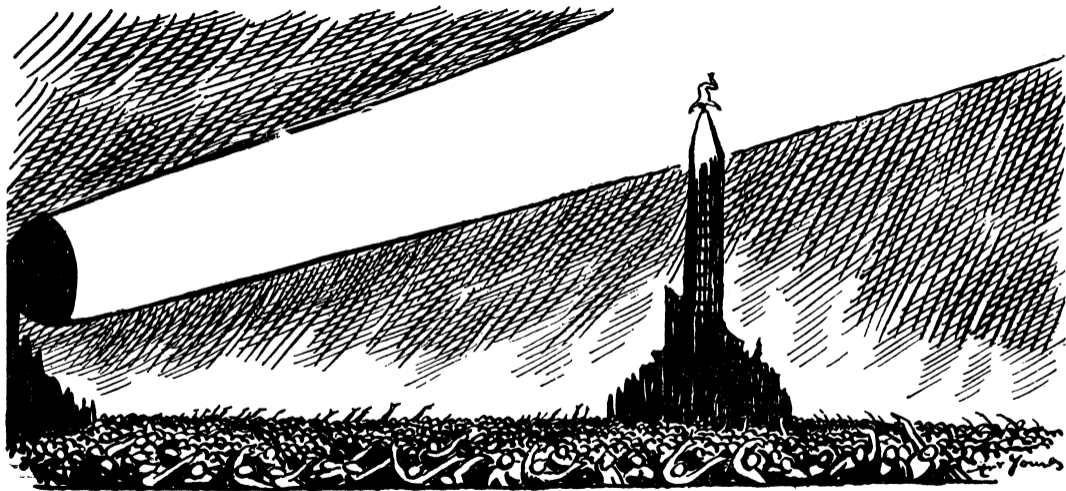
The story, in brief, is this: In Nugget City, a prosperous cigarette-manufacturing town of the southeastern United States, the leading banker, J. Max Pyle, includes among his advertising and self-glorifying projects a plan to put Nugget City schools on the map by engaging a specialist—the Dr. Kalb referred to—to reorganize them. A man named Potts is the verbose Superintendent of Schools; among the school principals is Eugene Stafford, more intelligent and more ethical than the rest, who gives Kalb's ideas genuine but chiefly passive approval. Kalb, unexpectedly to his boss employers, is actually interested in improving the social conditions of the working class homes from which most of the children come. The freeing of the children, under his regime, from old-fashioned tyranny and from the useless dry rot of textbooks—from the so-called "plain larnin'" of the title—leads to keen analysis by the children of the city's industries, to parental interest in the facts disclosed, to a night school for adults under the direction of Chenault, to speculation about class relationships. Then, with the coming of the general economic crisis and the increase of unemployment, there comes a tie-up of a sort between this genuine educational expanse and the ferment among the tobacco workers,—then the prospective strike, re-doubled police brutality, the raid upon the night school, the police murder of Ransom—most class-conscious member of Chenault's night-school staff—the forced resignation of Kalb, and the return to Nugget City's educational normality. There are other significant characters and happenings; there is romance, intrigue, excitement, scandal; but the above summarizes the school theme of this history.

This story is the first—so far as I know—to treat of school matters from a consciously revolutionary point of view. It is a good story, with living characters; its faults are minor, and, after all, possible of correction. Put it beside Grace Lumpkin's *To Make My Bread*: the difference of subject matter makes the comparison all the more instructive. In-



PUBLICITY

From Art Young's *Inferno*—Delphic Studios



PUBLICITY

From Art Young's Inferno—Delphic Studios

stead of dealing with the proletariat in boss-owned factories, we deal with the children of the proletariat in boss-controlled schools; instead of industrial class struggle, we have the reflection of it in the cultural field. *To Make My Bread* is, however, the better book perhaps because Grace Lumpkin wrote with the *Communist Manifesto* at her elbow, whereas Mr. Shields may (I am guessing) have had George S. Counts' *Dare the School Build a New Social Order?* too close to his.

OAKLEY JOHNSON.

The Methods of Joyce

ULYSSES, by James Joyce. Random House. \$3.50.

A KEY TO THE ULYSSES OF JAMES JOYCE, by Paul Jordan-Smith. Covici, Friede. \$1.00.

At this stage in Marxist criticism, the class roots of *Ulysses* may almost be taken for granted. With the growth of revolutionary literature in America, the really important question about *Ulysses* is its relation to the methods and sources of revolutionary-proletarian literature.

