

Truths About the Red Army *by Lucien Zacharoff*

# NEW MASSES

FIFTEEN CENTS

March 5, 1940

General Graves Tells  
How the USA Plotted  
Against the Soviets

*by James Morison*

The 'Case' Against New Masses

*by Joseph North and A. B. Magil*

Richard Wright's 'Native Son'

*reviewed by Samuel Sillen*

The Dilemma of Clifford Odets

*by Alvah Bessie*

# Between Ourselves

WE DON'T know if any of J. Edgar Hoover's merry men were in the audience at Webster Hall last Monday night, but if they were we would dearly love to see the report they sent their boss. It would be worth publishing. Of course, it would severely tax any writer to get down on paper the spirit of the 2,500 in that hall—but we suppose the FBI reporters have special symbols for registering that kind of thing. We hope they made everything clear to the administration; that these 2,500 in Webster Hall were talking up for the overwhelming majority of the American folk: they may not agree with what you have to say, but damn it all, the man's got a right to his say. And we'll see to it he gets that right! The protest meeting at Webster Hall proved one of the finest meetings NM ever held. We feel proud of it. All our tribulations are made more than worthwhile. We feel honored to go to bat for people like those in that hall—and those people were a cross-section of America's 130,000,000.

They showed the persons on the platform where they stood; and the speakers responded. Everybody who talked that night afterward admitted he spoke better than he knew how; the enthusiasm of the audience transmitted itself to each person on the program. The result was something we feel sure the authorities will have to reckon with. Prof. Edwin Berry



Lucien Zacharoff

Mr. Zacharoff has written more about the Red Army than any other American writer. He is a commentator on military and flying matters for newspapers, magazines, and syndicates here and abroad. His book "This is War" is subtitled "Everyman's Guide to Modern Warfare" and is a popular, informative encyclopedia on military matters for the general reader. His series on the Red Army in NM will cover the military and cultural activities of the Soviet armed forces.

Burgum as chairman keynoted the meeting with his earnest plea for the right of free press. All speakers, whether they agreed with the full program of the magazine or not, indicated their willingness to go all the way in guaranteeing that right to NM.

We don't know exactly how it comes about, but when it does, it gets you in a way you can't describe. We're talking about that speech of George Murphy, national publicity director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. When he was through the audience was on its feet, honoring him for his eloquence and deepfelt sincerity. His topic, "New Masses—Modern Abolitionist," brought home to the audience the realization that a large part of our population is still in a state of semi-slavery. When he said, "I can't tell you how I feel to be here. I feel I am at home," it did something to everybody in the hall. That's the way the meeting went all night. It should teach somebody down in Washington a lesson.

The other speakers—every one of them—approximated the simple eloquence of Mr. Murphy. Joseph North, Maurice Becker, who described the Wilsonian suppression of the old *Masses*; Arthur Kober, author of *Having Wonderful Time*, explained "A Screen Writer's Stake in Freedom of Speech"; Ruth McKenney, "A Writer's Stake in NEW MASSES"; George Selde, who described the greatest paper in the world—the *New York Times*—whose only fault is that it is a "damned liar"; A. B. Magil, and John L. Spivak, whose masterful collection speech drew contributions of \$748, a sum remarkable for that type of meeting. It all added up to something—something big.

Next week we will publish the letters of greeting sent to the meeting from Theodore Dreiser, Mike Gold, who couldn't attend because of illness, Art Young, Rockwell Kent, and many others.

Perhaps this week we will give you a sample of the letters and their spirit—this from Shaemas O'Sheel:

"My present occupation is helping progressive forces of the American Labor Party to organize in upstate counties. It happens that I must leave New York for another tour of Hudson River counties today. Therefore I cannot be with the host that will gather tomorrow night in defense of freedom of the press.

"But I will appreciate it if you can make part of the record of that gathering, my enthusiastic adherence to that cause and specifically to the defense of NEW MASSES. I have so

often crossed verbal swords with your editors, I have often made myself, I fear, a nuisance by my letters, my arguments, my criticisms, that I can claim a special right to take a humble place among your defenders. It is known that men will fight like cornered wildcats when they're starving. Let NEW MASSES be suppressed or censored either by the softspoken lawyers of the Department of Justice or the heavy-handed gorillas of the FBI, and I will be reduced to mental and spiritual starvation; and against that I will fight.

"Maybe it can happen here, but it won't."

The editors of NM herewith wish to thank all who participated in that splendid meeting on behalf of the right of free press; all in the audience, all on the platform. We feel more certain than ever that the magazine will live on to express the deepest desires of the American people. We know that the spirit of the Webster Hall meeting cannot be stifled. With that assurance, we will redouble our work to make this magazine worthy of its readers, those whom Joseph North saluted as "Fellow Editors of NEW MASSES."

## Who's Who

MARION GREENSPAN is an American journalist who was in Spain during most of the civil war. . . . James Morison is a regular contributor to NM. . . . Adam Lapin is Washington correspondent for NM and the *Daily Worker*. . . . Alfred J. Brenner is a young short story writer and critic.

## Flashbacks

ON March 5, 1770, a Negro sailor who was a runaway slave talked to some of his fellow sailors on the subject of the indignities to which Bostonians were subjected by the British soldiers. The Negro and his followers later pelted one particularly aggressive soldier with snowballs and sticks. They even stood up to the gun muzzles of a squad of seven Redcoats, and showed their contempt for the foreign oppressors by striking their bayonets with sticks. Suddenly one soldier fired, then all of them. First to fall was the Negro leader, Crispus Attucks. His death in this, the Boston Massacre, made a Negro the initial casualty of the American Revolution.

## This Week

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Art work by Mischa Richter, Crockett Johnson.

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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# NEW MASSES

VOLUME XXXIV

MARCH 5, 1940

NUMBER 11

## They Won't Take No

**O**UR creditors won't take No for an answer. They are reasonable men; but for months the printer, the paper company, and other business firms have been extending credit to NEW MASSES on the promise that they will be paid soon after our financial drive gets under way. Those promises were made in *your* name, in the name of all our readers and supporters. We were confident that you would make good those promises.

