

"GENERAL KRIVITSKY," you are Shmelka Ginsberg! (page 3)

NM **New Masses**

MAY 9, 1939 **15 CENTS A COPY**

DON'T MENTION SCRIPPS TO HOWARD

Robert Terrall

HEINZ LIEPMANN

The Spirit of Masaryk

BRIDGES' FRAMEUP COLLAPSES

An Exclusive NM Expose

BARBARIANS ON CAPITOL HILL

A WPA Series by Joseph Starobin

THE "TIMES": ACCURATE, UNBIASED, ANTI-LABOR

James Dugan

BETWEEN OURSELVES

WE WISH all NM's readers could have been in New York May Day and seen the float your publication built for the parade. It was one of the most striking in the procession. Tens of thousands applauded when it came along: the wide popularity of the paper was attested by the reaction of the crowds. It was heartening and gave all of us a shot in the arm—not that we need a shot, but it doesn't hurt, really, to hear your people shout, "Aye" when your proposition comes along.

We hope our friends will get the current magazine around to all the WPA folk on the cultural projects. The wolf pack is closing in on the white-collar workers. They see it as the weakest link in the relief setup. Knock that off, and the rest will come easier. Hence, we sent NM's man, Joseph Starobin, to Washington to interview some of the nabobs who don't want to see the jobless aided, who come of that tribe represented by the Nazi writer who cried: "When I hear the word culture, I reach for my revolver." NM deems the white-collar projects as one of the most significant developments in modern times—the first steps in creating a



Heinz Liepmann

The former correspondent of the "Frankfurter Zeitung," author of three novels and books on international affairs, has also been a playwright, stage manager, gardener, drummer in a jazz band, stock jobber, and sailor. Some years ago, after a long period of intensive, active opposition to Hitler, he was caught by the Nazi police and sent to the concentration camp of Wittmoor. Liepmann is now in this country. The Third Reich has done him the honor of publicly burning his books.

people's culture. Starobin's articles will help prove that point—and provide arguments against the Tories, who, though they haven't reached for their revolvers, as yet, have reached for the ax.

Many friends of NM attended last week a farewell party for George Willner and Tiba Garlin, who are headed for the West Coast to represent NM there. Impromptu musical entertainment came from several famous guests. Marc Blitzstein furnished a thrilling preview of several numbers from his forthcoming opera, *No for an Answer*; James P. Johnson, dean of jazz pianists, played a sequence from the musical drama he is doing in collaboration with Langston Hughes; Earl Robinson introduced a new ballad, *Go West, Young Man, Go West*; and Danny Kaye, late of Keynote Varieties, sang numbers from the show, accompanied by Sylvia Fine. Miss Fine's hilarious ILGWU number was especially popular. In tribute to the hard work Tiba and George have done for the magazine, guests contributed several hundred dollars to NM's drive.

No matter how you mispronounced her first name over the phone when you called for reservations for one of the NM affairs, Tiba Garlin has been one of our three or four most valuable staff members. It was she who organized an affair through innumerable phone calls, using her peculiar style of cajolery, charm, and bulldozing. It was she, as much as John Hammond, the director, who made NM's *From Spirituals to Swing* the historic affair it was. Now she is leaving to go to the West Coast. The staff will miss her acutely, and when next NM begins its season of forums and cultural events, the task of organization will be that much greater.

Another of our readers, Jack Chechanover of Brooklyn, N. Y., announces that he has a nearly complete set of NM for 1937 and 1938, which he would like to donate to some individual or organization. Mr. Chechanover can be reached through this office.

The League of American Writers is holding a benefit performance of the film *Juarez*, to raise money for the coming Writers Congress; the benefit will be on Monday evening, May 8.

N. T. of Brattleboro, Vt., writes to congratulate us on Wellington Roe's article on the *Saturday Evening Post*, which was published in our April 4 issue:

"I have for years been a reader of the *Satevepost*—mostly just as a bad habit—and have only recently stopped because of the reactionary at-

titude of the magazine, an attitude that forces itself into everything printed, whether about young love in China or a baseball game.

"Also in the same issue, 'Here Comes the Doctor,' by Cora Mac-Albert, which touched me personally and deeply. For I had once started the study of medicine, and dropped out because of the great cost of a medical education."

Who's Who

ROBERT TERRALL's article in this issue is the second in his series on large newspapers. . . . Joseph Starobin is the editor of the *Young Communist Review*, monthly magazine of the Young Communist League. In this issue he begins a series of articles on the federal cultural projects. . . . Tom Cullen is editor of the West Coast *CIO Industrial Unionist*. . . . Paul G. McManus is Washington correspondent of NM. . . . John Stuart collaborated with Bruce Minton in writing *Men Who Lead Labor*. . . . Jesse Trent is a student of Latin American affairs. . . . Langston Hughes is the distinguished Negro poet, fiction writer,

and playwright. . . . Sidney Alexander is a young poet whose verse has been published in NM.

Flashbacks

AMERICAN revolution advanced on two fronts May 5, 1775. While Colonial statesmen convened in Philadelphia in the Second Continental Congress, Ethan Allen and his Green Mountain Boys surprised Fort Ticonderoga, expelling the British Garrison "in the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress." . . . The first known strike in the American building trades took place in Philadelphia, May 5, 1791. Journey-men carpenters were aggrieved that their "wages (which are and have been for a long time too low) are meanly attempted to be reduced to a still lower ebb by every means within the power of avarice to invent." Also seeking a shorter work day, the carpenters bound themselves by the sacred ties of honor to abide by a resolution to the effect that "in future, a day's work, amongst us, shall be deemed to commence at six o'clock in the morning, and terminate, at six in the evening of each day."

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Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification direct to us rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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The Spirit of Masaryk

Dr. Heinz Liepmann, international journalist and novelist, recreates a prophetic interview with President Masaryk of Czechoslovakia.

ALMOST twelve years ago, on July 30, 1927, I was granted an audience with President Thomas Garrigue Masaryk of Czechoslovakia. Masaryk was then seventy-seven years old. I still possess a clipping of the *Frankfurter Zeitung* of Aug. 27, 1927, in which this interview was printed. I think that today this issue may be of historical value because, during our conversation, President Masaryk, one of the wisest statesmen Europe ever had, made a prophecy, which at that time appeared to be almost ridiculously impossible. He said: ". . . maybe my country has to go through one more ordeal—maybe it has to be destroyed once more, to be built up as the real, the definite, the eternal democracy . . ."

I shall never forget this meeting. In 1927 the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, then the leading liberal newspaper of Germany, had commissioned me to travel through the European countries to draw literary portraits of the leading statesmen or kings who carried the fate of Europe in their hands, or rather, in their minds.

RULERS UNKNOWN TO PEOPLE

Though all European countries, with the exception of Italy and Poland, were then democracies, the private, human, intimate personalities of the leading statesmen were absolutely unknown to the nations whom they represented. The purpose of my visits was to get an impression of the human qualities behind the official masks, to draw intimate portraits of living human beings rather than of the representatives of official duties. Thus, after interviewing Aristide Briand, who was then foreign minister of France and had shortly before received the Nobel Peace Prize, I went to London, where I visited King George V and his Socialist prime minister, Ramsay MacDonald. Then followed a visit to Norway, to King Haakon VII; both people and king were in a jubilant mood because Prohibition had just been abolished. After I had seen Marshal Pilsudski, who had the year before appointed himself dictator of Poland, I went to Praha to talk to President Masaryk.

An American can hardly imagine how difficult it has always been for a European to approach his own political representatives. Even in the countries with an old democratic tradition, the statesmen had no personal contact whatsoever with their people, and surrounded themselves with red tape. Often I had to wait for weeks until I succeeded in

getting my interview. As a rule, four stages of red tape had to be gone through. As soon as I arrived in a capital, the accredited correspondent of our paper in that town had to communicate with the German ambassador; our ambassador approached the foreign minister of the country, and the foreign minister's office arranged the details of my visit either with the court marshal's office—if I had asked to see a member of the royal family—or with the prime minister's secretary.

But when I went to Czechoslovakia and asked our correspondent in Praha to arrange an audience with Masaryk, he led me to the window which opened on an old and beautiful square, and said laughingly: "Look around, my friend. If you want to see the president, you just telephone to Castle Lany, where Masaryk usually spends his weekends; he likes to receive visitors there. Ask for the secretary, tell him who you are and what you want, and

then—you will get a date." Dumbfounded, I stared at him, convinced that he was joking.

IN THE TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

"Where can I find the telephone number?" I asked ironically. "Surely, it will be in the directory?"

"Exactly," the correspondent laughed, and opened the telephone book. And indeed, the president's phone was listed just like any other citizen's of Praha.

The same day, a Tuesday, I rang up Castle Lany, and after introducing myself to one of the secretaries and explaining the purpose of my visit, I was at once informed that the president would be glad to receive me on Friday at four; a car would be at my hotel at two-thirty. And on Friday, punctually, one of Masaryk's secretaries—a young man whose name, if I remember correctly, was Stefanik—called for me.

"GENERAL KRIVITSKY"

"General Krivitsky," you are Shmelka Ginsberg. You were never a general. You cannot even use a rifle. You never set eyes on Stalin or Voroshilov.

You are an Austrian, hailing from old Franz-Josef's Podvoletchiska. Your middle initial G. stands for Ginsberg.

You first turned up in Paris where you are a notorious *bon vivant*, denizen of the night clubs, and always in the dough. You invented your title and name for Paris journalism when you promised to "tell all."

Those who know you well will snicker at the idea that your mind can absorb an iota of politics—the nights in Paris are said to be too long. You are just the kind of adventurer that the infamous Yagoda would pick for his anti-Soviet dirty work.

You cannot even write. Isaac Don Levine, a lily in his own right, ghosted the articles. They made a fine product—Krivitsky, out of Levine, for the *Saturday Evening Post*. It is an open secret that Suzanne La Follette, Trotskyist stalwart, is lending Levine a hand in preparing the material for a book. Curtis Brown, Inc., are the agents of Isaac Don Levine, Suzanne La Follette and/or "General Krivitsky." If anybody still wants the book he can get it for \$500.

NEW MASSES has the facts.

That's about all.

Having arrived at Lany, I was at once led into the library, famous as the largest and most select private library in Europe; each book had been personally chosen by Masaryk.

I waited a few minutes, then the president's daughter and secretary came in, a tall intellectual looking woman of fifty, her father's most trusted collaborator. I noticed that I would have to pass a kind of examination before she would present me to her father; in the other countries—I thought—I had to produce documents and to boast of connections; in Castle Lany, however, I was examined about literature and philosophy.

Masaryk's daughter proved to be a highly educated, but not at all a dry and unimaginative woman; her conversation was logical and at the same time often charming and even amusing. I forgot that I was undergoing a test. As we were talking about Jefferson, I suddenly jumped up; a deep, soft voice from behind my chair had joined the discussion. I turned around: I faced Masaryk, the man, the statesman, and the philosopher I had admired for so long a time.

It has often been said that Masaryk looked like a Czech peasant, but I do not agree. Of course, he was tall and thin, his figure hard and lean and not that of a man of seventy-seven; his cheek bones were typically Slavic, and the beard growing wildly all around his mouth wasn't very fashionably trimmed. But the forehead, the eyes, and the hands were unmistakably those of a man who had spent a lifetime working with his mind.

Shortly after the World War broke out, the Czechs revolted against the Hapsburgs; their soldiers went over to the enemy, formed a Czech legion, and fought against their oppressors. The Allies promised the Czechs, as a reward, their independence, and in 1917 the professor of philosophy, Masaryk, with his two most faithful pupils—one of them the last president of Czechoslovakia, Benes—began to work on a constitution for the new Czechoslovakia.

"I looked around," Masaryk told me, "and studied all the existing democratic constitutions in the world, in order to find the best one. I knew that only a democracy with a firm belief in humanity and human dignity, and a definite program for national education, could be the right form of government for our country. I found the American to be the best of all modern constitutions. Of course, it was then already 130 years old; statesmen and philosophers had in the meantime gained many new experiences. We built up our Czechoslovakian Constitution on the American model, but we tried to add to it whatever experience statesmen and philosophers had won during this time."

"Do you mean to say," I asked, "that the American Constitution has lost its influence and value? Do you think it should be changed, too, to bring it in line with the new experiences of modern governments?" Masaryk smiled. "Of course not," he answered. "As long as in America the spirit of the Constitution rules, instead of its words, the United States will

prosper. But there is one danger which we tried to avoid. The effectiveness of the American Constitution depends to a great extent on the interpretation the ruling President gives it. And the candidates for the American presidency are not selected by the nation but by political machines. Thus an elected President is often obligated to his party and has to appoint his advisers from his political party. After four or eight years, when another President is elected, he changes his advisers—and the interpretation of the Constitution. Such a system would not be feasible for Czechoslovakia—a young nation without a national tradition. The Czechoslovakian state is too young for such risks. America—" Masaryk became almost tender—"it was in the American city of Pittsburgh that we assembled to write the constitution of our new old country, a constitution of a militant democracy. And in November 1918 we went to Praha and declared our independence." Masaryk grew silent; he smiled thoughtfully.

MIXED RACES A BENEFIT

After a while he went on. "I don't know whether in all the history of mankind, there has ever been a greater joy for a nation than God allowed us to witness in those days in Czechoslovakia. The oppressors were thrown out of the country, but not a single Austrian or German was hurt; everybody could leave the country with all his possessions.

"And now our country has been in existence for nine years. It is a short time—but look around! Though our nation consists of many peoples, of Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, Germans, Hungarians—we have peace and mutual understanding." (Seven or eight years later Hitler's unscrupulous agents began to travel among the Sudeten Germans, who regarded themselves until then as one of the best treated minorities of Europe. It took Hitler's agitators more than two years of continuous poisonous propaganda to arouse the peaceful German peasants against their Czechoslovakian neighbors and the government in Praha.) "Races and nationalities which do not mix," Masaryk went on, "become decadent and inferior. It is a great advantage for us to live together with several other nationalities. You see the result in the United States—all races of the world have mixed; the result is 'the American,' and don't you think he is a healthy and superior and proud specimen?"

I looked at this old man. I remembered the words he had written as a sort of Declaration of Independence for his country: "The profoundest argument for democracy is faith in man, in his worth, in his intellect and immortal soul; this is true metaphysical equality. From the ethical angle, democracy is justified as a political realization of love and respect for one's fellowmen. . . ."

We spoke about the difficulties which the other European countries faced at that time. "Do you believe," I asked, "that your country has escaped these troubles because you have a more democratic government and constitution?"

Masaryk smiled mildly and answered: "Human beings are created alike. But they have to be led. From their ancestors, the animals—if I may say so—human beings have inherited egocentric instincts. But a man who follows these instincts and takes whatever he sees and wants has to expect that his neighbor will do the same. The result is eternal fighting. In order to make people live in peace together, they have to give up those of their desires which disturb the peace of their fellow beings; they have to respect their neighbors in order to be respected by them. In short, they have to obey the so-called moral laws. But how to make human beings do this? Rulers have tried for many centuries to do it by force, but without success. Plato suggested *not* forcing people, but convincing them, and appealing to their reason. I think Plato is right. I believe that is the only way for human beings to live peacefully together and to respect each other; in short, the only way to a democratic community is knowledge, education, wisdom. And I am very proud to tell you that our country has more schools, proportionately, than any other country in the world. That is the reason, I firmly believe, that, whereas our neighbors have so many internal troubles, our country lives in peace."

Suddenly Masaryk became silent; he stared for a long time at the sun, which was burning deeper and deeper into the lonely mountains. I couldn't speak. The old man's face had changed. It bore an expression of unbearable exhaustion and pain; his lips were pressed together. At last he opened his mouth and said: "Each time in our long history that our country has been destroyed, we have built up a new and better one; each time our constitution became more liberal than the last had been. Maybe my country has to go through *one more* ordeal—maybe it has to be destroyed once more, to be built up as the real, the definite, the eternal democracy. . . ."

Ten years later Masaryk died. The entire country mourned him. He was not a general who had sent generations of young men into death and destruction; he had no propaganda minister, paid to build up a legend around him, but at the news of his death thousands of peasants, who did not have enough money to buy a railway ticket, walked for three and even for four and five days and nights to Praha, to say goodbye to the great old man. Though the government had not ordered or even suggested anything of the kind, all the towns and villages of Czechoslovakia—whether they were inhabited by Czechs, Germans, or Slovaks—were decorated with black or half-mast flags. All over the country people wept in the streets, and men walked around with black bands on their sleeves.

And this country has now been invaded and "conquered" by fascist Germany. For Americans who believe in the ultimate victory of democracy, there is one comfort: the first part of Masaryk's prophecy has been fulfilled. So will the second: the resurrection of Czechoslovakia, as the real, the definite, the eternal democracy.

HEINZ LIBPMANN.

THE COMING YEAR

FOUR weeks ago **NEW MASSES** was in danger of immediate suspension. The drive for \$30,000 seemed to be stalemated; \$13,000 had been raised, all of which had been used to liquidate our most urgent debts.

We did not have funds for the current issue. Many creditors had not been paid, and they threatened foreclosure.

As always, we took the problem to our readers. We explained to you the economy of the magazine, what it had and what it needed. We said that we could not go on without your immediate help.

Your response was superb. For two weeks money flowed into the office. The drive total went up to \$20,000. We cleared the month of April in good shape. We were able to plan two weeks ahead, a unique experience for a magazine of this sort.

But the problem we must face is far larger. At the outset of the drive, and every subsequent week, we explained that we were trying to guarantee our next year's existence. We wanted to publish the very next issue because that was the problem of the moment, to be settled in the here and now, but we also wanted to assure publication of fifty-one more **NEW MASSES**.

That is what we want you to face with us now. Unlike Neville Chamberlain, we—the readers and editors of this magazine, American progressives—are not content merely with sliding by the immediate crisis. Our whole philosophy is based on planning a solid structure for the future. **NEW MASSES** must hit fascism consistently—fifty-two times a year.

In that sense no issue of the magazine is more important than any other. There can be sellouts on a sluggish July day just as in late September or early March. And our failure to appear then will be just as serious as it was four weeks ago.

We ask that you respond to this situation exactly as you did to the last. Don't let **NEW MASSES** fail on July 7 or August 16 or any other week this summer. Look ahead with us to the time when we may be facing the same old nightmare of immediate suspension—and help us ward it off now. Let's save that August 16 issue of **NEW MASSES** now, and not in August. That way we will give you a better magazine, and that, as you know, is our service to democracy. Contribute *now* to our drive for \$10,000 and guarantee another year of a constant fight against fascism.



Richter

"Thank God for the Atlantic Ocean."

Mischa Richter

Don't Mention Scripps to Howard

Der Führer of the empire of Scripps-Howard shows what a little big reactionary can do. Spokesman of the fascist axis. Public enemy of the new deal. The "liberal newspaper" racket.

WESTBROOK PEGLER, in his petulant way, wrote a series of foolish columns last year about how most Italians living in America were gangsters. No one took him very seriously except an Italian paper, the *Bologna Resto del Carlino*. "It is sufficient to reveal," said the *Resto del Carlino* haughtily, "that Signor Pegler is a Jew and that the group for which he works, Scripps-Howard, is Jewish." That is a characteristic sample of fascist reasoning, hence not entirely accurate. In fact, on this particular subject Roy Howard and Lee B. Wood, executive editor of the *New York World-Telegram*, chief Scripps-Howard paper, find themselves in the embarrassing position of agreeing with the Italian editor. They don't like Jews. They don't want Jews on their paper.

