

Hollywood's Yes-Men Say "No" by Andrew Collins

NEW MASSES

AUGUST 31, 1937

FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY

"Give Us a Program!"

A First-Term Progressive
Analyzes the Session and
Appeals to the People for
a Unified Plan of Action

by
Congressman
J. T. Bernard



DARRYL
FREDERICK

IT IS something of a truism among journalists that the more imposing the façade of propaganda or "public relations" counsel, the uglier the truths concealed thereby. Occasionally a publication is privileged to penetrate the façade and expose what it conceals. Sometimes, even, an ill-advised guardian of the truth lets down the bars and unwittingly Tells All. Next week the NEW MASSES will publish an article by Mr. Barrie Stavis giving the details of an interview he had with Adolf Ziegler, personal friend of Adolf Hitler, who is now president of the Reich Chamber of Graphic and Plastic Arts. Mr. Stavis, when he met Herr Ziegler at the Paris Exposition, represented himself as an American fascist, and the hapless Nazi took the bait. Mr. Stavis, who is a playwright (his *The Sun and I*, produced by the W.P.A. in New York last winter, received considerable acclaim), realized every drop of drama in the situation, and led Herr Ziegler on to revelations that are nothing short of hair-raising. Don't miss this article next week.

What's What

TWO new publications, one already launched and one on the way, deserve the greetings of all friends of freedom and culture. The first is *Voz*, a Spanish-language daily, which made its initial appearance this week. It will be a general newspaper of events in Spain, Latin America, and the Spanish colony in the United States. The publisher's announcement states that "it will be a firm supporter of the legal Spanish government (loyalist), and will always defend democracy, both here and abroad." Mr. C. Barbazán is editor and publisher, and his editorial staff will include Dr. J. Jimenez Grullón, well-known Dominican author; Professor Julian Moreno-Lacalle; Managing Editor Leon Vivaldi; City Editor Alberto More, Cuban journalist; Gilberto Concepción de Gracia, Puerto Rican jurist; Perez de Vega, editor of the Spanish-American hour of Station WHOM; J. M. Gil, president of the Galician Center; Enamorado Cuesta, Puerto Rican author; and Dan Tatin, Chilean columnist. The managing director is Eric Bernay, formerly advertising manager of the NEW MASSES.

The publication which is on the way is *New Challenge*, a literary quarterly which will be launched in September by a group of Negro writers, including as associate editor Richard Wright, whose short story, "Silt," was published in the NEW MASSES last week. Dorothy West will be the editor, and Marian Minus the other associate editor. The magazine will carry stories, poems, plays, and articles "of a realistic and social nature." Those interested in the venture can address the editors care of *New Challenge*, 43 West 66th Street, New York City.

Another enterprise deserving of support is described in the following letter:

"We are to embark, in about three weeks' time, on the first and only enterprise of its kind in Alabama—the opening of a book store in Birmingham which will carry books and periodicals of interest to radicals and progressives.

"Much has been said in northern publications such as the NEW MASSES about the suppression of civil rights in the South. Not so much has been written about the splendid progress made

BETWEEN OURSELVES

in the last year, both by labor and by minority parties such as the Communist Party, in combating suppression and extending civil rights.

"A project such as our book store is indicative, we feel, of the 'new South.' The success we have in maintaining the book store will help immeasurably, by the very fact of its existence, in strengthening the forces of progress in the South. Further, it will be a most important agency for satisfying the hunger expressed by workingmen and members of the middle class for information and education of a progressive character, now almost impossible to obtain conveniently.

"Like many crusaders, we are rich in spirit but poor in pocket. We ask your readers for aid: both in the form of contributions of money and contributions of books, to be sent me at Box 1871, Birmingham. Those who make contributions may feel well rewarded, for in helping to build a new, progressive South, they are helping to build a progressive America.

"JANE SPEED,
"Education Director,
"Communist Party."

A reader writes in to make an interesting point. "I call to your attention," she says, "an advertisement which appears in the current [August 24] issue of your magazine. This advertisement refers to the showing of *The Spanish Earth* and reads in part as follows: 'America had its *Birth of a Nation*'; the U.S.S.R. had its *Potemkin*—and now, the first screened story of Spain's heroic struggle for freedom. . . .' In view of the NEW MASSES' oft-reiterated condemnation of the *Birth of a Nation* as a vile slander on the Negro people and as a falsification of history, may I point out the incongruity in your publication of an advertisement which extols it as one of the great epic films?" The point is well taken. The *Birth of a Nation* marked an advance in film technique, but was certainly the opposite of *The Spanish Earth* in being a reactionary distortion of history.

And while we are quoting letters, we may as well take two sentences from a recent note from Professor Harold J. Laski. Those of our contributors who have been covering the industrial front will be especially pleased to hear that: "The NEW MASSES

is admirable these days—especially on the industrial situation. You and your colleagues deserve thanks from all socialists for clarity of interpretation and incisiveness of judgment."

Who's Who

JOHN T. BERNARD is a Farmer-Labor Party representative from Minnesota who has just concluded his first term in congress. He sprang into national prominence during the first days of the session just closed by virtue of the fact that he was the only member of the House to oppose the administration's special resolution on "neutrality" as between the "factions" in the Spanish war. He is a Corsican by birth. . . . Andrew Collins is a journalist who has been on a writing assignment in Hollywood. He attended the meeting of the Screen Playwrights to which his article refers, but that was his first and last effort in that direction. . . . C.A.W. is a poet and critic who has contributed to our pages occasionally in the past. . . . Charles Wedger is an expert on Latin American affairs whose interpretations we have published from time to time. His most recent contribution to the NEW MASSES described the formation of a functioning People's Front in Chile. . . . Malcolm Haskell is a student of the special problems of middle-class and professional groups. On a previous occasion he wrote for us an article on the plight of the commission salesman. . . . Philip Stevenson is a well-known left-wing writer and critic whose work we have published before. He was one of the original members of the League of American Writers. . . . Art Shields had an opportunity while in Alaska to see how some of the Guggenheim mining interests were operated. He has a long history in labor journalism, having been one of the founders of Federated Press. He is now a member of the *Daily Worker* staff. . . . Robert M. Coates, who has contributed stories and reviews to the NEW MASSES before, was for some years the *New Yorker's* literary critic. He is perhaps best known for his epic story of the Wild West, *The Outlaw Years*, which became a national best-seller. . . . Christopher Lazare has contributed frequently to both the *Nation* and the *New Republic*. . . . Stewart Mott is a physician practicing in New York. . . . Mary Menk is a musician who went to Mexico to attend the Pan-American Music Festival.

Flashbacks

DORA KAPLAN, a "real" revolutionary, style 1918, did her bit in Moscow on August 30 of that year. By the logic which governs factioneers whose ideas have gone down to defeat, she resorted to bullets, inflicting wounds on Lenin which contributed to his death a few years later. . . . Only one day after the attempt on Lenin's life, London's bobbies ended what British Tories called an attempt on the life of the British empire. On August 31, 1918 (the war was still raging), the London police won a strike for higher wages. . . . The textile strike of 1934 which brought out a million workers began September 1. . . . Henri Barbusse, beloved Communist author and head of the World Committee Against War and Fascism, died in Moscow August 30, 1935.

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Lithograph by Margaret Lowengrund

“Give Us a Program!”

A first-term progressive, reviewing the session of Congress that has just been concluded, calls upon the people for a unified plan of action

By Congressman John T. Bernard

AS I write this, the first session of the Seventy-Fifth Congress is ending in an atmosphere of confusion. In the midst of confusion it is difficult to remember that disorder must always accompany change and growth. There is growth and change in Congress today. The strong currents of political awakening which sweep the country today freshen, while they roil, the long-stagnant waters in Washington.

Party alignments, once symbolized by the aisle which divides one side of a chamber from the other, have lost their old rigidity. The aisle is no longer either a chalk mark or an unbridgeable chasm. It has become a thoroughfare, and the traffic, crossing and recrossing, is heavy.

Party labels no longer certify party loyalties. In the Senate, the Democrats Wheeler, Garner, and Copeland front for the Republicans. In the House, willing reactionaries from the majority side carry the ball for Minority Leader Snell.

Men as well as parties are having trouble making their old labels stick. Many traditional “liberals” lost that stamp of approval in the deep waters of the Court fight. They will try, of course, to paste it back on. But that they will fail is clear from one example. Senator Wheeler of Montana henceforth goes plainly marked: “Reactionary. Beware.”

As important issues appear in ever sharper outline, mistakes in the labeling of individuals

are revealed and rectified. Senator Nye, with his record in the munitions investigations, sold himself as a “progressive.” Now Senator Nye turns out to be another case of adulterated goods. Speaking for Republic Steel, with the aid of Tom Girdler’s press agent, Senator Nye attacked the National Labor Relations Board in a speech that put him among the renegades from progress.

In the House, Representative Rankin has long tried to pass as a “public-power liberal.” But the label was misleading. Mr. Rankin wanted cheap power in combination with cheap labor as bait to lure runaway factories south. When the National Labor Relations Board threatened wage slavery in Tupelo by its assumption that the Wagner act meant Mississippi too, Mr. Rankin spoke up like a southern gentleman of the old school. Only his attacks on the Gavagan anti-lynching bill have equaled in venom his defense of southern workers menaced by a living wage.

Men who for years had found the designation of “conservative” eminently congenial, coasted in as “progressives” with the New Deal landslide. But the fact that in 1936 the Democratic ticket was headed by President Roosevelt worked no alchemy in these gentlemen. “New Dealer” McReynolds, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, forced through the embargo against Spain and the shameful Neutrality Act. Now he goes to bat against peaceful picketing of

foreign embassies. “New Dealer” Woodrum bolted the administration leadership to marshal the reactionary forces driving for a half-billion-dollar cut in relief appropriations. There are others—too many—who traveled up to Washington wearing the New Deal tag, and who will go back home branded “not as advertised.”

In addition to personal and party labels, sectional tags also begin to lose their familiar political significance. It is still true that the majority of reactionary Democrats come from the once solid South. A freshman senator, Claude Pepper of Florida, helped redeem southern honor in his maiden speech. Senator Barkley, new majority leader, unlike his predecessor, swallows the New Deal program whole, without gagging. The distance between Barkley and Joe Robinson is considerably greater than the distance which puts Kentucky north of Arkansas on the map. Senator (now Justice) Black comes from Alabama, feudal domain of landlordism, lynch law, and the Tennessee Coal & Iron Co. The fury of national and sectional reactionaries when Senator Black was nominated to the Supreme bench testifies to the validity of his liberalism. And there are plenty of Tories from up north.

The split between reaction and progress, transcending party and sectional lines, appears at first to be a split between New Dealers and anti-New Dealers. But it is more complicated than that. In the House, at least, there

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Lithograph by Margaret Lowengrund

“Give Us a Program!”

is a progressive minority which supports the New Deal against the reactionaries in both major parties, but at the same time presses forward beyond the limits set by administration leadership. This small minority includes my Farmer-Labor colleagues from Minnesota and myself; the Wisconsin Progressives ably led by Representative Gerald Boileau; Maury Maverick and his Maverick Democrats; and three progressive Democratic fighters, Jerry O'Connell of Montana, John Coffee of Washington, and Robert Allen of Pennsylvania.

ONLY in the last few months have we come together in anything like an organized bloc. Our small group is still amorphous, unrecognized, uncertain of its course. But time and issues are knitting us together.

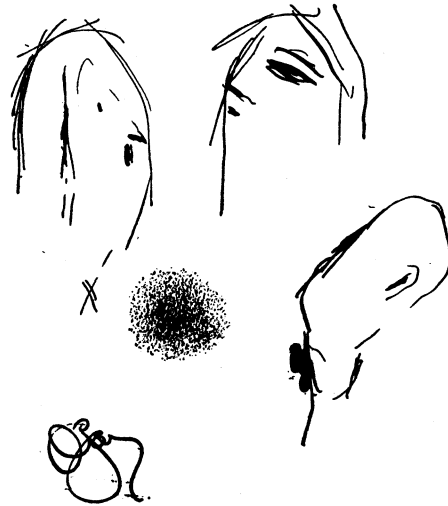
The first issue to unite us effectively was the issue of relief. The Boileau bill, which would have appropriated three billion dollars for W.P.A. jobs and one billion for direct relief, was our rallying point. This bill had the energetic and militant support of the Workers' Alliance. It is typical of our disorganized and groping status of that period that we did not prepare our strategy for supporting the Boileau bill. We met in twos or threes, in the corridors or the cloak rooms. We told each other it was a fine bill. We said we were going to vote for it. We agreed that Roosevelt was capitulating to the budget-balancers with his "economy" figure of a billion and a half. We disagreed on whether the half-billion cut advocated by the Appropriations Committee was shadow-boxing or a dead earnest attack by reaction on the living standards of the jobless masses. When the bell rang we straggled over to the House with little notion of what we were going to do when we got there. Each of us had his little arsenal of facts and speeches. But we were, at best, guerrilla fighters, leaderless and undisciplined.

Something happened to us in the course of that debate. Boileau, an experienced parliamentarian, emerged as our captain. We privates fell into line and backed each other up. We mustered fifty-one votes for the Boileau bill. And we played a decisive role in killing the Woodrum amendment to cut the appropriation to a billion dollars.

The seeds of a real united progressive front in the House of Representatives were sown in our minds by the relief fight.

But the seeds germinated slowly and did not sprout until, many weeks later, the vicious attacks on the C.I.O. again brought us together. We correctly interpreted the Rich-Cox-Hoffman barrage against the C.I.O. as a flank attack on all labor, organized and unorganized, employed and jobless. We saw that the A. F. of L. workers, in spite of the verbal bouquets coming their way, were sure to be hit by the real brickbats apparently aimed only at workers affiliated with the C.I.O.

Our defense was tardy and inadequately prepared. It never matured into the vigorous counter-offensive which the situation de-



"I don't know how Dr. Copeland would be as mayor of New York City, but they say he's wonderful on ingrown toenails."

manded. But at least it was an honest and spirited defense.

Coming to the defense of American workers, we congressmen again learned important lessons of strategy, organization, and unity. We began to meet more often, in larger groups. We strengthened our ties with the trade unions, and with Labor's Non-Partisan League.

Other issues, as they developed, added to our growing solidarity and our self-consciousness as a bloc. We were firmly united on the issue of Supreme Court reform. Had that issue come to an open struggle on the floor of the House, it must have added to our maturity. We were firmly united around the slogan: "Congress cannot adjourn its obligations." We shall maintain to the bitter end the need for housing, wage-and-hour standards, tax reform, flood control, soil conservation, farm aid, and other progressive legislation in this session of Congress. We are solidly behind the Schwellenbach-Allen bill to prevent the ruthless pruning of W.P.A. rolls.

We agree with the President that the Supreme Court's legislative veto offers the most serious threat to progressive legislation. That is why we ardently supported the Roosevelt Court bill though we recognized its failure to deal with the problem in a fundamental way. Now we see that those reactionaries who defeated the Court bill in the Senate today attack progress on another front. Their present aim is to strike out all progressive legislation when it comes up to bat in Congress. They no longer dare to trust everything to the Supreme Court's umpiring, which has shown a limited susceptibility to catcalls from the bleachers.

Needless to say, there are differences of opinion within our little group. Of these the sharpest and the most fundamental concerns the peace policy of the United States. All of us want peace, of course. But the majority have been led away from the true road to peace into the dangerous swamp of "neutrality" and isolationism. I hope I am wrong,

but I feel that only a very few of my fellow progressives in the House share my conviction that peace is to be found only along the road of collective security; and that those instruments of collective security which already exist—the Kellogg peace pact and the nine-power pact in the Pacific—must be taken from the archives of the State Department and used as living instruments. To me it seems worse than folly to pretend that aggressions in Spain and in China do not threaten our own peace, as they threaten the peace of the world. An ultimatum to all aggressors and unstinted support to the victims of aggression seems to me the only recipe for peace.

In spite of our differences, we shall, of course, continue to act together on those questions which find us in agreement. It is to be hoped that our unity will broaden, as it grows more deep and finds expression in more organic forms.

ALL OF THIS has been "shop talk." But the "shop" on Capitol Hill where laws are made is not altogether isolated from the mines, the mills, the fields, and factories, and homes of America. Congressmen and senators are yoked to the people by our electoral system. It is characteristic of our democratic form of government that what happens in Congress reflects what is happening outside. It is characteristic of the imperfections in our democracy that the reflection dims and distorts the image.

In Congress, the two-party system seems to be cracking up. New parties, one to represent each of these two old groupings, are struggling to be born. They are still unnamed, for baptism waits on birth. They will be rooted, however, in the two groups whose interests are in basic conflict, the groups of progress and reaction, of the majority of the people on the one hand and the minority rule of big business on the other.

Even during this period of gestation, which rapidly approaches its full term, congressmen and senators are forced to declare their kinship with one or the other of the unborn parties. In every part of the country progressive citizens and their organizations prepare to deliver the people's party from the womb of political reality. Preparations go on at an ever accelerating pace. The moment of birth is near.

In my own state of Minnesota we already have a party of reaction and a people's party—the Farmer-Labor Party of which I am proud to be a member, and which elected Governor Elmer E. Benson to office. In Wisconsin, the Progressive Party emerges ever more clearly as a true party of the people. In the state of Washington, the Commonwealth Federation moves ahead. Old party lines tangle and snap in New York City, where all progressives support the candidacy of Mayor LaGuardia. The recent victories of labor's representatives in the city primaries of Akron and Canton show how the movement is spreading.

To speak of the "birth" of a people's party

has served well enough as a figure of speech. But political "births" fortunately have no need to follow biological patterns. Quite unbiologically, but true to the laws of its own development, the American people's party is being born piecemeal, a leg in this city, an arm in that state. Some day its appendages and organs will be joined together. It will be alive and whole.

The conditions necessary to bring forth and nourish this living whole—call it a national farmer-labor party, or what you will—already exist. Organized labor, which must be its

backbone, is on the march. Under the banner of the C.I.O. the millions of unorganized workers in the mass-production industries are at last becoming articulate and grow daily in consciousness of their economic and political strength. Agricultural workers, as well as workers in transport and other basic industries, are uniting. Farmers are in desperate need, suffering, except for the numerically small group of well-to-do farmers, now from crop failure, now from a "surplus" of crops. High mortgage and high tax rates weigh heavily on both farmers and middle-class city

folk. Food, rents, the cost of living climb faster than wages. The fascist threat of vigilanteism is clear to all who cherish their civil liberties. Fear of the next economic crisis merges with painful memories of the last.

The issues have never before stood out so clear and sharp. Never before have the people as a whole reacted with such vigor to the issues.

The time for a new major party, a party of peace and progress, is here, is now. What is needed to clothe it in living flesh?

I want to speak of only one of many things which may be needed—a legislative program, formulated by the people out of their own experience, presented by them to the Congress as the expression of their unified will.

In the session of Congress now ending, we progressives have felt keenly the lack of such a program. It is true that the Roosevelt administration presented its own program, in many respects a progressive one. But popular support, even of the Roosevelt program, lacked organization to give it sufficient voice. Mass organizations like the Workers' Alliance, Labor's Non-Partisan League, the League Against War and Fascism, the trade-union groups, and especially the organizations of poor farmers and croppers, acted—but sporadically and separately. They must learn to act together, in support of their common interests. They must act from the day Congress adjourns until it meets again, all through the next session, all through the next recess. To rest is to court defeat.