Today our campaign is four weeks old. Of the \$25,000 needed to keep the magazine afloat, only \$2,526.06 has been received to date. Our creditors, who are reasonable men provided you pay them within a reasonable time, are beginning to become unreasonable. *And they won't take No for an answer.*

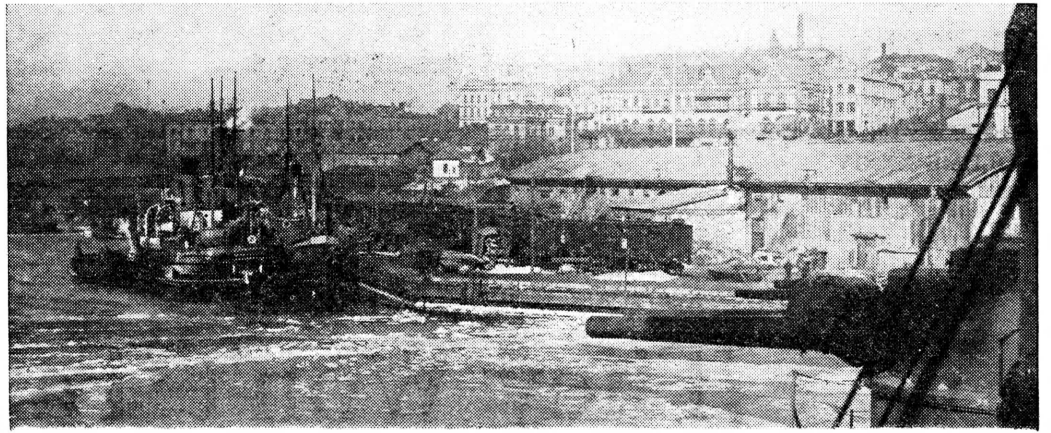
We have told you before: this is a war on two fronts. The Department of Justice has started a grand jury investigation of NEW MASSES. This is a disguised witch-hunt, an attack on freedom of the press by subterfuge. Now the pressure has also been sharply increased on the other front—the financial. The government investigation has caused our creditors to crack down. They fear for their investments. If NEW MASSES is forced to close because of failure to meet its financial obligations, the government's job will be over. The only American national weekly that opposes the war and the pro-war policies of the Roosevelt administration will have been silenced. *Are you going to let that happen?*

We are fighting not only for ourselves, but for all who love peace and democracy. We are fighting to defend the Bill of Rights. Won't you send your contribution—as big as you can possibly make it—*today?* Also, phone or write five friends at once and get donations from them. Speed is of the essence! Use the coupon on page 26.

*The Editors.*

## Intervention!

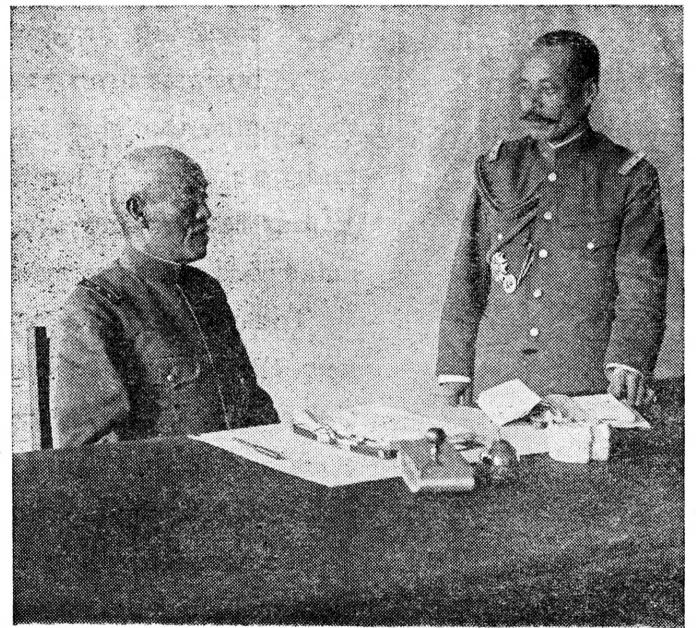
**J**APANESE, British, Czech, Chinese, White Guard Russian, and American soldiers invaded Siberia in 1918, avowedly to guard military stores, maintain railway service, and to permit passage of Czech troops through Vladivostok to the Western Front. As General Graves relates in *America's Siberian Adventure*, Japanese troops supported the White Guard bandit leader, Semeonov; the British backed Admiral Kolchak; Czechs refused to fight and General Graves refused to permit Americans to intervene in the attempt to restore czarism. These photographs of scenes in the Far East in 1919 have never been published before.



VLADIVOSTOK HARBOR, from the deck of the "USS Brooklyn," ordered to Vladivostok to head off Japanese seizure of the port.



CONFERENCE between Americans, White Guard Russians, and a Czech officer in Vladivostok, Jan. 3, 1919, at American Army Headquarters.



GENERAL OTANI, commanding Japanese interventionist forces in Siberia (left), and Lieutenant General Yuhi.



AMERICAN SOLDIER guarding the Consulate in Vladivostok during Major General Graves' stay.



AMERICAN ENGINEERS, members of the Engineer Corps, USA, sent to Siberia in 1918 to keep the Trans-Siberian Railroad open.

# How the US Plotted Against the Soviets

The amazing story behind official and unofficial dealings as revealed by Major General Graves, USA. What the State Department admits.

“WAIT and see” was the United States government’s policy in 1917-18 toward the new Soviet Russian state. Propaganda succeeded at first in concealing from the American people the truth about conditions in the new socialist land. In the West, General Mannerheim, with the aid of Germany and the Allies, overthrew the Finnish People’s Republic, while British and American troops, assisted by Russian White Guards, deployed from Archangel southward in north Russia. Maj. Gen. William S. Graves received personal instructions from Secretary of War Newton D. Baker to take an expeditionary force to Vladivostok, there to participate with the other Allied powers in interventionist action.

In his book, *America’s Siberian Adventure*, issued in 1931, but now out of print, General Graves publishes the *aide memoire* handed to him by Mr. Baker, in which it is clearly stated that the United States will in no way interfere with Russian experiments in self-government. This historic document said in part:

It is the clear and fixed judgment of the government of the United States, arrived at after repeated and very searching reconsiderations of the whole situation in Russia, that military intervention there would add to the present sad confusion in Russia rather than cure it, injure her rather than help her, and that it would be of no advantage in the prosecution of our main design, to win the war against Germany. It cannot, therefore, take part in such intervention or sanction it in principle.

What was the official position of the United States government? General Graves says:

The records show that President Wilson, about March 15, 1918, sent a cable to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, which stated, in part: “The whole heart of the people of the United States is with the people of Russia in the attempt to free themselves forever from autocratic government and become the masters of their own life” [page 29].

Consul General Harris, on June 8, 1918, wired from Omsk concerning the American position:

... The President of the United States has issued specific instructions to all official representatives of the United States in Russia to in no way interfere, recognize, or become mixed up with any faction or partisan strife in Russia or Siberia [page 48].

The secretary of war, the President, and the American consul general at Omsk are thus clearly on record as to America’s non-intervention policy. But behind the scenes something else happened. Says General Graves:

At practically the same time that President Wil-

## General Graves Dies

ON Tuesday morning, Maj. Gen. William S. Graves died of coronary thrombosis at his home in Shrewsbury, N. J. He was seventy-four years old. The fame of General Graves will survive that of many other generals whose exploits won military successes for their countries. General Graves won no great battles on the field of war. As commander of the American Expeditionary Force in Siberia in 1918-20, his victories were for the rights of the Russian people to self-determination, for democracy and against autocracy. He won these victories by observing to the letter his orders—which were not to interfere in Russian internal affairs. He remained to the end a staunch friend of the Soviet Union and an opponent of imperialist war.