James Joyce has risen to a new peak in English literature, and he has had a profound influence on contemporary writers. But the most effective part of that influence has been indirect. The school of disciples—centered mainly about *transition*—who have been experimenting with Joyces have never produced anything of sustained vitality, and they are now fading out in a last flurry of word-capers, which they have ostentatiously named writing of the "vertigral age."

The demise of Joyce's disciples proves that the method of any writer, however effective, cannot be transplanted to other literary material, particularly to proletarian material. At most, some aspects of Joyce's sensibility and innovations in prose form may be assimilated (as Virginia Woolf, Sean O'Faolain, Hemingway, and Faulkner, for instance, have done), but only after the relation of Joyce's methods to his purpose, his theme, and his sensibility has been recognized. In general, the assimilable elements of *Ulysses* are few, because the purposes of Joyce are so specialized.

The very existence of guides like Stuart Gilbert's and Paul Jordan-Smith's testifies to the detachment of *Ulysses* as a whole from ordinary human and even literary experience. In *A Key to the Ulysses of James Joyce*, Smith briefly summarizes the sequence of incidents, and then traces a rough parallel between the situations and characters of *Ulysses* and those of the *Odyssey*. He takes issue, though, with Valéry Larbaud, who emphasized the web of symbolism which relates each episode to some technique, color, organ of the body, science, Greek character, Greek myth, etc. "It seems to me," writes Smith, "that this meticulous analysis adds little to the understanding of the book." In general, aside from some perfunctory tributes to the depths of Joyce's insight and the effectiveness of his "vocabulary," and some objections to occa-

sional overlaid word-combinations, Smith avoids broader questions of literary criticism. But the reader of *Ulysses* will find Smith's guide very helpful.

Joyce's characters are probably more complete psychologically than those of any other novelist in the history of literature. A full background of memories and associations is woven into the acts and thoughts of Dedalus and the Blooms. This continuity of thought-process underrunning their actions, or stream of consciousness, as it is commonly called, necessarily has been carried through dramatically unimportant as well as important incidents in the lives of the characters. To achieve an intensity of meaning at almost every stroke of the pen, Joyce has introduced two prose forms: a run-on of free association, as in Mrs. Bloom's soliloquy, giving all the twists of a range of experience, and a use of word clusters, such as "Right and left parallel clanging ringing a double decker and a single deck moved from their railheads, swerved to the down line, glided parallel," encompassing in a single image a variety of impressions. But, in addition, the prose throughout *Ulysses* has a remarkable suppleness of idiom which gives a constant sense of recognizable reality to the reader. And the cadence is almost perfectly adjusted to the ring of each situation.

As Robert Cantwell has observed in a recent essay on Joyce, writers have recognized "that under the lens of his methods all the overworked scenes of realistic narrative, like drops of water under a microscope, are suddenly seen to be teeming with unsuspected life; the pauses and silences whose meaning could barely be guessed, the nuances of moods, the emotional responses which are scarcely reflected in speech or gestures or facial expression—all this, it can be seen now, is packed with infinite voiceless dramas, with dramas which yield less fully to any other method of presentation, or cannot be stated at all." But these merits have been achieved at the expense of immediate intelligibility to a reader with an average background of experience. By this I do not mean that all great art must be readily understood by the average man. I mean that James Joyce in successfully probing many psychological complexities of modern life has used a method which has detached his characters from significant social patterns. (Robert Cantwell has emphasized the extent to which the Irish revo-

lutionary movement enters into all of Joyce's writings, but I cannot see that it is any more than a source of memories which rise to consciousness in various parts of *Ulysses*: the revolutionary movement in no way affects the course of events.) Even time in *Ulysses* is relative to the thought processes and the acts fulfilling them, rather than to the tempo of the social world. The stream of consciousness follows its own steady course. Consequently, as Edmund Wilson has noted, *Ulysses* is essentially symphonic, non-dramatic. Joyce's method could hardly be used to present social conflict or human conflict against a background of class struggle.

Ulysses represents, I believe, the fullest possible exploitation of language for the purposes Joyce has evidently set himself. But there is a limit to the load which language can bear and still remain a medium of communication; and there is a limit to the use to which any literary method can be put if it is not to become sheer method. Though some critics hail the published fragments of *Work in Progress* as the *Ulysses* of the dream world, it seems to me that Joyce is crossing these limits. While Joyce is narrowing the social frame of experience, proletarian writers are grounding their themes and forms in the class pattern of life.