The few Jews on the staff of the *Telegram* are exhibited by Roy Howard and Mr. Wood to prove that they are not anti-Semitic. Once they ran a contest for assistant dramatic editor, which William Boehnel won. "Isn't he a Jew?" said Howard. "We don't want any more Jews." Later it turned out that he was not a Jew, so Howard gave him the job of movie reviewer. Lee Wood assumes that anyone he doesn't like is a Jew. Any lawyer he doesn't like is a Jew lawyer. He told the education editor, one of the paper's Jews, not to hire any more Jews for the school page. A short while later he solved the problem by abolishing the school page and firing the education editor. A few months ago Frank Farrell, of the drama department, wrote a series on the German-American Bund, in the course of which he was forced to give some attention to anti-Semitism, and the series never appeared. Before the election last fall the paper's Albany man interviewed Kenneth Simpson, the Republican campaign manager, and Simpson warned him not to underestimate the currents of anti-Semitism; that story didn't appear.

MR. WOOD DISLIKES REPORTERS

Mr. Wood is a big man, fairly burly. He doesn't speak; he yells. He played on the football team at Amherst. Whenever a story about garment workers or German pogroms gets into the first edition he says, "Only the Jews would want to read that—I guess we'll lay off it. I guess we'll lay off the Jewish stuff." When it is pointed out to him that a certain number of the *Telegram's* readers are Jewish he gets angry. "We don't want any of their God damn mockie circulation," he says. He doesn't like Negroes either, and the unwritten rule that there must never be a picture of a Negro in the *Telegram* (except on the sports page) was broken a couple of weeks ago with a picture of Marian Anderson, which perhaps he didn't notice.

Mr. Wood likes to go to night clubs which have knife throwers. At his current favorite, a restaurant called the Whirling Top, he is allowed to play the drums. One of the things he does in imitation of Mr. Howard is to

Scripps-Howard

IT WILL be no comfort to readers of the *New York World-Telegram* to learn that the rest of the Scripps-Howard papers are about the same. There is still a theory, useful to the management when negotiating with the Newspaper Guild, that every Scripps-Howard editor makes up his own mind. On some issues, like public power in the Tennessee Valley and the Pacific Northwest, local editors, for obvious reasons, are still progressive; but mostly when you consider the reactionary *World-Telegram* you consider the *Cleveland Press*, the *San Francisco News*, and the other nineteen papers in the biggest chain in America. Howard has one more paper than Hearst, and his papers are a lot more solvent.

Howard has learned from the experiences of Hearst not to give orders to his editors by telegram; he calls them up. By this time his editors know just about what attitude to take on amendments to the Wagner act, and he doesn't have to do much telephoning. A couple of editorials are written in Washington every day for the whole chain. When in doubt, out-of-town editors look to the *Telegram* for guidance. The *Telegram*, after all, has a Morgan man (Merlin Aylesworth) as publisher. (Mr. Aylesworth may be there looking out for Mr. Morgan's interests; but whether or not Mr. Morgan actually has money in Scripps-Howard, Mr. Howard acts as though he does.) Once the *Telegram* copydesk wanted to kill an especially stupid story by Ludwell Denny just after he started writing about labor. But Mr. Wood said, "We really got to run it. If we don't run it every editor in the country will think they don't have to run it." The Scripps-Howard papers don't spend any money on foreign correspondents of their own, thereby saving enough to send Mr. Howard abroad fairly often, but they all use United Press. They use the same columns and the same cartoons. And they print any observations by Mr. Howard on their front pages.

Once all the editors had a vote for the chain's Presidential candidate. In 1924 they voted for La Follette. Four years later, though the majority of the editors were for Al Smith, Howard was for Hoover, whereupon the institution of the majority decision came to an abrupt end and the chain supported Hoover. In 1932 Howard didn't have much choice but to support Roosevelt; but to the last minute his papers pushed Newton D. Baker for the nomination. Mr. Baker, in addition to being the candidate of Tammany and big business, was the Scripps-Howard lawyer; and only Roy Howard knows how close he came to being ambassador to the Court of St. James.

scold waiters. He owns six horses, and if he loves good horseflesh more than the average reader of the *Telegram* does, the paper will carry frequent news about horse shows just the same. He regards the city room as a kind of plantation. The reporters say that the only reason he doesn't carry a bull whip is that he is afraid of the Labor Board. He has great contempt for his staff. The most sagacious characters on an ordinary paper, editors and editorial writers, meet every day with the publisher and decide whether to consider the latest announcement of President Roosevelt as an outrage or an overture. Often the editorial writers are even allowed to vote, though if they vote too consistently against the publisher he will make the necessary rearrangements and get himself a few new editorial writers. Editorial conferences are rare on the *Telegram*. When Mr. Howard is in town, which is more of the time than you would think, the direct wire between his office in the New York Central Building and Mr. Wood's desk in the *Telegram* city room is busy all morning and half the afternoon. Mr. Wood nods mutely, makes desperate little drawings on his desk blotter, and wipes the sweat off his forehead. The worst job in the Scripps-Howard organization is at the other end of the wire from Roy Howard. He is a talker. When he hangs up, Mr. Wood calls for one of his secretaries, who calls for one of the editorial writers. The result of this system, which Mr. Howard no doubt picked up in the course of his travels abroad, is that the editorials read like advertising copy and the editorial writers are somewhat discontented.

THE LIBERALS

A man can be browbeaten just so long. In the last few years Howard and Wood have provoked most of their liberal writers and editors into resigning. There are some left on the *Telegram*; not many. Howard has never wanted anyone to get the idea that he is indispensable to the paper. Heywood Brown may be one of the most popular columnists in America, but Howard doesn't like him and when his contract runs out this year it probably won't be renewed. Rollin Kirby's cartoons haven't been on the *Telegram's* editorial page since the first of April. For a time it must have seemed to Kirby that Wood and Howard were deliberately thinking up ways to pester him. Howard would call up and dictate exact specifications for that day's cartoon, without bothering to tell him what point he wanted made. Howard didn't know anything about cartooning. Kirby believed in the New Deal; Wood insisted that he listen docilely to the latest anti-New Deal jokes.

Kirby handed in the last cartoon under his contract March 31. Wood said, "One more cartoon, Rollin, and we're finished." Kirby produced the contract: a daily cartoon up to April 1, 1939. Wood said that meant up to and including. Kirby, badgered beyond endurance, went home and sent in a check for one day's pay.

Before he left he called on Roy Howard. Howard said he was sorry he was leaving, but things just hadn't worked out, had they? Kirby said he wanted to tell Howard what he thought of the way he was running the paper. He had a lot of brilliant men on his staff, but as a result of his pounding they had become as cynical about their jobs as employees of Hearst. They knew what Howard wanted, and they supplied it. They wrote articles ridiculing the New Deal though they had voted for President Roosevelt. Take Stokes in the Washington bureau. He believed in the New Deal, too, but what could he do when he got an order from Howard for a series of articles on WPA in politics? All of Howard's employees felt that no editor would stand by them. They were not only cynical, but disgusted.

Howard mumbled for a moment, and then burst out furiously, "It's that God damn guild!"

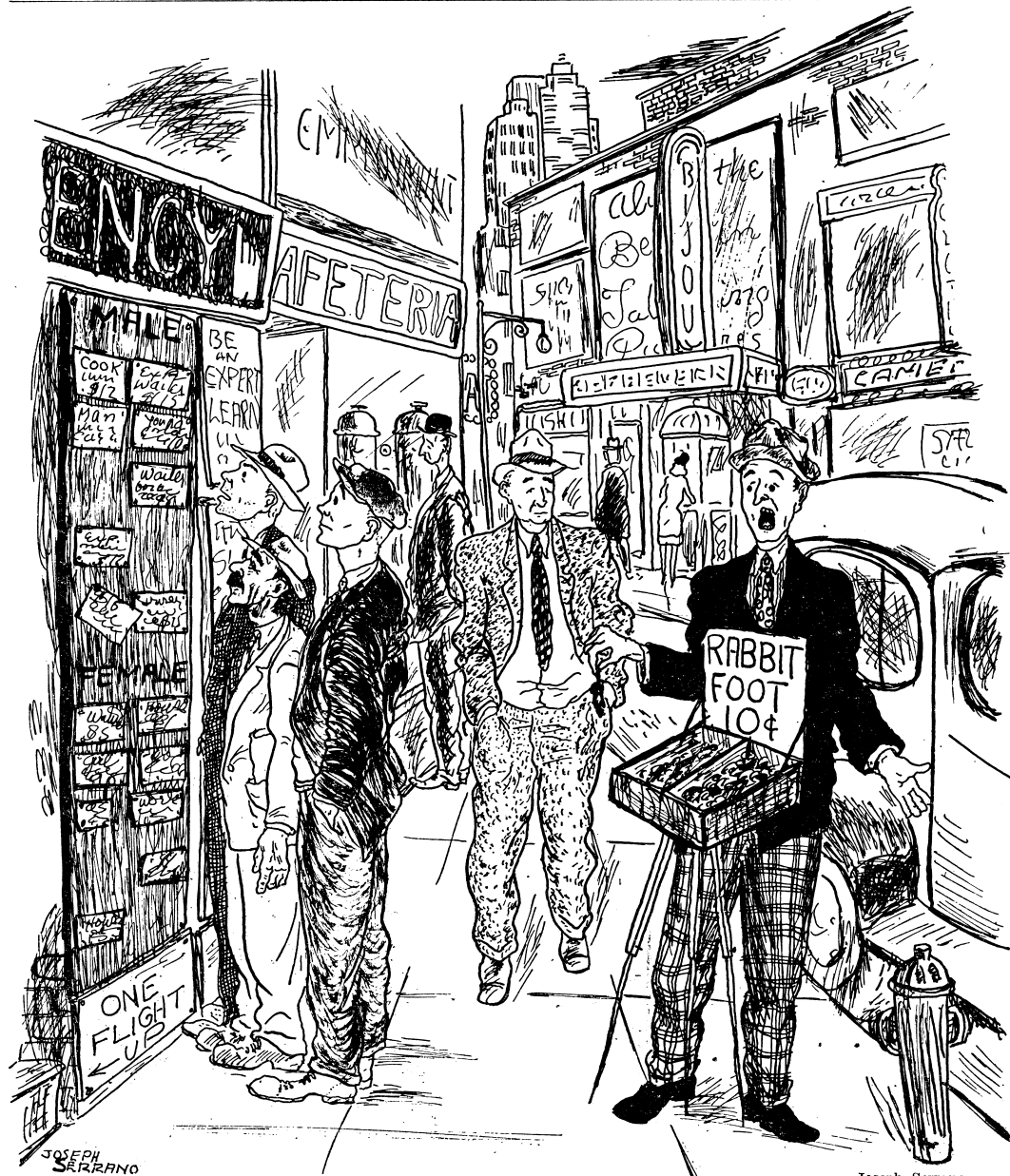
Howard flew into a passion when he heard about the Newspaper Guild; bargaining with reporters didn't come within his definition of freedom of the press. As late as the summer of 1936 he printed an open letter to Heywood Broun on the *Telegram's* front page: so long as he breathed free American air he would never sign a contract with the guild. Hearst picked it up and ran it on the front page of the *Journal*, to show his readers what a liberal thought about the subject. A few months later Howard did sign a contract, but he kept on sending memos to other publishers about how he had hated to do it. Every paper, including the *Telegram*, has a number of highly paid people who are annoyed, if anything, at the thought of joining a union. Mr. Howard's modest contribution to the theory of the open shop was to urge them to get into the guild and "keep it on the right track." Whenever there was a crisis they had their back dues paid up so they could keep their fellow workers from doing anything rash. Will Johnstone, who draws daily little cartoons on the first page of the second edition, complained angrily the day after a strike vote was taken last year: why hadn't he been told that the vote wouldn't come till one o'clock—he could have got in a bridge game. In the office Mr. Wood browbeats the active guildsmen, maybe not as much as he used to. It is not discrimination exactly; Mr. Wood just thinks he can't trust a guildsman, an active guildsman, anyway, to interpret the news. Edd Johnson, now with *Collier's*, was put on obituaries about the time he became guild unit chairman, and there were some weeks when he worked a different shift every day. This wasn't such good business, because he was getting a bigger salary than is ordinarily paid for writing obituaries. He was a good news-

paperman; Mr. Wood heard from several sources that *Collier's* was glad to get such a good newspaperman. "Yeah," said Mr. Wood, "he was a good newspaperman all right till he got loused up with that Newspaper Guild."

Mr. Howard is small and elegant. If he is not one of the best dressed men in America, at least he is one of the most dressy. People have made fun of his spats and his shirts, but he is a poor boy from a small town who has worked his way up to the control of properties worth something more than \$100,000,000, and he has a perfect right to wear spats if he wants to. His conception of himself as one of the few remaining star reporters in the world is shared, when he is around, by his immediate subordinates. One of the assets of his wardrobe is a fireman's helmet, to which he is entitled as a member of the volunteer fire department of Mount Vernon, N. Y. Once he covered a fire in a building across the street from his office window. He has never had quite as exclusive a story as the fake armistice in 1918, but his interviews with Lloyd George, John D. Rockefeller, Sr., Stalin, Franco, and Hirohito have made the front pages of papers besides his own.

His New York office is positively breathtaking. It is decorated with Chinese pottery and Japanese prints; there is a Chinese rug on the floor; the curtains are rich brocade. The dressing room and bathroom are done in bright red Chinese enamel. In the bathroom is a General Electric refrigerator, gilded all over so it looks like solid gold. A gilded pagoda on top hides the motor. The toilet and washbowl are red enamel with gilt fixtures. Howard is sensitive about some of his possessions. "I have been accused of having a yacht," he says; actually it is only a big launch (ninety feet). Howard goes to sea every summer to get away from hay fever and he takes friends for boat rides over the weekends. The *Telegram* staff can always tell when Mr. Wood has spent the weekend on the yacht, for he is more unbearable Monday.

Another thing Howard is sensitive about is his size. The first time the late E. W. Scripps saw him he said, "My God, a midget." Noel Macneish, now the *Telegram's* business manager, was hired at \$15 a week as Howard's secretary when Howard was away. When Howard came back he looked up at Macneish towering over him and said, "Fire



"Try a rabbit's foot, folks, you've tried private industry."

that man." Then he found out that Macneish had a good head for figures. Howard himself has no head for figures. He tips waiters a scrupulous 10 percent and saves string. Still, he manages to spend about \$100,000 a year. His salary isn't listed in any congressional announcements, but in 1934 all his enterprises seem to have made \$9,000,000, of which about half came to him. It is just about impossible to tell whether a paper like the *Telegram* is making money; surely advertising was off last year from the year before, and Howard, with no reluctance whatever, admitted to the guild that 1938 was the worst year for the *Telegram* since 1933. It made money in 1933.

INNOCENT ABROAD

Connoisseurs of Mr. Howard's foreign dispatches detected a slight note of impatience in his most recent series from Paris. It seems that this time Europe received him with a certain coolness; he hadn't been able to interview any of the big men. Mr. Howard could just as well have written his articles without leaving the United States, but no doubt he had looked forward to the trip. When the fourth or fifth came into the *Telegram* office Mr. Wood, who is often not too quick on the trigger, said, "Say, Roy is sneaking in a little propaganda for the profit system." In his first dispatch he summed up his publishing philosophy. "Public opinion is more widely informed in America than anywhere else in the world," he said. "Today this glut of information is by way of becoming a potential danger." Fascism has been sold to the masses but not to the capitalists. Hard to realize, isn't it? Americans are prejudiced about fascist countries; maybe it would be better if they knew less about fascism. It was a little startling—a man who runs the biggest chain of papers in the United States (twenty-one), the second biggest news association (United Press), a picture service, two feature syndicates, and several radio stations, wondering whether Americans don't know more than is good for them.

Just before Howard sailed for home he interviewed Lord Beaverbrook, who is the sort of publisher he admires. Lord Beaverbrook didn't think there was going to be a war, so Howard cabled his New York office to print a little peace news and stop frightening business. For the last month the *Telegram* has consistently played the European crisis under smaller heads than those of other New York papers. Naturally most of its foreign correspondence is United Press. Once Mr. Wood ordered AP out altogether, but the paper got worse so rapidly that he let it back so long as its news was confirmed by UP. When England warned Italy last month that invasion of Corfu would be an act of war, Mr. Wood refused to give it a ribbon because the UP had missed it.

So far as anybody knows, Howard has no personal political ambitions, but he likes the feeling of power. He is the friend of a lot of rich business men, and he tells them how to run

their business. He is the friend of Manuel Quezon, and he tells him how to run the Philippines, though Quezon doesn't pay much attention to him any more. He likes to say that he elected LaGuardia mayor and Dewey district attorney, though of course he reserves the right to criticize. As a matter of fact, he has been criticizing LaGuardia almost steadily since election day, 1933. He often goes to Washington to put pressure on Congress. Senator Wagner used to listen to him patiently, on the assumption that here was his most enthusiastic supporter in New York. (In the last election Howard came out for John Lord O'Brian.) He got in to see President Roosevelt when he wanted to. Once he went in, banged his fist on Mr. Roosevelt's desk, and said that the time had come to balance the budget. "Ever read it?" said Mr. Roosevelt. "No," said Howard, surprised. Mr. Roosevelt tossed a copy of the budget across the desk. "Read it," he said. Howard is still all for economy, but he doesn't talk much about balancing the budget.

The *Telegram* is no worse than the other evening papers; it is just more hypocritical. It is for President Roosevelt but against everything President Roosevelt is for. Discussing fascism from Paris last month, Howard wrote that the only bulwark against it in America is (with all its faults) the New Deal. That is the kind of statement which makes a *Telegram* reader so mad he can't see straight. Either the New Deal is a bulwark against fascism, or it isn't. If Howard thinks it is, and still assails every New Deal proposal and New Deal candidate, then he is less opposed to fascism than he is to the New Deal. Of course he never opposes the New Deal except for its own good. The reason he was so anxious about the appointment of Simon Gerson, a Communist, to a city job last year was that he didn't want the LaGuardia administration discredited. He was delighted with Benjamin Stolberg's series on the CIO because it showed the labor movement a way to improve itself—kick out all the people Stolberg said were Communists, which covered quite a lot of territory, but it would be worth it in the long run, Howard promised. When the Tugwell Pure Food and Drug Bill was up in Congress the *Telegram* was for it. Then one day a letter came in addressed to Mr. Hal Fletcher, the advertising director, starting off, "Dear Hal." It was from the manufacturers of Lydia Pinkham Vegetable Compound, a contract for two thousand lines of advertising. But of course if certain legislation got through Congress, said the covering letter, Lydia Pinkham would be forced out of business and the contract would have to be canceled, so a few days later the *Telegram* came out against the Tugwell bill, for the consumer's own good.

BUSINESS, NOT POLITICS

The *Telegram* guild paper used to quote from E. W. Scripps all the time, which probably got on Howard's nerves. Scripps, as everybody knows, let his men run moderately honest papers. Howard once told the Chamber

of Commerce of Denver, "We are here to sell advertising." Just a few months ago, in a full-page ad headed, "Business, Not Politics, Developed America," he played with a familiar idea: business has sold its products to the public, now it has to sell itself; and the Scripps-Howard chain was willing to sell itself, too. Scripps believed in labor papers. Now Scripps-Howard labor news is written by a man named Ludwell Denny, who qualified for the job by fighting the guild as editor of the Indianapolis *Times*. The *Telegram* carries almost no labor news. "We have no labor readers," says Mr. Wood. It doesn't carry much relief news, for Mr. Wood says it doesn't have any relief readers either. His idea of the typical *Telegram* reader is a man of some substance and a decent Christian appearance. The *Telegram's* circulation is higher now than it has ever been in its history, largely because of the decline of the *Post*; the advertising department is making a deliberate effort to get rid of circulation in Harlem and Brownsville. Any circulation over the 400,000 guaranteed to advertisers is just annoying.