NEW MASSES mourns his passing as the loss of a force for good in American life. We are proud to be able to continue the publication next week of excerpts from *America’s Siberian Adventure*, a book which will be an enduring monument to a great American.

son was expressing the views above referred to, and was forcefully resisting the Allies in their efforts to induce the United States to agree to military intervention in Siberia, Mr. Francis, the American ambassador to Russia, stated that the reports of Mr. MacGowan, American consul at Irkutsk, indicated Germans were preparing to take the Siberian railway.

March 22, 1918, Mr. Francis stated:

“My advices from MacGowan and other reliable sources charge Sternberg, who is a pro-German Swede, with aiding and directing organization and arming prisoners. Recently, MacGowan wires that uniforms of German officers are only partly concealed by Russian overcoats.”

On March 25, 1918, Mr. Francis wired Colonel Robins, Red Cross, at Moscow:

“... Cable, which is in my private code, indicates Department has heard that Soviet leaders acting under direction of German General Staff...”

Mr. Robins, in reply to this, stated:

“Regard suggestion of German control Soviet government as absurd and impossible. If Washington credits this contention, why are we wasting time here?”

On April 6, 1918, Mr. Robins wired Mr. Francis: “Soviet government believes America can prevent hostile intervention, and if Japan advances, it means that America has consented.”

On March 15, 1918, Mr. MacGowan, Irkutsk, wired Mr. Francis, in code:

“Trainload prisoners passed Eastward twelfth, with dozen machine guns, is stated, and two thousand stopped here. There is concurrent testimony that 3- and 6-inch guns are arriving, two of latter already commanding railway bridge and station. In daily machine-gun practice cadet school. Informant, hitherto reliable, states German major generals, even other officers, over thirty prisoners arrived and general staff expected from Petrograd to direct destruction of bridges, tunnels, and execute plan defenses. German, Turkish, and Austrian officers at times throng station and streets with insignia of rank visible beneath Russian military overcoats. Every prisoner whether at large or in camp has rifle.”

Subsequent events have shown that these supposed facts reported to Mr. Francis by Mr. MacGowan were someone’s imagination. The object of these reports is, however, perfectly clear. The representatives of England, France, and Japan had found in Mr. MacGowan a ready and willing listener to reports as to the danger to be expected from the German and Austrian prisoners who were confined in Siberia [pages 30-32].

At the very moment the policy of the United States, with reference to Russia, was being prepared in the State Department, solemnly assuring the Russian people and notifying all Allied nations that the United States would not intervene in the internal conflicts of the Russian people, the consul general of the United States in Siberia, Mr. E. H. Harris, a representative of the State Department, was telling the people of Siberia that the United States was a party to the contemplated intervention in the internal conflicts of the Russian people.

This statement cannot be refuted because any action against the then dominant Russian power in Siberia (Kolchak) must be construed as taking sides in Russian internal conflicts.

How could such a situation arise? One can only surmise, as no explanation was ever made by the State Department and no change was ever made in the policy of the government in so far as this policy applied to the use of United States troops in Siberia, and judging from the practice of Consul General Harris, his instructions, received through Peking, were never modified.

The United States, therefore, had its representatives of the State Department and War Department working at cross purposes from the beginning of military action in Siberia [page 53].

When I left the United States for Siberia, I did not anticipate that I would be involved in the political squabbles of the Far East, but very soon after my arrival in Vladivostok, I learned that every act of an American, civil or military representatives, was represented as designed for political effect in the Far East. This was true of all Russians and practically all Allies.

At the time of my arrival in Vladivostok, when the Allied representatives spoke of Russians, they meant the old czarist officials, who felt it was then safe enough for them to appear in their gorgeous uniforms every evening, and parade down Svetlanskaya, the principal thoroughfare. The other class was called “Bolsheviks,” although, as a matter of fact, the old czarist officials did not

claim to be in favor of the reestablishment of a czar in Russia, and the Russians called Bolsheviks did not claim to be in favor of the Soviet government. The line of cleavage between these two classes, however, was distinct enough for anyone to recognize. There was no such thing as the mingling of the two. The old czarist officials could see nothing but meanness, rascality, and everything else bad, in any Russian who did not agree with them as to what should be done to restore the Motherland to a pre-revolution status. As the Allies were so opposed to bolshevism, and every form and degree of liberalism was classed as such, they were dealing almost exclusively with the former czarist officials. The word "bolshevism" was so extended as to easily take in the Zemstvos, a body elected by the people, with a right of suffrage extended to all males and females of twenty-one years of age. This situation resulted in all activities in Vladivostok, such as telegraph, mail, passport, and civil control of the town, being in the hands of former czarist officials. They were not slow to organize so as to make the most of this advantage and were soon reaping their revenge on Russians who had dared to act contrary to their beliefs [page 65].

Soon after the Armistice, the representatives of England and France began to criticize me for my failure to cooperate, and spoke of the Russian faction supported by them as "the forces of law and order," and by implication, charging other Russian factions as representing lawlessness and disorder. This designation was not in accord with the facts, and, undoubtedly, was adopted because it sounded well where real conditions were not known [page 68].

The different policies followed by the representatives of the United States in European Russia and in Siberia unfortunately create a justifiable belief that the United States was not entirely frank and candid in its dealings with the Russian people [page 71].

There were American soldiers in Archangel during the time Mr. Poole was [American] consul general, and if reports are true, and there is no doubt in my mind as to their accuracy, the direction of American troops was turned over to the British. A participant in the campaign has recorded his impressions in a book entitled *Archangel, the American War with Russia*. In this work, on page 30, the writer says:

"No war, but in the province of Archangel, on six scattered battlefronts, American soldiers, under British command, were 'standing to' behind snow trenches and improvised barricades, while soldiers of the Soviet cause crashed Pom Pom projectiles at them, and shook them with high explosives and shrapnel, blasted them with machine-guns, and sniped at any reckless head that showed from cover!"

On page 75 of this same book, the writer states: "Also there was an American Consulate, with an American consul general, DeWitt C. Poole, who at times appeared to take over a supervision of the American share in this strange, strange war with Russia."

On page 28, the writer gives some instructions, cabled by the State Department to the American ambassador, on Aug. 3, 1918 (the day my instructions were made public). These instructions, in so far as the object to be attained by the troops in northern Russia goes, were identical with that part of my instructions previously quoted. This seems to justify the conclusion that the United States troops in northern Russia had the same general instructions as to policies that were given the troops in Siberia. It is not possible for me to make



Mischa Richter

"On your mark . . . Get set . . ."

any definite statement about the expedition to northern Russia, because, so far as I know, the United States has not given any information to the public relative to the expedition to Siberia or to northern Russia, but if these two expeditions had the same instructions, how is it possible that the Archangel expedition was used in hostile combat against the Soviet forces, while the Siberian expedition was not? This hostile action against the Soviets was particularly puzzling, as the President stated to the United States Senate on June 26, 1919:

"The instructions to General Graves direct him not to interfere in Russian affairs."