They must act together at the polls. The gap between the present temper of the people and temper of the present Congress must be narrowed.

But there is much to be done before the elections of 1938. I believe that the greatest contribution all progressive groups and individuals can make to speeding the birth of a national people's party is to call for a national legislative conference. At this conference we can thrash out and formulate our own legislative program, a program designed to meet the needs of workers, farmers, middle-class people, the youth, the Negroes, the women, and all oppressed groups. Around this program we can unite at the polls. Those who support it from the floor in the next session of Congress will speak with authority for millions of citizens organized in common cause.

The do-little Congress of 1937 is about to go home. Home is where the people are. Let the people tell the Congress what they think of its failure to deliver the goods. Let them check up on the old labels and put falsely advertised or poor quality stuff on the shelf.

The do-little Congress did little in part because the people did *too little* to enforce their will. In a democracy you cannot "let George do it." If you want a thing done, you must do it yourself. I appeal to all progressive American citizens to get busy *now*—that the next session of the Seventy-Fifth Congress may find its work well laid out. And that progressive citizens themselves may have power to see to it that that work is done.



UNNATURAL HISTORY

At this time of year the woods and forests of our land are alive with many creatures. Wild life there is in abundance but perhaps the strangest of all are the imported Chimpanazi (*Socialismus invertus americanus*). The most noteworthy anatomical feature of these ape-like men is the vocal apparatus. Swinging from branch to branch with right arm always extended above the head, they emit weird howls accompanied by the beating of drums and wailing of brasses. Between these outbursts they consume quantities of beer and pretzels. The results obtained by experimental studies of its mentality indicate that the Chimpanazi mind is poorly developed and, therefore, when armed, is most dangerous. The largest groups are to be found roaming the woods of New Jersey and Long Island—JOHN MACKEY.



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Hollywood's Yes-Men Say "No"

The acquiescers of the Golden West stick their chins out (but can they take it?) when it comes to unionism

By Andrew Collins

DURING the first week of September, the Los Angeles section of the National Labor Relations Board will begin hearings on the screen writer. About two years ago when the writers attempted to organize, they formed a Screen Writers' Guild. Membership mushroomed; the producers were alarmed, took certain steps of their own, and mysteriously everything blew up. With the Wagner act the revived Screen Writers' Guild suddenly realized the significance of its experience. Its former leaders had been blacklisted out of the industry. A company union, Screen Playwrights, Inc., had been recognized as the writers' bargaining agency, though its membership never came to even 20 percent of the Guild membership. A small clique was isolated in this company union, leaving the field clear for the new organization.

The Guild today includes a majority of the writers in every classification, in every studio, and in the film industry as a whole, according to a report by Dorothy Parker, chairman of its membership committee. The Screen Playwrights, Inc., prevented a Labor Board hearing during July and opposed a consent election. With both groups girding themselves for the showdown, the Playwrights have been caught out on a limb: no argument can conceal the fatal defect in their claim to speak for the writers—the writers in overwhelming numbers are now speaking for themselves. The Playwrights, therefore, threaten to carry the issue to the Supreme Court to prove that writers "are in a category with bankers" and the Wagner act does not apply to them; that if it does apply, they are the recognized agency and the Screen Writers' Guild is a malicious interloper, a late-comer muscling into their field to do havoc.

Comic relief in the struggle has been supplied by Major Rupert Hughes. The major is caught in crossfire between both groups. It is true he is a vice-president of the Authors' League of America of which the Screen Writers' Guild is part; but he is also an officer of Screen Playwrights, Inc., and he was a key member of the junta which, together with the producers, scuttled the Guild last year. The major himself touched off the fireworks when he refused to resign from either the Playwrights or the Authors' League; the major detected a conspiracy among screen writers to "sovietize" the film industry and the writing profession; the major, whose chores for Hearst have not dimmed his wit, decided that he must retain his office among

those who were opposing "the autonomy of individual writers" (read "right to work"), that he must bore from within and frustrate the "menace of regimentation, coercion, and segregation." The major, with his letter to the Authors' League refusing to resign either post, drew heavy fire from Marc Connelly, president of the League. According to *Variety*, show-business trade journal, Connelly's answer "sprained the Hollywood welkin in several places, language sizzled on the floor, and mugs scrambled for the exits . . . while old Lazarus Producer? Well, Lazarus laughed—as usual." Said Connelly to "My dear Rupert: In sum, your letter is pernicious syncretism. It is spiced with untruthful and misleading implications, misquotations of fellow writers, and unqualified misstatements of fact."

Morrie Ryskind took a page in the *Hollywood Reporter* and headlined it: "I remember when Rupert Hughes was considered an historian—but I'll never trust his data any more." And went on: . . . "At this period," continues Mr. Hughes, the eminent fictioneer, 'when there was no organization of screen writers, the Screen Playwrights, Inc., came into being.' Just like that—came into being, no less! A virgin birth—OSER!

"Rupert, you're getting to be a big boy now, and it's time somebody talked over the facts of life with you. Look, Rupert—will some of you young ladies leave the room?—I've got something to tell you. I know that up to now you have believed that the stork came and dropped the Screen Playwrights, Inc., right into the producers' laps. Well, Rupert, it wasn't the stork. (This is a little more embarrassing than I thought, but I must go through with it.) Look, Rupert, one lovely night a papa producer was walking in the moonlight with a mama writer who had voted against Article XII (as per instructions). 'I'll bet you can't guess what I'm thinking of,' said the papa bird. 'I'll bet I can,' said the mama bird. 'Let's get out of the light and talk it over.'

"So they got out of the light and talked it over, and out of that beautiful company union was born the very next day the Screen Playwrights, Inc. That's the whole story in a nutshell, Rupert, and though you may be hurt now, in time you will realize how sweet and wonderful it all is."

This battle in Hollywood is complicated by several factors. It has the earmarks of a literary vendetta; it moves like serial horse-opera; and the entire controversy has rung in remote issues, with the Screen Play-

wrights, Inc., holding out for the Supreme Court and "writers who are more like bankers than workers." Immediate issues have been abandoned while the company union proclaims that it opposes collective bargaining, opposes unionism, and opposes the Soviet Union; withal insisting that it is the bargaining agent of writers, that it is a legitimate union, that it hates propaganda.

What does the Screen Playwrights actually look like from inside? The following is a report of a meeting of the Screen Playwrights, Inc. It was read by Jimmy Gleason at a meeting of the Screen Writers' Guild and greeted hilariously. In many ways it is incredible even if it happened only once in a lifetime. There is cruel significance in the coincidence that this meeting took place during the same week that the Writers' Congress was in session in New York. Here, then, are the Screen Playwrights, Inc., as they are, speaking their own lines.

THE BULLETIN BOARD in the lobby of the Hollywood-Roosevelt Hotel carried this notice: "Screen Playwrights, Florentine Room, 8 p.m." At 8 p.m. I walked up to the Florentine Room and from the door saw John Lee Mahin addressing a group of four people at the front of the room. I returned fifteen minutes later. By then, there were about twenty people there. Howard Emmet Rogers was at the door. I took a seat well back in the room. Mahin and Rogers paraded the aisle and stood near the door talking.

Ben Markson introduced himself to me. He then introduced me to Rian James and several others. Bill Conselman entered. I was introduced to him. He said, "There's a goddamned publicity men's meeting downstairs and a Republic Pictures convention. I'll bet half our people get lost." Mahin went to the bar and rounded up a few others. He then called the meeting to order. There were thirty-five people there. Two others arrived in the course of the meeting, making a grand total of thirty-seven. Mahin sat at a table in the front of the room. In a semicircle around him were members of the board of Screen Playwrights, Inc.: Rogers, an unidentified man, Bess Meredyth, George Bricker (and wife), Bert Kalmar, Patterson McNutt, William Conselman, Major Rupert Hughes, Ben Markson, an unidentified man, and Preston Sturges. Before them were the writers and spectators, nearly all non-members of the Playwrights, among whom were Rian James, Harry Tugend, Milton Sper-

ling, three girls who were not writers, several men and women.

Mahin called the meeting to order.

[John Lee Mahin is now president of Screen Playwrights, Inc. Those who know him insist that he is the innocent dupe of Howard Emmet Rogers who dominates him completely.]

"For the benefit of those who don't know us very well, I would like to explain what the Screen Playwrights is and who we are. Around me here are most of the members of our Executive Board. McGuinness has sent word from Oceanside that he can't get here.

[James K. McGuinness is a producer at M.G.M. who, therefore, has no right to belong to a writers' organization at all. With Rogers and McNutt, he forms a trio (Mahin acts stooge) that supervises the political rectitude of the film community. McGuinness was scenarist of *China Seas* and *West Point of the Air*. It is important to observe that nearly all of the motion pictures which have been boycotted or attacked for their anti-labor, militarist, or imperialist propaganda originate in this group.]

"Grover Jones is sick.

[Jones is an old war-horse of the Mack Sennett days and proudly "anti-intellectual." He wrote *Lives of a Bengal Lancer* and *Annapolis Farewell*.]

"These members of the Executive Board and I will try to answer any questions you may have. Have you any questions? Well, maybe I had better tell you the story of this organization first. You will hear us called 'rats.' Especially Rogers, McNutt, McGuinness, and I are called 'rats' by the others. I would like to explain why. This is not a company union. Last spring after the rumpus we were accused of being a company union. Why? Well, they'll tell you that we used company cars for our organization work. But I have here in my pocket"—Mahin taps his right breast—"bills for taxis that we used. We dug into our own pockets to cover some pretty stiff expenses a year ago. As others joined us, they chipped in. But we never took any money from any producer.

"They'll tell you that we got Neil McCarthy, the lawyer for the producers. That's not true. He's a good lawyer and he's handled producers' cases, but sometimes one pro-

ducer sues another and he's appeared against a producer.

"In the year of our existence we have done what no other group has ever been able to do. We have sat down with the producers man-to-man and they have signed an agreement with us. We have gained many things for writers. For example, writers' names must appear on all paid advertising and lithographs. And in trade papers. That never happened before.

"I went to that meeting of the Screen Writers' Guild last night. There were one hundred and ninety-seven people there and about twenty of them were our members who went there to observe. There were lots of people there who were not writers. Ernest Pascal presided. The feller from the National Labor Relations Board was at the table. But Dudley Nichols acted as—well, I don't know just how you would describe his position—he was active.

[Mahin was whistling in the dark. There were more than four hundred and fifty writers present at the Screen Writers' Guild meeting the previous evening at the Hollywood Athletic Club. All except about fifty became members of the Guild. Some studios are 100 percent Guild today. Ernest Pascal presided because he was president of the original guild which was destroyed by the Screen Playwrights and the producers. Mahin was disturbed by Nichols's activity; Nichols was a prime mover in revitalizing the Guild under the guarantees of the Wagner act; he is now its president. "The feller from the N.L.R.B." was Ralph Seward, attorney of the Labor Board, who clarified the rights of the Guild and answered eleven questions posed by Mahin himself, the questions being in the form of

threats to the membership implying the long drawn-out and costly procedure that might be involved in a struggle for recognition; the strategic position of the producers; and, in general, reflecting the mischievous plans which the Screen Playwrights have since been following in their company-union character.]

"Last spring we decided to break away from that leadership when we saw that it was futile. It was more than futile. We saw that it was drifting into dangerous waters. A responsible group of writers decided to call a halt. You'll hear us called rats—but it wasn't anything like that."

Howard Emmet Rogers arose and took the floor. Mahin explained that Rogers, having become a "writer-producer" during the year, was now only an associate member—he could talk but not vote.

[Rogers has manipulated his very limited ability into an important position in the industry by just such services as he is now trying to perform for the producers in this instance. It was Rogers who threatened to resign at M.G.M. because Ernst Toller had been signed as a writer. Rogers haunts anti-fascist or pro-Spanish government affairs and even anti-Nazi meetings to record the license numbers of cars parked in the neighborhood. He is the keeper of the producers' blacklist in this connection. He is fanatically fascist and anti-Semitic.]

ROGERS: "A good part of that is aimed at me. I was in the thick of it last spring. I'd like to explain why this organization came into being. Maybe that way you'll get an idea of the irresponsible leadership we had to deal with. You'll be able to understand why it took them three years to get nowhere and we were recognized and the producers talked to us as soon as we were ready.

[Rogers then continued at length to charge that the heads of the Guild had never put in writing their specific demands—at least, they had never shown them to him. He then charged that after the two groups had broken apart, he attempted to amalgamate them but was prevented from doing so by the trickery of the Screen Writers, who inserted Section XII "secretly" into the proposed constitution. Section XII has been the sore point of much controversy—it deals with the manner in which a strike may be called.]

"We didn't realize what that meant at the time. But later that evening I found out we had signed a call for a strike! If a young writer had scored a hit, he couldn't sign a new contract! I called McNutt—he'll tell you this himself—and he told me I was crazy. But next day he realized I was right when our lawyer [McCarthy] explained it all to us. Then we all resigned and immediately organized this organization."

Ben Markson asked for and was given the floor.

"Why don't we lay down and die? We've got to face the facts. Look at all these empty chairs. That doesn't look so good to me. As I understand it, if we don't get some members quick, we're through. What's wrong with us is what was wrong with the Screen Writers. Without an issue, we haven't a leg to stand on. What is the issue, I say, and where are the members?"

MAJOR RUPERT HUGHES: "I must explain that this was not intended to be a general



Jack Walters

Waiting for Lefty

meeting. We asked the hotel to give us a sort of living room and it's not our fault that we drew this barn-like expanse of auditorium with so many empty chairs. We thought it would be better to have a series of meetings with small invited groups so as to answer your questions individually and give you concentrated attention."

Conselman arose and said very loudly and indignantly: "Why are you beating around the bush, Howard? Tell them what the issue really is—communism or conservatism!"

[William Conselman is the creator of Ella Cinders. Remember how Ella handled the foreigners? the agitators? the Reds? Conselman is opposed to propaganda.]

ROGERS: "That's it in a nutshell, Bill, now that you've put it that way. There's the same group still trying to put it over on the rest and if we don't watch out they may still get away with it. But all that aside, I ask these people what is the difference between the Screen Writers and the Screen Playwrights? I went to their meeting last night. I tried to get in. But I was kept out. I was warned by the officers that the members would gang up on me if they saw me at the meeting. Fine democracy, that is—but that's the sort of people they are!"

Several people asked questions from the floor. Milton Sperling was particularly insistent on the provision of the N.L.R. act as it had been interpreted at the Screen Writers meeting the previous evening. Conselman got up angrily and demanded, "What's the idea of so many questions? If we have to answer questions all night to get members, I say to hell with it!"

RIAN JAMES: "We were brought here to have questions answered. Do you see anything wrong with that?"

ROGERS: "You're perfectly right. (Then, to Conselman.) Take it easy, Bill. These boys have to find out for themselves."

Sperling still insisted on knowing what the Playwrights were going to do about the voting provisions of the N.L.R. act. "A majority is a majority and bargains for all. What will you do if the Screen Writers get 51 percent and you get 49 percent? Will you dissolve or amalgamate or what?"

McNutt made a rambling response. "The producers deal with whomever they please. The majority vote gives the Screen Writers bargaining rights but that does not mean that the producers have to meet any of their demands. Then what do they do? They put on armbands and start marching in a circle—and we walk through their circle and take over their work."

MAHIN: "The vote is based on numbers. There is an average of three hundred and forty-seven writers on studio payrolls. But writers can't be sovietized. Majority or no majority, the producers can take \$75 men and put them to work for a few weeks on the materials they have around."

ROGERS: "I ask you, why did the Guild's constitution call for such crazy fines and

penalties? Why, they could fine you up to \$10,000. I wonder what a writers' organization could have that would be worth \$10,000 to betray? I think writers should be able to trust each other. Our fines only go up to \$250."

HUGHES: "I wonder whether our friends out there realize that producers and writers can get together like gentlemen?"

ROGERS: "The reason the producers listened to us was the imposing quality of the eleven names that signed the first request for an appointment with them. They just couldn't say *no* to those eleven names. How do those names stack up against the opposition? The producers know us and whoever is in with us is in with them."

MCNUTT: "Gene Fowler made a damn clever remark when we got together last year. He said, 'What writers need is to protect themselves against—writers!' (Laughter.)

BRICKER: "Another thing. What made me decide against the Screen Writers was the way their leaders were always calling producers 'bastards.' Now, I know a lot of producers. Many of them are friends of mine that eat at my house and I go to theirs. No friend of mine is a 'bastard.' What's more, I know a thing or two about labor. I've handled strikes from the employers' side. The employer always has an ace in the hole. Why, for a few lousy dollars—what would seven to ten thousand mean to a producer—they can lay new names on the writers' payroll at \$50 a week for a few weeks and make any kind of majority they like. And that's not the only thing. I could show them how to handle this. Now, my friends, it is sometimes wise to be selfish. We're all out for ourselves and I'm sure the producers will find a way to play ball with the group that plays ball with them."

[A few days later, George Bricker was handed a raise and a new contract by Warner Bros.]

Interruptions repeatedly by Conselman: "You're either in or out. I don't know what all this gab is for."

SPERLING: "But I know and you know that employers don't give up without a struggle. They fight and squirm and even shed blood."

ROGERS: "What would a \$500-a-week man want that they would shed blood over?"

SPERLING: "Well, not exactly blood but didn't you have a hell of a time getting the concessions that you told us about?"



ROGERS: "Nothing of the sort. The producers saw us and behaved like real gentlemen. They know what it is they must fight against."

Meantime Bert Kalmar was getting restless and passed Mahin a note.

MAHIN: "Bert Kalmar is right. The point is whether we collaborate with producers who are evidently willing to collaborate with us or whether we tag after a pack of nuts!"

(General acclamation—amidst which McNutt observes: "There's the whole issue!")

RIAN JAMES: "Of course, now that you make this radical situation clear it's altogether different. I understand."

[Rian James is now a full-fledged member of Screen Playwrights.]

MCNUTT: "It's a question of leadership. Either a pack of Reds or the top men of the business."

MAHIN: "Here is a list of our members. (Reads names.) Those are all names that a producer would respect!"

ROGERS: "Over at M.G.M. we figured over the ninety-three writers on payroll for the year and seventeen of them wrote 90 percent of the productions. Do you realize what that means? Seventeen good men whose work means jobs for thousands would be saddled down by seventy incompetents. It's a case of good writers against bad writers—the studios will know who is who in a showdown."

[One of the evils of studio writing is the screen credit system, here endorsed by Rogers. It is to writers what the star system is to actors. Screen credit in no way reflects the ability or effort of a writer. It is subject to politics, prestige, whim, and chance. The younger writers who do the rough work sometimes spend years before crashing through to a credit. Rogers realized the foolishness of his attitude a few weeks later and issued a call to junior writers to come into his mob in a restricted status. None came.]

ROGERS: "Before we break up, I'd like you to see how things are done by this group. The other day we got a call from R.K.O. that one production would have no writers' credits on the advertising because three scenarists and three adapters were all claiming credit. Of course, that's something no arbitration board would allow anyhow. That was three in the afternoon. We made an appointment at the studio for five-thirty and we got the writers together and they immediately straightened the mess out so that only the three scenarists appeared. The producers thanked us and told us that the mess had taken up six weeks of time. The funny thing is these writers weren't even members of our organization, but we protected them all the same. Read them the letter from Briskin, Johnny."