In the twenty years during which Howard has been associated with the chain, it has become steadily more reactionary. Howard, of course, was never a liberal. In 1920, when he came over from United Press, he told Scripps frankly that he may have put up a wonderful fight for the underdog in his day, but there wasn't any underdog any more; the papers were no longer fighting, but grumbling. (That last phrase may have been thought up by Bruce Barton, who reported the conversation a few years later.) Howard never even pretended to be a liberal till 1933, beating the Republican Party to it by about five years. Just now, in private conversations, he is one of the country's leading liberals. There is no economic justification for his papers if they aren't liberal, which is why he let out such a howl last year when the New York *Daily News* suggested that they had turned against the New Deal. Of course they hadn't turned against the New Deal. At dinner parties he is inclined to blame his editors for putting reactionary stuff in the papers when his back is turned. "Those bastards," he says, "they think they can get away with anything." Once he assured Mayor LaGuardia, Scout's honor, that he didn't know a thing about a series the *Telegram* was running attacking LaGuardia's handling of relief. Now and then something moderately liberal still gets into the *Telegram*. In 1932 the paper got the Pulitzer prize for a series on the real-estate bond scandals. Burton Heath has just spent six months digging up dirt on Judge Martin Manton. Mr. Wood is usually uneasy when these liberal articles are running, though he understands that they serve the same function as the gilded pagoda on the top of Roy Howard's refrigerator—they hide the machinery. When the news editor played an article on the industrial insurance racket across six columns on the front page a couple of years ago, Mr. Wood said nervously, "It isn't worth that much, is it?"

ROBERT TERRALL

Barbarians on Capitol Hill

Joseph Starobin starts a series on the WPA arts projects and their importance in American culture. The campaign of the "book burners" in Congress.

FROM the House of Representatives lobby, I called National 3120 and asked for Starnes, of Alabama. A Southern belle complained that Mr. Starnes was not in. She was very vague about when he would be back. Three times that afternoon she stuck to her story.

Next morning, a Dale Carnegie voice with Mason-Dixon accents answered the phone. "Joe Starnes speaking."

"Oh, yes—NEW MASSES." He was terribly sorry, but in the morning he was all tied up with committee meetings.

"What about the afternoon?"

That wouldn't do either, what with the House session itself. "How about the late afternoon, Mr. Starnes?"

"Frankly," he drawled, "my mind gets awfully tired by five o'clock." After all these committee meetings and the House session, "my mind gets awfully tired."

Well, the gentleman from Alabama, a wide-awake member of the Dies committee, has a mind that gets very tired. I had thought it might be valuable to get an opinion on the WPA arts projects from the gentleman who found a Communist Party card on Christopher Marlowe. But if his mind gets tired in the afternoons, why that's another matter.

DIES INTERVIEW

Then I tried Martin Dies. He was lounging in the Rules Committee meeting before it started. He sprawled in his chair, the characteristic shock of blond hair falling over his forehead in the manner of a gent I have seen in the paper but whose name slips my mind. A Gropper cigar juts from his lips, and he flicks it contemplatively on the Rules Committee carpet.

"Mr. Dies," I say, after the self-introduction, "have you ever seen a Federal Theater Project play?" He nods.

"Have you ever seen a book by the Federal Writers Project—down in Texas, perhaps?"

Martin Dies sizes up the situation quickly. Yes, he has seen Federal Theater plays, and read their books. I ask him the other questions but he has my number now, and gives only yes answers.

"Mr. Dies," I say, "do you think the WPA arts projects should be continued?"

He looks at me squarely through cold blue eyes, staring as though he had not really been looking at me before. He flicks the big cigar.

"Well, I voted for it the other day, didn't I?"

"What about the Deficiency Bill reduction?"

"Well, I voted for continuing WPA, didn't I? It's all in the record." He waves me away. ". . . It's all in the record." But the truth

of the matter is that Martin Dies fought with the pack against the full appropriation for WPA. He voted for the reduction, but makes it appear that he was voting in reality for the continuation of the projects. After that, he curls up and just glowers.

That makes at least two strikes, even if you figure Martin Dies as a foul ball. I make my way around to visit Mr. Parnell Thomas, Republican, of New Jersey. Mr. Thomas is a very busy man. He was at the moment attempting to get the Judiciary Committee to report favorably on his resolution for the impeachment of Frances Perkins. He won't talk to me in the halls, and when I catch him in his office, he is putting on his coat for a trip to New Jersey.

"Are you the kind of fellow that prints what I do say, or what I don't say?" That's his first answer to my question on whether he has ever read a WPA book, attended a WPA concert, etc.

"Mr. Thomas," I reply, "I can't print what you don't say. So I can only print what you do say."

"Well," he says, "why don't you come in some time when we can look each other square in the eye, and talk this thing over?"

"Mr. Thomas," I say, "can't we look each other square in the eye right now?"

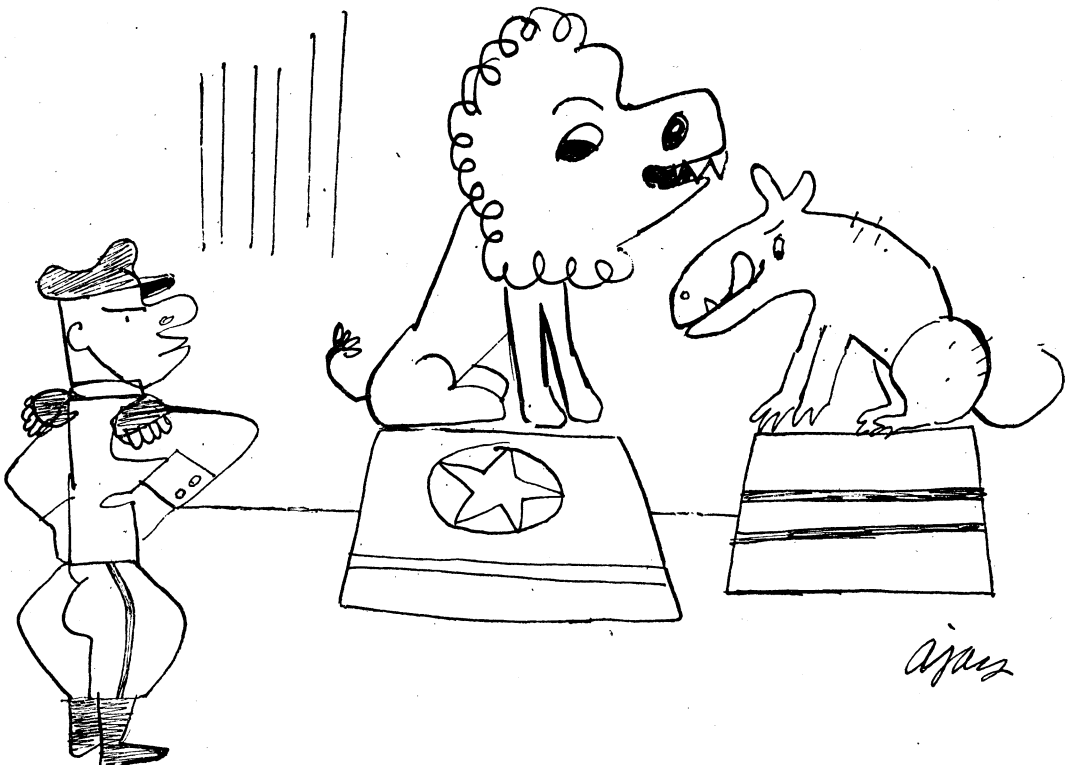
He is a short, trim gentleman, gray at the temples and a little shiny at the top. He's got a straight, even-featured, cool face; rather thin, firm lips. From the way he puts on his

coat you can tell he thinks well of himself. I can't help recalling the story I heard about how this J. Parnell Thomas was a sergeant in the Seventy-seventh Division. Those days he had a different name. I don't know what the J. stands for, but I know his name isn't really Parnell Thomas, and there's a story about why he's not wearing another handle.

WHAT THOMAS SAID

At any rate, he will not answer my questions. Obviously, he has to leave for New Jersey something terrible. But he will give me a statement which I must take down verbatim. Certainly, I am willing to take his statement, but in addition, I say, I would like to ask a few questions about whether he has ever attended a WPA music concert, ever visited an art gallery. He is willing, as I said before, only to give a statement. I must not use just parts of it, he explains, because one sentence depends strictly on another. So he gives me his statement, which he dictates with his coat and hat on, looking out of the office window, the fingers of one hand spanning the fingers of the other. This, then, is J. Parnell Thomas, Republican representative from New Jersey, one of the minority members of the Dies committee.

I believe that the arts projects, as such, serve a worthy purpose. There is no reason why unemployed actors, writers, etc., should not be given relief the same as unemployed other people. The Federal Theater Project and the Federal Writers Project in New York, however, in addition to



"He never uses a whip—he has British assurances."

erving some unemployed relief, also serve Communist and other subversive groups as a sounding board.

Mr. Thomas is, as you see, a foxy fellow. The more I think about his statement, the more I realize that it tells the whole story. Just as it stands, it says everything we need to hear from the reactionaries on the subject of the arts projects.

For what does this mean? First of all, there is no one who dares attack the arts projects as such. There is no basis under the law to deny professional citizens, whom private industry refuses to employ, the benefits of government relief. The arts projects achieve their initial justification, and deserve bouquets, because they have established, as a matter of principle, the equal status of mental and manual labor. Even a two-bit representative from Jersey cannot say otherwise. But he can, and does, adopt another line of attack.

In order to defame an enterprise upon whose merits he cannot pass, Mr. Thomas implies two things: that the arts projects are generally good but they are bad in New York, and that the arts projects are fine things but they serve Communist and other "subversive" groups as a sounding board.

Of course, the autonomous state of New Jersey is still within the same meridian as New York. Nevertheless, sectional and regional prejudices are still so strong that public officials can successfully play for applause by smearing the arts projects with the taint of the wicked East. Although the Indians have long since crossed the Spuyten Duyvil, for some citizens New York is still the arch-pagan town.

WPA IS NATIONAL

To be sure, the facts show that the arts projects are national in scope. The Music Project operates in forty-two states, the Art Project in forty-one, the Theater Project in forty cities and half as many states, while the Writers Project and the Historical Records Survey embrace the country as a whole. About half of the 33,500 project workers are occupied outside of the Eastern area. To take the Art Project alone, of the four million people who participated in the community art centers (which are galleries and schools combined) in the first two years of their existence, over half live in the Midwest, West, and South.

It stands to reason that the arts projects can only exist where a certain number of citizens qualify for professional labor. Where there are no professionals registered for relief, or only an insignificant number, you can't set up extensive projects. But more than any other single phenomenon, the arts projects have tended to counteract the flow of the cultural tide toward the Eastern cities. Emphasizing native and regional sources, the WPA projects have reversed a tendency which private patronage enforced. Planning for the nation as a whole, the arts projects have restored to the entire nation the talent of its creative citizens. Primarily a program for the conser-

vation of human resources, the WPA has erected barriers against cultural blight and erosion by giving the individual artist status and roots in his own community.

But it isn't just that the reactionaries in Congress hate the Reds. Nor is it only a matter of using the charge of Communism to cripple and bring the arts projects low. Actually, they don't care beans about culture. Themselves devoid of sensitivity and interest in the arts, these tory legislators cynically assume the same for their constituents. We live in an era when all art and culture are experiencing transvaluation. All forms of creative expression are being infused with a new content. Understandably, those who resist change in the economic and political realm do their worst in the sphere of culture as well.

When Miss Caroline O'Day, representative from New York, rose in the House to suggest that if Congress were going to slice the deficiency bill at all, it should earmark full funds for the arts projects, nothing revealed the temper of the reactionaries more than the fact that she was literally howled down.

Behind the cry of Communism lies the effort to destroy the entire WPA. And if one reads the signs of 1939 correctly, the projects are facing more than a fight for their continuation, more than a fight to retain an existing status which is itself a reduction from the 1936-37 levels. The fight to retain the federal arts achievements can only be realistic in the context of larger issues in which the New Deal as a whole is at stake.

The Dies committee made full use of the WPA angle in its assault on the New Deal last fall. The godfathers of the Dies committee, such as E. E. Cox of Georgia, who assaulted a Negro representative of the Workers Alliance in the halls of Congress a little while ago, now have a similar junket in the House Investigating Committee, chaired by Representative Woodrum of the Democratic economy bloc. Ostensibly organized to bring practical proposals for the revision and improvement of the relief system, the committee is doing the Dies routine on a smaller scale. The ridiculous "discovery" that Herbert Benjamin of the Workers Alliance was a Communist of eighteen years' standing, and the angles which the subcommittees are pursuing in local areas, are calculated to furrow the soil for recommendations that would spell the end of WPA. Nor is there a guarantee that the President's reorganization proposals will leave the cultural projects intact, once the WPA, as such, is merged in a public works authority.

All the semaphores give the alarm. Every straw bends ominously in the wind. Nothing is more appropriate at this time, if public sentiment is to prevail over sinister and bigoted interests, than the eradication of all misconceptions about the value of the projects, their cost, their achievement, and their promise. That is what the second article in this series is intended to do.

JOSEPH STAROBIN.

Neville's Payoff Pals

Who does what for whom in Italo-English finance.

SOME skeptical people don't trust Chamberlain's manifestations of anti-fascist indignation. Here are some of the reasons why:

The Italian rayon trust, Snia-Viscosa, which controls practically all of the artificial textile business of Italy and is one of Mussolini's important war industries, has an international board of directors. On this board are three Englishmen, Messrs. Johnson, Bourne, and Williams of Courtaulds, the big English fabric factors. Courtaulds, which is capitalized for 32,000,000 pounds sterling, is directed by J. S. Addison who is a member of the Special Economic Council which is now advising Neville Chamberlain. Hanbury Williams, the Courtaulds man on the Snia-Viscosa board, is also a director of the Bank of England. See?

The big British armament firm of Vickers possesses thirty thousand shares of the Italian metal corporation Terni, the boss of which is Signor A. Ciano, the uncle, no less, of the present fascist minister of foreign affairs.

Douglas Vickers represents the British Vickers firm in the directorate of the Italian corporation Tecnomasio Italiano, whose president is Ettore Conti, fascist senator and president of the Banca Commerciale Italiana. No matter whose bombs fall on whom, Mr. Chamberlain's pals will collect.

A couple of other Cliveden fingers well embedded in Mussolini's pizza are Prexy MacKenna of the Midland Bank and former chancellor of the exchequer, and P. A. Cooper, governor of the Hudson Bay Co. and director of the Bank of England, too, who sit on the Council of Sofina, the Italian-German-French international electric trust which owns important plants in Italy. One of them is the Adriatic Electric Co., whose president is Count Volpi, former minister of finance, governor of Tripolitana, and financial adviser to Mussolini.

As MacKenna and Cooper sit about the directors' table with the count, they probably chat about the affairs of the Cook Sleeping Car Co. (a European version of the Pullman service here), of which Count Volpi is a director, and the Lincolnshire & Central Electric Supply Co., Ltd., of which the same Count Volpi is president.

The Pirelli Cable Works of England, a branch of the giant Italian Montecatini syndicate, sold half of its stock to the General Electric Co. of London. The director of GE London is Arthur Chamberlain, a cousin of Neville the Devil.

In the streets of the City, Britain's Wall Street, sly winks are exchanged (through reputable brokers, of course) when the prime minister makes a parliamentary face at his bumboy Benito or when the Duce twists the tail of the Lion of least resistance.

ORONZO MARGINATI, JR.

"The Times": Accurate, Unbiased, Anti-Labor

The NLRB probes the anti-labor policy of the New York "Times." Newspaper Guild hearings not included in "News That's Fit To Print." Written and illustrated by James Dugan.

FOR three months of continuous hearings one of the most important of contemporary trials has been taking place in New York. The National Labor Relations Board is airing charges preferred by the Newspaper Guild against the mighty New York *Times* in the cases of three discriminatory firings and five transfers for guild activity. Although they involve only eight cases, the hearings have become among the longest in NLRB history. The management has spent over \$75,000 in the defense and the proceedings directly affect the editorial policy of the *Times*. Thirteen inches of news about the case has appeared in the bourgeois press—five in the paper itself at the beginning of the hearings.

When I began to attend the hearings the case was in its forty-seventh day. They are taking place in a small, low-ceilinged room in the Hotel Times Square, a hundred yards from the giant presses of the paper, convenient for *Times* executives and employees, who drift in and out during the day. An NLRB hearing seems like a casual affair but the informality is deceptive. There is no jury and little forensics: everybody concentrates on the record, which comes pouring out in shorthand from two stenographers. Tilford E. Dudley, the trial examiner, sits at his desk on a low platform in the front of the room, busy with rapid shorthand notes. He is a big, countrified fellow with a friendly manner and a broad smile. He is the author of the scorching Fansteel decision in which he declared the principle of the worker's property-right in his job

as well as the management's more formal rights. Beside him is the witness chair in which during the next ten days three of the most powerful press lords are to face the questions of the union. Before him are the counsel tables like football benches behind which the spectators divide like partisans of Yale and Harvard—the guild crowd and the company sympathizers. The *Times'* legal battery consists of Louis M. Loeb and Emil Goldmark, of Cook, Nathan, Lehman & Greenman, old *Times* retainers. Mr. Goldmark is receiving \$750 per day as a special trial pleader, while Mr. Loeb is struggling along on the retainer. The *Times* has spared no expense in defending its ideals; in addition to the legal fees it is paying \$1 per page for daily transcripts of the testimony, photostating every scrap of evidence, and employing two more office lawyers as brain-trusters.

THE LINEUP

Mr. Goldmark is a pale, elderly gentleman with a pince-nez which bobs up and down on his nose as he rapidly chews endless sticks of gum. He is busy, when not actually questioning, making rapid notes. I looked over his shoulder one day at the notes and was surprised to find they consisted of nothing but highly intricate doodles. He is a ready objector; many times during the long hearings the trial examiner has had to ask him to stop his interfering tactics. When his stars are on the stand, Mr. Goldmark is a clever user of bench signals to direct the testimony.

Louis M. Loeb is a country-club, turkish-bath type, very genial and deep-voiced, fond of making puns. Sample: a witness used the word "trite" and Mr. Loeb defined it as a fish nobody likes.

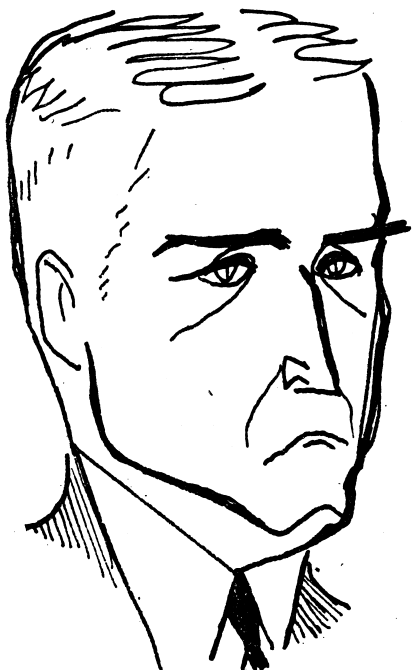
Lester M. Levin, the NLRB lawyer, is a young, reserved fellow with an even baritone voice. His interest is in keeping the record so clear of irrelevancies that the *Times* will have little chance of appeal, a possibility at which they have consistently hinted. A. J. Isserman represents the guild. He runs his case sharply, at times he visibly annoys *Times* executives with his tart questions.

The cases chosen to be contested by the guild, those of Leonard Goldsmith, Fred Jaeger, and Grace Porter as dismissals, and five others as discriminatory transfers, were handpicked. They were entered almost two years ago before Mrs. Elinore Herrick of the New York Regional NLRB office and have been delayed again and again by the NLRB and at the request of *Times* lawyers. When they were a year and a half old, Mr. Loeb, getting notice of the issuance of the complaint, asked for more delay to prepare his case, saying, "Oh, the *Times* never thought the Labor

Board would issue a complaint." The *Times* still finds it hard to believe.