However, in that the sensibility of Joyce is an important reaction to the contemporary world, and the technical devices in *Ulysses* are effective for exploring parts of that world, *Ulysses* is now part of our literary heritage. And it is likely that proletarian writers will use variants of the Joycean method in some portions of their novels for presenting, for example, a flow of memories, a merging of thought with conversation and action, a sense of multiple meaning in a scene, or, as Dos Passos has done, for relating the lives of diverse characters to a social situation.

WALLACE PHELPS.

Upstate Decay

FIRST LOVE AND LAST, by Howard Coxe. Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$2.

What impresses one most in *First Love and Last* is Howard Coxe's unusual method of telling the story of Sara Cloud. The device he uses—that of telling the story backward—is not a new one, but there is a decided freshness and novelty in Coxe's treatment caused

James Joyce's ULYSSES

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largely, I believe, by the author's approach to each separate period in his heroine's life; each of them is made complete in itself and each could be read without reference to any of the other sections.

Despite the excellence of this method, the unity of the entire novel suffers as a result of the author's complete absorption in each of these three stages. Thus we find that there are significant and obvious lapses in the whole narrative—lapses not only in the story but in the writing itself, which is worse.

However, behind the effect of Coxe's method, which has startled the daily reviewers so completely that they have overlooked the more intrinsic values in the novel, there is an excellent picture of the decay of an American middle-class family in a small upstate town. It is the story not only of Sara Cloud, the central character and the dominating personality of the town of Sparta, but of the entire family: the senator; his gentle, invalid wife; Sara's sister, Miss Charlotte, who eloped with a no-account actor and turned out badly; Roderick Cloud, baby of the family, who turned his back on his genteel upbringing and his Harvard education to run off to Paris and art and to marry a French peasant girl.

As the reader moves backward over the life of the Clouds, the disintegration, not only of the family, but of the entire smug and polite framework of the earlier, nineteenth century tradition, becomes apparent. For this reason the portrait of the Clouds, though of limited scope, is a valuable one. I think the story would have gained in effectiveness had not the author been so engrossed in his unique method of piling retrogressive detail upon detail. Such a method could be justified only by cumulative revelations—a piling up of the incidents which caused the situation we find when the book opens, in 1931.

EDWIN ROLFE.

A Wise Virgin

QUEEN ELIZABETH, by J. E. Neale.
Harcourt, Brace & Co. \$3.75.

This book is a sober, well-arranged, well-documented biography, undistinguished and occasionally a little factitious in style, but easy and readable. Its reasonableness and well-ordered richness in detail make it, in contrast with Lytton Strachey's cream-puff, *Elizabeth and Essex*, a satisfactory performance. For Mr. Neale, Elizabeth is primarily a *zoon politikon*; the key to her character and actions, her ruling passion, is her desire to be a successful monarch; her famous vacillations, her notorious stinginess were not arbitrary traits of temperament, but had their roots in policy. "The greatness of Elizabeth lay," he says, "in the rarest combination of inherited qualities: the popular arts of her father and the financial prudence of her grandfather." The last point is particularly stressed. "Finance is the essence of Elizabeth's story." "It is in that financial sense of Elizabeth's, her resolute irritating parsimony, that the secret of greatness lay."

If an account of Elizabeth's life is an his-

toriographical desideratum, it is common sense to stress her politics rather than her pudenda. Lytton Strachey's attempt to separate the Woman from the Queen ("Let us draw nearer; we shall do no wrong now to that Majesty, if we look below the robes") falsifies both. But if one were to look for a broad or fresh historical interpretation of Elizabeth's age and of Elizabeth in relation to her age in this book, one would be disappointed. The pre-suppositions are the usual ones of English liberal historians. As long as the times were not ripe for Parliamentary government and England had to pass through the phase of monarchical absolutism, let us be thankful that the business was gotten over so creditably under Elizabeth. By her "popular arts" she kept class and religious feeling in check: she was the symbol of national unity. By her skill in diplomacy she made England a power to be reckoned with on the Continent: she was the symbol of national greatness. Finally, wonder of wonders, she upheld English prestige at home and abroad with a minimum of taxation falling on the prosperous classes. This last emphasis is perhaps Mr. Neale's most original aperçu—with what wistful glances at her successors in the government of England one can only guess. Things were better in those days. The 4700 percent profit on Drake's voyage around the world is, one surmises, something that history can not be made to repeat. For the rest, the chief significance of her reign seems to lie in the tendencies, just beginning to appear, towards Parliamentarianism. In short, the personal monarchy welds the country into a nation; to nationalism Parliament adds the blessings of political liberty; and then, apparently, history ends.