If the same instructions applied in northern Russia, as seems very probable, why did the United States troops in northern Russia interfere in Russian affairs? [pages 73-75].

The Czechs in Siberia were naturally liberal-minded men. They had had enough of autocracy and were willing to fight bolshevism, because they visualized it as being an agent of Germany and Austria, and because it seemed to stand between them and their aspiration to establish a republican Czechoslovakia. As soon as they realized that fighting bolshevism meant not only combating all forms of liberalism, but it meant the placing of what governmental power was left into the hands of people who had held office during the Romanov dynasty, and who probably had the czarist ideas as to government; then the Czech could no longer march in step with England, France, and Japan [page 82].

It soon became evident at these Allied meetings [on the Siberian intervention] that I was an unknown quantity, and their principal darts were fired at me, when any differences arose. There were basic differences in our policies which could never be reconciled as long as my instructions remained. England, France, and Japan always had as their objective to do all the damage possible to Bolsheviks, while I was trying to keep out of trouble with any Russian party. The principle of non-intervention had been broadcast throughout the world and everyone in Siberia, Russian and foreigner, knew of this promise before Allied troops entered Siberia. From my point of view, this policy was sound and there isn't a nation on earth that would not resent foreigners sending troops into its country, for the purpose of putting this or that faction in charge of its governmental machinery. The result is not only an injury to the prestige of the foreigner intervening, but is a great handicap to the faction the foreigner is trying to assist.

The moment that the United States took sides in the Russian conflict, which was at variance with the solemn assurance made to the Russian people by President Wilson, her reputation for fair dealing was discredited [pages 81-82].

Press distortion deceived the American people, says General Graves:

I have never been able to understand by what means or by what agencies the people of the United

States were led to believe our troops went to Siberia to fight bolshevism. I could always understand why certain foreigners misrepresented the policy of American troops in Siberia, because I understood the object of this misrepresentation. The *New York Times* was certainly well informed on all international questions during the Wilson administration, and no paper in the United States had a better opportunity for obtaining real facts. Mr. Carl Ackerman, a representative of this paper, came to Siberia in October 1918 and later stated, with reference to a conversation I had with an officer relative to the arrest of a Russian because he said he was a Bolshevik, that my instructions to the officer "were the first intimation he had that the United States did not consider the Bolsheviks, everywhere, as enemies of the Allies" [pages 91-92].

The United States never entered into a state of war with Russia, or any faction of Russia. It was equally as unconstitutional to use American troops in hostile action in Siberia against any faction of Russia, as it would have been to send them to Russia with a view to using them in hostile action against the Russians. If I had permitted American troops to be used in fighting "Red armies," as stated, I would have taken an immense responsibility upon myself, as no one above me, in authority, had given me any such orders. The fact that I did not permit American troops to be so used was responsible for nine-tenths of the cynicism directed against us, while in Siberia. I was told by Gen. Leonard Wood, upon my return from the Far East in December 1920, that if I did not have copies of my papers I would be "torn limb from limb, in the United States, because I did not take part in fighting bolshevism" [pages 92-93].

General Graves' neutral position won him enemies in high places:

I began early in 1919 to realize that U. S. Consul General Harris was opposed to my views of "non-interference in the internal affairs of Russia," and supported Kolchak where he could. I also began to sense that I had opposition in Washington. . . . For example, I received a cable from Washington containing a rather sharp, pungent criticism of me for lack of supervision of my censorship regulation, winding up by telling me that I would give this my personal attention. I personally examined all communications from my office, and could find no violation of censorship regulations [page 113].

Washington wanted its own kind of reports about conditions in Siberia, says General Graves:

Soon after I arrived in Siberia, fifteen officers and very high class men reported to me from Military Intelligence Office in Washington, for Military Intelligence work in Siberia. The majority of them, as I remember, came from educational institutions, and I was very much pleased with their appearance as well as their standing and reputation in the United States. I was careful to see that all of these officers understood the orders: "not to interfere in political affairs, and not to intervene in internal conflicts."

I then sent them out to various parts of Siberia, all at railroad towns, with a view to getting reports on the military, political, social, and economic conditions in Siberia. I soon received a cablegram from the War Department, stating that the government expected to get their information as to conditions in Siberia from the representatives of the State Department. This cable puzzled me very

much. While it contained no instructions to me, the meaning seemed clear that the government wanted me to know that what I said of Siberia, or of conditions there, would be ignored. Such a peculiar cablegram as this had some significance or meaning which was not entirely disclosed, and if the State Department wanted to know the real conditions in Siberia, why did they propose to ignore the information coming from the great majority of United States representatives? The Army was in a much better position to get the facts than the State Department, because of the much larger number of observers and the greater number of places from which reports were received, and I cannot admit that the Army observers had less intelligence than the consular agents of the State Department in Siberia. If the State Department did not attach any importance to the Army reports, why not throw them in a waste basket? Why tell me they were going to ignore my reports? The facts of the matter were, these Army reports were pinching somewhere. They wanted information along a certain line, as was disclosed by their cable sent to Mr. August Heid, representative of the War Trade Board, functioning under the State Department, that he, Mr. Heid, was not sending the kind of information the State Department wanted him to send out of Siberia. . . . It was evident to me then that Consul General Harris or the Russian Division of the State Department in Washington, both of whom were Kolchak supporters, were not pleased with the information the Military was sending, relative to the Omsk regime. I was quite annoyed, as it appeared to me that the State Department, or someone in that department, had sized me up as a weak man who could easily be frightened, as well as easily deterred from performing what I conceived to be my duty [pages 119-125].

Personal attacks on General Graves followed:

At this time there was considerable criticism in the United States of the action of American troops in Siberia. This criticism took different forms, some suggesting that the Americans had become bolshevistic; some suggesting that we could watch the situation from the United States, as well as from Siberia; and some were critical of my selection to command the American forces, because of my lack of experience in the command of large bodies of troops. Mr. George Harvey, of *Harvey's Weekly*, seemed to be the most severe critic. He, of course, as usual, used his sarcasm not only against me, but against the secretary of war because of my selection for the Siberian command. These criticisms were very familiar, as they were almost as common as my meals in Siberia. The American consul at Vladivostok was cabling to the State Department each day, without comment, the libelous, false, and scurrilous articles appearing in the Vladivostok press about the American troops. These articles, and the criticism of the American troops in the United States, were built around the charge of being bolshevistic. This charge could not have been based upon any act of the American troops, because there was not a single incident where they gave aid or comfort to the Bolsheviks, but the charge was the same that was lodged against everyone in Siberia who did not support Kolchak, by Kolchak adherents, which included Consul General Harris.