Mahin read a two-page letter in which Briskin explained that four sets of lithographs would not carry writer-credits because they had gone to press before the agreement had been signed.

McNutt: "I wonder how long it would take a radical to get a letter like that from a producer."

ON Boston Common their heart ash
blows
And gently yielding, the rank grass
knows

One August midnight of every year
Since 1927 appear

These ashes in rendezvous on the field.
O tenderly knowing, the green blades shield
Where men sought pasturage in commune,
Where broomsticks trained by oppression's
moon

And truth once tarried to turn the mass;
These are not alien to this grass—
O firmly growing, O grass that sighs
For limping liberty lost in lies.

Here stir the ashes of two who died
That blindness bloat on their blood for pride.
The flesh and bone was the state's to burn
But ever the heart ash must return,
Petals of splendor that vaulted the flue
Flowered of freedom life never knew.
For flesh and bone on that August night
Was strapped to a throne of deathless might.
O voltage beyond man's blundering sight,
O pitiful anguish resembling fright.
(A fisherman and cobbler dared to dream
That love might triumph in mankind's
scheme.)

Marauders of dreams are men who slay
But they cannot burn the dream away.
It lives, it haunts like a prayer unsaid
All those who judged the dreamers be sped;
It sifts through the sleep of each betrayer
Till doom itself concocts them a prayer,
Till men call forth from betrayal's slime
Their own oppressors and weigh their crime:
And some shall be judged to live again
As less than the dogs who deemed them men,
For seeing how men by men are rent
Dogs with their status must be content.

Now this is the whispered word that goes
Sharper than north wind, sweeter than rose,
Longer than life till all men are free—
This is the story the grass told me.
So if you have hearts with which to hear
Louder than rhythm of Paul Revere
Stronger than Garrison "who'd be heard"
Listen to death's undying word:
Here once again, but patience, Sacco,
We've but begun. It is I, Bartolo!
New earth is ours and all earth grew:
We live in millions, they slew but two!

Do you remember the night we died?
The limpid anger, sorrowful pride.
The harbor, Nicola, we could see
No stain remain of a stamp tax tea.
But there were boats patrolling slow
And this time tyranny ran the show.
The tea came in, the revolt was lost—
Each August midnight we'll count the cost!
Yes, they filled the lower railroad yards
With squads of wooden machine-gun guards
And floodlights painted this park grass white—
But we walked out over the world that
night. . . !



Nicola Sacco

Miracle in Boston

(Chapter for a New World Testament)



Jo Page

Bartolomeo Vanzetti

We walked as only free men may go
(O high is the wind on the road we know)
We ran, and not since the world began
Did two men go as fast as we ran.
We flew so fast that the stars stood still
For we outran time into freedom's will . . .
And our burned-out eyes began to see
A summer and autumn of men made free,
And our lips renewed to sweeter bliss
Than ever was drunk in passion's kiss
(O summer of toiler taking his fruit,
O autumn of slavery's shriveled root!)

It is good 'to live when spring's soft cry
Opens the earth, but better to die
For a spring whose blossom shall set men free,
O spring after winters of tyranny!
O warming of heart and soul and mind,
O ultimate harvest of mankind . . .
Rebirth of love, what flaming flower
In gardens of soil may match your power,

What beauty of painted petal or tree
May equal the beauty of men set free,
What song of spring may a poet sing
Better than man's own awakening?

Nicola, know then we are alive!
Only a moment it took us to dive
Through spurious waters etched in fire,
But see how emergence lifted us higher
Now are we surely Carducci's own
For only in us is the future sown,
And we are that future, freed at last
Of groveling present and hideous past.
The world has offered us earth's new heaven
Where every August since '27
Workers arise with our life-filled urns
(O precious the wage that rebellion earns!)

From Boston Common their heart ash blows.
Over the older city it goes
Into the new, that their souls might retrace
Their funeral march. At Langone's place
They greet the undertaker who chose
Tuxedos to shroud their workers' clothes.
They pass along down Arlington Square
Where roses were strewn which still lie there,
Witness to pelting crowds and surging
Comrades annoyed by policemen's urging:
They hear a woman's voice head the way
Shouting a workingmen's Judgment Day!

They linger where rain beat on the hearse
(Too late, O mother, O cooling nurse!)
They enter Forest Hills' furnace again
And their winding sheet is the healing rain.
Rising, they meet the rain, their mother.
The heart ash lifts above the smother
And finds the flue, climbs on the sky
There on that bosom forever to lie
Drinking miraculous milk alone . . .
(O the hearts of these are as our own,
Guilty of hope in humanity—
Guilty they were as so too are we!)

We then the ashes drawn of their pain,
They the arisen and we the slain;
And Boston shall have them new to kill
Longer than Boston has Bunker Hill . . .
How strange the story that they who came
By sorrow in revolution's name
Should haunt a hill where Yankee pride
Hurled the first spear in monarchy's side,
Or linger bravely and undismayed
By Boston Latin School's pious shade
Where three hundred years of learning, free,
Were futile to save democracy!

And ages hence they shall tell who pass
Of heart ash hidden in common grass.
By common men shall the tale be sped
Of two who died yet never are dead.
(O life miraculous, blind with sun
O boundless brotherhood but begun!)
And long as poverty shall be here
These ashen petals must appear
Until the song of a spring is heard
Never propounded by man or bird!
O song no music can ever write
O man's deliverance out of night!

C. A. W.



Nicola Sacco

Miracle in Boston

(Chapter for a New World Testament)



Jo Page

Bartolomeo Vanzetti



THE NEW GULLIVER

Fred Ellis



THE NEW GULLIVER

Fred Ellis

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Washington March

WITH Congress adjourned, Harry Hopkins, W.P.A. administrator, has told the job marchers assembled in Washington he can neither reinstate the half million W.P.A. workers who have been dismissed during recent months nor check further layoffs that are scheduled for 200,000 more. It seems that Mr. Hopkins's hands are tied because one tory Representative, Clinton A. Woodrum, refused to allow the House to vote on the Schwellenbach-Allen resolution. Though one hundred and seventy congressmen were pledged to support the resolution, which would have provided job security for nearly a million W.P.A. workers and their dependents, Mr. Woodrum, as chairman of a small sub-committee, took it upon himself to condemn this huge army to the idleness, poverty, and bitter suffering of unemployment.

No one seriously pretends that men and women dismissed from W.P.A. are finding steady jobs. Here and there a few are given temporary work, now that farm crops need harvesting, but a nation-wide survey conducted by the Scripps-Howard papers indicates plainly that the overwhelming majority are hopelessly stranded. Many have been forced to apply for relief in their own localities, though most communities are either unwilling or unable to provide for them. To all intents and purposes the others just "disappear." That may satisfy reactionaries like Representative Woodrum, but the Workers' Alliance, now numbering 800,000 members, is not content with such a "solution."

And the thousands of men and women from every part of the country who assembled in Washington are living proof that dismissed W.P.A. workers have not "disappeared." On the contrary, this demonstration marks the beginning of a determined drive to win some measure of security and justice for millions of unemployed. In a conference with Harry Hopkins, David Lasser and other Workers' Alliance leaders proposed the creation of an appeals board which will enable workers who have suffered discrimination to get a fair hearing. The entire scope of labor relations on W.P.A. has also come up for dis-

cussion. Both as a symbol of solidarity among the unemployed and as a prelude to more concerted action, this job march has been a success. Congressmen with their ears to the ground will hear more from these marchers and the Workers' Alliance.

A Mass Party

ON September 1 the Communist Party will mark the eighteenth anniversary of its formation with a coast-to-coast broadcast by Earl Browder over the blue network of the N.B.C. Browder will address the nation from 6:15 to 6:30 p. m., Eastern Daylight Saving Time.

The great distance the Communist Party has traveled since 1919 to its present position of influence among the masses is indicated in the plans announced to the press last Tuesday. About the first of next year there will be launched two more daily newspapers, in Chicago and in San Francisco, which with the *Daily Worker* in New York will constitute the beginning of a national chain. The new papers will start modestly, as the *Daily Worker* did, with four pages, and their program gives them, in these times of the rapid growth of the labor movement, a sure guarantee of success. They will be militant organs of the progressive and trade-union forces allied with the farmer-labor-party movement. Spokesmen for the Communist Party, they will supply vital news to the masses, especially that which is suppressed by the capitalist press. With these two papers serving the Middle West and the Coast, the New York *Daily Worker* will be free to concentrate on its own field, and to make itself a major metropolitan newspaper for the working people of New York and the eastern states.

Together with these plans, Browder announced a national party-building campaign for large-scale mass recruiting. The sum of \$500,000 is to be raised for a broad educational campaign. A \$250,000 fund drive is being launched for an intensive state-wide campaign in New York.

All these plans and figures, on a scale which would have been fantastic a few years ago, emphasize the full emergence of the Communist Party on the political field in the United States as a mass party, with an important role to play in the uniting of all progressive forces in the country.

Teachers and C.I.O.

AS we go to press, the battle for unification of the labor movement on a progressive program opens on one more front. Meeting in Madison, Wis., the annual convention of the American Federation of Teachers is focused on the question of

C.I.O. affiliation. The inner-union sentiment on this issue duplicates to some extent that found in the American Newspaper Guild: there is a considerable body of opinion ranged on each side of the question. The large Chicago delegation is committed to vote against C.I.O. affiliation, and Chicago has drawn Cleveland into its wake. The big New York delegation is instructed to vote for affiliation, and Philadelphia takes the same position. A. F. of T. progressives as a whole, including the Socialists and Communists in the union, are for the C.I.O. tie-up, but they are determined that there shall be no rift in the ranks of organized teachers. They are confident that unity can be preserved without capitulation to reactionary influences.

Their confidence is justified on the basis of the union's history. A year ago, the A. F. of T. took the lead among national organizations in adopting a forthright stand in support of Spanish democracy. By the time this issue of the NEW MASSES reaches its readers, the desire of some progressive teachers to see a similar stand on China's independence may have been realized. But while such issues will be given serious consideration, this year's convention is expected to concentrate chiefly on the economic problems of the teacher and the organizational means for solving them. It is in this sense that C.I.O. affiliation is the dominant issue at Madison.

Ironic Anniversary

IT is supremely ironic that the anniversary of the Kellogg-Briand Peace Pact should be commemorated this week while the pact itself is being pounded to tatters by Japan's guns in China. An elaborate ceremony, in which both the U. S. assistant secretary of state and the French under-secretary of foreign relations will participate, gives notice to the world that the existence of the pact has not been forgotten. Washington, however, would prefer to forget.

For years a proud defender of the Open Door for American capitalists in China, the United States has forsaken this policy in favor of the so-called "neutrality" law. Neither the Kellogg pact, signed in 1928, nor the Nine-Power Treaty, ratified in 1922, has been abrogated. Both remain part of the foreign policy of the United States, antecedent and superior to the "Neutrality" Act.

The hesitation of President Roosevelt and Secretary Hull to invoke the "neutrality" legislation is based on the obvious fact that nothing will so completely cancel real neutrality as this law. In Spain it helps Franco; in the Far East it will strengthen Japan.

Isolationist politicians like Senator Nye have been urging enforcement of the law in

the belief that it will be effective in keeping the United States out of war. Actually, it puts the United States into war, on the side of the aggressor.

It is not yet too late to invoke the Kellogg-Briand Pact and the Nine-Power Treaty, which, designed specifically for such a situation as this, can be effective in curbing Japan. The Nine-Power Treaty guaranteed China territorial integrity, the right to establish her own stable government, and equality of commercial opportunity for all the imperialist powers. Every one of these principles has been violated by Japan, precisely because the United States and other signatories have failed to apply this treaty to her current attack on China.

Finance Neutrality?

PERHAPS another reason lies at the root of Washington's hesitation to apply the neutrality law. The immediate benefit to Japan is undesirable because of the basic conflict between American and Japanese imperialism, and in addition, the consequences to American-held bonds on Japan's tremendous external debt would be disastrous.

Japan's bonds declined precipitously last week. Its 6½ bonds maturing in 1954, which has been 100½ early this year, were 90 on August 13 and dropped to 75¾ by August 21. "Authoritative quarters" considered it extremely likely that the enforcement of the Neutrality Act would immediately result in a default in interest. They had in mind that during 1936 Japan spent 46.8 percent of its total revenue on its war department and only 18.8 percent on its finance department; that as the war proceeded the percentage going to the military would increase; that the Neutrality Act

would cut Japan off from foreign exchange.

They recalled with satisfaction, to be sure, that through the entire Manchurian conquest and ever since, Tokyo has been meeting its foreign interest payments, although Japan's bonds dipped into the thirties. What was not particularly emphasized was that Japan has bought back large amounts of its bonds at a fraction of their value—the bankers call it repatriation. There seems no reason to doubt that the Tokyo financiers would do the same again, waiting until the proper moment to obtain the greatest bargains.

Altogether, then, the international financiers are caught in one of the major contradictions of capitalism. They want Japan weakened in the Far East, for that means more opportunity for American exploiters; but they don't want it weakened too much, for that means they lose the interest on their bonds. And when a banker loses his interest, he loses all.

W.P.A. and Truth

"Sacco and Vanzetti had become for a new generation . . . the classic example of the administration of justice to members of unpopular political minorities.

"It was widely believed that, although legal forms were observed, the determining factors in the case from the start to the finish was the affiliation of the two men with an unpopular minority political group."

THESE sentences, part of a forty-one line reference to the case, are included in the recently issued *Massachusetts: A Guide to Its People and Places*, a W.P.A. Writers' Project publication. They are surely as restrained a statement about the judicial murder of Sacco and Vanzetti as could well be set down, ten years afterwards, but they have aroused to fury the anti-labor forces of Massachusetts, headed by Governor Hurley. Hurley has an added incentive for the hullabaloo he is raising. He is chagrined at having endorsed the book without having read it. Now he is bestirring himself to have the distribution of the book stopped, to hunt out and get the writers fired, to drag President Roosevelt in—all to defend the "proud record of Massachusetts"—and he sums up his statesmanlike position by telling the American Legion convention: "If these men don't like Massachusetts and the United States, they can go back where they came from." All of which is good publicity for the book, as it seems unlikely that the Washington W.P.A. authorities will be bluffed into interfering by the Massachusetts reactionaries.

Ten years is a relatively short time for a written history bearing an official stamp to catch up with the facts. The judgment of honest people everywhere on the Sacco-Van-

zetti case was formed finally on August 23, 1927, when the fisherman and the cobbler were put to death while millions the world over stood aghast and incredulous, unable to believe that such things could be. The W.P.A. guidebook merely indicates, in the most sober language, the judgment of the world. The rage it has awakened among the Massachusetts Tories proves that Sacco and Vanzetti are not as dead as these gentlemen would like to think. Ten years after their murder, Sacco and Vanzetti are still fighting names, an accusation which the workers will continue to hurl, a challenge and a symbol which they will never forget.

The Klan Sues Again

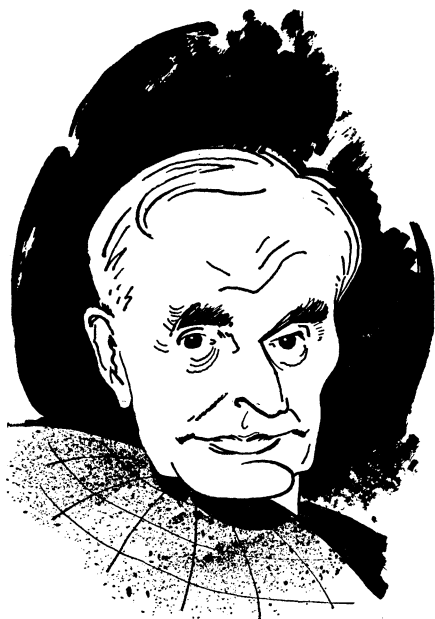
THE Ku Klux Klan has suddenly decided to whitewash itself and indulge in a bit of movie censorship at the same time. Acting as a corporation, exponents of the fiery cross have brought suit against Warner Bros. and Vitagraph, Inc., for alleged use of the K.K.K.'s patented insignia in the film, *The Black Legion*. The petition has been filed in the state of Georgia, whose prison commissioner sued Warner Bros. for libel because they produced, *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang*.

The K.K.K., according to its petition, is so intimately identified with the insignia, particularly when it is attached to a white robe, that the Klan feels it has a "definite proprietary interest and a distinct good-will therein." That being the case, we wonder if the plaintiff hadn't better charge Warner Bros. with libelous understatement, since the film in question is only a feeble reminder of the Klan in action.

Land of Plenty

FROM the dispatches of anti-Soviet correspondents an uninformed person might conclude that nothing was happening in the Soviet Union except the arrest of saboteurs and traitors. The tears which the capitalist press daily sheds over the execution of spies and wreckers—do they expect the Soviet Union to give these enemies medals?—could float one of Franco's cruisers. And in wailing over the sad fate of the rats whom the Soviet people are hunting out of their holes, the press manages to overlook almost completely the most important thing that is happening in the Soviet Union today: the harvesting of the greatest crop in its history.

It was otherwise last year when a prolonged and widespread drought—which under the czar would have meant starvation for millions—cut down the crop. Nobody starved in the Soviet Union, but the promised cuts in food prices had to be postponed because of



Joe Bartlett

Hull—he still hesitated

the poor crop and the heightened war danger. Then the attention of the press was focused daily on the Soviet fields, and the lie-factories of Riga and Warsaw and Berlin worked overtime to turn out tales of hunger and bread riots to curdle the blood. Today, despite the masterly silence of the correspondents generally, enough is known to make it clear that the Soviet Union's food crop this year will reach at least seven billion poods—one hundred and fifteen million metric tons. The announced objective of the Soviet Union has been seven to eight billion poods. This year the goal will be achieved. To grasp the meaning of this figure, it is necessary to remember that before the World War the annual average Russian grain yield was about eighty million metric tons.

With this crop the Soviet Union stands out for all the world to see as a land of plenty. With its land 95 percent collectivized, with a higher degree of mechanization in agriculture than any other country can show, and with substantial reductions in food prices this year a practical certainty, the Soviet Union presents a picture of growing prosperity. This, however, is not "news" as the capitalist press views news about the Soviet Union.

Weir's Artistry

FOR many years observers have felt that the labor policies of Ernest T. Weir put this steel magnate more or less in a class by himself. The National Labor Relations Board has now pretty well established Weir's right to claim the blue ribbon. The recent N.L.R.B. hearing at New Cumberland, W. Va., was originally scheduled to take place in the auditorium of the Weir High School in Weirton. Permission had been granted by the county school board. Possibly Mr. Weir's native reticence made him frown on the proposal. At any rate, the chairman of the school board, who happens to work for the steel company, had the permit rescinded—ostensibly because Weirton's fire chief insisted on installing a fire escape before the hearings could begin.

It is difficult to pick highlights from evidence that realistically portrays a particularly vicious company union, liberal use of espionage, and the customary manhandling of union organizers. The general pattern is indicated by a remark credited to one John Larkin, chairman of Weir's employee representation outfit. Rebuking one of his hired "hatchet men" for failing to "get" a C.I.O. organizer, Larkin said: "You could have hit him on the head and drove him down into the weeds, and no one would have found him for two weeks."