This is to travesty a book that is excellent within its limits, but it is also to emphasize what a great many loose ends a book written with the presuppositions that Mr. Neale brings to his subject necessarily leaves lying about. What were the "popular arts" of Elizabeth that Mr. Neale assigns as one of the stigmata of her "greatness" and what were the conditions that enabled her to exercise them successfully? There are tantalizing glimpses in the book of the position of court, aristocracy, administrative apparatus, merchant-bourgeoisie, peasantry, and artisans. These classes are Mr. Neale's ultimate ground of reference, but their relations are left unexplained. Yet it is precisely in terms of these relations that the significance of Elizabeth's reign would become clear and granted the primarily political nature of Elizabeth's character, the terms in which even her personal story could be best approached. "There are periods," says Lenin, quoting Engels, "when the warring classes attain such an equilibrium of strength that the State power for a time becomes, to an extent, independent of both classes and appears as a mediator between them. . . . Such, for instance, were the absolute monarchies of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries. . . ." Elizabeth and her age offer a very fine opportunity to a Marxist

historian. And it is a job of some immediate importance, for in schools and colleges, because of its literary ramifications, the Elizabethan age is the source of a great deal of very pernicious poison gas.

HOWARD N. DOUGHTY, JR.

Notes on Pamphlets

HOW MELLON GOT RICH, by Harvey O'Connor. *International Pamphlets*. 5c.

In this pamphlet the author of *Mellon's Millions* briefly describes the various industries the Mellon family controls and indicates some of the ways in which this control was secured. Coal, steel, coke, gas and electric power, and gasoline, to say nothing of aluminum—in all these industries hundreds of thousands of workers pay tribute to the Mellon family. Tracing the career of Andrew Mellon in finance and in politics, O'Connor makes an impressive contribution to our understanding of the American plutocracy.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS IN TEN, by A. A. Heller. *Friends of the Soviet Union*. 10c.

This 72 page pamphlet is the perfect handbook of answers to the slanderers of the U.S.S.R. Heller touches on many subjects: industry, agriculture, wages and labor conditions, social insurance and health regulations, aviation, the army, and diplomacy. He summarizes the results of the First Five Year Plan and indicates the prospects of the Second. Countless thousands of Americans want to know the facts about Russia, and here they can find them.

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In the Money

Wall Street Dialogs

FIRST CUSTOMERS' Man—I'd like to see a good strong market right now, stocks going through the roof.

2nd Customers' Man—I don't give a damn which way they move, just so they move. What I want is some action.

1st C. M.—Yes, but the country needs a strong market. It will help business.

2nd C. M.—Oh, there's no doubt about that.

1st C. M.—People will have more money.

2nd C. M.—Billions of dollars were lost in the 1929 stock market crash, weren't they?

1st C. M.—Tens of billions. The Stock Exchange has published the figures.

2nd C. M.—Where did all that money go?

1st C. M.—I dunno.

2nd C. M.—But somebody must have gotten it.

1st C. M.—I suppose so. Anyway values were destroyed all around. And when values are destroyed wealth is destroyed. One day you have securities worth a hundred million dollars; then the stock market goes down and your securities are only worth fifty million. It doesn't matter who buys them from you; their value has been cut in half. There's just that much wealth less in the world.

2nd C. M.—Isn't it queer—how the stock market creates and destroys wealth.

1st C. M.—Sure is. I don't believe anybody really understands it.

2nd C. M.—After all, no goods are produced or consumed on the Stock Exchange. There was substantially the same amount of goods in the world the day after the October 24th crash as there was the day before. Just the same everybody was poorer. It's got me!

1st C. M.—Psychology I suppose.

2nd C. M.—I guess so.

1st C. M.—Whatever it is, it's mighty important.