General Graves was spied on by Department of Justice agents:

Evidently this idea became so widespread in the United States that the government, in one case

at least, decided to watch Americans who had seen service in Siberia. This statement is based upon an incident that took place at the Commodore Hotel in New York City, in November 1921. A self-appointed committee had made arrangements for as many of the Americans as possible, with service in Siberia, to meet at a dinner given at the Commodore Hotel in New York. There were about sixty people at this dinner, and all had seen service or were relatives of those who had seen service in Siberia. Admiral Knight and I were both present. After we sat down at the table, a man who was unknown to any of the committee came into the room and also took a seat at the table. The senior member of the committee found an opportunity and asked this man who he was. The man showed him a Department of Justice badge and said he had been ordered from Washington to be present at this meeting, that he was going to remain, and he advised the representative of the committee not to cause any trouble. Nothing was said about the incident until after the dinner, when the representative of the committee saw the assistant manager of the hotel and asked for an explanation. The assistant manager said the man had shown him credentials and papers, which made it impossible for him to do anything except take him to the dining room. There is no doubt in my mind that the Department of Justice agent was sent to this dinner by some official of the United States government, and so far as I know, the practice of sending secretly, and without the consent of the guests, an agent of the Department of Justice to a private dinner is only resorted to when there is fear of subversive activity against the United States. . . . All who knew of this incident felt mortified and hurt. If I had known of this man's presence at the time of the dinner, I would have advised demanding of the hotel management that he be removed from the dining room and, in case of refusal, I would have advised all the dinner guests to leave the hotel, and I would certainly not have sat quietly at a dinner table where the Department of Justice was watching my acts, or my speech. This, after Admiral Knight had given more than forty years of his life and I had given more than thirty-seven of mine, to the service of our country.

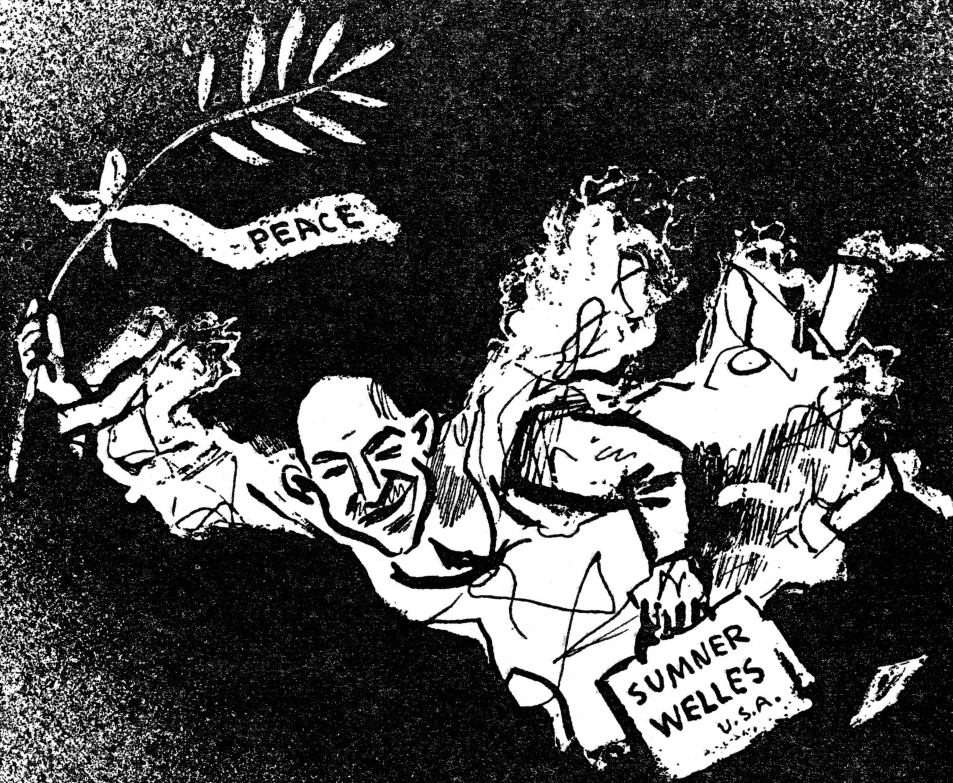
In December 1918 another effort was made to prevent freedom of action of the U. S. Military in Siberia. General Knox came to my office and showed me a communication from the British government, approving his recommendation that General Janin (French) would command all Russian and Allied forces operating against the Bolsheviks, and that he, General Knox, would have command of the lines of communication, and also have charge of the training of the troops. I suppose he wanted to get my reaction to his proposition, as he knew well the American troops were not fighting Bolsheviks, and were not being controlled by either General Knox or General Janin.

In my judgment, it would have been most unfortunate if the United States had taken any action that would have placed the use of American troops under the direction of English, French, or Japanese in Siberia. There were constant efforts being made to bring about this situation and, if it had been done, no one can doubt that the American troops would have been used to kill Russians for their political beliefs. This would have been bad enough, but there is another side to the picture that I believe is of more importance to the American people, and that is, that American troops would also have been used to bring resentment against the United States by the Russian people.

JAMES MORISON.







# Truths about the Red Army

Lucien Zacharoff describes the military and cultural life of the Red Army and Navy. What friends and enemies say. The first of two articles.

ON FEB. 23, 1940, the Red Army celebrated its twenty-second anniversary. Assembled from the nations that comprise the USSR, spread over one-sixth of the world's surface, it presents the most intriguing quantity in the present-day seething military scene. What is it like, what does it do, how big is it, how does its personnel think and live, where does it rank among the armies of the world? These are questions that are on every tongue, friendly and unfriendly.

In the tense and insecure formative years of the Red Army, the Soviet authorities, for understandable reasons, shrouded their military organization in utmost secrecy. This provided a Roman holiday for foreign experts and near-experts who for a generation had indulged in an orgy of guessing, insinuation, and outright lies. Sometimes an alarming picture was painted of a menacingly mighty Red Army; but more often, its accomplishments were minimized. Either version was designed to stimulate schemes for an anti-Soviet military coalition.

## IMPERIALIST AMBITIONS

Manchuria . . . Ethiopia . . . Spain . . . China . . . Austria . . . Czechoslovakia . . . Albania . . . Poland . . . The world is familiar with the imperialist powers' policy of helping themselves to the lands they covet, in utter disregard of international law and elementary morality. These same aggressor states had for years let the world know that they regarded the Soviet Union as their bitterest enemy and the principal obstacle to the realization of their fondest schemes. They formed the "Anti-Comintern Axis" which was nothing more or less than a military alliance against the USSR.

The question arises: Why haven't these aggressors sent their goosestepping legions to do away with the USSR, to achieve what should be by far their richest triumph economically, politically, militarily? The answer is: the Red Army.

Many years ago Friedrich Engels, whose teachings are studied to this day by the Soviet military, wrote:

Nothing depends in the same degree on economic conditions as precisely as the army and the navy. Armament, personnel, organization, tactics, and strategy are in direct dependence on a given degree of development of production and of means of communication.