Perhaps the best example of the Weir

technique was shown by the testimony of Elwood Turley, a former grand jurymen. After the hatchet gang had half killed two C.I.O. organizers, the victims appealed to the law. The grand jury heard their complaint and the evidence seemed sufficiently direct, but five or six of the jurymen refused to vote true bills because the men who had been attacked were engaged in union organization. The complaint was summarily dismissed on the ground that the whole thing was "a drunken brawl."

In general the picture drawn at New Cumberland deserves a prominent place in the Labor Board's national collection. Ernest T. Weir should feel well satisfied with this culmination of his labor-baiting artistry.

Educating Farmers

A GAIN tenant farmers have been left holding the bag. Congress has appropriated twenty million dollars to aid them and to retire submarginal land from use. This sum falls far short of the fifty millions suggested by the administration at the beginning of the session. And, of course, it is only a shadow of the amount needed if there is to be a real attempt to solve this problem, or even to check the alarming increase in farm tenancy. Secretary Wallace has estimated that it would require annual appropriations of one hundred and sixty million dollars merely to reestablish on a sound ownership basis the number of farmers who "normally" lose their holdings each year.

Even such a program would still leave more than two and three-quarter million farms operated by tenants. Since 1880, when 75 percent of the farms in this country were owner-operated, the average yearly increase in tenant farms has been 33,465. During the decade 1925-35 the rate increased to more than forty thousand. Today only three farmers out of five own the land they work. Worse still, most of this so-called ownership rests on the thinnest of equities. Thus, in 1930 farmers' debt-free holdings amounted to considerably less than half the land's total value. In other words, while 60 percent of our farmers could nominally be classed as owners, their real ownership is restricted to some 30 percent of the nation's farm land. In eighteen states the "owning" farmers owed 60 percent of what their real estate was worth. In three of the best farming states this figure amounted to 70 percent.

With such a debt structure syphoning off a large proportion of their cash income and pressing the less fortunate down into tenancy, farmers have begun to revise their political and social outlook. The present Congress has shown its incapacity to cope with fundamental agricultural problems, just as it

has failed in the fields of industry and business. As insecurity and pitifully small cash returns continue to decimate the ranks of small owners, the farming population will see the need for united action by small and middle owners, tenants and wage-earners. The logical instrument for such action is a farmer-labor party.

Fascism for Export

THWARTED by the strength of the people's front in France, and by British distaste for totalitarian doctrines, Hitler and Mussolini have undertaken to export fascism in new ways. Dispatches from England reveal interesting details that center round the recently expelled Nazi journalists. Messrs. Crome, Wrede, and Langen improved their leisure time by establishing five fascist centers in merrie England. These gatherings, often held at fashionable hotels, have been known to the British government since October 1935.

The wife of a cabinet minister joined the German ambassador and prominent members of influential circles to plan the work of fascist espionage. The three Nazi journalists were closely linked with this activity. So closely, in fact, that the British Home Office took the unusual peace-time step of expelling them. Since Joachim von Ribbentrop was appointed ambassador to Great Britain, the National-Socialist Party has doubled its foreign organization—and in consequence the activity of fascist groups on English soil has grown tremendously.

The *Week*, a well informed English news service, reports that more than sixty-five thousand francs went from Berlin, via the Nazi party of Luxemburg, to one fascist organization in Britain. This is said to have roused British backers of fascism—Lancashire cotton interests, two bankers, and a large motor car manufacturer. Not wishing to lose control of their own movement through heavy foreign subsidies, these patriots put pressure on the cabinet to oust Hitler's agents.

The sums involved seem small, however, when compared with recent fascist exports to France, where Colonel de la Rocque, chief of the dissolved Croix de Feu, somehow got his hands on nine million francs to purchase the left radical *Petit Journal*. For years de la Rocque has been supported by ex-Premier André Tardieu. Now it is revealed that Mussolini has been in direct contact with the colonel, using members of Jabotinsky's fascist-inclined Zionist-Revisionist group as go-betweens.

M. Jacques Doriot, deposed mayor of St. Denis, has likewise turned to journalism. Doriot purchased the ultra-reactionary

Liberté just before government inquiry into a coal scandal forced his removal from office. Former Premier Laval is said to have supplied the purchase price. Another curious angle to this deal is that *Liberté*, with a rapidly falling circulation (now less than forty thousand), owes an enormous debt to the Semard printing works, and M. Henri Simond, director of Semard's, has agreed to allow Doriot to pay the sum in easy installments.

The Semard works are owned by the *Echo de Paris* and M. Beghin, publisher of

the *Paris Soir*. Until recently M. Simond was proprietor of the *Echo de Paris*. He resigned when the Blanc family, which owns 57 percent of the paper, demanded to know why the *Echo de Paris* was not returning a profit. M. Simond did not care to explain that the profits of the Semard printing works were being used to carry former mayor Doriot's venture in fascist journalism. Rather than sacrifice *Liberté*, M. Simond severed his connection with the *Echo de Paris*. How long Doriot's fascist sheet can survive may soon depend on Mussolini.

Roosevelt and His Party

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S speech at Roanoke Island attacking the "American Lord Macaulays" was beautifully timed. Three days afterward Congress abandoned the job it was elected to do and ran home. The breakdown of Congress, openly engineered by the very forces of reaction that Roosevelt had pilloried, gave immediate dramatic emphasis to his speech. It pointed up in the strongest light the major political development now gathering speed in the country, the replacement of old party lines by class lines. It showed how rapidly Democrats and Republicans are disappearing, and progressives and reactionaries are taking their places.

Congress ran home—the abandonment of four fifths of the legislative program can scarcely be called an adjournment—because the reactionaries temporarily seized control. It refused to carry out the task assigned to it last November by the unmistakable voice of twenty-seven million voters. It allowed the well-organized opposition of the Tories, Republican and Democratic, to blind it to its duty to the country and to the most pressing needs of ill-fed, ill-housed, ill-clothed America. It refused to reform the Supreme Court, to curb the power of nine old men to thwart the will of the nation. It put off action on an anti-lynching bill. It carried its surrender to the economic royalists to the point of allowing a handful of reactionaries to strangle in the House Rules Committee the Black-Connery Wages and Hours Bill after the Senate had passed it. By its open and wholesale betrayal of the confidence of the people, Congress, dominated by its Tories, completely justified in its closing week the words used by President Roosevelt in summing up the program of the "American Lord Macaulays":

They seek to substitute their own will for that of the majority, for they would serve their own interest above the general welfare. They reject

the principle of the greater good for the greater number, which is the cornerstone of democratic government.

Roosevelt's was a fighting speech, upholding "democracy—and more democracy" and holding up to public scorn by name such reactionary forces as the National Association of Manufacturers, the United States Chamber of Commerce, and the Liberty League.

As to the goal of "the greater good for the greater number," however, Roosevelt can serve only as a signpost, pointing to the future. He is himself rooted in the capitalist system, and proud of it. He would like to see conditions improved, but within the framework of capitalism. The Democratic Party which he leads includes in its headquarters staff representatives of the topmost layers of big business, and it can never be a unit in following any program of social legislation. Big business, which during the dangerous bank holidays of 1933 was travelling to Washington—with dust on its knees—

pleading with Roosevelt to stave off a revolution, is now standing behind the President with a knife, ready to kill any attempt at social legislation that might cut into its profits. It has just given an exhibition of its power, by slaughtering almost all the legislative program which the people had voted for, in the session just closed.

The first session of the Seventy-Fifth Congress has ended; now the people are in session. It should shortly become clear to the representatives and senators who disregarded the clear mandate of last November that the people are in no mood to have their wishes disregarded. The warning of John L. Lewis when the Wages and Hours Bill was finally killed is obligatory homework for every legislator to study between now and the next session:

To the leaders of the Democratic Party it presents the challenge either to restore sufficient party discipline to permit government to function under their guidance or to confess that their party is not the vehicle by which the people of the country may progress to a solution of their pressing social problems.

Sabotage of the Democratic Party by a small group of its more conservative members, which came to a head in the House Rules Committee and in the caucus of last evening, shows that Democratic leadership is unable to carry out the pledges made in the name of their party during the 1936 campaign.

If the Democratic Party as at present constituted cannot make good on its election pledges to the people, there are strong and growing forces in the country, inside and out of the Democratic Party, who can and will carry through the vitally necessary program. The session of Congress just closed has produced one result of immeasurable importance for the future, in uniting and testing in battle the group of progressive legislators. As Congressman Bernard describes the session from the inside, in his article in this issue, the progressives in Congress have learned in battle the need for unity, organized action, and a common legislative program.

Between now and the next session of Congress the demands of the American people for protection of their basic rights will grow louder. These demands may yet reach the ears of those weak-kneed legislators who have yielded to the reactionaries, and send them back to the next session prepared to do the job for which they were elected. But whether those who scuttled the people's legislative program decide to become honest or not, the time is ripe for a great change. It can come only by the united effort of all progressives, in getting together on a program which answers the pressing needs of the workers and farmers, and such a program, embodied in a national farmer-labor party, will sweep the country.



Soriano

He Named Names

Lawyer, Defend Yourself!

The reactionary bias of the Bar Association is only one of the influences which brought the Lawyers' Guild into being

By Malcolm Haskell

MANY references in recent weeks to the aggressively progressive activities of various local chapters of the National Lawyers' Guild have aroused public interest in the work of this organization.

The guild got under way when six hundred attorneys representing almost every state in the union gathered in Washington, D. C., last February to participate in its organizational convention. It is true that a few delegates came to the City of Big Noises to distribute professional cards, others to practice their oratory and still others merely to rid themselves of inferiority complexes. Yet the most captious observer would admit that by and large the delegates with exemplary energy and conscientiousness succeeded in launching a movement which may yet render their profession a definite force for general social and economic progress rather than the convenient tool of the fascist-minded clients of a few large law firms.

The first day of the convention disclosed the basic distinction between the new organization and the American Bar Association, which, representing only 20 percent of the profession, has heretofore been accepted by the press and the public as the voice of the American lawyer.

At the opening banquet, Senator Homer T. Bone of Washington reviewed the activities of a small group of well-paid corporation lawyers, typified by John W. Davis and Newton D. Baker, who had been blocking social legislation by attacking the constitutionality of the various acts before the Supreme Court. What contribution, asked the senator, have these attorneys and the American Bar Association, which they own body and soul, made to the cause of human rights?

To the defense of these humanitarians rushed Frederick H. Stinchfield, president of the organization thus slurred by the senator. He wrote in the *Washington Post*: "[Senator Bone] inquires when lawyers have ever been interested in human rights. It is apparent that the senator has forgotten the Declaration of Independence. That is America's declaration of human rights. It was drawn by lawyers. Its spirit is that of lawyers. . . . The senator may also have forgotten the constitution of the United States. There is another document dealing entirely with human rights. It, too, was written by lawyers. . . . The senator finds no good in lawyers, living or dead. His attack embraces Jefferson, Madison, Lincoln, Cleveland, and Wilson, those who founded and those who sustained human rights."

The issue being joined, as lawyers like to say, let's examine the record.



Martin

We find that in the name of dead revolutionaries and reformers, Mr. Stinchfield justifies the uniform opposition of his organization to every effort exerted in our generation in behalf of human progress. The appointment of Justice Brandeis to the U. S. Supreme Court was openly opposed by seven past presidents of the Bar Association. That organization was conspicuously silent when innumerable Americans were robbed of fundamental civil liberties during and after the World War. In the name of Abraham Lincoln, it has systematically excluded Negroes from its membership rolls. In the name of Thomas Jefferson, it has studiously avoided a consideration of the problem of constitutional rights of the masses—becoming articulate only when vested property rights are endangered. In the name of Woodrow Wilson, it has gone on record as opposing the Child Labor Amendment—and why not, when its hierarchy is retained by substantial members of the National Association of Manufacturers?

When the present strife in steel reaches the stage of litigation, the role of certain prominent lawyers, high in Bar Association circles, as the advisers and strategists of the confidently obstinate Girdlers, Purnells, Weirs, etc., will be revealed. To climax its shameful record, the association has never undertaken a realistic survey of the pressing problem of professional economic welfare, and indeed at its 1936 convention defeated a resolution calling for a lawyers' W.P.A. project.

What more conclusive evidence of the immediate necessity for an organization truly representative of the American lawyer could be submitted than this evasive, obfuscatory, flag-waving apology by the man who now poses as its ex-officio mouthpiece?

One may well ask what has compelled lawyers, whose very existence takes root in the old order of a profit economy, to appraise critically not only those who have purported to be their spokesmen in the past but also the general

problems of their contemporary society? The answer to this question is of major importance for in it is implicit the answer to the overwhelming problem of universal middle-class upheaval.

Social and economic crises cause reflective persons to pause for analysis of their society and determination of their role therein. What is a lawyer's function under capitalism? What part does he play in productive relationships? Ripping aside the deceiving veils of hoary traditions and scholastic bugaboo the lawyer finds that with very few exceptions all of his activities center upon the manifold fields of trade and commerce. "Most of the law (except the elemental law of community defense)," says Prof. Charles A. Beard, "is concerned with the property relations of men, which reduced to their simple terms means the process by which the ownership of concrete forms of property is determined or passes from one person to another."

It necessarily follows that the more numerous the commercial relationships, or the greater the number of independent business units existing in any given economic epoch, the more frequently will develop inter-functional problems requiring the specialized services of lawyers.

When capitalism was in the stage of growth and development and the American middle class was in its ascendancy, white-collar employees and professionals were at a premium. Stenographers, accountants, salesmen, lawyers, etc., could not be trained fast enough to satisfy the demands of expanding industry and commerce.

Lawyers as an economic group depended for clientele upon this powerful and influential middle class. A young lawyer of working or middle-class stock a generation ago could well look to his employed intimates with confident expectation that many of them would ultimately go into business for themselves and would thereby become his clients. As these enterprises would grow financially, his practices would also grow in volume and in importance.

Today the trend is in reverse. The average lawyer's acquaintances for the most part are not going into business but rather out of business. Lewis Corey has pointed out that in 1870, independent enterprisers comprised one seventh of all persons gainfully occupied in the United States, today only one twentieth. The conclusion is inescapable: legal business is being dried up at its source, not temporarily by a passing depression, but permanently by the inexorable march of monopoly.

The economic activities once dominated by

the disappearing class of independent enterprisers are being taken over by the monopolies, but rationalization and mechanization eliminate to a very large extent the legal problems of the supplanted small-business entities.

The large corporations also have their legal problems, but such retainers are placed with lawyers of the same social and economic class as that of the clients who offer them. These fortunate attorneys have learned much from their clients. The same monopolistic trends which are liquidating independent merchants are now at work within the legal profession, driving lawyers out of independent practices, and are creating a class of salaried professional employees.

The 1936 survey of the legal profession in New York County made by the New York County Lawyers' Association discloses that one fourth of all practicing lawyers in New York City are employed by other attorneys. This is a very high figure, and yet it does not include the large number of attorneys who are not in general practice but are either in the legal departments of large corporations or are holding positions requiring legal training with insurance companies, trust companies, and other agencies for the corporate practices of law.

Yes, mass-production methods have invaded even the sacred precincts of the legal profession. Familiar has become the story of the talented, ambitious law-school graduate, with *Review* experience, Phi Beta Kappa and C.O.I.F. honors, who is tempted by a position offered in a well-established firm. To be sure the starting salary is small, but it appears to be an apprenticeship that must eventually lead to genuinely big things. He even gets a private office with his name on the door.

Our budding genius is at once assigned to handle one particular phase of litigation. In a year he is a master in that field. Then to his growing disappointment he finds the years rolling away without any change in the basic nature of his professional tasks and with only a small increase in his salary. He may be getting as little as fifteen dollars per week, but his employer charges the clients fifty dollars or more per day for the time expended by our hero. The lad's been trapped—he's now as servilely job-dependent as the girl who takes his dictation. The real tragedy lies not so much in his exploitation as in his unawareness of the snare. He dresses, struts, thinks, and votes in the pattern of his employers and dreams of the day when he can emulate them.

From *Martindale's Legal Directory*, I select at random a few law "factories" which employ large numbers of "associates," talented men and women whose only recompense is a moderate salary and who grind out the real work of the organizations. These firms are eloquent examples of the incredible changes in the tone and character of what was once as personal a profession as medicine.

O'Melveny, Tuller, & Meyers of Los Angeles: thirteen partners and twenty associates. A few of their clients: Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co.; Southern California Gas Co.;



Woodcut by Helen West Heller

Shell Oil Co.; National Biscuit Co.; Johnsmansville Co.; Procter & Gamble.

Newman & Bisco, New York City: two partners and twenty associates.

Wright, Gordon, Zachary, Parlin, & Ney, New York City: thirteen partners and thirty-five associates.

Kirkland, Fleming, Green, Martin, & Ellis, Chicago: seventeen partners and thirty-four associates. A few of their clients: *Chicago Tribune*; *Chicago Daily Times*; the Catholic Bishop of Chicago; Chicago Board of Trade; Chicago Yellow Cab Co.; Travellers' Insurance Co.

We have discussed the minority of lawyers who have some steady economic base, either as professional entrepreneurs or as their salaried employees. The remainder of the profession, utterly without financial security, compete with one another in a disorderly scramble for the petty legal crumbs disdained by the large law firms, the trust companies, the insurance companies, the banks, and the lay collection agencies.

The New York County Lawyers' Association survey showed that

More than half of the profession in New York County are in the income class below \$3000 per year; the median for the entire profession is only \$2990, almost half are below the respectable minimum family subsistence level of \$2500 per year (one third are in the class below \$2000 a year, one sixth below \$1000, and almost one tenth at or less than \$500 a year); and substantial portions are on the edge of starvation, with at least close to 10 percent of the New York City Bar virtually confessed paupers.

An unrealistic and evasive attitude has been assumed by bar associations, national and local, upon the question of professional economics. As long as members earn enough to pay association dues, organization interest is turned elsewhere. The lack of systematically accumulated data upon the subject of professional economics has been a factor in encouraging law school enrollment to reach an all-time high.

To budding lawyers the profession is painted as a glamorous, adventurous, highly lucrative career. When the practice of law is discussed, the melodrama of the profession in its spectacular moments is portrayed. A successful high-school debater is encouraged to visualize himself as an eloquent advocate swaying the judge and jury in a great battle of wits.

On the rare occasions that the question of making a living arises in a classroom or in the office of a vocational advisor, the stock

answer is, "There's always room for a good man at the top in any field." I shudder at the thought of how many Americans have been lured to a life of miserable maladjustment by the appeal of that capitalist cliché.

Such technique is not alone erroneous—it is rankly deceitful. Potential lawyers should not be taken on tours of the courts. Tours instead should be arranged through some of the law office "slums" which dot every American metropolis. Let them see the countless attorneys sharing drawer space in uncarpeted, sometimes unlighted offices. Acquaint them with the gall and wormwood tasted by these independent professional people who are frantically and desperately clinging in a losing fight to the fringes of middle-class respectability. Above all, students and lawyers alike should be weaned away from the Horatio Alger illusion that "a good man" can overcome even these handicaps—for the cheapest commodities in the legal market today are talent and energy.

A few individuals may succeed in scaling the ever-heightening economic hurdles. The vast majority of lawyers, and the entire middle class of which their profession is an integral part, are foreordained to an increasingly difficult struggle for existence.