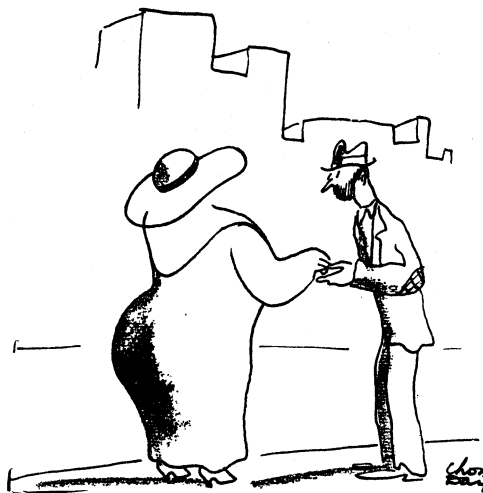
2nd C. M.—It's the key to everything.

1st C. M.—Anyway you can't just look at it on the surface. It's complicated. Leonard Ayers or one of the other big economists probably could explain a good deal that looks mysterious to us. Take this matter of destruction of wealth for instance. You say no goods are created or destroyed on the Stock Exchange. Well, there's such a thing as direct and indirect influences. In the last few years tons of sugar have had to be destroyed, coffee has been dumped into the sea, cotton fields have had to be ploughed under. Maybe the collapse of the market has had something to do with that. By George, I'm sure of it!

2nd C. M.—Oh, there must be some connection.

1st C. M.—Those economists are pretty shrewd boys.

2nd C. M.—Oh, I don't know. I don't see any of them getting rich. Most of them are worse off than we are.



Chon Day

"HERE, I KNOW WHAT IT IS TO BE HUNGRY!"

1st C. M.—That's right.

2nd C. M.—Leonard Ayers has been wrong for five years.

1st C. M.—And Irving Fisher.

2nd C. M.—And Babson.

1st C. M.—Do you really think nobody knows what it's all about?

2nd C. M.—Oh, I suppose Morgan and some of those big fellows.

1st C. M.—And they're not tellin'.

2nd C. M.—You said it.

1st C. M.—You know Ben Smith says that stocks are undervalued right now.

2nd C. M.—I'd sure like to see them go up.

1st C. M.—So would I. It would be the best thing that could happen for business.

2nd C. M.—Don't I know!

Rules for a Gambling House

Plenty of Wall Street denizens dread the financial announcements of the Roosevelt administration in the same way as children dread the visits of the doctor. That is their reaction to the bill proposed by the Senate Committee for regulation of stock exchange business. Brokers and certain pool operators don't like it at all. Yet the most casual study of the bill leaves no doubt that, far from striking at the basic evils of capitalism, it aims to conceal and buttress them.

As a matter of fact the bill is an urgent necessity for American finance capital. Too many scandals have come to light—all the way from Charlie Mitchell, Kreuger and Insull to Albert Wiggin's web of personal holding companies and the disclosures of businessmen, selling their own stocks short. Recent exposures have tended to involve the government itself with increasing frequency, as in the granting of air-mail contracts, in the profit-margins on the sales of airplanes to the army and navy, in the C.W.A. . . .

With the economic crisis still pressing and

the international situation exerting its special influence, demoralization spread through all sections of the supporters of capitalism. It became necessary to make efforts to restore capitalist morale. The stock market occupies a pivotal position in the capitalist financial scheme and it was there that the abuses had been most notorious. That, I think, is the unmistakable explanation of this bill to regulate the stock exchanges.

For practical purposes the bill contains only one significant innovation: government licensing of exchanges. Here we have another indication of the growing integration of centralized capitalism with the machinery of the state, as in the N.R.A., the recent "gold standard" provisions, R.F.C. stock ownership in private banks, etc. As to the accumulation of prohibitions making up the body of the bill, it introduces no really new element, except in the matter of penalties. Requirement of periodic financial statements by corporations listing their stock; forbidding of fictitious sales, in which actual ownership does not change; prohibition of manipulative purchases and sales for purposes of deception, or dissemination of false or misleading rumors, regulation of margin requirements—all these have long since been dealt with by the New York Stock Exchange itself. The present proposals are a bit more drastic but that is all.

Of course the bill never will be passed in its present form. There will be changes—to widen some of the loopholes—but in essence the bill is what American finance capital wants. It won't terminate fraudulent practices in the stock markets, though it might be a curb on the more reckless. It will probably hamper the activities of small brokers; it will definitely add to the power of the big fellows in the "investment banking" group.