Mr. Goldsmith was an advertising solicitor who helped accomplish the startling record of organizing two thousand commercial-department employees into the Newspaper Office Guild in two weeks, in 1936. This union, now defunct, was organized in anticipation of a merger with the American Newspaper Guild, which came about shortly afterward. Mr. Goldsmith, by the management's admission, was a record-breaking salesman, having consistently run 10 percent ahead of his colleagues in effectiveness. But reports came to the management of his union activity on the *Times* and in helping the organization of other papers. He was fired in August 1937. The other cases run to type. One piquant example of the anti-union zeal of the management occurs in the instance of Jane Schwartz, who was originally hired by the paper to solicit art advertising, a field in which she was experienced and efficient. When her efficiency spread to union organization Miss Schwartz was rebuffed by a novel kind of segregation. Her entire department was moved out from under her and she found herself in the apartment-advertising division, which motivated her resignation.

When I came into my first session, Edwin L. James, managing editor of the *Times*, was on the stand. He is a stout little man, nicknamed "Dressy" James by the boys. He resembles an overstuffed version of Robert Benchley. His delivery occasionally hints that



ARTHUR HAYS SULZBERGER, "*Times*" publisher, married the boss' daughter.



NLRB TRIAL EXAMINER, Tilford E. Dudley, listens to three hundred hours of testimony.



GUILD LAWYER, A. J. Isserman, probes secret publishers' meeting.

he is a Southerner, and he prefaces many remarks with his "thirty years in the newspaper business," beginning with Hank Mencken on the *Baltimore Sun* and including World War service, European correspondence, and a spell as European manager of the *Times*, before he came back to the desk in 1930. Mr. James' voice is harsh, some say from being gassed in the war and others say as a result of a nocturnal occupational hazard of newspapermen. He is a shrewd witness who pays little heed to Goldmark's coaching; in fact his counsel once blew up at Mr. James' readiness to answer the board's question after Goldmark had yelled an objection. He admitted authorship of the following memorandum which was attached to a Communist leaflet:

MEMO TO MR. SULZBERGER FROM E. L. J.
 The spies report that some of the auditing people are back of this. Maybe it will amuse Mr. Weinstock to try to find out who.
 Nov. 4, 1935. E. L. J.

Mr. James explained that the note was just a gag, and that voluntary information by employees was the only spying activity. There are no "outside spies" needed, he said; there are many "voluntary informants." Mr. James uses some of his picturesque vocabulary when he is asked his attitude toward Communist activity on the paper. He refers to that "lousy publication, *New Times*," Communist Party shop paper, as showing "a stinkin' attitude toward the *Times*," but thinks that Red activity is nothing to worry about. Mr. James testified he was friendly to the Newspaper Guild when it was first organized, but cooled off later when the organization abrogated its high professional standards by taking in copy boys and other such riffraff. Copy boys have given the managing editor no little trouble with their highfalutin' ambitions. Mr. James relates the sad story of his sealed memo to the auditing department which authorized a \$2 raise for one of the copy boys. Before the lucky lad knew about his raise, three other office boys approached Mr. James and asked for \$2 raises.

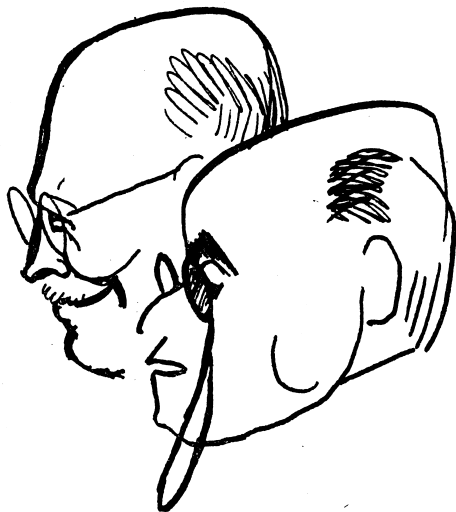
Mr. James defines the moral code of the paragon newshawk as follows: "On loyalty—I mean it is a feeling in a man's heart that he owes his heart to the outfit which pays his salary and causes him, regarding newspaper

work as a career, to put his devotion, service to the paper, ahead of any other activity he happened to have. . . . It is more or less to the tune of 95 percent one happy family bound together in a common loyalty to the *Times*."

Although the *Times* has not seen fit to report the NLRB hearings, in which they are interested to the extent of seventy-five grand, Mr. James admits that he assigned a reporter to cover a guild meeting for the purpose of preparing a confidential report for the executives.

The next witness is Col. Julius Ochs Adler, 630 Park Avenue, general manager of the paper. Unlike Mr. James' rough-and-ready apprenticeship, Colonel Adler can point only to Princeton and the United States Army as his cultural background. He is the nephew of Adolph Ochs, late patriarch of the *Times*, and a genial little man, sunburned and bald, with a brisk gray military mustache. He is a timid witness. Mr. Loeb in examining him contrives to feed him with exhibits. One of these is a startling document consisting of a series of lecture notes on file cards prepared for a speech to the staff made by Colonel Adler soon after he became general manager. One notation reads, "abandon espionage." The union lawyer is interested. Colonel Adler explains that he referred to "spotters" used by the paper to tail advertising space salesmen and check on their dutifulness. It turns out that the spotters were regular employees, assigned confidentially to this task. "Who were they?" asks the guild. Colonel Adler doesn't know. "How did you put an end to their activities if you didn't know who they were?" Colonel Adler doesn't know that or whether they were specially paid or what kind of reports they made, or anything about them.

The company lawyers have more surprises in their fat file of exhibits. Throughout the trial they introduce the most damaging evidence against themselves—James' spy note, Adler's memo, a confidential report on the guild activities of Goldsmith—and now they produce Colonel Adler's desk calendar for 1937 to prove that Goldsmith was lying when he testified that he was interviewed by Col-



TIMES BRAIN TRUST: Attorneys Louis M. Loeb and Emil (\$750 per day) Goldmark.



HAROLD HALL, labor negotiator for the open-shop "Times."

onel Adler on June 4, 1937. The calendar page for June 4 shows that Colonel Adler saw one Herbert Hoover but no Leonard Goldsmith. But here on the June 14 page is the name Goldsmith, and Mr. Loeb smiles in triumph. The guild lawyers take advantage of the calendar and have it put into evidence in its entirety. They show that Colonel Adler had a classmate named Goldsmith who is also named in these pages of appointments, and get the admission that employees were often seen without appointments. Then they discover an entry for June 2 of a secret meeting of publishers, which Colonel Adler cannot remember clearly, particularly whether or not the guild was discussed.

Now we have a character named James Robbins, yachting editor, to testify for the management. Mr. Robbins relates that one day he was busy with a yachting story when Fred Jaeger, one of the guild zealots, stopped at his desk and said: "Why don't you join the guild? Everybody's doing it. We're going to socialize this newspaper, this city, and eventually this nation." Mr. Robbins almost fell off his yacht.

Now we have the *piece de resistance* (which proves to be resistance to the guild), Mr. Arthur Hays Sulzberger, president and publisher of the *New York Times*. Mr. Sulzberger is a trim, square-headed man, who looks like an aging matinee idol turned Sunday School superintendent. He once told a staff meeting the smartest thing he ever did was to marry the boss' daughter.

Mr. Sulzberger's testimony begins to make plain the executives' attitude toward the paper. The *New York Times* is something exalted, above this world, and its executives are touched with some of this divinity, and a little awestricken by it. "Ours is a particular kind of business," says Mr. Sulzberger. "We deal in ethical standards." These ethical standards may sometimes run contrary to the Supreme Court itself, an institution almost comparable to the *Times*. When informed in a negotiation meeting with the guild that the Wagner act protected union organization, Mr. Sulzberger

announced that "frankly" he "would wiggle out of it somehow." As a matter of fact the *Times* is superior to governments. When George Seldes testified that loyalist censors showed to all the war correspondents the cables from the *Times* to Herbert Matthews, Mr. Goldmark wonders indignantly if this was the thing to do to the *Times*.

The burden of Mr. Sulzberger's lengthy testimony is that a closed shop, guild shop, or preferential shop in the newsroom of the *Times* will destroy the paper's unbiased, objective, and accurate character. He says it over and over again in five days of testimony. "I've lived it, I've dreamed it, I've slept it, I've eaten it—because I see in the guild shop the greatest threat to unbiased reporting." Once he answers a point of information by referring the questioner to "the files of the New York *Times*, which is an accurate, unbiased newspaper." But he has a trying time holding his concept together under cross-examination. "No guild man is any more guilty of bias than a non-guild man—it is just the collective bias that counts." He brings in a homely maxim of his father's on Woman's Suffrage: "Women wanted equal rights and special privileges," and leaves his listeners to apply this to his attitude on the guild. Another unhappy analogy comes from the publisher in reference to Leonard Goldsmith's guild activity and the concern of the management over it. "I did not want to create an issue in the office. I have been taught in bringing up my children not to bring up issues, because you either have to go through with them or back down, and I was determined to do the same thing on the *Times*."

There are two moralities at work in this trial—the forthright confidence of the guild in the worker's right to organize and the paternalistic attitude of the management, not unmixed with a noble concern for the freedom of the press. In no other way can one explain the damaging exhibits introduced by the management and the flat open-shop attitude of Mr. Sulzberger. When *Times* executives were asked in plain language whether they employed labor spies, their shock was unmistakable—a shock so great that the question had no real meaning to them—merely the thought made them shudder. How callous and hypocritical this worship of virtue can be is illustrated in the remark Mr. Sulzberger made about lower-salaried employees on the paper: "These people should either receive more or be dismissed. We do not want lower brackets on the *Times*." And on the reason for Jaeger's dismissal: "Mr. Jaeger was dismissed not because he didn't turn in business but because he didn't try."

The case nears its end; Mr. Sulzberger has said, "The day the New York *Times* is forced to sign a closed shop contract in the news department, that day the paper will be for sale."

I left the hearings the day they were recessed at twelve-thirty so that Mr. Sulzberger might attend the dedication of a monument to the freedom of the press at the World's Fair.

JAMES DUGAN.

Bridges' Frameup Falls Down

NM's exclusive story about the informer and ex-convict whose perjury is the hope of West Coast union busters.

WITH the U. S. Immigration and Naturalization Service ordered to proceed with deportation hearings, the case against Harry Bridges, West Coast CIO director, may hinge on the testimony of one man, an ex-convict and police informer.

The Supreme Court's decision in the Strecker case held that membership in the Communist Party at the time an alien enters this country, or at the time deportation proceedings are instituted against him, is cause for deportation.

To date only one man claims to have definite proof of Communist Party membership in the case of Australian-born Bridges. That man is Arthur Kent, alias Scott, alias Margolies.

Kent claims to have Bridges' membership card in the Communist Party, made out in the name of "Harry Dorgan."

Bridges has offered to eat the card, together with a bowlful of goldfish, or to leave the country voluntarily if such evidence can be produced. Best guarantee that such evidence, real or manufactured, doesn't exist is the fact that it hasn't been produced to date.

WHO IS MR. KENT?

Who is this Arthur Kent, alias Scott, alias Margolies, upon whose testimony the West Coast shipowners and open shoppers are counting so heavily? What are the forces behind him? Briefly, his record might be summed up as follows:

1. In 1927 convicted of burglary, served three years of a seven and one-half year sentence in San Quentin.
2. Employed as stool pigeon for police departments of San Francisco and Portland, following his release from prison in 1931.
3. Worked for Col. Henry Sanborn, notorious strikebreaker, starting April 1936, in developing deportation case against Bridges. Work involved wiring Bridges' hotel room in Portland, during convention of Maritime Federation of the Pacific in summer of 1937.
4. Arrested in December of 1937 for series of thirteen burglaries in the wealthy Beverly Hills district of Los Angeles. Implicated local labor leaders as his accomplices in fantastic "Red robber ring," whose alleged purpose was to convert stolen furs and jewels into money for the Communist Party. Labor leaders later absolved of all guilt.
5. Sentenced to from one to fifteen years in Folsom prison, but secretly allowed to work out his sentence in the Los Angeles County jail.
6. Pardoned by Republican ex-Governor Merriam (after serving only nine months) in one of that official's last public acts before being forcibly retired by California voters. In freeing Kent, Merriam lauded his work in

"exposing and interpreting radical and subversive activities in the United States."

FINK'S ANATOMY

That, in brief, is Arthur Kent's record of crime, double-dealing, treachery, and betrayal. But it warrants much more detailed study. What makes a stool pigeon "tick"? Let's take him apart and see.

Following his release from San Quentin in 1931, after three years "in stir," it is safe to assume that Kent was in the employ of the police network on the West Coast. Prisons breed stool pigeons.

Undoubtedly, Tom Mooney was a familiar figure to Kent in San Quentin. At any rate, immediately following his release, Kent, cashing in on an acquaintance with the famous labor prisoner, plunged into active work with the Mooney Defense Committee, the better to wreck it from within. He also joined the Communist Party in 1934 to "stool" on that organization. He of course completely concealed his criminal record, for otherwise he would never have been admitted into the Communist Party.

COLONEL SANBORN'S STOOGES

It was not until April 1936 that Kent made contact with Col. Henry Sanborn, Army Intelligence officer, prime mover behind the San Francisco Industrial Association, member of the American Legion's Committee on Subversive Activities, publisher of the Red-baiting *American Citizen*—the man who is credited with breaking the bloody Salinas lettuce strike.

Sanborn it was who operated in Salinas as the mysterious "Mr. Winters," self-appointed coordinator of all law-enforcement agencies engaged in breaking the strike.

"Under his [Sanborn's] dictatorship," Paul C. Smith, editor of the San Francisco *Chronicle*, wrote at the time, "minor children . . . have been deputized and armed; high school students have been pressed into service for the manufacture of clubs; nauseating and dysentery gases have been shot along crowded streets by high-powered bomb projectors . . ."

When questioned, Sanborn readily admitted that Kent had been in his employ since Easter Day, 1936, "to ascertain and develop the relationship of one Harry Bridges and others to the Russian Comintern."

But let Kent tell it in his own words. The following is quoted from a so-called "confession" signed by Kent on Dec. 22, 1937:

So I arranged to try to get a job with the National Broadcasting Co. through a friend. He contacted Colonel Sanborn, and Colonel Sanborn tried to get me a job through Don Gilman, vice-president of NBC, for \$100 a week. . . .

At that time Colonel Sanborn and others, particularly a member of the Police Department of

Portland, discussed with me matters in reference to the membership of Harry Bridges in the Communist Party.

Kent's first assignment as a "radio technician" was to wire Bridges' room in the Multnomah Hotel in Portland, where the CIO leader was attending the convention of the Maritime Federation of the Pacific, in June 1937. By posing as a telephone repair man, Kent did manage to plant a dictaphone in Bridges' room; but the latter discovered it.

It was not until a month later that Kent was exposed, and then by accident. A group of people were gathered in his studio apartment in his absence when—but let Kent tell you in his own words:

The telephone rang and someone said that Colonel Sanborn wanted to talk to Mr. Hill. I then arrived and the message was given me with many suspicious comments. Everybody left the studio and went somewhere else.

Upon investigation, Kent was immediately expelled from the Communist Party and dropped by the other organizations in which he had been active.

ITCHY FINGERS

Still all might have gone well with Kent; he might have left town and worked himself into the labor movement in some other section of the country as an informer, had it not been for the unfortunate fact that he had itchy fingers. He was next heard of when police picked him up and charged him with a series of burglaries in the wealthy Beverly Hills section of Los Angeles, burglaries that netted him over \$30,000 in loot, according to police. Kent was really in a jam. A one-time loser, he knew that a second conviction would go hard. His only hope was to plead guilty and to throw himself on the mercy of the court by involving innocent persons high in the labor movement.

The plot went something like this: Kent robbed homes in order to get money for the Communist Party. Describing himself as a sort of "Red Robin Hood," Kent said he "expropriated" from the wealthy in order to give to the poor, thus "equalizing" social conditions. And, of course, the police went for it, because Kent's arrest coincided with an open-shop drive which had but recently been launched, and they saw in it a chance to tar the CIO with Communism.

Kent implicated as his accomplices in the "Red robberies" Tom Johnson, then business manager of the CIO newspaper in Los Angeles, and Dave Saunders, a member of the Sailors Union of the Pacific in the North. Johnson, who had worked with Kent on the Mooney case in 1931, but who had not laid eyes on him in four years, was arrested but eventually given a clean billing; and although Saunders offered to surrender, the district attorney did not even bother to issue a warrant for him.

Subsidiary to the main plot was one known as "the case of the water-soaked stiffs," also

Tomorrow's Seed

Proud banners of death,
I see you waving there against the sky,
Struck deep in Spanish earth
Where your dark bodies lie
Inert and helpless—
So they think
Who do not know
That from your death
New life will grow.
For there are those who cannot see
The mighty roots of liberty
Push upward in the dark
To burst in flame—
A million stars—
And one your name:
Man who fell in Spanish earth:
Human seed
For freedom's birth.

LANGSTON HUGHES.

hatched by Kent. This plot involved the framing of Harry Bridges, Henry Schmidt, and other waterfront labor leaders on phony charges of murder. The plan was to fish bloated corpses from the bottom of San Francisco Bay, identify them as persons missing from the waterfront, and pin the resultant "murders" on Bridges, et al.

A good study of a psychopathic liar was obtained by those who watched Kent in court. They will remember the elaborate detail with which Kent embellished his story connecting Tom Johnson and Dave Saunders with the robberies of which he alone was guilty. They will remember his white-faced nervousness when he testified, how he chewed his fingernails, covered the lower part of his face with a handkerchief when news photographers tried to get pictures.

REDUCING THE PENALTY

Yet, despite all the lies and the police willingness to convict them, Johnson and Saunders were absolved of all guilt. Charges were dropped against them, because there was absolutely no evidence to corroborate Kent's testimony. Kent himself was sentenced to serve from one to fifteen years in Folsom, the home of two-time losers, at his probation hearing on March 9, 1938. Commending him on his "patriotism" in exposing "subversive" activities in the maritime unions, Judge Clarence L. Kincaid ordered Kent's sentences on two counts of burglary to run concurrently, thus reducing the penalty, from two to thirty years, to one to fifteen.

The police department never meant to arrest Kent a second time as a burglar, you can wager on that. He was too valuable to the police departments for which he worked. In fact, it is understood that the chief of police of Portland called Los Angeles and raised hell when he learned that Kent had been picked up by two blundering cops in Beverly Hills.

But, once arrested and the charges entered on the police blotter, the prosecution had to

go through with it. It could, however, and it did, dismiss six counts of burglary against him, Kent pleading guilty to the remaining four. And the judge, as reported above, kissed him off with a light sentence, after complimenting him on his "patriotism." The judge was undoubtedly influenced by the letters he received begging him to show leniency toward Kent. These letters came from Colonel Sanborn; A. H. "Pedro Pete" Peterson and W. R. A. Patterson, ringleaders of the now defunct "Dirty Dozen" longshore renegades; and Stanley M. "Larry" Doyle, former district attorney of Portland.

KENT'S FRIENDS

One and all begged that Kent not be sent to Folsom or San Quentin for fear that he might be "roughed up," but that he serve his sentence in the county jail, where he could be "visited" occasionally. These letters are so important that it is worthwhile to quote from a few addressed to the county probation officer (the italics in each of the quotations are mine):

If you, in your official capacity, can in any manner assist in keeping Arthur Kent from being sent to Folsom or San Quentin, *it would be greatly appreciated* by the American Federation of Labor . . . (A. H. Peterson.)