These are some of the considerations which have resulted in the creation of the National Lawyers' Guild. The attitude assumed upon these fundamental problems by the American Bar Association has revoked its right to pose any longer as the voice of this victimized group of professionals.

There exists upon the controlling group of the A. B. A. the constant pressure of finance-capital to transform our governments, state and federal, into media existing solely for the protection of vested interests and for the suppression of the organized working class. Shall the majority of the profession follow the path of the leadership by which it would be betrayed? Or shall it, under the constructive direction of the Guild, repudiate that leadership and become a forward-looking group fulfilling the professional traditions which have become empty shibboleths in the mouths of the Stinchfields?

In addition to its intelligent and courageous attitude upon the problems of professional economics, the program of the National Lawyers' Guild expresses ideals for which the truly progressive forces of America have long waged a difficult battle. If the Guild can render in the mind of the average American lawyer the beginnings of a consciousness that he must ally himself with the progressive forces of humanity in the present crisis—if it will encourage lawyers to undertake representation of workers, individually or organizationally, in their struggle for economic and civil liberty, these ideals, articulated and put into practice for the first time by any large organization of lawyers, will have been fulfilled to an unprecedented degree. There appears hope indeed that Heywood Broun was prophetic when he opened his address to the convention: "Mr. Toastmaster and fellow trade-unionists. . ."



Woodcut by Helen West Heller

Mexican Labor Reunited

The recent rift, which threatened to isolate the Communist Party, has been satisfactorily closed

By Charles Wedger

THE Mexican labor movement has just passed through a trying and critical period. Some of its wounds have not yet entirely healed, but like a fractured bone that has been well mended, it has emerged from the ordeal more closely knit, stronger, and tougher than ever before. Nobody deliberately breaks his arm in order to strengthen it; but if it happens to crack, if it grows together straight and fast and then, because of this misfortune, the causes of future and more serious troubles are removed, one is likely to look upon the accident as on the whole a beneficial experience.

It is in this light that one must consider the recent experience of the Confederation of Mexican Workers (C.T.M.). A unified body of industrial unions, counting over six hundred thousand members or 90 percent of all organized labor in Mexico, it is relatively the largest and most advanced labor federation in the Americas. Nevertheless, late in April, at a meeting of the Fourth National Council, a number of unions, among them the railroad and electrical syndicates, two of the strongest and most militant in Mexico, brought up charges to the effect that the Council was violating the statutes of the C.T.M. and the most elementary requirements of democratic procedure by failing to recognize bona-fide delegates from various state and local organizations.

Unable to secure satisfaction, these unions, representing something like one half the total membership, withdrew from the Council meeting. Three national secretaries of the C.T.M. followed them. The latter were then promptly suspended from the Council and the case was turned over to the organization's judiciary committee. However, for all practical purposes, a split had occurred.

In the first heat of conflict, the National Council at once placed the full blame for the split on the Communists, indulging in an orgy of anti-Communist vituperation which ill became an organization which since its birth has been denounced by reactionaries as an agent of Moscow. Later, however, Lombardo Toledano, general secretary of the C.T.M., modified the Red-baiting tactics of his colleagues by admitting that the dissenting unions were not all Communist-led or Communist-controlled. Though he still found serious fault with the Communist Party of Mexico, he also touched upon the shortcomings of the C.T.M. and of its "minor leadership," deploring the "evil inheritance" of the past which he recognized as having contributed to the crisis on hand.

In a general way, Lombardo Toledano was undoubtedly correct in his analysis of the deeper causes of the split. The Mexican labor movement, though it has made tremendous progress since the Morones sell-out of a decade ago, has carried with it—inevitably, one is tempted to say—the virus of its infantile diseases. The rank and file of the Mexican unions has always been militant, and this is reflected in the utterances of its leaders. At the same time, due to the historic circumstances of the 1910-20 revolution, the labor movement early became too closely associated with the government. It must be recalled, however, that under the progressive Cárdenas regime this factor takes on a special character.

This and other circumstances, in the past, led to the establishment of a bureaucratic leadership which traded the independence of the labor movement for personal power and profit, and masked its betrayal with clever demagoguery. In the case of the now discredited and greatly diminished Regional Confederation of Mexican Workers (C.R.O.M.), predecessor of the C.T.M., the Morones gang which controlled it descended to the most cynical racketeering and ended up as one of the main bulwarks of the Calles dictatorship.

The C.T.M., however, got off to an auspicious start in February 1936. As a direct

offspring of the famous Committee for Proletarian Defense, which was instrumental in ousting Calles the previous June, it consciously broke with the C.R.O.M. traditions and set out to build a unified, democratically governed, and independent labor organization. To a considerable degree it was successful, and as a result won many impressive victories, some, like the ten-day strike of the electrical workers in Mexico City a year ago, revealing a high political level.

Nevertheless, almost from the beginning, the old debilitating tendencies made their appearance. It is true that Lombardo Toledano, who had led the revolt against Morones, with whom he was once associated, has given proof of a sincerity and insight into labor problems rarely encountered in the official leadership of the Mexican labor movement. Yet the directorship of Lombardo Toledano and his most capable associates constantly suffered from the obstructions of inefficient and irresponsible elements (some of them thinly disguised grafters) who controlled part of the C.T.M.'s organizational machinery.

With more firmness on the part of the top leadership and more vigilance by the rank and file, the situation might have been corrected without too much stress and strain. However, failing any effective check, cliques of petty bureaucrats merrily continued their little game of trading favors, pulling wires, and otherwise maneuvering for personal gain. For example, in various states—notably in Nuevo León, Coahuila, Mexico, Campeche, and the Yucatan—the support and prestige of the C.T.M. was lent to reactionary politicians who were actively persecuting militant workers and peasants. Elsewhere, unions that were plainly not bona fide were recognized, to the detriment of genuine labor groups. Various other irregularities, which include a major scandal involving the organization of a teachers' union, lent fuel to the fire which broke out at the meeting of the Fourth National Council.

It was not strange that enemies of labor, both within and outside the C.T.M., took advantage of the split to heap abuse upon the Communist Party. The Communists wielded considerable influence with several of the largest dissident unions. Two of the three suspended national secretaries were Communists. According to all superficial appearances, the Communists had assumed the lead in a move to split the Mexican labor movement. It was an excellent opportunity to undermine the prestige of the Communists who for months had been exposing the irregularities within the



Woodcut by Mendes



Woodcut by Mendez

C.T.M. and agitating for a house-cleaning.

However, some of the criticism directed against the Communists was well-meant and had its foundation in a long series of misunderstandings, annoyances, and erroneous tactics for which the Communists, in their role as the vanguard of the proletariat, were plainly responsible. The Communist Party itself was not entirely unaware of this, and immediately after the split, it undertook an intensive study of the entire situation, a study involving merciless self-criticism.

The result of this endeavor was the now historic plenum of the Communist Party of Mexico which took place during the last days of June. This meeting can justly be considered an epoch-making event. To begin with, it brought forth a sharp, clear, and much-needed analysis of the fundamental political trends in present-day Mexico. In the second place, it resulted in a thorough overhauling of the party line on the basis of the frankest and most painstaking dissection of past errors, an act which Earl Browder, a guest at the plenum, declared to mark the definite "coming of age" of the Communist Party of Mexico as one of the major branches of the Communist International. Finally, it created the conditions for the reuniting of Mexican labor, the prime prerequisite for the continued progress of Mexican democracy.

As the plenum discussions made clear, the ultimate source of the party's errors was its immaturity. An infant party when it was forced underground by Calles in 1929, it emerged early in 1935 with fewer than two thousand members. A year later it had nearly ten thousand members, and today it has passed the seventeen thousand mark. Along with these remarkable gains, the party also won numerous strategic positions in the labor movement and a good deal of prestige in certain departments of the government.

However, with its underground experience and psychology still close upon it, with a large number of new members improperly assimilated, the party was unable to throw off its sectarianism rapidly or effectively enough. This led the party to make greater demands than were perhaps justified on the C.T.M., the dominant Partido Nacional Revolucionario (P.N.R.), and other left-wing groups, and then to lose patience and composure when these demands were not met.

The Communist Party was thus in constant danger of isolating itself from the great mass of progressive elements. It set up a people's-front organization despite objections by the C.T.M., and without the C.T.M. no effective people's front can exist in Mexico. In the elections, it attempted to run independent candidates against those of the P.N.R., disregarding the fact that the chief task was to defeat the common enemy of both, the fascist-clerical reactionaries.

At the same time, the Communist Party conducted aggressive campaigns for positions of leadership in various organizations. Among non-Communists, these tactics lent the impression that the Communist Party was trying to dominate all left-wing activities. To make



Martin

Thoreau Today

Declension of earth's paradigm
Discloses now time's latest whim
Dreaming of love on rainy afternoons
While nations crumble, governed by
poltrons.

Whimpering of his anguished soul
While Jack and Joan starve on the dole.
Who once was master of tall tacking
ships

Spawned him a son who loves boots,
chains and whips.

Or others, parcelled on the tree's last
leaves:

Straining silkworms, property of thieves.

What! shall we don the fur again,
Swing back the circling arms,
Creep eastward to the ancient den
Where Walden's woods sing psalms?

IRVING LIGHTBOWN.

★ ★ ★

matters worse, Communists were getting into the habit of treating non-party co-workers as if they had the same theoretical position and were subject to the same discipline as Communists. All in all, this could not fail seriously to weaken the confidence of outsiders in the Communist Party.

Had the party been aware of these mistaken tactics, it might have prevented the split. True enough, as we have seen, the dissatisfied unions of the C.T.M. had just complaints against the Fourth National Council. But if the party had used all its influence to prevent these unions from walking out instead of encouraging them in this action, it might have prevailed upon them to stay and iron out the difficulties within the official C.T.M.

Furthermore, had the party been sufficiently conscious of the role that the C.T.M. now plays and must continue to play in Mexico, if it had kept clearly in mind the nature of the Cárdenas government, its significance in present-day Mexico, and its position in the world struggle between the forces of progress and fascism, it would have strained every effort to preserve the unity of the Mexican labor movement at any cost.

In fact, "unity at any cost" was the motto

of the final resolution adopted by the plenum, a masterly document of tight, sinewy, Marxist analysis and concise, unembellished wording—unmistakably sound in its critique and its recommendations. It placed the greatest emphasis on the fact that with all its imperfections, the C.T.M. is a powerful and indispensable force both in the struggle against Mexican reaction and foreign imperialism and in the drive for the immediate and ultimate demands of the Mexican proletariat. In these struggles, the unity of the C.T.M. is in itself of revolutionary importance.

On the unity of the C.T.M. depends, in a large measure, the success of a project to knit the labor organizations of all Latin America into a single, consolidated revolutionary body, a feat of incalculable importance if accomplished. On the unity of the C.T.M. also depends to a significant degree both the survival and the steady leftward progress of Mexico's enlightened regime and its rapid transformation into a genuine people's-front government. In one respect at least, the Cárdenas government is unique in the capitalist world: it loyally and openly lends every support to the Spanish republic. This fact alone puts Mexico in the forefront of the world struggle against fascism and places upon the shoulders of all progressives in Mexico an additional responsibility for maintaining and defending the government of President Lázaro Cárdenas.

The reestablishment of the unity of the C.T.M. at the Fifth National Council, held in Mexico City during the last days of July, gives assurance that Mexico will continue to march ahead to new triumphs. Some old problems still remain to be settled, for unity was achieved when the dissenting unions, realizing the correctness of the revised Communist position, asked and were granted readmission on the basis of full recognition of the legality of the previous National Council.

In the meantime, the two Communist national C.T.M. secretaries have resigned their positions while the third suspended secretary has resumed his former post. One organization, the strong electrical workers' syndicate of Mexico City, refused to return, but there is every likelihood that it will come back in the near future. There are also excellent prospects now that the powerful miners' union, with its seventy thousand members, will also return to the fold after more than a year's absence.

As for the old problems, there is a greater chance that they will be solved—gradually and within the confines of the C.T.M.—than ever before, thanks to the courageous and unselfish attitude of the Communist Party of Mexico. Of course, it would have been better had the party not made errors and thereby avoided the break. Nevertheless, with the prompt knitting of the split and with the good luck that no irreparable losses had occurred, there is much that has been gained for all concerned in the clarification of issues and tactics and in bringing into the clear light of day the smoldering controversies that might have erupted later with disastrous results.



Martin

The Worm's-Eye View

Mr. Taenia Solium was a citizen of no mean city, but he, like others, found that parasitism was not enough

By Philip Stevenson

ONCE there was a young and ambitious, absolutely sincere and honest tapeworm named *Taenia Solium*. When he got a position in the small intestine of a worker named Obrero, he congratulated himself. It was not every youngster who landed such a soft berth right at the outset of his career.

Obrero had a healthy appetite and an up-to-date efficient system, so Solium got attached to him and right away started talking turkey and grabbing off the bacon. Opportunity knocked three times a day regularly, and Solium decided to make the most of it and achieve a big success in life. As he said, the breaks came to everybody some time or other, but only smart guys knew enough to take advantage of them, and he was every inch a smart guy. Not that he expected to get something for nothing—oh, not at all! He expected to work hard for his bread and butter, but on the other hand he was certainly not going to pass anything up.

Obrero paid no attention to Solium, just as if he weren't there, so gradually Solium began to feel that he, and not Obrero, was really running the production end. Everything came through Solium first; he had a free hand to do what he thought best for the business, and he didn't forget to look out for Number One, so he waxed fat on his work and got full of beans and pep and ambition. At first Solium used to worry that maybe he was getting more than his fair share of the gravy. He'd feel like a worm and wonder if Obrero got enough for himself. But since Obrero only ate all the more heartily, Solium finally concluded that it was the eternal law of nature that he should get the cream and Obrero the leavings.

He worked it out like this: individuals have a sacred right to profit by their superior skill, brains, hard work, initiative, and determination, and to enjoy the fruits thereof without interference. Nobody would ever bother to work, he decided, if they had to divvy up the proceeds with loafers. Besides, that would be nothing less than just plain bolshevism.

As Solium grew in body, his ideals kept pace. At first, all he had looked for from his position was a decent average living, a chance to raise his family in decency and comfort. But now he began to dream of supplanting Obrero as the big cheese of the whole works. It seemed to him that already he was an indispensable part of the digestive process—that Obrero couldn't do without him. He figured that Obrero had to swallow what came, whether he liked it or not, and it was all grist to Solium's mill. He got over his qualms that maybe he was being too hard-boiled toward

Obrero. After all, competition was the basis of all progress, and it was only fair that the smartest individuals should come to dominate the inferior masses. "You can't change tapeworm nature," Solium would say, "and if it weren't for the stimulus of rugged competition we would all stagnate. We might even degenerate to a lower order of life," the tapeworm concluded.

At this period of his life Solium developed the habit, whenever he got blue or down in the mouth, of thinking back over his career and gloating over how far he had traveled on the road to success. He would remember how only a few months before he had been an insignificant worm clinging to Obrero and content to live on a dole. But although it is well known that the dole saps the moral fiber, he had not allowed his moral fiber to be sapped. He had gritted his teeth, stuck to his post, digested all the material Obrero sent him, and developed efficiency and economy—the cardinal principles of success. Part of what he earned by the sweat of his brow he had salted away, till now he was grown strong and confident and was expanding rapidly. It only went to show, Solium would think with gratification, how a young and inexperienced tapeworm, by sheer grit, thrift, and integrity of character, could rise unaided to a position of responsibility and leadership.

HE no longer worried about holding his own in the struggle for existence. His problem was rather how to keep from expanding too fast. Already he monopolized 80 percent of the intestinal field, which left him only 20 percent for future development of the business. But he would cross that bridge when he came to it, he decided. To a tapeworm of his intellectual caliber, problems were not a source of worry, but rather a spur to the imagination.

He welcomed the difficulty. It stimulated his competitive spirit. "I dote on struggle," he would tell his wide-eyed children. "There is nothing quite like the thrill of contending daily with Obrero for the lion's share of the morning toast-and-coffee, the noon hamburger-on-rye, the prandial steak-and-onions." And with each victory over Obrero, he felt more like a real lion.

In time, Solium's policy of expansion brought him a 95 percent monopoly of the intestinal field. Thus it appeared that soon there might not be enough for both Obrero and himself, and that therefore Obrero would have to content himself with less. But that was fair enough, for it was Solium's destiny to go on expanding indefinitely, and there was no use

in Obrero's opposing the ordained forces of nature.

For a while Obrero seemed resigned to the situation. His appetite redoubled, which only accelerated the growth of Solium so that presently his monopoly was 99 percent.

At this point Obrero suspected that something might possibly be wrong. He went on a hunger strike for a day, following up with a modest dose of chocolate-covered dynamite that shook Mr. Solium to his foundations. Recovering his wits after the blast, Mr. Solium found to his horror that three of his segments (the weakest and youngest units in the field, of course) had been put out of business, and his monopoly reduced once more to 80 percent.

Mr. Solium was highly incensed. "This is nothing less than terrorism!" he boomed. "Now I have always been a champion of tolerance, liberty, and so on; but after all there are limits. Liberty is not license, I always say. The sacred rights of property must be preserved at all cost—surely, sound-thinking 100-percent American tapeworms are agreed on that. Moreover, it is well known that all strikes are selfish, wasteful, and un-American. Obrero is so envious, so blindly vengeful, so warped by foreign radical dogmas, that he does not see that in depriving me of my just desserts he is likewise depriving himself of his bread and butter. He contends that he is acting for idealistic reasons—that he is striking for the rights of man as against the rights of tapeworms—but no more childish argument could be imagined. There is, of course, no clash of interests between men and tapeworms. To say there is, is simply to stir up class hatred and prejudice. Paraphrasing my preceptor Carnegie," Mr. Solium asserted, "I maintain that the stool of digestion has three legs—food (which is of God), the alimentary canal (Obrero's minor contribution), and the tapeworm on the inside who controls and supervises all. The three legs are equally indispensable, since the stool will not stand on any two.*"

"And lest any doubt the truth of this," Mr. Solium continued, "let me ask a candid question: Where would Obrero be without me?"

* "A mass meeting of the workmen and their wives was afterwards held in the Liberty Hall at Pittsburgh to greet me, and I addressed them from both my head and my heart. The one sentence I remember, and always shall, was to the effect that capital, labor, and employer were a three-legged stool, none before or after the other, all equally indispensable. Then came the cordial hand-shaking, and all was well." Andrew Carnegie, *Autobiography*.

Who is it that controls the amount and quality of his diet? Who restrains his unbridled appetite and keeps him from dying of overindulgence and riotous living? I! Yes, I! And were it not for the cool-headed, clear-eyed tapeworms of this world, the masses would long ago have perished of their own excesses.

"So you see, it is not I who am a parasite on Obrero, but rather the reverse. However, to accept Mr. Carnegie's generous view, let us say that men and tapeworms need each other. Therefore they should collaborate—not resort to force and violence against each other for the pleasure of trouble-making agitators. Obrero must behave, else I shall be forced against my will to employ stern methods to restore law and order in digestion."

Having finished this courageous and forthright statement, Mr. Solium sank back, pale and exhausted, but with the light of determination in his eyes undimmed.