This universally used method of evaluating a nation's war potential brings us to the fact that the Red Army has directly behind it the vast industrial power of the USSR, its incalculable natural wealth. Today the USSR leads all Europe in industrial output and is

second in the entire world only to the United States. In one year it produces as much coal, petroleum, metals, and other strategic necessities as czarist Russia yielded in four years.

As early as 1936 one Magnitogorsk plant had smelted two and one-half times more pig iron than was smelted in all of Poland, while the Kuznetzk and Magnitogorsk plants together had exceeded by 30 percent the pig iron smelting in Japan.

On this foundation, the technological background of the Red Army has expanded to most formidable dimensions. Today the best informed organs of militarily advanced countries will not venture to dispute that the Red Army is in the forefront, equipped by its national resources with all requisites of victory.

The Red troops, of course, are generously provided with the basic weapons of modern warfare—automatic arms, such as rifles and machine guns. We learn from Regiment Commissar I. Bulochnikov, writing in *Noviy Meer*, August 1938: "If a German infantry division has 408 machine guns, Japanese 584, and Italian 291, we can state with certainty that in this respect we do not yield to them."

The extent of technical equipment and consequent firing power may be judged from the remarks made in March 1939 by Marshal Klementy Voroshilov, commissar of defense, who said that in the preceding five years there had been an increase of 103 percent in the numerical composition of his army. He added: "We have now ten times as many regular infantry divisions as we had before under the territorial system"—a system that had been replaced by the "regulars."

One can only guess how many divisions have been added since that statement was made, and after the outbreak of a European war which threatens to involve every major nation. Formerly consisting of thirteen thousand men, the Soviet infantry division now incorporates eighteen thousand.

This expansion is due to bringing into the Red artillery all categories from the so-called close-support artillery down to the division artillery; to additions in the machine-gun contingents; and to the greater number of men per platoon. A Red infantry corps embraces about sixty thousand men with a corresponding quantity of artillery, tanks, and other combat media. Marshal Voroshilov's discourse on the relative fire power of the leading European armies is illuminating:

A single volley from the entire artillery of a French corps, consisting of three divisions, weighs 6,373 kilograms. A German infantry corps of the same strength fires 6,078 kg. A volley of artillery in the Red Army infantry corps weighs 7,136 kg. A French corps can release 51,462 kg. of shell fire

a minute, a German corps 48,769 kg. A Soviet infantry corps can discharge 66,605 kg. of metal a minute. If we add to artillery fire per minute also the weight of shells, mines, rifle-grenades and bullets, we find that a French corps fires 60,981 kg. a minute, a German corps fires 59,509 kg. a minute, and a Soviet infantry corps fires 78,932 kg. a minute.

The Soviet commander-in-chief did not bother to make comparisons with the Japanese and other armies because the forces of France and Germany are decidedly stronger. He did draw attention to the 52 percent increase in Soviet cavalry in the past five years. The cavalry's technological strength grew during the same period as follows: light machine-guns, 30 percent; heavy machine-guns, 21 percent; anti-aircraft complex machine-guns, 31 percent; artillery, 43 percent.

Soviet artillery is growing numerically and rapidly being perfected. This is more significant in view of the fact that the wars in Spain and China, and the present Anglo-French war against Germany have confirmed the theory that artillery is an exceedingly important weapon. Regiment Commissar Bulochnikov says:

The Red Army is furnished with all forms of artillery. We have in necessary numbers anti-tank guns, light field pieces, anti-aircraft, heavy and long-range artillery. A German infantry division incorporates in its composition 132 guns; Japanese, ninety-six; Italian, eighty-two. These figures are hardly unattainable for us.

In the years of the civil war and intervention, following the November Revolution, the newly formed Red Guards had no tanks of their own. Indeed, up to the time of the First Five-Year Plan there were only a few damaged tanks captured from the enemy during the civil war. Today first-class tanks are the *sine qua non* of an up-to-date army; the Soviet Union has an adequate number of them for defense. Foreign observers have repeatedly noted their splendid combat qualities—high passability, speed, and mobility. France's authoritative military publication, *Revue d'Infanterie*, stated:

Correct application of motorization and mechanization is one of the principal factors abetting the transformation of the Red Army into the mighty, dangerous force which it is now considered to be. Virtually all tanks possessed by the Red Army have been built in the USSR, created by the labor of Soviet engineers and workmen [and, it should be emphasized, of Soviet materials].

From Voroshilov's review of the Red Army's progress in 1934-39, we learn that the personnel of the Red armored-car and tank units has grown by 152.5 percent. The

number of tanks has grown 191 percent, of armored cars 750 percent. In the defense commissar's own words, the marked changes in the equipment of tank detachments are particularly striking in the case of artillery:

If we make one volley of all types of guns mounted on tanks and armored cars in 1934 to equal 100, in 1939 one volley equals 393. In 1934, fire power per minute of our entire tank fleet equalled 100; in 1939 it has grown to 332.

Even as early as the 1935 war games, the Red Army tank corps aroused the admiration of foreign experts. After watching the maneuvers near Kiev, General Loizeau, chief of the French military mission, declared in an interview published Sept. 17, 1935, in the Red Army newspaper *Krasnaya Zvezda*:

As far as tanks are concerned, I think we shall have to put the Soviet Union in the first place. The Red Army has a whole arsenal of tanks of all sizes and types, beginning with speedy little whippets and ending with veritable armored land cruisers. That opens up wide possibilities for various operations and for the cooperation of all possible arms. Your tank park is really wonderful. Frankly I wish we had one as good.

In the German War Ministry organ, *Militärwissenschaftliche Rundschau*, for December 1935, General Guderian made the following admissions:

The Russians have the best foreign models for ordinary commercial motors and also for tanks. They have bought Ford, Carden-Lloyd, Vickers, Renault, and Christie patents and adapted them for their own purposes. They have produced their best and most modern vehicles in masses, they have trained their troops excellently in their use, and they have adapted their tactical and operative aims excellently to the performance of these troops. Budenny's Cavalry Army of 1920 has developed into Voroshilov's Tank Corps of 1935 . . . ten thousand tanks, 150,000 military tractors, and over 100,000 military motor vehicles of various kinds put the Red Army at the head of Europe in the question of motorization. Great Britain and France have been left far behind.

Perhaps twice the number of tanks mentioned by General Guderian in 1935 are at the disposal of the Red Army today, suggests Max Werner, author of *The Military Strength of the Powers*.

Tanks and aviation constitute the center of gravity of the modern army's offensive strength. In the years of the civil war and foreign intervention, the Red air force consisted of a few dozen antiquated and be-draggled craft. In 1918, during the May Day parade, a solitary airplane circled over Red Square; in the Khodinskoye Field barns reposed twenty primitive machines dubbed by their pilots "the flying coffins." About the quantity and quality of the USSR's air armadas today the Paris newspaper *Soir* has written:

The most remarkable, the most striking airfleet belongs to the USSR. The entire population of the USSR looks upon aviation with indescribable en-

thusiasm. The *Osoaviakhim* [the nationwide civilian aviation and chemical-defense society with approximately fifteen million members] has organized all over the country hundreds of schools for gliding, power pilotage, scores of flying clubs for men and women, thousands of cells acquainting the peasant youth with the status of modern aviation.