In brief, the measure will in no way alter the basic role of the stock exchange as a place where shares in existing and prospective surplus value are gambled for. It amounts to laying down a set of rules for a gambling house.

MARKET FOLLOWER.

REVOLUTION

Great mob that knows no fear—

Come here!

And raise your hand

Against this man

Of iron and steel and gold

Who's bought and sold

You—

Each one—

For the last thousand years.

Come here,

Great mob that has no fear,

And tear him limb from limb,

Split his golden throat

Ear to ear,

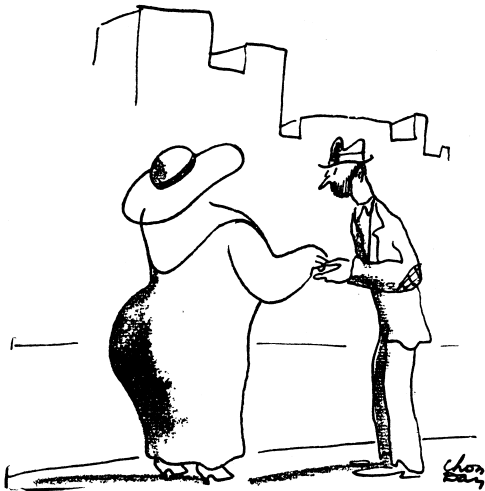
And end his time forever,

Now—

This year—

Great mob that knows no fear.

LANGSTON HUGHES.



**"HERE, I KNOW WHAT
IT IS TO BE HUNGRY!"**

Chon Day

New Scenery for New Audiences

MORDECAI GORELIK

WHEN THE American scene designers were invited to send pictures and models to the International Theatre Arts Exhibition at the New York Museum of Modern Art, they were asked to design new projects for which they did not have commissions. "What is wanted is your most personal expression free from any limitation of Broadway or a particular producer or a particular occasion." The recently added drawings and models by the Soviet designers are, on the contrary, those that have already been put to use on the stage. Nevertheless they remain the most impressive feature of the modern section, distinctly above most of the contemporary American work. It is clear that the Soviet designer is aided, not limited, by the kind of theatre system that exists in his country.

Each year the Soviet theatre, already one of the great cultural achievements of the newly-born socialist state, goes on to further victories in making its theatre worthy of the Revolution. These victories are made possible through the fact that culture is not a luxury but a national necessity in Russia. While capitalist and fascist nations are sharply "economizing" at the expense of all cultural work, the Soviet theatres spare no expense in their productions. Above everything, however, the vitality of the Soviet theatre is due to the vitality of the new audience that has come into the theatre—the proletariat.

It is this vital audience participation, coincident with the Revolution itself, that caused the Soviet designers to question the whole line of the West-European and American theatres. The passive, analytic, "atmospheric" type of production was reaching its limit. This detached mood in the theatre is possible only to audiences who have no immediate interest in large issues, and who come to the theatre to be lulled to forgetfulness, not awakened to insight. This detached mood, from the designer's point of view, results in the typical peep-box setting inside the picture-frame of the proscenium, a picture remote and static. The Soviet designers destroyed this picture. With an initial crudeness they shattered the eternal horizon of the stage floor and swept away the eternal veil of the cyclorama. From the brick walls of the stage they shot constructivist ramps, steps, platforms and galleries, movie screens and naked stage lamps, into the view of their audiences, making the whole theatre an architectural unit, bringing back to a union with the orchestra and balconies that part of the theatre which had, since the beginning of the industrial era, been turned into a curtained mystery.

Capitalist critics have looked upon constructivism as a passing "gesture." They are wrong only in their inability to see the creative force

of this gesture. The Soviet theatre has passed beyond constructivism, but only in refining this original gesture, in enriching it with the theatrical heritage of the past and with the penetrating insight of the revolutionary workers besides. This "gesture" has accumulated force through the use of materials, properties, mobile stages, dynamic perspectives, so-called camera-angles—which have made it into an international direction in the theatre. Soviet stage settings have the shock of the play meeting its audience, the precision of *machines for theatre*.

The sketches by Nivinsky for Vakhtangov's production of *Princess Turandot* (1921) are already a classic. This production turned a cruelly sentimental Cinderella fairy tale into a happy farce that laughed its own story into the discard. Scenically the production took the audience into its confidence in the same sly humor and showed the stage hands shifting the scenery from act to act after the manner of the Chinese property men. W. and G. Stenberg's model for O'Neill's *All God's Chillun Got Wings* harks back to earlier constructivist models, and at the same time illustrates the difference between static and dynamic staging: the original American designs by Throckmorton were similarly laid out, with a street corner in the center of the stage: but the converging streets were never actually used for the action of the play, they only provided a picture.