For a time all went well. To make good the loss occasioned by his strike, Obrero again increased his appetite. Mr. Solium's strength revived. Soon he had replaced his lost units and was working at 100-percent capacity. Once more this caused Obrero's share to shrink to insufficiency, and he began to sicken and pine. Then in his brutish and rebellious heart he began to nurse a dark and monstrous plot. He decided to liquidate all tapeworms as a class and regain control of his own intestinal tract.

Mr. Solium's stooges and gorillas reported the existence of the conspiracy, and a dangerous fire flashed from the master's eyes. Revolution! Violence, eh? Very well, then: force must be met with force. Obrero must be brought to his knees, begging for mercy.

But Solium needed time. He must make a pretense of conciliation while he prepared for

a showdown. He must explain to Obrero that, although at present he could not afford to give him a larger share of the corporeal income, later on, in better times, if Obrero worked hard and behaved himself, there would be a large increase. Word of honor!

But for the first time Obrero would not listen. He no longer believed in promises. Placidly he continued his preparations for the final liquidation and expropriation.

In despair, Mr. Solium sent for his public relations counsel. Possibly an appeal to public opinion might delay matters. He dictated a statement which was given enormous publicity in the tapeworm press. It is worth quoting in full as a model to be followed by all tapeworm literary aspirants:

Although the digestive system under which we live is admittedly not 100 percent perfect, yet is it not preferable to digestive chaos, or to no digestive system whatever?

Strange as it may seem, there are certain elements, misguided by foreign agitators, who advocate destruction of all digestion by force and violence, and an end of tapeworm authority through assassination of all tapeworms.

The danger of such crackpot ideas cannot be exaggerated. They must be pitilessly exterminated by all patriotic persons desirous of preserving religion, the home, and the intestinal purity of American womanhood.

It may be that a few individual tapeworms have indeed taken unfair advantage of their position to exploit those who depend on them for a living; but if so, they should be persuaded to mend their ways and take a broader view of their duties and social responsibilities. We should not, because of the shortcomings of the chiseling five percent, condemn all tapeworms; for they are, as a class, the most sober, industrious, hard-working, and frugal members of society. In fact, tapeworms are indispensable to the preservation of our traditional American system.

The vast majority of tapeworms have always exhibited admirable generosity toward their human dependents. Take, for example, Mr. Tania Solium,

the Stool King. Finding his employee Obrero somewhat underprivileged (due to temporary conditions beyond Mr. Solium's control), Mr. Solium voluntarily relinquished 20 percent of his legitimate domain to improve Obrero's situation. This voluntary act is said to establish a new high in collaboration between tapeworms and their underlings—overtopping the generosity of an earlier great philanthropist who was wont to distribute dimes to his neighbors. When interviewed today at the scene of his labors, Mr. Solium, with his characteristic aversion to publicity, declined any comment other than to quote the famous maxim by which he has lived and conducted his giant enterprise to such spectacular success: "Do unto others as ye would they should do unto you."

From this example, which may be multiplied infinitely, it is clear that not tapeworms, but rather the ignorant and vengeful fomenters who would put an end to all philanthropy, are the true enemies of society. Already, tapeworm-haters are anathema to all vigilant and straight-thinking citizens. It is to be hoped that a vast movement to rid our body-digestive of these radical termites will be inaugurated in the near future.

Mr. Solium, although willing to endorse and even contribute to such a crusade, feels that the initiative should come from disinterested citizens. A stout believer in democracy and by nature self-effacing, he prefers to leave the choice of a fæcist leader to the outraged populace who, he believes, can be depended upon to take the matter into their own hands and exterminate the trouble-makers. "You see," he concluded simply, "I never take sides."

Alas for Mr. Solium! By this time the outraged populace was fed up with fæces and fæcist demagoguery. His battle-cry fell on deaf ears.

"Very well," he resolved, with the firmness characteristic of tapeworm nature, "I shall rely on myself alone."

Whereupon he girded up his tapeworm loins for a supreme and final effort. And so effective were his exertions that he retained 100 percent of all that came in, while Obrero was totally deprived of sustenance.

Obrero, however, was ready. He answered the lockout by fomenting another strike, and this time he held out so long that Mr. Solium suffered agonies. In vain Solium threatened to shut down the plant altogether. Obrero did not even bother to reply. Instead he threw a double charge of dynamite into the works. When the detonations had quite died away, half of Mr. Solium's model plant was gone.

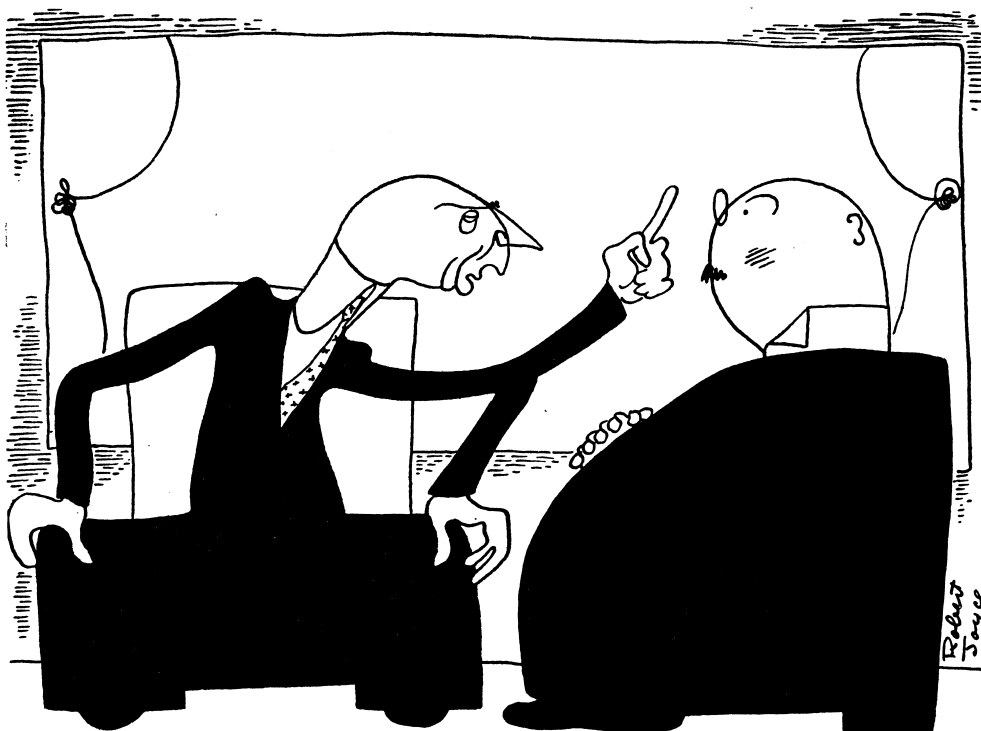
Commending his soul to his maker, Mr. Solium staggered feebly to his desk and scrawled an entry in his diary:

I am reliably informed that a second and final blast is preparing. Very well, I am ready. I am not afraid to die. I have lived richly and not altogether in vain. Future generations will better appreciate my contribution to human happiness. If I had a fault—and who has not?—it was that of excessive generosity. I was too lenient. I spoiled Obrero. The slave mentality cannot be indulged, for it will always abuse its privileges. I should have been firm. Let all tapeworms who come after me be warned by my example. As for me, in heaven I shall find my reward.

Now sounds the final trump—the gurgle of the fatal potion. Down, ye mourners, down on your knees! Time to don the black. Time to strike up the organ. Ah! it comes! I am overwhelmed!

Nearernygodtothee! N e a r e r

The rest was a long, down-slanting stroke of the pen, and then . . . blank white paper . . .



Robert Joyce

"Foreign agitators—you said it—from Philadelphia!"

"Leftism" and Counter-Revolution

While their objective logic may be the same, says the author in answer to a critic, it is important to make a distinction

A Letter from John Strachey

I HAVE received a letter criticizing my recent article headed "Radicals in Rompers" [issue of July 27] in your columns. The criticism is a serious one, and I hasten to deal with it, because I think that I may inadvertently have caused the same misunderstanding amongst others of your readers, which I evidently did in the case of my correspondent.

His first point was that I had said that Lenin had "unkindly" called Trotsky a wind-bag. My correspondent thought that readers might misunderstand this (I am not sure whether he did himself or not) as meaning that I thought that Lenin was wrong to be unkind to Trotsky on this occasion. Of course, I meant nothing of the sort. Lenin, when he was conducting a political controversy, was, as a matter of fact, neither kind nor unkind. He was scientific, and he was ruthless, as he was in this controversy with Trotsky (wind-bag was one of the mildest words he used) just because he was one of the most objective, just, and impersonal men who ever lived. As a matter of fact, I believe that a thorough study of Lenin's controversies, not only with Trotsky, but with all the opposition groups, including those of Bukharin, Radek, Pyatakov, and, of course, the Mensheviks, is the most instructive thing that anyone can undertake at the present moment, in order to understand the present situation in the U.S.S.R. Such reading should include, above all, the relevant volumes of Lenin's *Selected Works* (Volumes II, III, IV, V, and VI especially) and also Popov's *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*. It is only when one reads and rereads these works that one realizes that Lenin regarded Trotsky, and those whom Trotsky influenced, as quite the most deadly danger which faced the Russian Bolshevik Party in the pre-war years. Hence, my word "unkindly" was thoroughly badly chosen, and I am very grateful to my correspondent for pointing it out to me, and giving me this opportunity of correcting it.

My correspondent's second point is more important, and I think raises a more difficult question. He suggests that I treated the P.O.U.M. rising in Barcelona as an error of infantile leftism, when in fact it was a counter-revolutionary crime. Objectively, of course, there is no doubt that the rising was a counter-revolutionary crime. It has now also been discovered that the P.O.U.M. leaders had relations with Franco, which shows that for them the rising was quite consciously and subjectively counter-revolu-



William Hernandez

Holding Back Fascism

tionary and criminal. I certainly ought to have made this plain in my article, and I agree, on looking at it again, that it is not plain.

Again I think my correspondent is right when he says that my article might lead to confusion between sincere infantile leftism and Trotskyism as such. It might suggest that Trotskyism is just a foolish error. Of course, this is not the case. Trotsky and his immediate supporters have passed over bag and baggage into the counter-revolutionary camp.

All the same I believe there is an important distinction to draw here, and one which we ought to draw, because we fail to carry conviction when we do not. That is the distinction between Trotsky and Trotskyism proper, and the groups and individuals who, because of their lack of political education, fall under more or less Trotskyist, or merely leftist, influences. For example, though I have no first-hand evidence one way or the other, I should think that it was extremely improbable that most of the actual workers who took part in the Barcelona rising were consciously counter-revolutionary. They were simply dupes of counter-revolutionary leaders. They were not in touch with Franco, and did not know that their leaders were. This is certainly the case in respect to one English group which, as I said in my article, unfortunately supported the P.O.U.M. rising—the Independent Labor Party. It is impossible to deny that the Independent Labor Party is a genuine tendency within the British labor

movement, though it is now a very weak, small, and discredited tendency. Objectively and in its leadership, it is dangerously near Trotskyism; but it is quite fantastic to suggest that the rank and file of its members throughout the country have suddenly become counter-revolutionaries. On the contrary, they have simply become confused.

Now, I do believe it to be a serious mistake for us to declare that the rank and file of such groups (as for example of the I.L.P. in Britain) are criminals when they are merely dupes. For we damage ourselves very seriously when we make such a statement. These people and their friends know that they are not criminals or counter-revolutionaries. They know that they are not in touch with Franco or the enemies of the Soviet Union. Hence, if and when we accuse them of being so, we not only outrage them, but make them feel that we are capable of the wildest and most unfounded accusations. In so doing we shake their faith in all our assertions. They are usually simple people without much opportunity for judging for themselves, and very serious harm is done if we accuse them of being things which they certainly are not. Naturally, I do not know how the position is in the United States, but it would surprise me if there are not individuals and even groups of perfectly sincere leftists. And, however horribly they are being duped and misled, and however disastrous their present activities are, it is unfair and unwise to accuse them of being conscious criminals or counter-revolutionaries.

READERS' FORUM

It happened in Spain—Vigilantes in Rip Van Winkle's country—From a Chinese journalist

● I didn't know Al until the week we met in a little town in southern France and waited for the time when we could safely sneak past the border patrol to join the Spanish army. But I got to know Al very well, and to love him as I've loved few people. Waiting around inactive wasn't a particularly easy thing to do for men as anxious as we were to get to our destination—and inaction inevitably brings on dissatisfaction and the resultant squabbling over very petty things. Al somehow always kept the horizon before us—not in a soap-box manner. That we would have resented very much. He handled the situation as only a rank-and-file Communist can.

You probably know hundreds of Als back home. Nothing heroic about him. Just a guy that had to get his work done. And that's how Al died.

It was a shell from a Nazi warship that snuffed out Al. They say it was one of the last shells in the hideous bombardment of Almeria that got him. And if Al hadn't been such a good comrade, he needn't have died.

Al was part of a contingent of chauffeurs stationed at Almeria. He was asleep when the first shells fell on the unwarned city. Al could have rushed to a bomb-proof cellar. It wasn't to save his truck that he rushed to the garage. After all, as they say here, "It takes twenty years to make a man—twenty days to make a truck." And Al knew this. But he also knew that trucks were needed—wounded to bring in, communication lines to be repaired.

It isn't easy to think of Al in the past tense or as a symbol. And revenge on the part of those that love him isn't the answer. Al came here to help make a free Spain, and we here will help carry the job forward. DELL.

Albacete, Spain.

Catskill Class War

● Harlan County, Kentucky, is a far cry from the lush wooded hillsides of the Catskill Mountains. There are no mine pits burrowing into the earth of the New York vacation resort. The huge palatial hotels sitting on the mountain tops bear no resemblance to the squalid little huts of the mine country.

But the foregoing is not a wasted comparison. The stories disclosed in the recent hearings before the LaFollette Committee on Civil Liberties, of industrial unrest, of the victimization and intimidation of workers, raids on union halls, of a corrupt and venal county officialdom working hand in hand with the mine owners, and of brutal, lawless assault on workers who dare to join unions bear comparison with conditions prevailing now in New York's summer playground.

Sullivan County, vacation resort for New York's millions, has been turned into an armed camp!

Barbed wire fences are stretched across hotel grounds, and automobile loads of thugs wait vigilantly at hotel entrances for the appearance of union organizers. Known gangsters and hoodlums are registered on hotel lists as guests. An efficient espionage system holds union headquarters in South Fallsburgh under constant surveillance, and intimidation of workers proceeds apace.

However, union organizers of the Hotel & Restaurant Employees' Union, an A. F. of L. affiliate, continue their organizing activity despite the menace of further attacks. Already more than fifteen hotels have been forced to sign contracts with the union, granting union recognition, a closed shop, wage increases, and better food for their workers.

And it is against these demands that the hotel owners are fighting. It is because of these demands that union headquarters were invaded on Thursday, July 29, by six hoodlums who attacked three union organizers and two union members with baseball

bats. It was because of these demands, too, that on the next afternoon union organizers were asked to come to the Moneka Lodge (where more than 70 percent of the workers were members of the union) to negotiate with the management. The request to bargain collectively was a stall. As the organizers walked from the hotel to their car, ten men, one of whom was recognized as a notorious gangster, appeared out of the bushes, armed with baseball bats, and repeated the beating of the previous day. During this period, county and local police authorities have done nothing to ease this situation, and in one case arrested a union member who protested against the apathy of the police.

Notwithstanding this terror, hotels are visited, shop committees are set up, and leaflets are secretly distributed to workers who wait anxiously for news of the union. Moreover, several hotels have been forced to sign with the union even in the midst of this terror.

However, the efforts of the union must be augmented by the protests of New Yorkers who patronize the Catskill resorts. Write or wire the Hotelmen's Association in South Fallsburgh, demanding that the attacks cease and that they deal with the union. Write to the mayor of Monticello, Luis de Hoyos, protesting his call on the American Legion to "repel the alien and foreign influences" attempting to organize the resort hotels. The union is carrying on the spirit of organization that is sweeping the country. You can help us.

JAY ARNOLD,
Hotel & Restaurant Employees' Union.
South Fallsburgh, N. Y.

A Letter from China

● The situation in North China is once more plunged in chaos. It is Japan's customary trick to alternate force against China with avowed friendship. When her pressure reaches a point beyond endurance, she is cunning enough to stretch out a hand of professed friendship, the better to pave the way for another cycle of pressure; at the same time, the result of mollifying resistance is thereby obtained.

During the first few days of the Loukouchiao affair, three separate agreements were made by both sides for the evacuation of troops. Offensives, however, were launched against China's positions at the exact hour at which withdrawal was agreed upon. The fourth and last agreement was for simultaneous evacuation on July 22. Three days after the Chinese forces had been withdrawn, the Japanese troops were still actively reinforcing their lines and replenishing their store of war supplies.

Important lines of communication leading from and to Peiping are now in the control of the Japanese. The Peiping-Shanhaikwan highway, the Peiping-Tientsin highway, and the Peiping-Tungchow railway radiate eastward. These lines intersect at Tungchow, some twelve miles from Peiping, long controlled by Japanese troops, now the capital of the East Hopei Anti-Communist Autonomous Government. Fengtai, strategic point on the north approach, has also been in Japanese hands. Employees of the Fengtai railway station were replaced by those of the South Manchurian railway on July 24, to ensure compliance with Japanese orders where the Peiping-Ningshia railway is concerned. On the southeast, the major line of traffic is the Peiping-Hankow railway. Loukouchiao is an

important midway station on this line. This explains the Japanese intention of starting an incident at Loukouchiao. To the west of Peiping is a short railroad to Mentaokou, which is joined by highway with Changhsientien, a rather small but important town on the Peiping-Hankow railway. Papaoshan is the first strategic point on this line and out of Papaoshan the Japanese troops are trying to force the Twenty-Ninth Route Army. Tsangping is the controlling point on the eastern section of the Peiping-Suiyuan railway. Another highway due north from Peiping to Kupeikou is already in Japanese hands. Peiping, the glorious and magnificent imperial capital of three dynasties, richest storehouse of inimitable objets d'art and treasures accumulated through hundreds of years of history, is practically in Japan's satchel.

Since the breaking out of the Loukouchiao affair, Peiping has been under martial law and in momentary danger of devastation by war. Gendarmes patrol the deserted streets which but a few days ago were overflowing with happy light-hearted pedestrians going busily but unhurriedly on their respective errands. For now, those who could have taken refuge elsewhere. The very walls and battlements of Peiping seem to frown in disconsolation, albeit in imperturbable dignity.

Japanese military planes drone day and night through the still air above Peiping. Japanese pilots glide low over the forbidden city—sanctum sanctorum of bygone dynasties.

It may seem strange, but Japanese private soldiers in North China are not in the least interested in the aggression in which they are supposed to take part. Among the Japanese conscripts, not a few have received a high education and discern with clarity the situation prevailing between China and Japan. They came to China with knapsacks on their backs and rifles on their shoulders by order of their superior officers, but in most cases did so very much against their own will. Their sympathy does not lie with the military regime of Japan.

To an old visitor who has not seen Tientsin for some time, the city presents a strange sight. Khaki-uniformed Japanese soldiers are posted in the railway station, at approaches to the Tien-Chiao, or Bridge of Heaven, and at every street intersection. The station itself has been converted into Japanese field quarters, surrounded by booths hastily set up by Japanese clubs and women's associations for the special amenity of these soldiers.