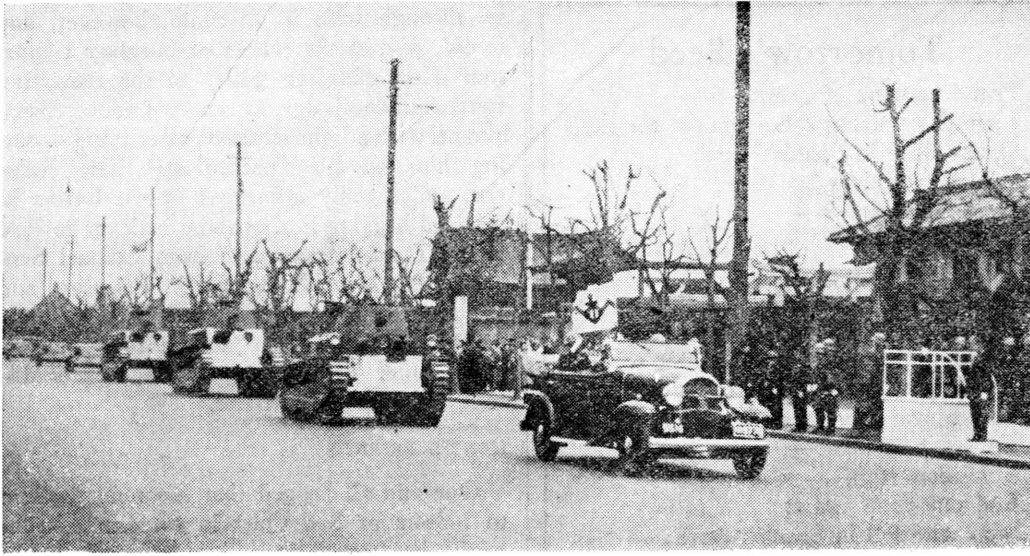
. . . The testimony that he [Kent] can and will give to the United States Senate Committees and the federal court before whom Bridges will be brought will be invaluable and true, *and therefore must not be open to attack upon its credibility . . .*" (Col. Henry Sanborn.)

Kent has never lied to me in the three years I have known him . . . Kent is the motivating factor and the principal reason why the Harry Bridges case has progressed as far as it has, and he deserves commendation for this, if for nothing else. (Stanley M. Doyle.)

As an American and an AFL union man, I believe that Arthur Kent is too valuable a source of information to send to the pen . . . He will be of invaluable aid to us if he can be held *where that information and he will be available* for the cause of Americanism and to work against the subversive activities of the Communist Party. (W. R. A. Patterson.)

And this strange assortment of union wreckers prevailed. Although sentenced to Folsom, *Kent never set foot inside its door!* Instead, he served out his sentence secretly hidden away in the Los Angeles County jail, where he was easily "available" to authorities interested in using his testimony to deport Harry Bridges. He remained there nine months until ex-Governor Merriam pardoned him, because of his outstanding work in "exposing and interpreting radical and subversive activity in the United States," the Republican official said, using almost the identical words of the judge who sentenced Kent. That was part of the "deal" too, Merriam's pardon. That was Kent's reward for serving his masters so faithfully.

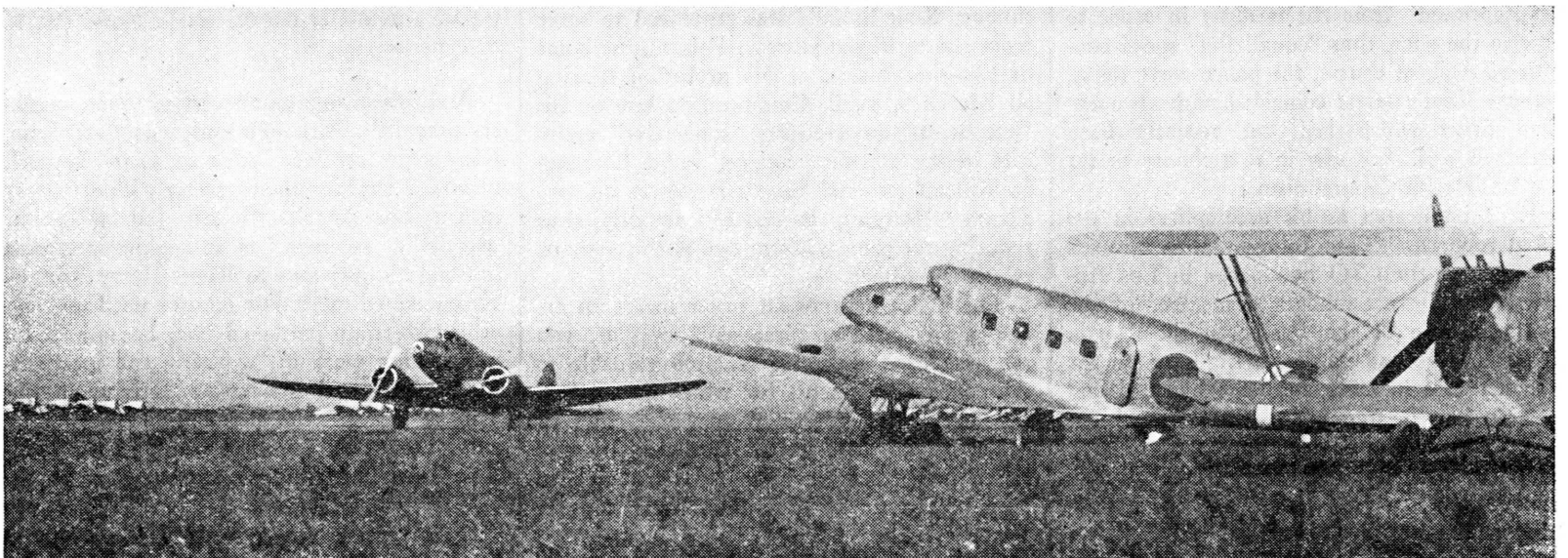
TOM CULLEN.



"Buick Leads Again"—followed by American and British made tanks.



Banzais greet the giant American bombers returning from a raid.



More skyliners serve the invaders of China.

"Made in America"

Japan's war machine runs largely on American supplies, oil, machines.

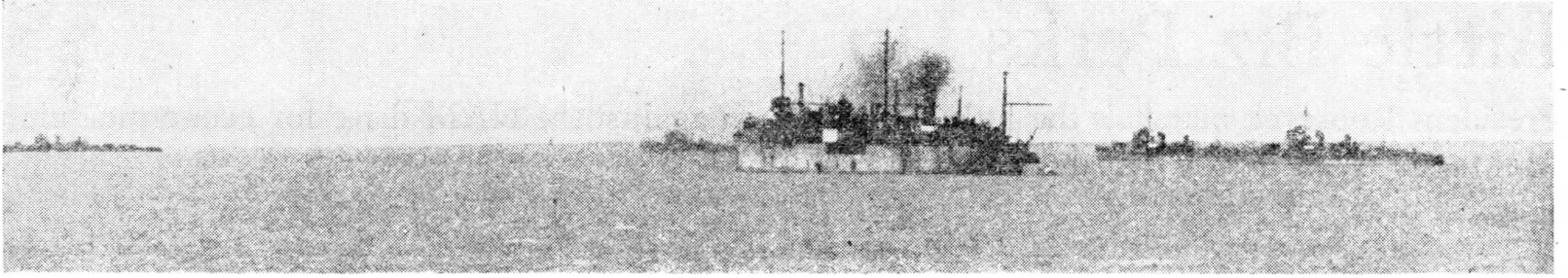
FFIFTY-FOUR PERCENT of Japan's imports of war material come from the United States. This extensive, if not actually decisive, aid which our manufacturers and industrialists give the Japanese invaders of China has cost the lives of millions of innocent people. It also suicidally strengthens the open enemy of the United States in the Pacific.

Throughout the country there are thousands of individuals who feel keenly this betrayal of the Chinese people by some greedy merchants whose patriotism and consciences are atrophied.

Headed by former Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson, the American Committee for Non-Participation in Japanese Aggression, 8 West 40th St., New York City, is engaged in unifying Americans to protest against our "partnership" in Japan's barbarous slaughter of the Chinese people. The accompanying pictures have been furnished by them.

The growing movement to halt this un-American policy of some of our corporations in participating in Japanese aggression has enlisted many prominent citizens. Possible connections with powers who have the perspective of future invasion of the United States might also be investigated. It will be recalled that the French suppliers of Hitler are in the foreground of all traitorous movements to make France a prey to the Nazis and fascists. In the same way, the wealth of Spain was used against its people during the past three years.

The arms we are furnishing to Japan to conquer China can be used against us. All indications, from the *Panay* incident to the almost daily bombings of American hospitals, schools, and missions in China, give us a foretaste of Japanese aggression.



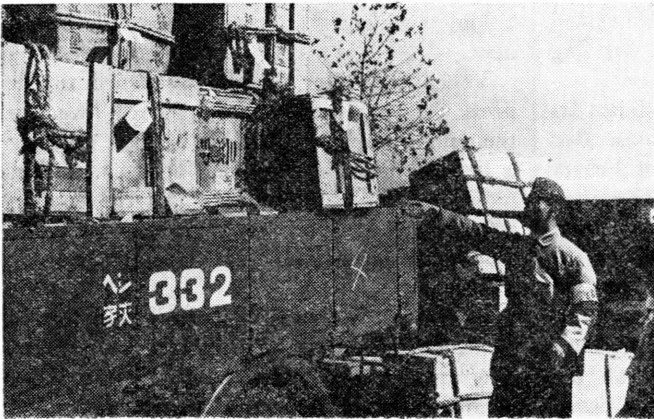
Straight from San Diego, Calif., come these Japanese tankers with United States oil for the destroyers of Hirohito.



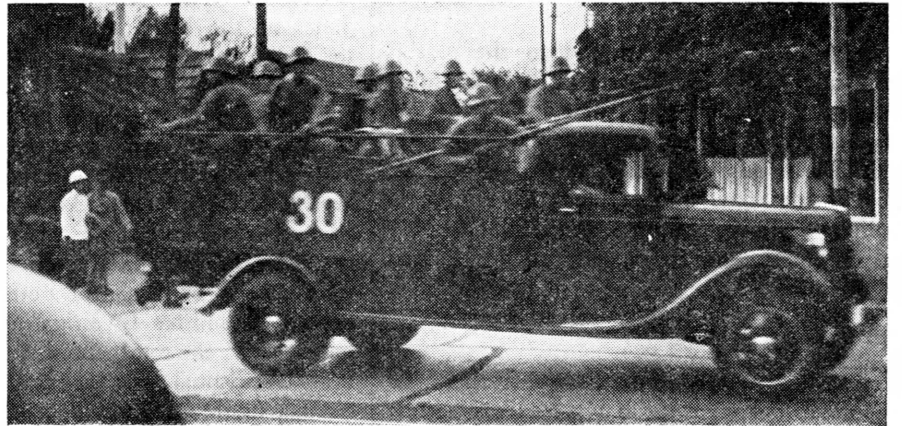
More oil for the bombers.



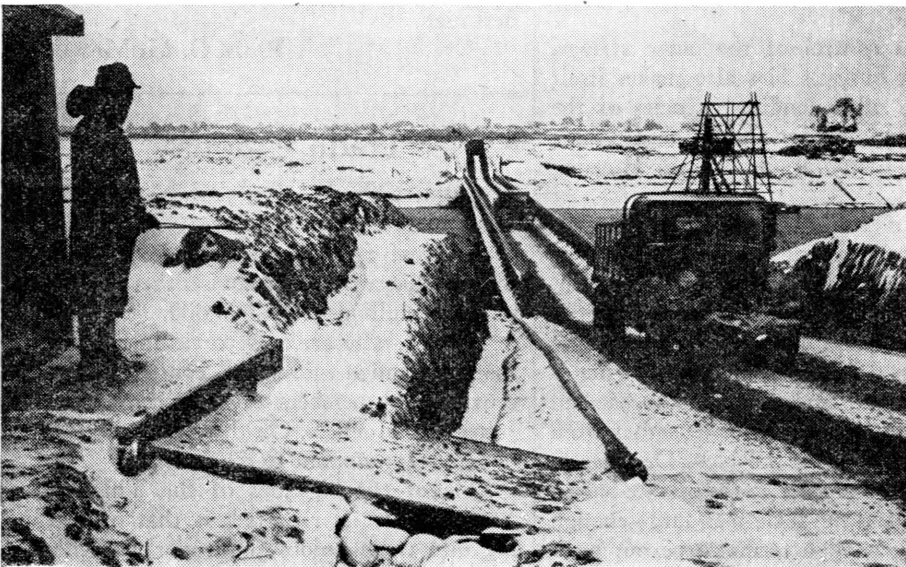
American tires leave their mark on China's roads.



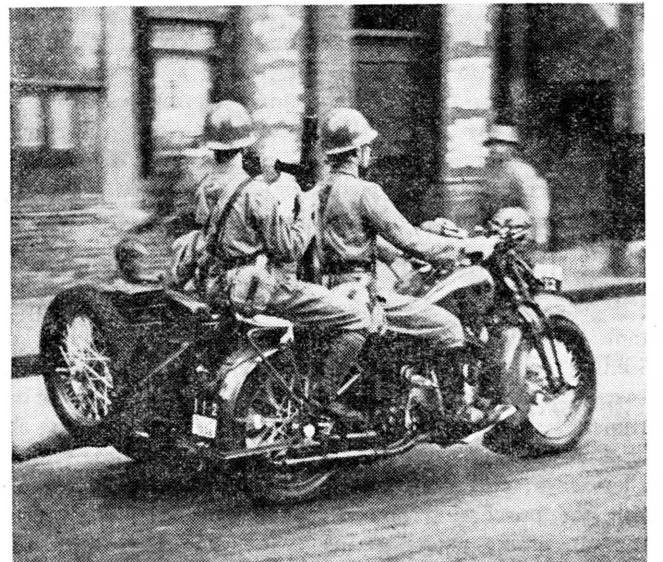
American spare parts for tanks.



"Watch the Fords Go By."



American trucks carry Japan's death into China.



Jap motorcycle police ride United States bikes.

Little Biz Perks Up

President Roosevelt marshals the little business men against the NAM drive for economic ruin. McManus' Washington dispatch.

Washington.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, nobody's fool in practical politics, has decided to turn the enemy's divide-and-rule tactics to the uses of progressivism.

Nobody has to whisper in Franklin's ear about the arrogance and open hostility with which the National Association of Manufacturers and the chambers of commerce view his every move to start industrial wheels to stirring. Nobody has to relay to him such frank confessions as were forthcoming from one of New England's better-known factory owners during the more lucid moments of a certain Boston cocktail party last week: "Business really hopes prosperity won't come during this next year. If things get too good, Roosevelt will claim all the credit and run for a third term. We'd rather continue to starve for a while than have that happen."

Nobody has to show him the black-bordered blotters being sown far and wide, bearing the serio-comic inscription: "Give me an order or I'll vote for him again."

Nobody has to tell him these things. He knows them.

The President knows that in the mortal combat of 1940, big business will stand four-square against the New Deal, despite any concessions or rapprochements it may offer. All this is self-evident. And thus Roosevelt took to be equally self-evident his motive in politely declining to address the U. S. Chamber of Commerce convention, even as he declined last year.

NEW STRATEGY

But this year he went a step farther. He supplemented his snub to big business with a cordial willingness to address the convention of the American Retail Federation on May 22. And therein lies the interesting tale of a new strategy.

The American Retail Federation was created in 1935 to represent the small and middle-sized business of the country during the days of the NRA. Its moving spirits were the pro-New Deal Filenes of Boston, and the Strauses of R. H. Macy & Co. In the years intervening, the federation has remained the Washington spokesman of a good slice of little business, although restricting its legislative activities almost entirely to the trade problems of its constituent members. Guiding spirit R. H. Macy has upon occasion, however, indicated its endorsement of the government's spending policy both in its "Help the Consumer" advertising campaigns, and in other ways; for retail business lives or dies with the purchasing power of the country. And purchasing power means WPA, PWA, and the hundred and one federal aids so bitterly fought by the tycoons.

It is with the fond hope of stimulating this tremendous and thus far latent support in little business, swinging it away from the kite-tail of the NAM and splitting the business front, that Roosevelt has so warmly accepted the invitation to speak at the first national forum of the Retail Federation.

The splitting of the business front is not going to be an easy task, however. Just how difficult was sharply illustrated by an inner-administration conflict over government lending policies that preceded the issuance of last week's Reorganization Order No. 1.

JESSE JONES, TEXAS BANKER

Major administration lending organ is the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, headed by Jesse Jones. It was created under Hoover for the purpose of extending loans to the larger business institutions to rehabilitate them, tide them over the rougher spots in the economic cycle, and help them expand where their financial structure is sound enough to warrant it. Under the New Deal, with Jesse Jones at the helm, the RFC has continued to function largely as a feedbag for big business.

The RFC has done tremendous business. Its total loans run well into the billions. But of the \$1,850,000,000 outstanding on February 28 of this year, \$653,000,000 represented advances to banks, and \$478,000,000 loans to railroads—loans, incidentally, many of which have been sharply criticized by the Senate Committee Investigating Railroad Financing. Of the total sum, loans to little business constituted but a small part of the blanket figure \$383,600,000 nebulously designated on the balance sheets as "Other Loans." Thus somewhat less than 20 percent of outstanding RFC loans have been made to help small business.

Through its control of the purse strings, the RFC's big business bias also makes itself sharply felt in other lending agencies of the government—Home Loan Bank Board, Home Owners Loan Corporation, Federal Housing Authority, etc.

Confident of its hold on the RFC, the National Association of Manufacturers has meanwhile been bending the ear of little business with mighty denunciations of the RFC's lending policies, and blaming it all on the New Deal. On the basis of an Iscariot friendship, it has in the past few years succeeded in leading the little men farther and farther from their former positions in the New Deal camp. Squeezed at the same time by the private banks, who refuse to lend the little men large enough capital on long enough terms to permit business expansion ("lack of confidence," they call it), the average small business man finds

himself on the verge of stagnation, with no very clear idea of where to go, what to do, or whom to blame it all on. The growing confusion, carefully fostered by the NAM, is the stuff of which fascism is made.

FRIEND GARNER

Roosevelt hoped to clear the picture by spiking the guns of the strongly entrenched and politically potent Jesse Jones, and by using his reorganization powers to bring the lending agencies under the Commerce Department, where the firm hand of Harry Hopkins would be used to soften the agencies' attitude toward little business.

Getting wind of the projected plan, however, Texas banker Jones called to his aid Texas banker Garner and his boys on Capitol Hill, prematurely broke the story to the press, and centered a tremendous drumfire of opposition on the White House. The day before the reorganization order was issued, Jones, avoiding even the constant eye of the press, slipped into the White House and there spent a long two hours in confab with the President.

When the order was finally issued to the press, it was immediately apparent, even in the mimeographing, that the section creating a Federal Loan Agency had been at the last moment completely revised. All the lending agencies, instead of being placed under the Commerce Department, are to be grouped separately.

A new battle, however, is in the offing. No chairman has as yet been named to head the new agency. Big business will fight to keep its fifth column, banker Jones, in control. It is virtually certain that Roosevelt will seek to supplant him or subordinate him to one with a kindlier eye for America's little business man.

PAUL G. McMANUS.

Soviet Trade Unions

DURING the last five years the number of workers and employees in the Soviet Union rose from 22,000,000 to 28,000,000. The number of trade unionists there rose from nineteen million to 23,800,000.

Women, who are now particularly active in the trade union movement, constitute 26 percent of the members of shop committees in factories and offices. On these committees non-Communists amount to 80 percent.

One of the big jobs of the Third Five-Year Plan, it is reported, is that of recruiting into trade unions those workers who are still not members of the trade union movement.

Forsythe

The Brest-Litovsk Boy

ON THE editorial staff of the New York *World-Telegram* there is a fascinating individual who is known around our house as the "Brest-Litovsk boy." From what we can figure out he is both a man with a mission and a man with a very soft job. Others on the staff may be required to turn their hand to various aspects of life but our man confines himself to Brest-Litovsk.