The Soviet air force is the foremost in the world. Understandably Germany contemplates this fleet with an evil eye. She is a hundred times more afraid of it than of the land army of the Soviets and of their naval forces.

The high excellence of Soviet aircraft has been demonstrated in the past few years by the transpolar flights from Moscow to the West Coast of the United States, the 1939 dash from Moscow to New York by Brigadier General Kokkinaki and Major Gordienko of the Red Army, and by countless distance, speed, and altitude records certified by the *Federation Aeronautique Internationale*.

Marshal Voroshilov tells us:

The speed of our pursuit planes has increased 56.5 percent [in five years] and their ceiling 21.5 percent. The speed of our close-range bombers has increased 88 percent, the ceiling 83 percent, and the range 50 percent. The speed of our long-distance bombers has increased 70 percent, the ceiling 77 percent, and the range 61 percent. The speed of our scouting and combat planes has increased 67 percent, the ceiling 23 percent, and the range 45 percent.

Changes in the ratio of various types of craft in the Soviet air force are noteworthy. Heavy bombers have risen from 10.6 percent to 20.6 percent. The proportion of light bombers, combat and reconnaissance planes has decreased from 50.2 percent to 26 percent. Pursuit planes constitute 30 percent as against 12.3 percent five years before. In 1934 the Soviet air force could lift two thousand tons of aerial bombs on a single flight. In 1939 its lifting capacity had been stepped up 208 percent.

"The Soviet Russian air force is the strongest in Europe at the moment," wrote England's outstanding military critic, Capt. Liddell Hart in his *Europe in Arms*, published in 1937. The same conclusion had been reached two years earlier by the great British authority on air warfare, General Groves.

In the German *Militärwissenschaftliche Rundschau* for December 1935, Colonel von Bulow wrote that "in recent years the air force of Soviet Russia has been strengthened to such an extent that it is now the strongest in the world. It forms the core of the whole military strength of Soviet Russia."

In France, addressing the Chamber of Deputies on Feb. 28, 1936, the one-time minister of aviation, Pierre Cot, quoted from a report of the French Ministry of War: "The air force of the Soviet Union is already the strongest in the world, and it is rapidly being strengthened still further."

A few years ago the British Major General Wavell, who headed his country's military mission to the Red Army maneuvers, exclaimed that had he not seen it with his own eyes, he would have never believed possible the transfer

to the enemy "rear" of thousands of parachuting expeditionary troops in full battle regalia.

What of the Soviets' anti-aircraft defenses? Their AA artillery increased 288 percent in 1934-39. The AA gun ceiling has grown 60 percent. Perfect coordination has been achieved between the AA defense and chaser planes which show a quantitative expansion of 142.3 percent.

A tremendous number and variety of automobiles, tractors, motorcycles, and other vehicles in the army provided an average of 7.74 mechanical horsepower per Red Army man in 1933. In 1936 it rose to 12 hp. Early in 1939 average mechanical traction per Red Army man was 13 hp., an increase of 67 percent since 1934.

The Soviet land frontiers, stretching for some twenty thousand miles, are firmly locked against attack. Subterranean fortifications of iron and concrete belt the borders of the eleven Soviet republics. A high French officer, writing in the *Petit Journal* in May 1935, asserted that the Soviet fortifications on the Western frontiers were equal to the famed French Maginot Line.

It is impossible to describe within the scope of this article the Red Army's techniques in such spheres as fortification systems, chemical warfare, engineering, mountaineering, the intelligence service, camouflage, the signal corps.

Three oceans and twelve seas wash the 25,000 miles of the Soviet Union's naval borders, which must be, and are, dependably guarded by the battleships, cruisers, destroyers, submarines, and mine-layers of the Baltic, Black Sea, Northern and Pacific fleets, supplemented by powerful coast-artillery defenses.

No wonder even the most aggressive nations have been reluctant to attack the USSR. Who wants to smash his head against a stone wall—if he can avoid it?

LUCIEN ZACHAROFF.

## Russian Verb Department

OUR institutes of higher learning are preparing to do their bit in the coming anti-Soviet war. This announcement of the City College of New York offers one view:

The City College in its School of Education has added a course in Russian to that which has been offered in previous semesters. It is really a continuation of a course now popular with students and takes up word building and detailed study of the Russian verb, which by vowel changes in its conjugation is strange to Americans.

An interesting feature is the translation of the Russian daily newspapers, *Pravda* and *Izvestia*. This gives the students firsthand information about the present confusing situation in Russia.

In a mimeographed supplement to the course list at Columbia University, the extension department announces the following instruction for the second semester: "Russian Conversation (for Army Officers)." Hold your earmuffs, boys, here we go!

# Epilogue to the Spanish Tragedy

Marion Greenspan tells what is happening inside Spain today. The wreckage of the fascist invasion. The coming together of the masses.

“**N**O NEWS is good news” does not apply to Spain. The no-news from Franco-land these days — these many months—is an organized silence, the outward projection of the tomblike atmosphere within Spain. News outlets are deliberately bottled up. It is almost impossible, for example, to obtain Spanish newspapers in America. Individuals and organizations place subscriptions payable in dollars but get no response. The New York Public Library received the miserable provincial organs of the Falange fascists in Valladolid, Oviedo, and Seville for some time after Madrid fell but in August even these stopped coming.

Nevertheless, hints of the horror that pervades Spanish life today escape from the mouths of the topmost terrorists, including Franco himself. An Associated Press wire in the New York *Times* on New Year’s Day says:

Generalissimo Francisco Franco, after charging the “destruction of the nation’s economy by the Marxist government,” said, “it should surprise nobody that there are shortages of bread or milk or that the transportation of necessities is slow.”

What conditions in Spain prompted that defensive speech? Franco’s vigilance has not prevented our obtaining an answer from unimpeachable sources: the Spanish fascist authorities. First, the hunger contingents include approximately one million persons imprisoned in the various jails and concentration camps. Second, Falange Espanola announced at a recent congress that its Auxilio Social—official national poor-relief organization—had 1,044,331 persons wholly dependent on its various soup kitchens and children’s diners. The Auxilio has to provide 54,401,706 monthly meals. In other words, at the probable rate of one meal a day there are nearly two million individuals who get no nourishment besides starvation soup. Then there are 126,510 daily diners at the 230 “Mother and Child” institutions maintained by the National-Syndicalist Charities. Poor-relief is organized only in the cities, so the majority of Spaniards, the rural population, starve quietly, out of range of the Falange’s statistics.