Armored trains squat in the station yard. Fighting tanks bristling with machine guns speed over the rails. Chinese-owned freight and passenger cars have been commandeered for transportation of Japanese ammunitions and war supplies. The few Chinese passengers who alight onto the station shuffle out as fast as they dare, to disappear into the intricate streets.

An agreement between the Chinese and the Japanese forces was reported to have been arrived at on July 19. The third clause calls for suppression of anti-communist activities and other terms which admit of great freedom of interpretation.

Agreements of this nature appear to have been but matter of form, for Japanese troops have all along unceremoniously taken the law into their own hands, searching and arresting anyone suspected of being anti-Japanese or communist. It is easy enough to give a dog a bad name and hang it. Only recently, a noted journalist was reported missing; the fate of a number of student officers of Nan Kai University who disappeared a short time ago is unknown. People whose opinions are known to be particularly "dangerous" vanish mysteriously. The Chinese police force is utterly helpless to check or interfere in these illegal arrests.

Hongkong, China.

CHEN PIN-HO.



REVIEW AND COMMENT

The Guggenheim dynasty—William Saroyan's stories—A Spanish town—Syphilis and society

HARVEY O'CONNOR has done his best job in *The Guggenheims*,* the story of the ruthless, acquisitive family that founded the smelter monopoly. With irony, color, and dramatic detail he traces the rise of America's fourth richest family from a peddler's pack. The history of the Guggenheim family becomes a symbol of the development of twentieth-century monopoly capitalism from the crude, competitive business of the mid-nineteenth century.

The proletariat develops in the same time-span. Free, independent prospectors become embittered wage earners for the trust. Populist farmers and independent gold panners graduate into revolutionary members of the Western Federation of Miners, the union of pioneer hard-rock miners, which paved the way for the I.W.W. and brought forth leaders like Big Bill Haywood and Vincent St. John.

The most vivid portion of the book is the first half, which was written before O'Connor's labors on the *People's Press* absorbed so much of his time. The frontier scenes, where the Guggenheims grabbed their first bonanzas, are skillfully and realistically sketched. The description of the riotous main stem of Leadville, where Father Meyer won his gambler's chance in the A.Y. and Minnie silver mines, is meat for a scenario writer.

Frontier life of another kind appears in the story of son Simon's elevation to the United States Senate by Colorado's Republican legislators. Gun play and crude Rocky Mountain vote-buying for cash—not with preferred lists—preceded the donning of the toga by the western representative of the smelter trust. Simon fell into the spirit of the thing. "It is merely conducting political campaigns as they are conducted these days," he told Frederick Lawrence, an eastern journalist. "The money I have contributed has helped elect these men, and naturally they feel under obligation to vote for me. It is done all over the United States today. I do not consider that it is wrong, and neither do I think that it can in any sense be called bribery."

This moral obtuseness of the Guggenheims was evident only in social questions, however. In their personal and family life the Guggenheims were paragons of outward order and decency, as Will, the youngest of Meyer's seven sons, found out when he married the enchanting Grace. A family council was hurriedly called, and Will was told to chuck her, or else. . . . It wasn't because Grace was a gentile; the Guggenheims were liberal Jews. She was a too gay, a too impetuous divorcee. Grace fought back, and

the court scrap against the united family and their legal guide, Samuel Untermyer, forms a sparkling chapter.

This family solidarity was one of the mainsprings of the Guggenheim fortune. Father Meyer's crude pioneer daring and shrewdness was blended with the modern financial sophistication of his elder sons, Isaac, Dan, Murry, Sol, and Simon. A heritage of an earlier social order, this family solidarity lasted long enough to put the immigrant peddler's son among the rulers of the capitalist world, with a far-flung mineral empire in North America, South America, and Africa.

The growth of this empire follows the Rockefeller pattern. Just as Rockefeller controlled the oil industry by controlling the refineries, so the Guggenheims set out to take over the smelting of silver and lead, later branching into copper. To keep metal prices up they shut down independent mines by refusing their ore, and dozens of ghost towns sprang up in the Rockies. They bought up top mining engineers like John Hays Hammond; and they took into their deals foreign tyrants like Diaz in Mexico, Bloody King Leopold of Belgium, and Ibanez in Chile.

The crest of their power was reached just after the World War when their wealth was swollen by the two hundred million dollar profits of copper and lead. They still dominate their cornerstone trust, American Smelting & Refining Co., but their power elsewhere is waning. It is waning with the splits in the family solidarity that have come with modern times. Meyer's abler grandsons

like Harry Guggenheim, former ambassador to Cuba, have left the chief Guggenheim boards. And Will, the frustrated lover and artist, who never belonged with his business-like brothers, sits alone in his mansion on Riverside Drive, contemplating his pathetic verses. Will's favorite poem, "My Orchid," is a fitting finale to the closing chapter, "The Twilight of the Guggenheims." In this twilight we see the family gradually settling down towards the idle-rich slough of the Vanderbilts and Goulds.

O'Connor's book is a teeming document of the last three generations of business change and social struggle. He got the material by tireless research and first hand exploration in Mexico and the Rocky Mountains. *The Guggenheims* show his literary technique at its best. He has blended economic data and human values with a consistent freshness that exceeds his skill in *Mellon's Millions* and *Steel Dictator*. Some readers may wish his socialist conclusions were stated as bluntly here as in the steel book, but this reviewer finds them implicit in the Guggenheim story, and livened by an ironic approach that makes fascinating reading.

ART SHIELDS.

A Greek Named Pete

LITTLE CHILDREN, by William Saroyan.
Harcourt, Brace & Co. \$2.50.

THERE are some good things about Saroyan. One is that he will write a letter to any editor, anywhere, who happens to mention Saroyan's name in his columns—



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*THE GUGGENHEIMS, by Harvey O'Connor. Covici-Friede. \$3.



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and this, since the editor usually prints the letter, does more to enliven the pages of our contemporary periodicals than might be imagined. Another is that he has a particularly vivid sense of his own importance, and that, too, is a good thing if it is held in check. Still another is that he has a strong dislike for the conventional modes of story-telling—the laborious development of mood, the careful alignment of plot and character, the obviously premeditated dénouement, and so on. The trouble with him is that so far he has never gotten beyond a declaration, more or less pettish, of his likes and dislikes, and has been content to let things go at that.

Thus, in his latest collection of short stories, we have: (1) a story about a Jewish kid named Sam who had a nervous habit of laughing, so that he laughed when the other newsboys made fun of him, and laughed when they played tricks on him, and laughed—finally—when he got jammed in a freight elevator and was killed; (2) a story about a Greek named Pete whose tragedy was that he tried to run an all-night restaurant all alone on a twenty-four-hour shift and couldn't stand the gaff; (3) a story about an expert telegrapher who got fat; (4) three or four stories about children that are unexpectedly tender and sympathetic and all that; (5) two or three "I" stories—about the inconveniences of wearing pants from the year-before-last, of being a Western Union messenger and loving the richest girl in town, etc.—that seem to have a place and a reason only in some vast whimpering autobiography; (6) one story, at least, called "Where I Come From People Are Polite," that combines irony and fantasy, sharpness, and a kind of broody moodiness, and is all in all a very good story indeed.

In most of the stories, though, one's feeling is of material stretched too thin and of small points too much insisted on; and the total effect of the book, in this over-reachingness of treatment over subject-matter, would be one of ill-advised burlesque, if it weren't for a sense of strange and blustering honesty that runs through it all. Mr. Saroyan, at least, picks the right things to hate—the shams, the phoiness, the unfairnesses around him. One can't help feeling, though, that this alone isn't enough.

It isn't an accident that the short story, almost alone in present-day writing, has been able to maintain its authority. The novel, by the very breadth of its scope, must derive its form from the form of social order it describes; and when that order is formless or when its formation is in question, then the novel itself is hampered, having no accepted frame on which its pattern can be developed.

The short story suffers from no such handicap. While the novel attacks on a wide front, the short story, the sharpshooter of the art, can pick off its subjects one by one, without being forced to pay too much overt attention to their philosophic and social interrelations. But this does not mean that the sense of these interrelations need not be there. Indeed, because its target is small, it is from the accuracy of the short story's aim, the im-



Ruth Gikow

mediacy of its impact, that it gains its power. The trouble with Mr. Saroyan, as a sniper, is that so far he has been merely firing at random, towards a not very clearly formulated enemy. One can't help wishing that he would get more direction, both philosophic and artistic, in his aim.

ROBERT M. COATES.

On a Military Map

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF A SPANISH TOWN,
by Elliot Paul. Random House. \$2.50.

THE proof of Marxian literature as a growing and vital force is sometimes to be found in its least expected manifestations. Such a book as Elliot Paul's *The Life and Death of a Spanish Town* is, for example, motivated by as subjective a quality as disorientation. It exhibits an unawareness of history, an ignorance of social fact, and a total lack of class-conscious analysis, yet it succeeds in its subject matter (not in its insights) in arriving at a practicable Marxian literary formula. That, of necessity, constitutes a contradiction in terms, and *The Life and Death of a Spanish Town* fails as a whole, because of this contradiction. It succeeds, on the other hand, in one important aspect—that it is indicating the opportunities of a new thematic function for literature.

Drama and fiction of the past have been chiefly concerned with the individual, with a conventionalized hero whose problems and predicaments, whose career and destiny were created by a series of arbitrary events particular to himself and only general in their symbolism. The hero belonged to a race apart, dissociated from society, and only resembling it in such categorical characteristics as ambition, fear, cowardice, jealousy, etc. He was singled out, so to speak. What befell him was extraordinary to his society, not typical of it, and his society was only indirectly or panoramically involved. In successful Marxian literature, however, the fate of the individual should be interrelated with the fate of his society, or, to be more exact, society should

play the role of the hero. It should be the molding and compelling force to which the individual is subordinated and in whose actions it is inevitably reflected. This may be effected in several ways. The social factor may serve as the dramatic agent, or better yet, society, a particular class or community, may be treated by the author as though it were a character. It may be described in terms of its conflicts, its humiliations, its ambitions, its fears, its rise or fall, its tragedy. These qualities, in turn, may be synthesized in the destiny of the other (the conventional) characters, and a new type of drama created, developed on two converging lines: the drama of the individual as a character resolved by the community and the drama of the community as a character—each with a movement and history of its own, and a climax in common.

On Mr. Paul's island of Ibiza, the peasantry led various lives, fished and drank, ate and slept, committed their trivial crimes, reviled the church, cursed the *Guardia*, loved their women, sang their songs—until the first significant communal event occurred. When the mail-boat from Barcelona failed to arrive, the entire town of Santa Eulalia rushed to the waterfront and waited, filled with the same premonition, the same suspense. Thereafter, with the advent of Franco's troops, personal values were abandoned, duties neglected, habits broken, the heterogeneous lives of the inhabitants became inseparable from the fate and character of the community, a community attacked and changed in personality. Catalina no longer thought of her wedding, Pep Torres lost his interest in music, Pep Salvador no longer clowned, Ramon and his motorcycle no longer went spluttering through the village on a hundred gratuitous errands. They were all engaged in a war, unforeseen, unrelated to the events and preoccupations of their daily lives. ("Here, we shall not begin killing one another.") When Elliot Paul finally left the island, it was butchered and blood-drenched, shattered and wrecked. Soon after, the remaining four hundred inhabitants were shot down by Italian machine-gun fire. Nothing is left of the community or its characters now. It is only a stretch of land, a pin on Franco's war-map, a naval base for fascist ships and planes.

Mr. Paul is intense in his indignation, but he is to be reproached for his naïveté. Under his insistence on non-partisanship, on his reactions merely as an outraged human being, one detects the expatriate deprived of his last perfect haven. Naïveté is apparent in the very division of the journal: Part One—4000 B.C. to 1936 A.D.; Part Two—July 14 to September 15, 1936. Part One is devoted to the idyllic, and, apparently, timeless and placeless happiness of the inhabitants of Ibiza. They sing and dance and drink and bask in the glorious sunlight like fishermen in the market place of a comic opera. They live (and seem to the author to have lived ever since 4000 B.C.) in a world apart from any social or economic realities. In Part Two, the revolution rises like a disturbance in the atmosphere, and Mr. Paul becomes bitter and sharp, but

not for the right reasons. Revolutions do not occur out of thin air, nor out of everlasting peace and contentment, nor are they to be interpreted mystically. Their origins and causes are historic progressions and facts. Perhaps, Mr. Paul was too casual, for example, in judging the Ibizans' hatred for the *Guardia* and their contempt for the church. Be that as it may, he is to be praised for the fortuitousness of his subject matter and for the violence of his journalism. If the reader wavers in his appreciation, it is only because Mr. Paul wavered between what he was fortunate enough to witness and what he failed, coherently, to conclude.

CHRISTOPHER LAZARE.

The War on Syphilis

SHADOW ON THE LAND, by *Thomas Parran*.
Reynal & Hitchcock. \$2.50.

TEN MILLION AMERICANS HAVE IT, by *S. William Becker, M.D.*. *J. P. Lippincott & Co.* \$1.35.

IN contrast to many diseases for which medical science has found neither the cause nor cure, syphilis belongs to that very select group for whose prevention, diagnosis, and cure we have practically sure-fire methods. The contributions made by Mechnikov, Wassermann, and Ehrlich to the care and prevention of syphilis are well known, yet every year a half million new cases appear in this country, and out of five recognized cases only one receives even a minimum amount of treatment.

The two books under discussion here excellently complement each other in a study of what the problem is, and what can be done about it. Dr. Becker, a practicing physician, has written a remarkably good layman's handbook of syphilis, in which he answers the thousand and one questions with which doctors are constantly bombarded: how the causative germ looks and acts; how the disease is acquired, both in intercourse and "innocently"; what the primary sore looks like; what the usual course of the disease is; what constitutes proper treatment; what the blood tests are and what they mean. It is a sound and interesting book, with graphs that are truly helpful. Dr. Becker has wisely avoided the method of the "horror school" of writers on syphilis; his descriptions are authoritative and restrained.

Dr. Parran, on the other hand, is a public health officer—his job is to survey the field, to present statistics, and discuss community programs. He has written the finest treatise on the public health aspects of syphilis now extant. He is a man who knows his business, looks at it with a fine social conscience, and a mind critical of the taboos and superstitions that have beset workers in his field. There can be no quarreling with his figures. The prevalence of this scourge, the absence of proper facilities for its recognition; and its woeful neglect even when recognized, are baldly set forth.

But Dr. Parran goes further. He recognizes this scourge as a disease brought on by poverty. To the extent that syphilis is the

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product of promiscuity, it is the product of poverty, of "permitting children to grow up ignorant and among depraved surroundings." "Promiscuity," Dr. Parran says, "occurs among the black race, as it does among the white, in groups and communities of the underprivileged. It is the smug citizen, satisfied with the status quo, who is to blame for the children, black and white, without moral standards, brought up in the slums, without decent education, wholesome play, or useful work, without ambition because without hope." He lays to poverty and ignorance a large proportion of untreated cases.

A doctor in syphilis-ridden Georgia writes:

Domestic servants here are probably over five hundred. They get from one to five dollars per week, the average being less than three dollars. Most of them have dependents or children in school. If a law is passed compelling them to be examined and treated, they could not be forced to comply unless it is free. . . . I am allowed only three hundred dollars for all office and laboratory expenses, and in spite of rigid economy, I cannot meet the expenses with that amount. I have no fund for treatment.

So far as these people are concerned, Ehrlich never lived.

Prostitution accounts for a large proportion of the cases. "Under present conditions, it presents the single greatest social handicap to complete eradication of America's No. 1 killer, syphilis." What is to be done about it? Dr. Parran suggests that the experience of the Soviet Union is very enlightening.

The almost complete liquidation of the commercial prostitute has helped the problem greatly. There are no professional prostitutes in Russia except those who prefer that sort of life, i.e., the physically and mentally pathological. First, because destruction of the profits from prostitution eliminates the organizers of the traffic. Further, because every woman has or can get a job in a land where women are held back from no trade or profession, and workers in all trades and professions are at a premium.

The question is: what can be done here and now? That much can be done is evidenced by the experience of the Scandinavian countries. Per 100,000 population, the annual incidence of newly recognized syphilis in the United States is 796; in Denmark, 20; in Sweden, 7. These brilliant results have been accomplished by compulsory notification of cases; by compulsory treatment, 85 percent of it in free clinics, government-administered, and staffed by well-paid physicians who are specialists in the field; and by thorough epidemiology—the tracing back of every case to its source. Here is an object for us in this country. Public health is purchasable, but it must be purchased by public funds. The American people have a right to be freed from the dread of syphilis. The precious power that we have over this disease must be made effective.

STEWART MOTT.

Brief Reviews

A TROJAN ENDING, by Laura Riding. Random House. \$2.50.

Taking issue with Lord Raglan who in a recent book attempted to show that the heroes of mythology are universally fictitious, Miss Riding has deliber-

ately plunged into the Homeric legend of the Trojan War, "to disentangle the knowledge-elements from the story-elements." But of the resultant factual beginnings which are given further body through a lavish use of archeological clues, Miss Riding has fashioned a novel—her first, though she is the author of several volumes of poetry and prose. Her book is more than a re-creation of the story describing the collapse of the Trojan world, for the author has had recourse to non-Homeric legends as well as to the bounteous source offered by the great poet of ancient Greece; in fact, the story centers around the non-Homeric figure of Cressida, who becomes to the author the symbol of the courage of the Trojan era: "the more than fatalistic courage to be alive." The quotidian aspects of the story of Troy have confessedly intrigued the author—unfortunately, to such an extent that the original epic tale of the conflicts between Greeks, Trojans, and the gods which they created too often shrinks to the anomalous level of cozy chats around the hearth.

A. P.

CONSIDER THE LAUNDRY WORKERS, by Jane Filley and Theresa Mitchell. League of Women Shoppers, 10c; in bundle orders, 5c.

This valuable pamphlet is the result of a year's survey of laundry conditions made by twenty investigators for the League of Women Shoppers. It includes case histories, statistics on wages and hours, verbatim statements of employers and employees, and some lively on-the-spot reporting. The evidence conclusively proves that conditions in the laundry industry as a whole are shockingly bad, and that these conditions will be bettered only as workers and consumers fight together for their improvement. The consumer suffers not only as the silent partner to a situation which permits intolerably long hours and starvation wages, but as the victim of unsanitary conditions which spread infection.

The League of Women Shoppers points out that the operators have been glib in their promises and proposals but deficient in action. Laundry workers' unions, however, are growing in strength and militancy and are making headway. With the cooperation of consumers, stimulated by such information as is contained in the present pamphlet, they are on the way to cleaning up the laundry industry.

R. H. R.



Recently Recommended Books

Moscow, 1937: My Visit Described for My Friends, by Lion Feuchtwanger. Viking. Book Union choice. \$2.

Whirlpool, by David Lamson. Scribner's. \$2.50.

Runaround, by Benjamin Appel. Dutton. \$2.50.

Pulpwood Editor, by Harold Hersey. Stokes. \$3.

The Profits of War, by Richard Lewinsohn, Dutton. \$3.

After the Genteel Tradition, edited by Malcolm Cowley. Norton. \$2.75.

Illusion and Reality: A Study of the Sources of Poetry, by Christopher Caudwell. Macmillan. London.

Home Is Where You Hang Your Childhood, by Leane Zugsmith. Random. \$1.50.