Rindin's model of a revolving gun-turret for *The Unknown Soldiers* at the Kamerny (1932), is a beautiful example of how the theatrical setting is being moulded to new forms under the stimulus of new audiences, new quickly-scanned vistas of fast-moving events. And Levine's model for *Joy Street* at the State Dramatic Theatre, (Leningrad, 1932), while giving all the foul "atmosphere" of a backyard that any tired business man could wish for, has built up at the same time such a zigzagging path for action as would shatter any business man's peace of mind. No wonder the conservative critics are annoyed at such "aggressive" decor without "allure," scenery whose vitality would kill the usual Broadway production. But the Russian pro-

ductions thrive on such scenery, and the positive lines, colors and lighting of these settings are only a starting-point for the incisive direction, and clear deliberate acting of performers trained to use their whole bodies. Along these platforms and stairways which seem impossible to American actors, the Soviet actors are as sure-footed as cats.

In the world theatre the scene designer has, since the war, been one of the most forward-moving elements. The artistic audacity and superb craftsmanship of the Russians command the admiration of good artists and craftsmen everywhere. Nor will thoughtful American designers and drama-lovers generally fail to realize that such art springs only from a revolutionary society.

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LECTURE

ROY HARRIS, America's Leading Composer will talk on "MUSIC and Labor—its Aesthetic Relationship," on Friday, Feb. 23rd, at 8:15 P. M., at the Pierre Degeyter Club, 5 East 19th Street, New York City.

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Harry Gannes, of the Daily Worker Staff will speak on the

"PRESENT SITUATION IN CUBA"

The Screen

STATE FAIR was one of the earlier films of the escape cycle. It was an apotheosis of farm life, of specific American soil. Will Rogers followed this picture with *Dr. Bull*, again expressing the virtues of small town and agrarian life. Here, the thesis was extended a further step—an attack on modern science and technique, the second doctrine in a potential fascist catechism. His most recent film, *Mr. Skitch*, advises impoverished Americans to get into their Fords, travel, and discover America. These three films set the pace for the back to the farm movement. At least one of them, the doctor theme, was repeated with Lionel Barrymore. Numberless newsreels, short subjects, and "asides" in feature films still contribute to the attack on modern science and technique. The bourgeoisie have become machine wreckers.

Paul Muni's vehicle, *The World Changes*, relates the decadence that grips a clan the further it is removed from the soil and portrays the insufficiency and rottenness of rentier life. The attack on leisure class life is typical of fascist demagogy (remember that the Chase National Bank owns Hollywood) and the solution this film offers is the call—back to the farm.

The production of *Alice in Wonderland* a few months ago (it was rejected as film material two or three years back) indicates how instability can make the simplicity, phantasy and infantile association acceptable now. In *Berkeley Square*, the problem of escape backwards through time is also the theme. The attempt to recapture the past is also reflected in the lusty work of Mae West, in Beery's *The Bowery*, in the dozen or so beer films of 1932-33. The 1890's have been celebrated in song, film, and women's fashions. They all sing of the "sturdy, simple, and characteristic American virtues of the nineteenth century."

The next few months will see the release of at least three more agrarian films that I can think of offhand, *Louisiana*, *Carolina* and *As the Earth Turns*. They will all emphasize the period in costume as well as setting. The next six months will also see no less than seven "queen" films. Marlene Dietrich in the *Scarlet Empress*, the story of Catherine the Great, Elizabeth Bergner in *Catherine the Great*, Katherine Hepburn in *Queen Elizabeth*, Greta Garbo in *Queen Christina*, Helen Hayes in *Mary of Scotland*, Norma Shearer in *Marie Antoinette*, and Claudette Colbert in *Cleopatra*. The motion picture trade papers hail the passing of the sophisticate and sin film. They are demanding dramas based on the Conquistadores, the Empire Builders, the '49ers. No doubt we will soon see again films like the *Covered Wagon*, *The Iron Horse*, *Old Ironsides*, *Birth of a Nation*, told this time with a deliberate appreciation of "ancient" glories, making a specific fascist appeal

in the name of the "sturdy wholesome, simple, and characteristically American nineteenth century."