Just when he came upon this universal solvent is not clear but we first became conscious of it at the time of Munich last year. At that time our friend had a remarkable editorial which proved that Chamberlain would have taken a totally different line with Hitler if he had not been convinced that the Soviet Union had no intention of coming to the assistance of Czechoslovakia. In short, the Czechs had been double-crossed by the Russians instead of by the French and British, as some vicious commentators were insinuating. Furthermore, said our hero, Chamberlain had not the slightest confidence in the Soviet Union because he recalled that the Russians had run out on their allies during the World War by signing the Brest-Litovsk treaty. He added further that most of the ills which mankind has been suffering since could be traced to that event.

Having once launched himself upon this road, our man followed up rapidly with other deductions based upon this vicious treaty. He refrained from saying that the lateness of spring was caused by Brest-Litovsk but scarcely any other parallel escaped him. At a time when Major Al Williams, Scripps-Howard aviation writer, was proving not only that the Soviet aviators could not fly and that the Moscow-American non-stop flights had never happened, our man commented upon this remarkable assertion favorably, added a few words about Colonel Lindbergh, and concluded with the usual reference to Brest-Litovsk. The Soviet army, said our boy in another editorial, is so weak that nobody wants Russia as an ally and this may be traced directly back to Brest-Litovsk. When Hitler took the remainder of Czechoslovakia recently and Chamberlain, after first saying that the act constituted "no breach of faith" on the part of Germany and later in his Birmingham speech saying that the deed was most certainly a breach of faith and an indication that force now ruled in the world, the Brest-Litovsk boy charged into the breach instantly with the statement that the whole episode could be traced to the weakness and perfidy of Soviet Russia, which in turn led straight back to that lamentable treaty.

In many ways this is the most interesting scapegoat to turn up since the days when Bill

Thompson won Chicago elections on a platform of defiance of King George. If the New York Yankees should happen to lose the pennant this year, I shall be able to write the proper editorial for that without taking my feet out of the wastebasket. It will mean that Joe McCarthy has surrendered too soon, as Russia once did when it ended the war at Brest-Litovsk. If the World Fair is a flop it will be because of a Brest-Litovsk mentality which has seeped in among the board of managers. The effect of the magic words upon the ordinary mortal was brought to me by a conversation with our office boy who entirely upset my arguments about Munich by tossing off "Brest-Litovsk" and then regarding me with a mysterious look as if expecting me to crumple and fall from the impact of such preponderant truth.

Since it is hardly likely that a man would sacrifice an advantage like that, it is probably useless to discuss the matter with him on the basis of fact, so we merely set down here a few considerations for the benefit of history. Just two weeks ago President Benes of Czechoslovakia asserted in an interview with Erika Mann in the *Chicago Daily News* that the Soviet Union had offered to carry out its military agreements with the Czechs even after the French and English had welched on theirs. He was kept from accepting the offer by the traitorous Agrarian Party which preferred being conquered by Hitler to being saved by Stalin. It is interesting to note that this important statement by the president of a former great state and on a point which has been constantly in dispute since Munich should have been buried in the back pages of the *New York Times*.

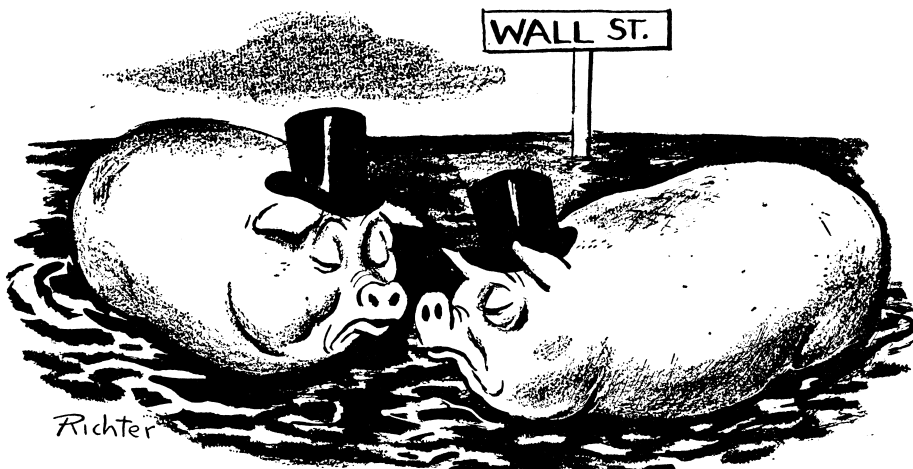
The further charge that the Russians ran out on the World War comes with slight grace from anybody, when it is remembered

that it was the sacrifices of Russia at the outbreak of the war which saved the French and English armies in France. The Russians were rushed into an offensive before they were ready for it and suffered tremendous losses. It was this offensive, however, which made the Germans hastily transfer troops from the Western front, thus weakening them at a time when one more determined push would have taken Paris and the Channel ports and brought victory to the Germanic powers.

Nothing was ever truer than the saying that "France and England will fight to the last Russian." The Russians, without arms, without proper food or support, died by the millions to help their allies. Even after the first revolution, Kerensky launched a further offensive as an indication of Russia's good intentions. It had no chance of success because by that time Russia was exhausted. Men fought with their bare hands, even as they have been doing in Spain. Just how our Brest-Litovsk boy reasons they could have continued fighting is a mystery, but a bloodthirsty and vicious little gentleman like that would have no reflections on such matters when he has an ax to grind. He has found a good parrotlike slogan and is not going to give it up. The fact that the French were on the verge of collapse when America came into the war will never be found among his erudite comments. Everything was the fault of the Russians and since this will serve to flay the Soviet Union, he will never relinquish his use of the magic words: Brest-Litovsk.

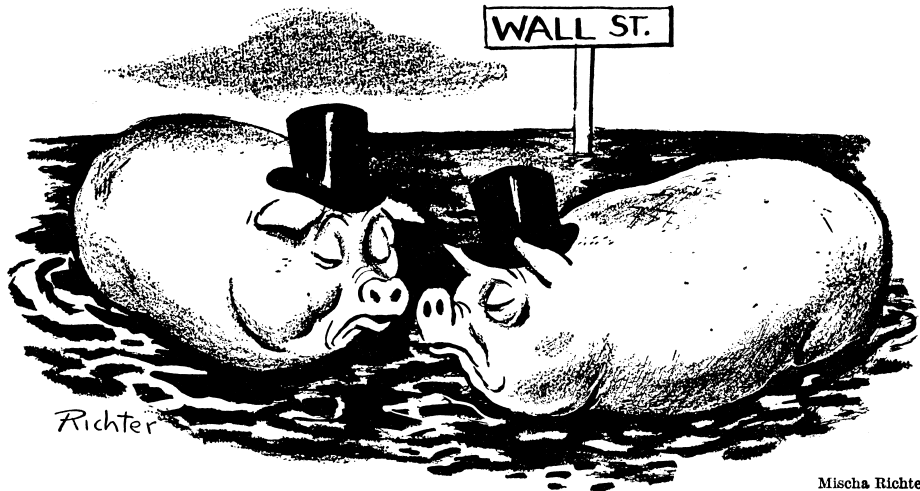
Is Hitler determined to trample on the rights of every nation in the world? Well, says our little man, that is merely a natural result of Brest-Litovsk. Did Mussolini crush Albania? Most certainly—and why shouldn't he? Think of what the Russians did at Brest-Litovsk. I expect at any moment to hear our man saying that Hitler is such an accomplished breaker of treaties because the Germans acquired the habit by breaking the treaty of Brest-Litovsk. And he will therefore prove that if it hadn't been for Brest-Litovsk, there would have been no need of breaking the treaty and hence no horrible example for Adolf to follow. The Russians will get it in the neck some way, anyhow.

ROBERT FORSYTHE.



Mischa Richter

"I've always said you can't change human nature."



Richter

Mischa Richter

"I've always said you can't change human nature."

New Masses

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Apologia and Blackmail

HITLER'S two-and-a-half hour philippic, like all of his speeches, was not so much an expression of policy as a diplomatic and propagandistic maneuver designed to facilitate the further development of a line of action that by now is well established and unambiguous. Aggression is a law of life of fascism. It can be ended—with all the dire consequences for fascism that that would involve—only by the mobilization of superior force. The chief tactical aim of the fascist aggressors is, therefore, to prevent such a mobilization by dividing the opposition in each country and internationally. Hitler's speech must be viewed in the light of this twofold tactical aim.

President Roosevelt's dramatic message was a serious diplomatic blow to the fascist dictators. It served notice on them that the United States had a direct stake in war or peace and intended, despite the obstructionist tactics of American isolationists, to play an active role in the efforts to prevent war. And by addressing itself solely to Hitler and Mussolini the message clearly pointed to them as the source of the war danger and served to rally the peoples of the world for resistance to further aggression and policies that aid aggression.

Hitler's problem was to counteract the powerful international influence exerted by Roosevelt's message and to paralyze American action for the future. He sought to do the first by a lengthy apologia for his crimes in a manner calculated to fan the embers of appeasement sentiment among the reactionary ruling circles of Britain and France. With this he combined new blackmail threats against Poland to frighten it out of its still uncrystallized alliance with Britain and any disposition to unite with the Soviet Union. To paralyze American action for the future he skillfully played on isolationist prejudices in the way that had already been suggested

to him by Gen. Hugh Johnson. This part of his speech was, according to Dorothy Thompson, prepared by the German embassy in Washington. She describes it most accurately as being "couched in almost the language used by many of our own critics of the State Department's foreign policy."

To cover up his rejection of Roosevelt's proposal for a ten-year all-around non-aggression pact and for a disarmament and economic conference, Hitler offered to conclude individual non-aggression pacts with the states Roosevelt mentioned—again the tactic of dividing the opposition—provided they themselves requested it. At the same time he indicated just how much this offer was worth when, without consulting Poland, he abrogated the ten-year non-aggression pact signed with that country in 1934. This is itself an act of aggression bearing the threat of new aggression to come.

Yet despite all his efforts and the active assistance he is receiving in other countries, including our own, Hitler did not succeed in nullifying the tremendous international effects of Roosevelt's message. However, the ambiguous tactics of Chamberlain, Bonnet, and the governing groups in Poland and Rumania continue to play into his hands. The alliance with Poland still has not gone beyond Chamberlain's pledge in Parliament of April 3—while behind the scenes the Chamberlain crowd is pressing Poland to surrender Danzig and make other vital concessions to the Nazis. The Soviet Union is still being kept in the background though Ivan Maisky, Soviet ambassador to England, spiked inspired stories concerning the uncertainty of the Soviet position when he declared on the eve of Hitler's speech: "We are going to assist Europe in case of aggression." And in Britain all attention is being focused on conscription instead of on building a solid anti-aggression front, without which conscription can serve only reactionary ends.

The danger remains acute. Further positive action by the United States in the spirit of the President's message and in cooperation with the USSR may well avert an explosion at terrible cost in human life and suffering.

The Way to Stop War

WHEN Dorothy Thompson indicated the other day that Hitler's speech was written, in part, by his advisers in Washington, many Americans should have started thinking. Hitler thoughtfully suggested we should not depart from "traditional" isolationism. He believes that bad for our national welfare. Ditto the AFL's legislative representative at the hearing before the Neutrality Commission. Ditto Messrs. Hearst, Hoover, Reynolds. The circle is closed. The AFL leadership should bethink itself, now that

it finds itself in such unsavory company.

The cash-and-carry provisions of the Neutrality Act lapsed May 1. The way matters stand now, we cannot legally sell weapons to the democratic nations if war should break out. But any American munitions manufacturer could sell at his own risk to the fascist governments the materials that go into the making of munitions.

This the munitions concerns have been doing—enthusiastically. Japan kills Chinese with American metals: so did Hitler and Mussolini kill Spanish loyalists. It is one of America's greatest crimes that this could happen. And we stand with all those in Washington and throughout the world who want to put an end to this business. The President pointed the way in his January 4 message to Congress; the CIO and numberless serious citizens who want to avoid war also realize this: that the only way to stop war is, as the *New York Times* itself admitted, May 2, "by creating a preponderance of strength on the part of law-abiding nations." That means collective security; that means the lineup of the democracies—France, Great Britain, the USA, the USSR—and all the smaller countries fearing Hitler's next snatch. We feel that short of outright repeal of the Neutrality Law, the amendments proposed by Senator Thomas to permit, with the consent of Congress, embargoes of aggressors, are a step in the direction toward peace. The new bill introduced by Senator Pittman, providing for an embargo against Japan, is also in line with the needs of the situation and with the desires of the majority of peace-loving Americans. We recommend that the AFL membership act to prevent Matthew Woll and John P. Frey, stooges for the tory Republicans, from finagling their organization into a tacit, and not so tacit, support of Hitler and Mussolini.

More Needed for WPA

APPROXIMATELY three million persons were employed on WPA during 1936. Another 850,000 were on the waiting lists for jobs, fully accredited and eager to take their places among the nation's producers. Two million young Americans came of working age and at least 500,000 found no place in private industry.

Those are the figures that must be considered in any planning of federal work relief. Totaled they give an absolute minimum count of those whom the government must aid if we are to preserve the decency and self-respect essential to the maintenance of our democracy.

President Roosevelt, in his message on relief, defended the New Deal philosophy admirably, but he failed to compute adequately the need for the next fiscal year.

In recommending only \$1,477,000,000, he gave a figure that would mean the reabsorption of four million workers in private industry during the coming year—a hope that nothing in the history of the past ten years would justify. The reduced appropriation carries with it the necessity of a cut of one million among those now employed and leaves nothing for those who need jobs now or for those who will enter the market during the next twelve months. The figure of course is by no means final. President Roosevelt showed no weakness in the face of tory assaults on the idea of WPA. He paid no attention to the Woodrum committee which is taking the Dies precedent in smearing the New Deal. But WPA must not only remain as an institution—it must continue at full strength. And progressives should insist on an appropriation that is not based on any assumption that capitalism will buck its own laws of development.

China Advances

ON March 27 the Japanese army, in the most extensive gains since the taking of Hankow in October, captured Nanchang, capital of Kiangsi Province, southeast of Hankow. This was a serious blow to the Chinese defenders. It not only meant the loss of China's greatest air base, but cut off important food supplies and opened the way for a westward advance to the strategic city of Changsha, capital of Hunan Province.

Only a little more than a month has passed. The expected advance to Changsha has not materialized. Instead the Chinese have been doing the advancing and are threatening to recapture Nanchang. Important gains have also been made in every invaded province. In other words, after twenty-two months of severe fighting and despite many costly defeats, the Chinese army shows growing strength while the Japanese invaders are finding increasing difficulty in making headway or even in holding on to what they already have.

A highly significant fact, pointed out by *Ta Kung Pao*, Chinese army organ, is that for the first time in the war the Japanese have been losing more men than the Chinese. This would indicate a serious deterioration in Japanese arms. *Ta Kung Pao* asserts, in fact, that in the twenty-two months of the war Chinese arms have increased 100 percent, while those of the Japanese have declined 40 percent. This still leaves the Japanese with a great material superiority. That, too, would not last long—nor would Japan's invasion—if a United States embargo cut off the steady flow of American raw materials and finished products which have provided more than half of the equipment of the Japanese war machine.

Government Streamlining

FOR the purpose of "keeping the tools of American democracy up to date" President Roosevelt has made the first proposals under the Reorganization Act passed by Congress in March. His message to Congress provides for the setting up of three new agencies, the transfer of the Budget Bureau from the Treasury Department to the executive office of the President, and the shifting of three independent lending agencies to the Department of Agriculture. The most important of these proposed changes is the establishment of the three new agencies. WPA and PWA, both now independent, are to be grouped together in a new federal works agency, which will also include the U. S. Housing Authority and a number of other public building activities. The National Youth Administration, the Social Security Board, the CCC, and the Public Health Service are among the bodies that will constitute the new federal security agency. Ten

independent lending agencies, including the RFC, the Home Owners Loan Corporation, and the Federal Housing Administration, will be combined in a new federal loan agency.

The President's proposals are a good beginning toward streamlining the government apparatus. In addition, they will effect economies of between \$15,000,000 and \$20,000,000 annually. Unless Congress vetoes the reorganization plan in whole or in part by a two-thirds vote, it will become law within sixty days.

One salutary effect of the new proposals has been immediate: suspension of the efforts of congressional Tories to ram through the Byrnes bill. Ostensibly designed to create a unified Bureau of Public Works, this measure would actually reduce relief standards, shift a large share of the work relief burden to the localities, and curtail the federal arts projects. In that sense it was part of the general attack on federal relief.



"She was caught taking a second cup."

John Helliker

Newspaper News

THOSE self-designated "trustees of our liberties," the members of the American Newspaper Publishers Association, concluded their annual convention the other day. Again the big business men of the press—in a meeting closed to reporters—reiterated their hostility to the social program of the New Deal—old age pensions, the wages-and-hours law, and the health insurance measure of Senator Wagner. On their own labor problem—the growing Newspaper Guild—the ANPA took the line expressed by Publisher Sulzberger of the *New York Times* in his testimony last week in the NLRB probe of the anti-union activity of his paper. Mr. Sulzberger, in fact, is the responsible author of the idea adopted by the publishers that the guild shop in news departments is a violation of freedom of the press.

The 1939 style in smart sheep's clothing still has a few telltale splits in the seams. The publishers elected a new president, John S. McCarren, whose newspaper career as general manager of the Cleveland *Plain Dealer* was prepared for by years as a department store executive. When the *Plain Dealer* proffered Mr. McCarren the job he said, "But I don't know anything about the newspaper business." The answer was, "That's just why we'd like to have you come and join us." In his election the publishers frankly acknowledge their big business character but this did not prevent Mr. McCarren from making a speech about freedom of the press. He also recommended negotiations of guild and mechanical union contracts on a nationwide basis which would deliver overwhelming power to publishers in collective bargaining. The peculiarities of each paper—minimums, working hours, etc.—would be lumped together in such a way as to retard locals which have gained higher standards than a possible nationwide minimum. For a real picture of freedom of the press in operation we suggest a reading of James Dugan's article in this issue on the *Times* Labor Board hearings.

"Equality"

WE WELCOME the new magazine *Equality*, whose editors bravely dedicate it "to an uncompromising fight against anti-Semitism and racism, at a time when the hearts of decent people are almost at the breaking point—at this darkest moment of modern history when fascist brutishness has become the state power in half the countries of Europe . . . with the added conviction that the American people, in their overwhelming majority, will repudiate the doctrines of intolerance and bigotry."

Those are brave words accompanying a

brave action. NM knows they are justified because the decent people have always triumphed when their voices have been represented in a democratic government. Suppress democracy and even a Coughlin, like a Tiso, can sell his country to fascism with arms and storm guards.

In its first issue *Equality* presents distinguished contributions by Dorothy Thompson, the Rev. Harry Emerson Fosdick, Warden Lewis E. Lawes, Donald Ogden Stewart, Sholom Aleichem.

One interesting editorial feature is "An Open Letter to the Catholic Hierarchy" which takes out into the open the growing heresy of racism that is expanding among Catholics. Led by such dubious clerics as Coughlin in the Midwest and Curran in Brooklyn, this deviation, which has shown itself in this country as anti-Negroism and anti-Semitism, has been but weakly combated by the responsible Catholic clergy. The low state of Catholic education and the civic laxity of Catholic leaders have aggravated this serious and unpatriotic perversion of democracy.

But although the cynicism of the hierarchy may be appalling to honest United States citizens, over 100,000,000 of whom have been ignored by the church in its isolated career, nevertheless the Catholic people of America and the priests who look upon their brothers persecuted by fascism in Europe know that the direct sequel to anti-Negroism and anti-Semitism is anti-Catholicism.