Integrity: The Life of George W. Norris, by Richard L. Neuberger and Stephen B. Kahn. Vanguard. \$3.

A Maverick American, by Maury Maverick. Covici-Friede. \$3.

Attitudes Toward History, by Kenneth Burke, in two vols. New Republic. \$1 per vol.

Three Comrades, by Erich Maria Remarque. Little, Brown. \$2.75.

Twilight of a World, by Franz Werfel. Viking. \$3.

Conversations at Midnight, by Edna St. Vincent Millay. Harper. \$2.

War on Saturday Week, by Ruth Adam. J. B. Lippincott. \$2.50.

The Making of a Hero, by Nicholas Ostrovski. Dutton. \$2.50.

Children of Strangers, by Lyle Saxon. Houghton Mifflin. \$2.50.

SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

The good and the bad in new films—A music festival in Mexico—Trends in the dance

OPENINGS this week are heterogeneous in character, ranging from a lavish society film to an adventure tale of slave traffic. In *Vogues of 1938* (United Artists): Walter Wanger, Hollywood's dilettante, brings a ritzy fashion show (in "glorious" technicolor) to the masses. It will undoubtedly appeal to those who religiously read *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar*. As a film it is formless, consisting of a series of fashion tableaux very much like the fashion sequences of the newsreels (only in color, of course) and some specialty numbers, one of them an obvious trailer for Mr. Wanger's forthcoming *Fifty-Second Street*. The Spewacks (of *Boy Meets Girl* fame) are given screen credit for the original story. What they had in mind, it is only possible to guess. As a hint, there is the well-known society matron, played by Marjorie Gateson, who is prominent at every Beaux Arts ball with her fantastic "Spirit of the Moon" or "Spirit of the Rain" costumes. This same lady appeared on the stage of Madison Square Garden for the benefit of the Spanish fascists with a costume called "The Spirit of Spain."

Fragment of an Empire (Amkino): The Cameo Theater, in New York, this week brings back Friedrich Ermler's brilliant silent film. If you have never seen this amazing film, there is a treat in store for you. The program also includes a fine British documentary film called *Song of Ceylon*. Directed by Basil Wright, one of England's finest documentary directors, it presents an interesting experiment in dramatizing a colonial country. It suffers from an over-mystical approach to the subject as well as from a tendency (found in many documentaries) to make the photography self-consciously beautiful. The most interesting portion is the one in which British imperialism (as represented by commerce and big business) is satirized in an extremely clever use of the sound track.

Confession (Warner Bros.) One of the worst films of the season, combining all of the bad features of *Stella Dallas*, *Valiant Is the Word for Carrie*, et al. For students of the film, it will be of some interest to note that it is the first American film done by the well-known German director of the silent screen days, Joe May, under whom Fritz Lang worked. May's last big film was one he made for UFA based on Leonhardt Frank's famous novel *Karl and Anna*. It was distributed here by Paramount as *Homecoming*.

Souls at Sea (Paramount): Like *Slave Ship*, this concerns itself with the slave traffic. Unlike the former film, it at least admits that the important people in the slave trade were not the actual slave runners, but their bosses, the rich men of both England and America. But don't get the idea that the film is social. Its primary concern is adventure, which unfortunately is confined to long-drawn-out scenes

aboard ship against projected backgrounds. Sea photography which would have made this an interesting nautical film is very scarce. Director Hathaway achieves excitement in the burning and sinking of the packet, *William Brown*, and the subsequent battle for the life boat. It would have been even more exciting had the film stuck to the facts of the actual case with more fidelity. New Yorkers should avoid the theater where it is currently running because the management has seen fit to include a Max Fleischer cartoon on the program. The cartoon artists, you will recall, are out on strike for higher wages, shorter hours, and union recognition.

PETER ELLIS.

PAN-AMERICAN MUSIC

THE latter part of July, the Pan-American Chamber of Music Festival was held in Mexico City. Sponsored by Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, and held at the over-elegant Palacio de Bellas Artes, these concerts brought clearly to light a few very important points relating to the modern composer, his chances of a hearing, and the reaction of his audience.

As the first series of its kind, it does mark a milestone in the belated encouragement of the American composer attempting to free himself from academic European influences. Much of the thematic material was taken directly from folk-music sources; in other instances, as in the case of the Peruvian music, folk songs and dances were directly transcribed for piano choruses. Aaron Copland's *Music for the Theatre*, so indigenously New York, was as usual, enthusiastically received. A new composition of Sylvestre Revueltas, *Homenaje a Garcia Lorca* was heard with much interest. In the series of six concerts it will be interesting to note that seventeen contemporary composers were heard. These came from the United States down through Mexico, Cuba, Brazil, Peru, Chile, and Argentina. Six composers represented the United States: Copland, Carpenter, Hill, Harris, Piston, and Sessions. Outstanding among the Mexican composers were Chavez, Revueltas, and Huizar. Villa-Lobos and Casabona represented Brazil. Among the compositions were trios, quartets, quintets, and sextets,

works for chamber orchestra, piano, and choral groups—all interesting enough to warrant hearing. Of course, such concerts must be given more often and in more than just one place in order to bring about a closer understanding as to what the modern Pan-American composer is doing. If this excellent series is the beginning of future festivals, they should be held more than once a year, so that other composers who deserve to be heard have such a chance and so those new compositions that have real merit can become part of the modern repertory.

Why were not these concerts better attended? The masses should have come. But very little encouragement seems to have been given them. Were prices too high for the average Mexican concert-goer—or were the concerts publicized only among the upper circles, and in the swanky American-tourist hotels? I am inclined to think that both reasons had much to do with the comparatively small attendance at these better-deserving concerts. The Mexican worker is quite alive to the scene around him. He is as anxious to witness the development of new music as he is ready to take part in labor demonstrations; as much aware of contemporary art and music as of his economic necessity to rid himself of the exploiters and imperialists. But at these concerts he was definitely neglected; very little publicity reached him in regard to this festival; nothing was done to bring prices within his means. So that the audiences were composed largely of American tourists who came to see the million-dollar Tiffany curtain—or had nothing else to do for the evening. This was too bad. So much good musical material is being written right in the Americas, much of it definitely characteristic of its origin. Yet when so excellent an opportunity was presented, the very important element of attracting the listener was badly neglected. Perhaps those concerts which will surely follow this series will be brought to the attention of the workers too.

Real credit should be given to Carlos Chavez for the excellent manner in which he arranged and conducted these concerts. The first part of each was devoted to a great classic work, and was invariably magnificently performed by the Coolidge Quartet.

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memory. This year, in addition to the customary workshop presentation for which Hanya Holm was responsible, the three Fellows (an innovation), Anna Sokolow, José Limon, and Esther Junger were at work with group compositions for which the student body provided the corps.

The students are principally teachers of dance and gymnastics in the mid-western states, people who generally direct the taste and trend of large groups of students, if not of communities; and considering that the school is in actuality a symposium of the thought and trend of the more important personalities in the field, the Bennington school takes on a special significance. It becomes more or less a pulse of whither the dance.

Last year it was Charles Weidman's *Quest*, the artist's quest for the discovery of himself, and Doris Humphrey's *With My Red Fires*, the story of love in a matriarchy, that climaxed the season here. Both compositions dealt with abstract concepts in what was a considerably abstract world. Weidman's work cut into the modern scene with decided anti-war, anti-fascist sentiment, but Doris Humphrey was completely preoccupied with an archaic theme; and in both compositions the conflict of the *ideal* in an *idea world* was the dominating note [reviewed in NEW MASSES, Feb. 3].

Not so this summer. Hanya Holm's major work, *Trend*, is concerned with "a recognition of the common purposes of men and the conscious unity of life"; José Limon spoke his piece on Spain, climaxing his suite with a moving anti-fascist "defiance and dedication"; and Anna Sokolow was brilliant in her poignantly satirical *Façade—Esposizione Italiana*.

This is not to say that the abstract concept has left Bennington; on the contrary. Hanya Holm gave a good section of the first half of her program to *City Nocturne, Rhythm II, Festive Rhythm*, abstract patterns, impressionistic and rather short on the substantial side; José Limon is still considerably involved with movement for the sake of gesture; and Esther Junger uncomfortably concerns herself primarily with themes of scarcely immediate interest. It's difficult to get excited about the *Processional, Betrothal, and Recessional* which is a twentieth-century conception of primitive festive rites—and some considerably good movement and group choreography (of which this is Esther Junger's first) is wasted for lack of direction.

But, still on the matter of the abstract concept, it is in the school proper, the work as exemplified by the student demonstration, that shows a curious and disquieting predilection for the abstract pattern which was the manner of dancing several years back. This was the dance of defeat and escape, dance to which, if there is a reactionary trend in the art, the reactionary dancer will move.

Now why there should be such a discrepancy between the work of the school and the work of the masters is rather difficult to understand—unless the teachers be called into consideration: Martha Hill, Mary Jo Shelly, John Martin, dance critic of the *New York Times*

and leading critical spirit of Bennington. But these are progressive people; it isn't likely that they would encourage any retrogressive movement in the dance field. At the same time, I should like to venture the opinion that it isn't likely that groups under the direction of a Martha Graham, an Anna Sokolow, a Tamiris would work out compositions titled *Ground Bass* or *Three Dances of Judith*. Incidentally, it is interesting to note that in its four years of existence, Tamiris has never put in an appearance at Bennington—whether by design or accident, her presence is decidedly missed at the school. The work here definitely leans to the cerebral both in subject matter and execution; the emotional qualities are lacking.

The Bennington school serves a valuable function. It provides a common experimental ground for a good section of the dance world; it offers an invaluable intensive course with several of its leading dancers; it provides a forum for dancers and students throughout the country and, finally, it serves as a means of sharpening the focus of the country on the art and makes for the beaking down of its local provincialisms. This is praise enough for a comparatively isolated development and Miss Hill and Miss Shelly have much with which to be satisfied. However, the directors of the Bennington project (who plan to run a quadruple workshop next summer: Graham, Humphrey, Weidman, and Holm) had been better advised to realize the importance of the school as an instrument of propaganda in idea as well as technique of dancing. It would seem that a lack of relationship between the student work and the end concerts was an indication of an unhealthy condition. The workshops, while themselves elegant in conception, are more in the manner of display—and right now, the students, playing a part of negligible importance in the productions, tend to prove a none-too-subtle form of advertisement for the place. It would be a much happier turn of events to see material evidence of a more basic approach on the part of the school to the problems of the artist in the demonstration of the student work. Is it not to the school's credit that its students will contribute some \$200 for the cause of loyalist Spain and at the same time be involved with, again, such superficial subject-matter as primitive *First Heritages*?

As to the concerts, Hanya Holm's *Trend*, for which Wallingford Riegger wrote an excellent musical score and which employed Edgar Varese's *Ionization* beautifully, is built on an almost mathematical thesis-antithesis-synthesis base. The monotonous drudgery of *Our Daily Bread* is opposed to a collapsing *Satiety*; the *Effete* (which produced a dancer of unusual lyric quality, Louise Kloepper), the *Lucre Lunacy*, the *From Heaven Limited* and the *Lest We Remember*, satiric figures who ultimately end by supporting and parading *He, the Great* (jingoist)—an admirable portrait of the behavior of the liberal before the *Cataclysm*—(undoubtedly intending the World War). *The Gates Are Desolate* is an impressionistic *Waste Land* from which the

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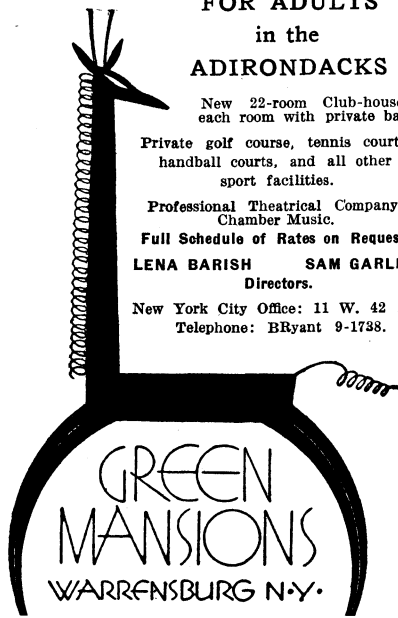
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Of the Fellows, it was to be expected that Anna Sokolow should produce the most important work. She is still a dancer young in years, but her dances are among the most significant, mature, sensitive, and profound. Her anti-fascist satire, *War Is Beautiful*, ranks with *Chronicle* (Graham) and *How Long Brethren?* (Tamiris) as easily one of the more important compositions of last season. One doesn't any longer expect student work from Sokolow—and one doesn't get it.

Façade—Esposizione Italiana for which Alex North wrote a beautifully apt score, is a satiric comment on the irony of Italian fascist culture: "Belle Arti," "Giovanezza," "Prix Femina," "Phantasmagoria," with Anna Sokolow, the Citizen (her first appearance in her own group composition), an interested, nervous, and finally—as the whole cultural facade disintegrates like a worm-eaten pillar—accusing and protesting figure.

Façade has less anger than *War Is Beautiful*, but a more poignant human quality for all its bitterness: "Belle Arti" is crumby imitation Greek and superficial Florentine; "Giovanezza" is a hollow cartoon of athletic enthusiasm; "Prix Femina" is for the meek and bloodless "lady of kitchen"; "Phantasmagoria" has the Citizen twisted and turned till literally he walks on his head and climbs walls—backwards. The single gesture of accusation that emerges from the mess—the Citizen's hand saying, "There you have it!"—writes a dozen pages and a score of speeches.

José Limon surprised with his group work, especially with his *Sarabande for the Living*—"defiance and dedication" inspired by the heroic stand of loyalist Spain against the bloody fascist combine. The composition has an intensity of emotion and direction, a persistent drive which builds to a steel conclusion. Not simply "No pasaran!" but "This is our victory!"

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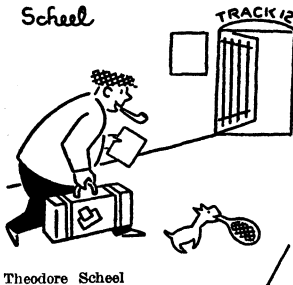
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Theodore Scheel

Limon comes out of the Humphrey-Weidman school, and definitely shows the Weidman influence in his choice of concrete subject matter. His "Sarabande for the Dead," first of the group movements in the *Danza de la Muerte (Dance of Death)*—which might have shown better with a maturer group—was the tragic ritual which occupies Spain like a plague; his "Hoch, Viva, Ave," are caricatures lampooning the military, the land-owner, and the church, "personified causes of the destruction in Spain." Even if his titles are a throw-back to the vague and equivocal, his explanatory notes and his dance compositions are not. There is still much of which Limon might rid himself, too often he loses himself in love of movement as opposed to the sense of his work, but his superb and exciting technique seems at last to be headed in a profitable direction.

Esther Junger has appeared on Broadway both on the concert stage and in the theater. She has a good sense of design, and though her movement is still much too derivative, her work is pleasantly inventive. Unfortunately, she clings to such thematic substance as *Ravage* (impressionistic after Wigman), *Festive Rites* (theatrical after the Hollywood manner); and her *Dance to the People*, while good in its jazz movements, is exactly that and no more—there's no bread and butter in it for a substance-hungry audience.

What Esther Junger lacks is a point of view—she sits on a fence. Technically, Esther Junger moves with a sensitive ease; it's unfortunate that she chooses to use her equipment and ability for principally hollow cases.

One new and important composition that this writer missed, unhappily, was Martha Graham's *Immediate Tragedy*, a dance of dedication for which Henry Cowell did the music. The *Immediate Tragedy* is Spain, the dedication is to La Pasionaria. According to the most reliable critical reports, this is a new Graham in a tremendously impassioned and tremendously moving statement.

New York has much to expect of its dancers this coming season, and to the extent that Bennington afforded the means by which such dances might more comfortably be created, it has served a purpose of no mean proportions.

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ity speaks from Middle Temple Hall, London, about the original performance of *Twelfth Night* by Shakespeare's own company in 1601, Sun., Aug. 29, 1:30 p.m., C.B.S.

H. V. Kaltenborn. Speaks from Paris on "What I Saw in Loyalist Spain," Sun., Aug. 29, 2 p.m., C.B.S.

Columbia Workshop. Another striking radio drama, Sun., Aug. 29, 7 p.m., C.B.S.

William Lemke. Talk on the "Necessity of Monetary Reform," Mon., Aug. 30, 7:45 p.m., N.B.C. red.

"Back to Methuselah." The first of five George Bernard Shaw plays to be presented over this network, Mon., Aug. 30, 9:30 p.m., N.B.C. blue.

"Unifying Influences in a Democracy." The Institute of Human Relations broadcasts from its conference at Williamstown, Mass., a symposium with Gen. Hugh Johnson, Senator Robert M. LaFollette and others as guest speakers, Mon., Aug. 30, 4 p.m., C.B.S.

"Twelfth Night." The last of Columbia's Shakespearean productions with Tallulah Bankhead, Orson Welles and others, Mon., Aug. 30, 9 p.m., C.B.S.

Journey Through Space. The Hayden Planetarium continues its series, Tues., Aug. 31, 5:45 p.m., C.B.S.

Cordell Hull. The Secretary of State discusses the workings of his department during another U.S. Cabinet program, Wed., Sept. 1, 10:30 p.m., C.B.S.

William E. Dodd. The U. S. ambassador to Germany speaks on "Public Opinion in a Democracy," Fri., Sept. 3, 6:45 p.m., C.B.S.

Song Festival. The Workman's German Singing Alliance broadcasts from Cleveland, Sun., Sept. 5, 8 p.m., C.B.S.

Ralph Bates. From Spain every Tuesday and Friday at 7:30 p.m., via short wave on station EAR, 31.65 meters. On all other nights, a fifteen-minute news broadcast at 7:30 p.m.

Recent Recommendations

MOVIES

The Spanish Earth. Joris Ivens's much heralded film of the civil war in Spain is a deeply stirring document that you cannot afford to miss.

Dead End. The realistic drama of kids from the East Side slums comes to the screen with its impact unimpaired.

The Life of Emile Zola. Easily the best film of the year, powerful and profound.

You Can't Have Everything. A better than average backstage musical with the hilarious Ritz brothers.

Ourselves Alone. Realistic dramatization of the Irish rebellion of 1921. Should be on your "must" list.

High, Wide and Handsome. A fairly entertaining story about the Pennsylvania oil boom with music by Jerome Kern.

They Won't Forget. A powerful and extremely moving film of a lynching in the deep South.

PHONOGRAPH RECORDINGS

Beethoven. The A-major quartet, Opus 18, No. 5, is recorded by the Lener foursome on Columbia 301, and the trio in C-minor, Opus 1, No. 3, is played by Milton Kaye, Max Hollander, and Sterling Hunkins on a Musicraft release.

Handel. The peerless William Primrose and an orchestra conducted by Walter Goehr make a gem of the concerto in B-minor for viola and small orchestra (Columbia).

Haydn. The light choral works, "Die Harmonie in der Ehe," and "Die Beredsamkeit," well sung by Lehman Engel's W.P.A. Madrigal Singers on a Gamut disk.

Mozart. The Budapest foursome plays the F-major quartet (Victor Album M-348).

Scarlatti. Ernst Victor Wolff at the harpsichord gives us the F-minor sonata (Gamut).

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