Broadway contributes two more films to this cycle at the present time. *Beloved*, at the Roxy, is a musical directed by Victor Schertzinger and stars the singer John Boles. It tells the story of a young aristocrat who flees from the German revolution of 1848. Here, on the American soil, in the Negro spirituals, in the grandeur of the Civil War, he finds the elements for the composition of a symphony that will capture the soul of America. The film is similar to *Cavalcade* in conception. It tells its story against the changing background of the Civil War, the Spanish American War, and the World War. It insists that something hollow and rotten has come into American life at the present time, it emphasizes the sweetness, charm, and tranquillity of the nineteenth century. Its theme is ever concerned with the real soul of the real America. The war scenes are glorified and the revolutionists of 1848 are depicted as vicious vandals, as a bloodthirsty rabble destroying works of art, killing men, and despoiling women. The film pretends to an artiness that singles it out for "discriminating class audiences," according to the trade papers. It is a vicious chauvinist performance and within it are contained all the elements of a fascist appeal. The fact that it is in no way political and carries its propaganda implicit in the story, makes it that much more dangerous. American workers might do well to learn what their European comrades do with films that oppose their class interest.

Nana, at the Music Hall, also belongs to the nostalgia cycle. The settings as well as the costumes insist upon the nineteenth century. The Zola novel has nothing to do with the film. Goldwyn received a typical Hollywood story and fashioned it into a dramatic vehicle that would allow Anna Sten to register the full gamut of emotions. Her earlier films have shown us that she is a vigorous and charming actress. Sluggish direction, and a poor story, will make you leave the theatre disappointed. The extravagant pictorial qualities that characterizes *Nana* only serve to emphasize the basic artificiality and incredibility of both characters and story. The Second Empire setting plus three coats of lustrous enamel is what your money will buy you at the Music Hall this week.

NATHAN ADLER.

Current Films

Moulin Rouge—Constance Bennett, Franchot Tone. The tail-end of the Gold Diggers-Footlight Parade musical cycle. Save your money.

Madame Spy—Fay Wray, Nils Asther. Drivel about a female spy who marries an enemy officer to get information. But the dope falls in love with him. Poor story competently directed by Karl

Freund. One of a series of war propaganda films we are going to receive with increasing frequency.

Search For Beauty—Produced after a high pressured world wide beauty contest. Stupid story poorly done. A pageant of healthy, good looking young men and women. See it only if they pay you!

Hi Nellie—Paul Muni. Hokum melodrama about a newspaper man. Vigorous direction by Mervyn Le Roy and expert acting may entertain, though they reveal nothing about the inside of a metropolitan newspaper.

You Can't Buy Everything—May Robson, Lewis Stone. The story of a money-mad woman financier who destroys banks and engineers Wall Street coups, but finds, alack and alas, that mother love comes before love of money.

All of Me—Frederick Marsh and Miriam Hopkins. Where the Park Avenue couple learns all about true love from the boy and girl in the slums.

Fugitive Lovers—Robert Montgomery. The Grand Hotel theme on a transcontinental bus. Hokum slickly directed, creates suspense. N. A.

Current Theatre

Peace on Earth—The Theatre Union gives an anti-war play, by George Sklar and Albert Maltz, a vigorous, exciting production. A dockers' strike against the shipping of munitions for a new world war has repercussions on a college campus, resulting in the frame-up and execution of an idealistic teacher for a murder committed by the police during a demonstration. *Peace on Earth* is at present the finest achievement on any American stage.

Tobacco Road—The dramatizers of Erskine Caldwell's story have not pulled their punches in portraying the life of the submerged white agricultural tenant population of Georgia. It is a starkly revealing picture of the poverty and degradation to which post-Civil War "reconstruction," carried out by the northern capitalist dictatorship, abandoned these people. Henry Hull's performance is a masterpiece.

Days Without End—Eugene O'Neill goes publicly to church in his latest drama, which a leading Catholic critic has called "one of courageous surrender to Christ crucified." The hero sins and repents, the betrayed wife is restored to mental and physical health and the masked figure that has represented the hero's evil other self keels over, dead.

The Green Bay Tree—With intermittent cleverness and unusual elegance of setting, this Jed Harris importation from England is mainly a plea for sympathy for unsexed young men. W. G.

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