Pulitzer Prizes

THE Pulitzer awards this year are on the whole more discriminating than one might have been led to expect by the previous record of the prize committee. The choice of Robert E. Sherwood's *Abe Lincoln in Illinois* was inevitable, and we second the nomination with enthusiasm. Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings' *The Yearlings*, a novel about Florida poor whites, and Carl Van Doren's biography of Benjamin Franklin are uncommonly good books. About some of the other choices there will be a greater division of opinion. It is significant that this year's award for reporting went to a series of articles in the Scripps-Howard press smearing the WPA and the New Deal, just as last year's award went to a series attacking Justice Hugo L. Black. We cannot feel that this repeated encouragement of anti-progressive reporting is unrelated to the prejudices of the prize committee. We are still convinced, as we were last year, that no foreign correspondent more richly deserved an award than Herbert L. Matthews for his reporting of the Spanish war, and we regret that he did not receive the prize for correspondence from abroad.

Movie Goers!

IN THIS issue we review the two greatest movies ever made in Hollywood, *Juarez* and *Confessions of a Nazi Spy*, which are the culmination of democracy in the American film. Both pictures are so stunningly superior to the average that considerable reorientation of the audience will result. NM readers are among the advanced moviegoers who have demanded such films. It is the joyful duty of our friends to support these pictures now, while the general audience is adjusting itself to them.

Meet the Bishop

THE new archbishop of the New York Diocese of the Roman Catholic Church has been appointed from Rome. He is Monsignor Francis J. Spellman, an able Vatican attache, close friend and adviser of Pius XII.

Introducing him, the *New York Times* told how he smuggled out the encyclical of Pius XI, blasting Mussolini's breach of the Concordat and protesting the fascists' savage attacks on Italian Catholics.

At the time, feeling between the church and the fascists was running high. Headquarters of Catholic Action were being raided and portraits of the Pope were being trampled in the street. It seemed desirable that the encyclical should be issued somewhere else than in Italy, and so Monsignor Spellman was selected to make the journey.

With the lengthy encyclical in Latin in his briefcase, the priest from Whitman, Mass., took a train. The journey was arduous, and at one place, according to report, an unidentified fascist took a shot at him while he was waiting for another train at the border station.

After such adventures with fascism, Archbishop Spellman will be delighted to meet his neighbor, Bishop Molloy of the Brooklyn diocese, who was pleased to receive, at a public banquet a few months ago, a decoration from the same Italian fascist government that still exterminates Catholic Action in Italy. They should have many experiences to chat about.

The new archbishop will also be amused to find that in Brooklyn, Father Curran's so-called "Catholic International Truth Society" contains many members of the same political party that took a pot shot at him in Italy. And the Coughlinites in his archdiocese will be surprised, to say the least, to find a Catholic prelate who has actually read the encyclical of Pius XI on racism.

Most edifying, however, should be the archbishop's conversations with that local monsignor who recently wrote to a Catholic labor organization that "If Pope Leo XIII had known about the American labor leaders of today, he would never have written his encyclicals on labor and social injustices."

In Defense of Optimism

Samuel Sillen remarks upon the seductiveness of despair voiced by some of our unhappy warriors against fascism.

IN HIS review of Ruth McKenney's *Industrial Valley* some time ago, Malcolm Cowley took a friendly crack at *NEW MASSES*. Cowley was enthusiastic about the book as a whole. "Even though it is based completely on fact," he wrote, "I offer it as one of our best collective novels." But he was troubled by the brief concluding section, in which Miss McKenney "writes as a politician instead of an artist, and her political judgment is weakened by the mood of bitterly determined optimism that now prevails at *NEW MASSES*."

Cowley's distrust of "bitterly determined optimism" was reflected last week in his review of John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*. Again, he expressed enthusiasm for the book as a whole. And again, he was bothered by its most hopeful portion. After the Joads reach California, Cowley says, the interludes are spoken in a shriller voice: "The author now has a thesis—that the migrants will unite and overthrow their oppressors—and he wants to argue, as if he weren't quite sure of it himself."

It may be that I am a victim of that cheerful mood which now prevails at *NEW MASSES*, but I can't for the life of me see the literary point of Cowley's objections. The concluding section of Ruth McKenney's book and the later interludes of Steinbeck's novel are neither forced nor shrill. They state the positive implication of both books, and that implication is certainly not pessimistic. The rubber workers of Akron did win a superb victory, after all, and only a bitterly determined pessimist will say that the victory was an accident that is not likely to be repeated in other situations. And the migratory workers on the West Coast are moving very definitely toward the same kind of effective organization—by the way, there is a very interesting reference in Steinbeck's novel to the struggles of the Akron workers.

There have been novels, of course, in which victories came too easy. They were slapped on. They did not grow organically out of the characters and action of the story, nor did they correspond to victories in real life. Everybody agrees by now that this sort of novel is entirely unconvincing. But that does not mean that a realistic optimism in fiction is a bad thing. Granville Hicks made an important point in his review of *The Grapes of Wrath* last week: "No writer of our time has a more acute sense of economic forces, and of the way they operate against the interests of the masses of the people, and yet Steinbeck is never for a moment close to despair. The Joads at the end of the book face certain dis-

aster, and, having got to know and love them, one bitterly resents it. But, though the book ends on the note of pathos, it is an optimistic book. Steinbeck can afford to show without mitigation the tragedy of the Joads because he knows so well the only basis for hope in our times." Of course Steinbeck has a thesis. His novel would have been less true and less great if he did not have one.

I suspect that a larger issue is involved in the reaction to these particular books. What is involved, ultimately, is a frame of mind, a way of looking at what is going on in the world today. Cowley's remark about *NEW MASSES* is not an isolated one. Other writers have expressed a certain resentment toward our "bitterly determined optimism." There are those who seem almost pleased with themselves for having "predicted" the defeat of Spain at a time when we kept insisting that victory was possible. Others are a little impatient with us for not abandoning the people of Britain and France as the hopeless victims of Chamberlain and Daladier. "It's no use," they say. "The eggs cannot be unscrambled." Not a few have already "conceded" the 1940 elections to the Republican Party. Who has not met the complaint that in these difficult days it is impossible to write because "honest writing" (I believe that is the phrase) must be gloomy and hopeless, "politically suspect"?

There was a time, not so long ago, when many of the poetry manuscripts that came into this office could sing nothing but the final vict'ry. The sunsets at the end of every stanza were brilliantly red. All the problems of the here and now disappeared when viewed

from the high peaks of the future. These detours around the present were not, I submit, optimistic. They were no more optimistic than those many poems which come in today, poems that, like Lear, curse the seed which is propagating a new generation. They are obsessed with a feeling of guilt for having brought human beings into such a horrible world. The pressure of a defeat in Spain, a Chamberlain betrayal, a Hitler pogrom, and a WPA slash is so intense that the very fact of living seems intolerably hateful to these writers. The one type of poem was pessimistic because it ran away from the complexity of the present to the solutions of a future which could only be achieved by grappling with unpleasantness now. The other type is pessimistic because it can see nothing but the depressing headlines in the afternoon newspaper.

Our defeats are real, and there is no sense in pretending that they are not. There is even less sense in being floored by them, because that is obviously the condition for further defeats. An optimism based on a refusal to recognize our setbacks is shortsighted, and it might well prove to be fatal. A pessimism based on our failure to understand the strength—and what is more important, the potential strength—of the people's movements in the world is contemptible, and it will certainly prove to be fatal. *NEW MASSES* does not whistle in order to keep up its courage; it whistles because its courage is deeply rooted in a philosophy and a program that can and will work. If we were isolationists, we would long ago have died of a broken heart. If we felt that the victory of fascism in this country was inevitable, we would suffer from chronic melancholy. If we did not appreciate the meaning of the Soviet Union, if we had to publish Edmund Wilson's demoralizing stuff every two or three weeks, we would resent cheerful faces.

If the best of our contemporary writers are optimistic, it is *because* they are bitterly determined. The optimism of these writers is not the complacency of those Victorian writers who believed that progress operated in the universe independently of human effort. It is not an ostrich-optimism. Elliott Paul's *The Stars and Stripes Forever* is an optimistic book because it recognizes the might of a modern industrialist, and because, beyond that, it discovers the superior might of an aroused and organized body of workers. This is true of Steinbeck's new book. It is true of Ruth McKenney's. Nobody will say that Richard Wright cushions the horrors of lynching and the oppression of the Negro people; and yet *Uncle Tom's Children* is anything but a de-



Frank Davidson

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fealist book. Edwin Lanham's *The Stricklands* has the same quality of "bitterly determined optimism." So, in real life, with the boys of the International Brigade, the flyers from Moscow to New York, the Angelo Herndons and Tom Mooneys, the marchers in the May Day parade, the Newspaper Guild men on strike in Chicago, and the workers in the German underground movement. The editors of *NEW MASSES* are in good company and they plan to stay there. If anything, they will become more, not less confident; more, not less optimistic.

SAMUEL SILLEN.

Liberal's Self-Portrait

Oswald Garrison Villard's memoirs reviewed by John Stuart.

INHERITED wealth created opportunities for young Oswald Garrison Villard—Harvard under Mr. Eliot, travel, ownership of a newspaper. His memoirs (*Fighting Years: Memoirs of a Liberal Editor*, Harcourt, Brace & Co., \$3.75) lack the usual narrative of early uphill struggle. In fact, his boyhood was so insulated by the magnificence of a Dobbs Ferry estate, a stifling private schooling, and an introverted though devoted family life that for a moment you ask how Mr. Villard managed to survive it.

But the reason is apparent. Mr. Villard inherited more than wealth. On the maternal side, grandfather William Lloyd Garrison endowed him with troubled feelings for the Negro, consideration for the rights of women, a blazing moral righteousness, and a burning pacifism. Mr. Villard's father, one of the powerful capitalists in the days of James Hill and Collis Huntington, was, despite his stock operations, a man of cultural distinction. He had come to America from Germany with strong republican sympathies and worked as a Civil War correspondent with the Northern armies before building his transportation empire. Both father and grandsire were internationalists, both were free traders, both abhorred war on any grounds, and both were disciples of Manchester liberalism. That defined Oswald Garrison Villard's career; and the proof is in his glowing tribute to his father, whose beliefs he accepted to the point of being his father's intellectual image.

Mr. Villard has held steadfastly to these convictions throughout his journalistic life. He has made it a virtue not to question them in the presence of the new world realities which have antiquated the liberalism founded on a free capitalism. The reader of these memoirs is astounded by the absence of any effort by Villard to reexamine his outlook or to see why his liberalism could today be nothing more than a drop of water in the vast desert of moribund capitalism. This incapacity for readjustment to change has left him frustrated and despairing, and the only solace he finds is in the small but important victories for which he fought.

With no sound comprehension of the forces moving the times, Mr. Villard has been led to place his faith in the top men who repeatedly

betrayed his hopes. He learned next to nothing from what he saw in Washington in the pre-war days while he was political correspondent for his *New York Post*. He knew Wilson and was on friendly terms with his Cabinet members. He saw the country slowly drawn into the war over his vociferous protests and those of the small bloc of objectors. The conniving at Versailles outraged him. The treaty itself he denounced in the pages of the *Nation*. The brutality of the government in Haiti and Nicaragua, the oppression heaped upon the Negroes, the corruption in the Albany Legislature, the murder of Sacco and Vanzetti—all these he fought as violations of morality. If the violations persisted they were the acts of wicked men whom Mr. Villard must convert to his own sense of justice. But the attempts at conversion were rarely successful. During the treaty-making in Paris Villard tried to inform Wilson of the suffering of the German people wrought by the Allies' blockade and to beg him to be merciful. The President would not listen. Mr. Villard never asked himself why justice was not part of the imperialist game of plunder. He could only retreat to the editorial chair to bewail the callousness of officialdom.

Neither Villard's everlasting rush from celebrity to celebrity, nor his mixing with the leading governmental circles, added to his education. He was too easily impressed by the spoken or written word. And when the deed disappointed him, he could only label the doer as deceitful and selfish. It would be wrong to say that Mr. Villard was entirely naive. He was, for example, never fooled by the ace of jingoes, Leonard Wood, by Colonel House, or by Henry Ford and his fantastic peace ship. But the fact that he was taken in so often by the glamour of a reputation reveals also his isolation from the people. He has never found strength in those without name or position. The pages of his autobiography are conspicuously lacking in experiences with the men and women who toil and hunger and who have never heard of the *Nation* or read Mr. Villard's indignant pieces. There is hardly an anecdote about workers or farmers or plain everyday people which Mr. Villard might tell with joy as having given him some insight into what America feels and hopes for. If Mr. Villard has ever been in a union hall he fails to say so. If he has participated in people's movements by contributing checks and advice, there is no sign that he ever took part in them in the rank-and-file sense.

Combine this peculiar aloofness with inflexibility and you have the chronic ailment of Villard liberals. Their enlightened humanitarianism impels them to counter any encroachments on the good life. But what they have not learned is that liberalism of and for itself is not enough; and, moreover, that the battle for liberty, peace, and security is subject to continuous transformations. There never was a harder lesson to learn and those who fail to master it are left only with kindly intentions which are of little avail. Mr. Villard, for example, still clings to the pacifism of 1914-17 as the answer to today's war-

ridden world. The meaning is clear: Mr. Villard and the men and women like him have simply not given thought to changed processes to meet the challenges of a world moving at catastrophic speed. They are willing to make the fight for democracy but without a realistic program—and frequently on terms of courtesy to the enemy. Mr. Villard's life is tragic evidence that this credo of treadmill liberalism will not work.

JOHN STUART.

“Mexico Marches”

J. H. Plenn gives an authentic picture of our southern neighbor.

J. H. PLENN'S *Mexico Marches* (Bobbs-Merrill, \$3) is a valuable corrective to the meager and often one-sided accounts of Mexican news which an obviously biased press has been supplying. The good-neighbor policy has not, unfortunately, been reflected in the attitude which many newspapers and periodicals have taken with respect to Mexico. The general reader will do well to check his impressions with Mr. Plenn's sympathetic study.

Mr. Plenn launches the introduction of his book with a series of panoramic, swift-moving shots which set the scene for the expropriation of the wells from the foreign oil companies on March 18, 1938, a date which has now assumed the aura of a Mexican national holiday. That moment contained as much drama for Cardenas as the struggle in which he eliminated Calles, Big Boss of Mexico for many years. Mr. Plenn's terse recital of the background history, with all of its tragedy, sordidness, graft, and greed, the obstructionist tactics of the Employers Union of the Petroleum Industry, the courageous stand of Cardenas in the face of violent attacks from all sides, finds its crystallization in the belief that the evolution of Mexico's oil problem had to lead inevitably into the path of expropriation.

Following the pattern set by Gruening in his *Mexico and Its Heritage*, the book treats of the contemporary scene in topical fashion with an engaging colloquial style which in no way detracts from Mr. Plenn's competence as a reporter and scholar. He provides the background of our southern neighbor's history (so necessary for an understanding of Mexico today) from the time of the overthrow of the Diaz government by Madero in 1911 until January 1939, devoting a chapter to Mexico's would-be revolutionary redeemers who followed the counter-revolutionary dictator Huerta. Of these anti-Huertistas—Villa, Zapata, Carranza, de la Huerta, Obregon, and Calles (six men on a horse)—it is the last one, Plutarco Elias, “the terrible Turk” of the Mexican Revolution, who is judged most critically and justifiably condemned by Plenn as the man who forgot his revolutionary oaths when he served as the brake on the revolution of 1917.

The element of drama to be found in Mex-

ico's crises centers about her leading personality, “That Man Cardenas,” whose portrait in this book (part of which appeared in *NEW MASSES* of April 4) is painted richly and with assurance. By way of contrast, Mr. Plenn describes Mexico's mess of kingfish-men, such as Garrido Canabal and Saturnino Cedillo, who loomed as potential threats to the control of Cardenas. He gives a well rounded and enlightening picture of all the important aspects of contemporary Mexico which are dealt with only too infrequently and superficially by our press: big business exploitation; fascist penetration into industry; Nazi spies; demagogues and strong men; the still powerful generals; the new Mexican army; the rise of the trade-union movement, its leaders, rank and file, and the active share of the Communists; the agrarian question from Yucatan to La Laguna; the background and present status of the church-and-state controversy; the achievements of the “Little Red School House”; the renaissance in the arts; and the new national political party.

In his discussion of Pan-American relations Mr. Plenn emphasizes the moral for the United States.

If there is a lesson for us in the Mexican people's sufferings from the *cacique*-kingfish system, it is that authoritarianism, totalitarianism, every kind of bossism, arises automatically when democratic control is relaxed. . . . At home, our best weapon against totalitarianism is to hold rigorously to democratic control, to scotch any abuse of political or economic power, to fight for equal opportunity. This will serve, too, as an inspiring example for the Latin American believers in democratic control. That is the common ground on which permanent friendship with our Latin American neighbors can be built: democratic control—control by the people. . .

JESSE TRENT.

Child Refugees

“Children of Guernica,” by the German exile Hermann Kesten.

AFTER the flying angels of “Christian civilization” had bestowed their benediction on April 26, 1937, there wasn't much left of the holy Basque town of Guernica. Buildings in flames or dust, children without heads, the howling of disemboweled dogs, the dismal stream of refugees fleeing through the fields toward Bilbao and being machine-gunned by the departing Nazi planes—it was a horror story that exploded once and for all Franco's claims as the defender of Christianity. Guernica, of course, had no military significance whatever. But the fascists had just been defeated at Guadalajara.

Impressionistically and with a bitter pen, Hermann Kesten, the German exile who collaborated with Ernst Toller on a play about Mary Baker Eddy, tells the shameful story in *The Children of Guernica* (Alliance, \$2.50). The narrator is a fifteen-year-old Basque boy who has escaped to Paris. At first one feels that the style—simple and yet ironic and mature—is incongruous with the story

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teller, but then one remembers those pictures of Spanish refugee children: the little fists clenched in Popular Front salute, the old, old faces. . . .

Before the sirens screamed there had been Father, the gentle pharmacist who read Cervantes and Lope de Vega and Homer to his seven children, and Uncle Pablo with his belly laugh, and Mother, and dried-up Soces, and the warm sun. "After the crash . . . I could tell my father by his watch chain."

The boy gets to Bilbao where he persuades a priest to take him back to the ruins of Guernica in search of his family. But the priest is shot by a fascist firing squad, and, despairingly, Carlos steals over the maize fields to Bilbao and is shipped to France. The clamoring thousands fighting at the quay for escape, the smoke-thickened nights, the periodic raids, the shivering in *refugios*—all these scenes are painted in those nervous green flashes like the sky in El Greco's *View of Toledo*.

But the final quarter of the book bogs down. Certainly, Kesten—an exile himself—must realize that the bewildered attempts of refugees to strike new roots merit a novel in themselves. As it is, his account of the boy's reunion in Paris with what is left of the family, and the lives of the refugees there, is sketchy and unconvincing. Carlos loves Carmen but Carmen loves Jose, Mother loves Uncle Pablo but Uncle Pablo runs off with Madame Noel—is that all? And it is precisely here that the major weakness underlying an otherwise powerful novel becomes manifest: the failure to present a single character who resists. Only the fascists seem to act; the others either wait or run away. "Your whole morality is nothing more than the fear of death," says the mother to her peace-loving husband. But where are the others: those who fought with shovels and staves and one round of ammunition per day?

Not knowing the German original, this reviewer cannot pass judgment on the accuracy of the translation by Geoffrey Dunlop. But "it moves nevertheless" and moves swiftly and with bite. SIDNEY ALEXANDER.

Brief Review

"Your Taxes," by David H. Richards, a valuable pamphlet.

THE thirty-page pamphlet *Your Taxes*, by David H. Richards (Workers Library Publishers, 3 cents) is an excellent introduction to the question of taxation and tax evasion by the wealthy. It describes those taxes which bear on the people and those which reach the upper crust. The controversial undivided-profits tax is explained in simple, clear language. This is followed by a description of the major tax evasion devices that were disclosed by a congressional committee in 1937. The pamphlet also analyzes taxation in New York. It presents an excellent tax program designed to remedy the defects in present laws.

Your Taxes is a pioneer in a field that has been sadly neglected by many progressives. It deserves to be widely read. E. H.

Hollywood's Greatest Films

Warner Bros. proves how great the screen can be in "Juarez" and "Confessions of a Nazi Spy." . . . The movies defend true democracy in two magnificent exhibits.

IN THE same week, from the same company, the two grandest of American movies have come thundering out of Hollywood. At the Hollywood Theater (N. Y.) we have *Juarez* with Paul Muni, Bette Davis, Brian Aherne, and John Garfield; and at the Strand, *Confessions of a Nazi Spy* with Edward G. Robinson, Francis Lederer, George Sanders, and Paul Lukas. They come as the floodtide of a Hollywood current I have touched upon from time to time—the realization that the movies must serve democracy. That these do is a sign for nationwide huzzahs and a matter of concern for reaction.

Below the Rio Grande, Benito Juarez is as present with the people as Lincoln with us. The small, forbidding Zapotec Indian whose presidency was run over as ruthlessly in 1864 by Louis Napoleon through Maximilian as Hitler and Mussolini through Franco shattered Spain's democracy in 1938, is remote movie material—but something new in Hollywood and close to this kind of democracy rediscovered him. This is his great story—the first movie in America to reach the stature of an important social novel or biography.

In this analogy *Juarez* is a new adventure in the American movie style. The screen is too much a short story as used by Hollywood: nowhere is there precedent for a film as ambitious and full of complex characterizations as this. The craft problem of filling in an understanding portrait of Juarez and his times, and paying heed also to the footless tragedy of Maximilian and Carlota, almost wrecks the balance of the film. Originally it ran four hours and it has been cut to two. Nowhere in Hollywood's custom was there much guide for the writers and director of *Juarez*.

For my taste, and history's, and to fulfill the contemporary meaning sought by the creators of *Juarez*, the Maximilian theme could well have been less important. It is incomprehensible to me that Maximilian's execution was not cut when so many other vital things had to go. Sufficient reason is established for his execution and then the film contains a lingering and sympathetic reversal of emphasis by a few minutes on the execution field; in which the emperor gives a purse to the soldiers and commands them to aim for his heart. The film hews to the historical data with pardonable abridgment and a few dramatic devices not strictly accounted for, such as the last scene in which Juarez visits the chapel where the body of Maximilian lies, to ask forgiveness. Maximilian and Carlota are handled with sympathy; Brian Aherne's masterful characterization of Maximilian, the

Hapsburg oaf, is fully as competent as Muni's Juarez. The movies have accustomed us to black and white villains and heroes. Here the nominal characteristics are reversed: Juarez is cold and ugly, the emperor warm and handsome, and both roles are lighted up with profound psychological understanding. Benito Juarez is democracy incarnate and the Hapsburg is a kind exception to monarchy. These are the hero-villain opposites in the real theme of the story—not Juarez the ugly, and Maximilian the noble. Movie habit discerns history in the persons of great men, following the dictum of Carlyle, and when first the movies bring us issues as much as men, the dramatic problem is highly involved. Ill-equipped movie audiences, never expected to lend themselves to this kind of probing under the surfaces, must go to this picture with new eyes.

As a political event *Juarez* is a proud and heartening thing. When it speaks truthfully

on Mexican history it gets to the heart of Hispano-American relations—Spain today; Cardenas, the true son of Juarez; foreign imperialism in Latin America, in fact the whole problem of rapprochement with Mexico and South America—and its message of democracy and brotherhood is couched in philosophical terms. Not all of the democratic maxims of Juarez come from his life and letters—like Robert Sherwood's Lincoln, Messrs. Huston, MacKenzie, and Reinhardt have written sweetly appropriate speeches of their own.

One of the virtues of this extraordinary film is its attack on racism. When Maximilian raises Tomas Mejia, a full-blooded Indian, to a generalship, the Indian refuses the honor. Maximilian is puzzled. He has not seen in back of him the saurian stares of the Spanish grandees, forbidding poor Mejia to aspire to the prerogatives of their pure blood. In the Indian's stoic glance there is the eloquence



PRESIDENT BENITO JUAREZ, played by Paul Muni, comes alone and unarmed to the capitol of treacherous Vice-President Uradi in the great film "Juarez," now playing at the Hollywood Theater in New York City.

Pages from a Worker's Life

By
WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

William Z. Foster began work when he was seven years old—as a newsboy. The conventional windup for a biography beginning that way would have Foster climbing the ladder to a bank presidency, or perhaps to the ownership of the paper he peddled as a child.

But Foster's life, as everyone now knows, was not of that sort. He began life in the American working-class, and he remains in it. He has advanced, of course, but he has advanced to a position of leadership in the battle for liberation and progress.

Pages from a Worker's Life, Foster's autobiography, tells that story. Foster's experience goes back to the days, before the Panama Canal, when American seamen guided sailing ships around Cape Horn, and what he remembers explains the militancy of the maritime workers. He has worked in agriculture, mining, railroads, building. He has organized workers in the most progressive labor and political groups of the times. He tells the story of the IWW and the 1919 steel strike as a leader.

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of a hundred pamphlets. In another scene, Juarez' traitorous vice-president, Uradi, pleads with Juarez to step aside for the good of the cause—an Indian in the leadership will hurt the movement; why not a Spaniard like Uradi? Juarez, unwilling to believe that his vice-president is a Garner, answers him patiently to the effect that he was chosen by millions of Indians like himself and that he will stick with them.

John Garfield plays Porfirio Diaz—young Diaz the fighter for liberty, not Diaz the old tyrant who betrayed Mexico to the exploiters years later. It has been said that when Mexico needed a traitor a hundred men stepped forward, but those days in the sixties, Mexico flowered with heroes, as many as a people always have. Garfield's attractive, lively young general is grand foil for the patient Juarez, his idol.

Bette Davis has a virtuoso opportunity in Carlota and she wrings every effect from it; the mad scene in Louis Napoleon's palace is a fearfully dramatic business, handled with inspiration by William Dieterle. A fine satiric episode occurs again in Napoleon Third's palace when, while sitting for his portrait, he is interviewed by the American ambassador. The emperor sits on a high wooden horse for Meissonier's huge canvas, chatting cockily with the envoy.

Here is a film with untold potentialities for good will toward maligned Mexico and as an implement of the good-neighbor axis. It is this and something else of dazzling human drama. In conception and execution within the collective art of the motion picture, *Juarez* is Hollywood's grandest film.

All of William Dieterle's directorial work has been in preparation for this great picture. The writing trio of John Huston, Aeneas MacKenzie, and Wolfgang Reinhardt have ruined forever the phony idea that screen writing is merely overpaid and frustrated hacking. This critical Solomon, in anticipation of the Academy Award for the best screenplay of 1939, nominates them each for one-third of an Oscar. The actors can consider this fan mail, and the technical people, not overlooking Perc Westmore—the makeup man responsible for Muni's telling disguise—are hereby thanked, and to the Warner tribe a half-dozen ticker-tape laurels for sponsoring a great social use of their power.

"CONFESSIONS OF A NAZI SPY"

Strictly speaking, there was some pretext for *Juarez* in Warner Bros.' biographical tradition. For *Confessions of a Nazi Spy* there was no Hollywood reason at all, as this shattering attack on Hitler stems from the documentary method, heretofore scorned by "practical" movie makers. The fruitful experiments of men like Joris Ivens and Herbert Kline, and neglected bands like Frontier Films, have at last reached Hollywood. There was no other way to tell the story.

Nazi Spy relates, in semi-fictional reenactments, the story of the spy trials in New York last year, involving Dr. Griebel, Gustav Rumrich, Johanna Hofmann, et al—the small-fry

spies from Nazi Germany. The technique is a considerable improvement on straight documentary style. In an hour and forty-five minutes, and given the immense resources of a Hollywood studio, it is possible to augment the maps, commentator, newsreel clips, montage, and reenactments of the *March of Time* style, with the dramas of individual participants. The documentary film makers have wanted to build around heroes and villains for years—but their material handicaps have prevented it. Joris Ivens began his *Spanish Earth*, you will remember, by pursuing the adventures of a common soldier. But the soldier drops out of the movie for the simple reason that Ivens' actual soldier disappeared, dead or strayed, in the middle of the shooting. The same thing happened to Kline's pretty little heroine in *Crisis* during the confused events in Czechoslovakia before Munich. *Nazi Spy*, in its reenactments made in the safety of sound stage and lot, furnishes these much needed focal characters, and follows them through to the end.

Well, you are almost startled out of your pants to see the Warner Bros. signet fade off the screen, a commentator appear in silhouette, sketching in the background, and then see a Hollywood film wade right into pictures of the Bund, the swastika, the Gestapo, spy rendezvous in a beer hall suspiciously like Maxl's on Eighty-sixth Street, Nazi meetings and camps, scenes on a German liner named the *Bismarck*, but really the *Bremen*, scenes in Goebbels' rat nest in Berlin, Hitler barking, Elite Guards rolling into Austria and Czechoslovakia—to see it laid out on the screen and know it comes from Hollywood is a blow I am still wobbling under. In as choice words as possible—*Confessions of a Nazi Spy* is terrific.

Edward G. Robinson, who would have given away his Cezannes for a chance to play Professor Mamlock, is the G-man who catches the Nazi spies by flattery, cajolery, and a shrewd understanding of them. Francis Lederer plays the egotistical spy, Schneider, a stupid fellow who aspires to great intrigues; George Sanders is the head operator, Schlager, direct from the Fatherland; and Paul Lukas is Dr. Kassel, for which read the Yorkville physician Dr. Ignatius Griebel. Milton Krims and John Wexley, the authors, have given these people real motivations when lesser men would have contrived two-dimensional villains. Lederer, particularly, makes a complete characterization under the powerful direction of Anatol Litvak.

The film reveals that one characteristic of German intrigue which will always lose imperialist Germany's wars—the contempt for the enemy. Although the loose vigilance of democracy allows impunity to much of Nazi arrogance, such as the Gestapo's commuting back and forth on German liners, this film suggests that the Nazi imbecilities are no match for democracy when it gets rolling.

Confessions of a Nazi Spy is a clinical study of Nazi espionage and the grandiose plans for destruction of civilization hatched in the Brown House. It belongs with *Professor*

Mamlock as the heaviest blow the film has dealt Hitler.

I have no hesitation in naming *Juarez* and *Nazi Spy* as Hollywood's two greatest films.
JAMES DUGAN.

Ford on the Air

Henry and Edsel mix propaganda and symphony concerts.

FOR those who enjoy serious music, the Ford Sunday evening hour is one of the choice spots on the air. Although huge expenditures do not necessarily guarantee good entertainment, the Ford Company has succeeded in disposing of its radio appropriation with taste, and in a manner calculated to add to public enjoyment. It presents one of our finest symphony orchestras, in addition to various guest stars of recognized ability. And the result of this carefully planned and attractive musical feature is an estimated following of ten million listeners.

It would be nice to believe that Messrs. Henry and Edsel Ford undertook the weekly expense of \$17,000 for air time over ninety-three stations, plus an even greater amount for talent, for the sole purpose of adding to man's spiritual content, or even advertising motor cars. But after listening to the Sunday programs, one begins to suspect that neither the desire to enrich the human soul nor the urge to boost automobile sales is the primary motivation behind these weekly airings.

For the Ford broadcasts do not confine themselves strictly to musical entertainment. There is a charming little interlude in which W. J. Cameron of the Ford Company, one-time editor of the anti-Semitic *Dearborn Independent* and now connected with the Anglo-Saxon Federation, another crusader against the Jews, delivers a homy, five-minute, heart-to-heart chat, smartly spiced with all the ingredients of tory propaganda.

The Ford technique is good. First it dopes you with an anaesthetic of the "Three B's," and then jabs you with a hypodermic of anti-union, anti-New Deal germs. If the toxin takes, well and good. If it doesn't, the Ford boys will try again next Sunday.

Naturally, the Ford Company must give a reason for sponsoring these weekly comics, and it states it through the lips of "Charlie McCarthy" Cameron. Said Mr. Cameron in one of the broadcasts (Sept. 12, 1937): "If public opinion is to get anywhere, it must have the right as well as the left of the facts." This remark would lead one to expect honesty from the Ford Forum, which is precisely the idea the Ford boys mean to convey. But let us see to what extent the air waves have been purified by their message of truth: "About fifty million of our people are employed," said Cameron on Feb. 6, 1938, "when everyone is working. Of that only 8 percent belong to unions."

The implication behind that statement is obvious: unions, presumably, are n.g. because only a small percentage of workers belong. It is also in harmony with the Ford theme song,

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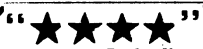
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"Why should men pay a union to work in my plant?"

Cameron's remark on May 22, 1938, that strikes caused 93,000,000 wasted days, sounds very serious if one looks at it purely from the point of view of a Ford efficiency expert. But from the worker's standpoint, a strike is hardly a wasted move when it brings increased wages and decreased hours, better working conditions, and the right to bargain collectively.

The real leaders of labor, so Cameron says, are the leaders of industry. Why? Because they create employment. And to those in favor of unionization he says (Jan. 23, 1938): "Suppose you do 'get' Ford, will that help others?" Unfortunately, a microphone is a one-way instrument. Cameron can't hear twelve million unemployed shout back, "Yes." But Ford is really a friend of labor, and if you don't believe it, ask Mr. Cameron. On Nov. 14, 1937, he told a gag about the Ford Company generously giving employment to a sixty-five-year-old man who was denied a job with another organization because of union activities. Of course, he suppressed the number of men Ford has fired for the same reason.

As is characteristic of the Cameron comics, Ford's marionette never comes out openly against anything; not even the New Deal. But he takes many a backhanded slap at the present administration. For instance, on March 13, 1938: "Leg irons must be taken off the nation's productive forces." In other words, let's take the country out of the hands of Washington and entrust it once more to the tender mercies of the bankers.

Cameron insists that the resolutions of youth conferences are adult-made. Young America is evidently misquoted when it expresses its desire for security. And his definition of a secure society is remarkably enlightening: "A collection of individuals who have made themselves secure constitute the secure society" (Jan. 29, 1939). Unfortunately, he fails to explain the formula for making oneself secure. Probably it just happens. You wake up one morning and find yourself that way.

Such is the character of the Cameron interlude for which the symphony concert serves as window-dressing. Cameron knows his business—and so does Ford. Ten million Americans each Sunday, for thirty-nine weeks of the year, absorb their propaganda in behalf of the pet ideas of American reaction. It is a potent poison.
 JOHN VERNON.

Capek's Last Play

"The Mother" deals with pacifism and Europe today.

KAREL CAPEK's last play, *The Mother*, which opened at the Lyceum (N. Y.) last week with Nazimova in the title role, is an intellectual's tortured study of the ideas surging in Praha on the eve of its downfall. The thesis of the play, obscure until the final curtain, is that pacifism is untenable because every in-

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dividual sooner or later discovers a cause for which he must fight.

Nazimova, as the Mother, sees her menfolk die one after another for ideals she cannot understand—her husband to build an empire, one son to find the cause of yellow fever, another to perfect a faster bombing plane. Of twins, one dies for Communism, one for fascism. To prevent her youngest son from dying to save his country when it is invaded, she advances every known pacifist argument. But when the Mother hears that the enemy has bombed a school and killed children, she sends her last boy out to fight.

Capek, one suspects, is no more able than the Mother to evaluate the causes for which her sons die. He makes no moral distinction between the doctor and the aviator. His sympathy is clearly with the Communist twin against the Nazi, but he regards them merely as two manifestations of pugnacity and in the end shows them united in defense of their country. If Capek had lived another year the shallowness of this conception would have been revealed to him brutally. He would have seen the Nazi open the gates of Czechoslovakia to the invader, destroy Czech culture, and reveal himself as the bomber of babies against whom even the Mother was aroused to fight.

Technically, the piece is not one of Capek's best. It is too full of ghosts. By the end of the second act, three-fourths of the cast are dead, but continue to wander on and speak their lines as glibly as ever. Some scenes are so protracted and repetitive that even Nazimova's endless variety cannot keep them from palling. Too much of the action is filled in by a ubiquitous radio.

But the play is worth seeing if only because it is an earnest, honest effort to deal with the forces that are tearing Europe to pieces today. It is also the last work of a great playwright, recently deceased, and one of the last productions of the great Czechoslovakian theater, recently murdered.

The young men of the cast are better than the average young men of a Nazimova cast. The play is copyrighted, it seems worth noting, by Mother, Inc. BARNABY HOTCHKISS.

Two Art Exhibits

Thomas Hart Benton's paintings . . .
The outdoor sculpture show.

AT THE foot of the staircase leading down to the Associated American Artists' new duplex showroom in New York, there hangs listing No. 5 from the catalogue of the Thomas Hart Benton show. This is Benton's *Self-Portrait*, a study in belligerence, very possibly arranged strategically thus to intimidate the incoming public into a state of psychological subservience. However fierce on canvas, Benton in the flesh smiled obligingly at the press and art-elect last April 17 at the grand opening of the new galleries. Everything on the mezzanine floor of 711 Fifth Avenue tends toward the sumptuous—noticeably the staff of

well groomed sales officials that people the many large and elegantly equipped modern rooms. The general effect is that of a department store of art. (There are notices reading "Original Signed Lithographs, \$5; with mats, \$7.50.") All this may prove to be the opening chapter of a great success story, for the appeal is of a designedly "popular" nature, and judging from past history, it would seem that the public enjoys being put on the skids by these master entrepreneurs.

Somehow the Benton paintings and the atmosphere seem to complement each other. For Benton remains the showman of the American scene. The thematic material that springs from his flashy palette is indigenous enough, but his interpretation becomes increasingly and (in view of existing conditions) unwarrantedly romantic. He has extracted the surface element of real situations to the point of cliché, and at present works his homely Americana into a sophisticated paint scheme foreign to the matter. The lack of really profound feeling resulting in this increased preoccupation with the detail of pattern is best evidenced in the chromoesque *Pussy Cat and Roses*. In the 1939 trek toward "pure art" all the values of the early simple drawings are jettisoned en route. The fussy still-lives, *Susanna and the Elders*, and *Persephone*, while technically an improvement over the earlier mural paintings—the figures have less of that stereopticon quality—nevertheless exude an aura of decadence which we surely have not yet attained. At least Steinbeck does not see us so. The apparent conclusion is that the Benton retrospective show (1908-39) testifies to a case of mental retrogression complicated by a touch of exhibitionism.

OUTDOOR SCULPTURE EXHIBIT

No matter what the weather, it is much healthier over at the corner of Thirty-ninth Street and Park Avenue where the Sculptors Guild is holding its second annual outdoor exhibition. The vacant lot, which responded favorably to treatment last spring, has been even more advantageously landscaped this year by the artists themselves, and from ten o'clock to sundown, for 10 cents admission, the enterprising citizen may wander at leisure during the month of May through the earnest representations of some sixty-odd American sculptors. Here is a good and honest show, pointing the spirit and progressive unity of a growing young group. Here, also, is a heterogeneous expression amazing in view of the usual implication of group work, the majority of groups being characterized by their similarity of esthetic outlook. Here the theories embodied are as various as the media employed in their embodiment and the inevitable contrasts as refreshing as they are sometimes startling. Here that democratic prerogative, free choice of subject matter, is most manifestly employed by the members of the guild, and often nothing but a piece of shrubbery divides an academic torso from a tragic indictment of the fascist invader.

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ANALYSIS OF THE NEWS of the Week every Sunday evening at 8:30 p.m. at the Workers School, 35 East 12 Street, 2nd floor. Admission 20 cents.

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From the University of Texas, in Austin, we received the following letter and a contribution of \$5.

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Letters of this sort provide the impetus for NM's drive. As long as we can rest assured that we are giving the facts and serving those who want truth and decency, we will fight to keep this magazine alive, and we will urge other progressives to aid us in bringing guidance and a message of hope. On page 5 we tell you of the drive's current standing.

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