## WRECKED ECONOMY

Franco cannot appease this hunger. He has no remedy for the ruined economy behind it, much less for the wreck of transport. Truck traffic is less than 40 percent of normal. The railroads are over twenty years old and require repairs and replacements throughout their more than ten thousand miles (16,733 kilometers). There were three thousand locomotives before the Spanish war; now there are seventeen hundred, of which seven hun-

dred need major repairs before they can be used. The merchant fleet is in as bad a shape. Of 793 ships, or 947,000 tons, of pre-war shipping, 126 of the largest ships totaling 435,000 tons have been lost—virtually half the tonnage. Moreover, 530 of the remaining 667 ships have seen over eighteen years of service, 296 of them more than twenty-five years.

The whole country seethes with discontent. In vain the fascist leaders warn against the “Marxists” and the “cowardly enemy waiting in ambush, taking advantage of our differences of opinion.” In vain they call upon the Falange to crush “those who did not know how to command and likewise do not know how to obey.” Dissatisfaction finds expression not only among the working class, highly educated by three years of popular revolution, but the peasantry and middle classes whose interests

—for the first time in Spanish history—found a staunch defender in the People’s Front. “Differences of opinion” exist within the regime itself; the Monarchists and Requetes are violently jealous of the Falange’s political monopoly. The Madrid correspondent of the New York *Times* let the cat out of the bag in an innocent last paragraph of his dispatch on December 30:

There is no doubt Spain is considerably more stable now than six weeks ago when there was a scuffle in the Puerta del Sol between Falangists and Requetes and the shortage of bread brought a few demonstrations in the Provinces. But there have been no serious riots of any kind and the food situation has improved.

The Allied powers, notably Great Britain, seek to exploit these difficulties in order to win Franco to their side or to replace him by

## A Year of Franco

**O**NE year after the war in Spain ended, reprisals and persecutions continue. The following fragmentary items in the American press speak volumes both for the resistance of the Spanish people to the Franco regime, and the barbarity of its repressions:

June 1939: The New York *Times* reported on the 7th that death sentences were being passed on an unestimated number of persons in Madrid: “The Nationalists have complaints calling for the arrest of at least a million more persons. The tribunals, working at top speed, will require at least another year to clean the dockets.” On the 13th, the *Herald Tribune*, *Daily News*, and *Post* reported: “A Republican prisoner is being sentenced to death every nine minutes . . . appeals from the death sentence are not permitted.” The *Journal-American* declared on the 12th: “Executions since the end of the war run well into four figures.”

July 1939: Jules Sauerwein, foreign editor of the *Paris-Soir*, after a trip through Spain, wrote in the New York *Times* on the 15th: “Repression was ferocious, the prisons full to overflowing, and every day hundreds of men were executed.”

August 1939: On the 8th the New York *Times*, *Herald Tribune*, and *Daily News* reported that 1,057 Spaniards had been arrested in a “purge.” The same day the New York *Post* quoted the Manchester *Guardian* of July 25: “Acquittals are rare and death sentences far outnumber sentences of imprisonment. The following are figures for the first week in May, and the

indications are that the severity has not abated since: persons accused, 347; death sentences, 266; thirty years, fifty-nine; fifteen year sentences, twenty; acquittals, two. During the same week, prisoners executed without trial, 301.” *El Popular* reported on the 31st from Burgos that 1,256 Asturian miners had been arrested and faced death or thirty years’ imprisonment.

December 1939: The Associated Press on the 2nd reported a letter written by Prof. Samuel E. Morison, Harvard historian, from Casablanca, Morocco, dated November 9. Said Professor Morison: “Spanish loyalists, whose only crime was to be on the losing side, are being executed daily.” On the 15th the New York *Times* published a telephone dispatch from Rome, saying that Generalissimo Franco “has commuted the death sentences of two Basque priests to thirty years’ imprisonment,” and adds: “It was also learned that fifty Basque priests are being kept prisoners in Carmona Prison in Andalusia.”

January 1940: *La Prensa* published an AP dispatch from Madrid on the 2nd which quoted from Franco’s New Year radio speech: “I ask all Spaniards, during this period of depression which naturally follows a war, to cover up the mouths of those who murmur, and not to permit any enemy of state to take advantage of the situation . . . justice requires that the 100,000 assassinations committed by the Marxists should not go unpunished . . . it is necessary to liquidate the hatreds and passions of the post-war, but not according to the liberal method, with its monstrous and suicidal amnesty.”

a regime of their own choice. The outlines of their plan already begin to emerge from the completely obscure gossip of the press. On January 3 the United Press reported from Rome:

A nobleman close to the entourage of exiled King Alfonso of Spain said tonight that rumors circulating abroad that Alfonso soon might return to Spain upon invitation of General Franco were "absolutely untrue and, above all, premature."

What slim hopes Alfonso may have for family restoration hardly rest with Franco. British agents are the more likely backers but while Allied plans for Spain certainly incline to a monarchy, it is not improbable that Alfonso's third son, Juan, would be their choice for king. A monarchy is indicated because the pro-Ally orientation is strongest among the Monarchists and the Basque and Catalan capitalists. The monarchy would have a protective "democratic" coloration consisting of a "loyal Opposition." This would be composed of certain selected "loyalist" military men, extra-fancy "Socialists," and cream-of-the-crop "Republicans." In short: Casado-Besteiro-Miaja. The regime would have no difficulty assimilating such an "Opposition," for these men have no fundamental differences with Franco himself, let alone with a regime that would carry out a face-saving removal of Franco.

#### CASADO'S OWN TESTIMONY

If the last statement seems an exaggeration, it is supported by Casado's published memoir, *The Last Days of Madrid*. He explodes the Junta's original excuse for overthrowing the Negrin government by revealing that there were means of continuing resistance. He describes his inability to negotiate a spectacular surrender and his fear that the people would use the "enormous quantity of explosives" still available to blow up Madrid rather than surrender it. What, then, was the real reason for the treachery of Casado-Besteiro-Miaja? That they saw eye to eye with Franco—and Chamberlain—on the meaning of the war and the character of the loyalist government. Casado writes:

This was the government which kept up the cry of resistance, a slogan received from Russia, who wished that the war should go on to upset international equilibrium and, fundamentally, to take the flag of Bolshevik war into Spain, at the cost of the blood of Spaniards.

Such a "loyal Opposition," and its parent regime, would certainly have British support. With the present setup, however, the Allies are making unsatisfactory progress. They offered Franco coal, fats, cotton, rubber and machinery from England, wheat, automobiles and machinery from France, in exchange for Spanish copper, mercury, oranges, canned sea-food, olive oil, and wines. Franco's need is great, yet he prolonged the negotiations for months. Finally he signed a trade pact which may bring French wheat to Germany in exchange for Spain's Italian-controlled mer-

cury. Franco's trading with the Allies is similar to the exchange the belligerents carry on among themselves via other neutrals, for the truth is that Spain lies in the orbit of Germany and Italy and is acting as an important reserve of war materials for Germany.

This does not preclude commercial exchanges and agreements with the Allies, but it limits them to a basis on the whole more beneficial to Germany than to either the Allies or Spain. The idea has been propagated that German influence in Spain declined after the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact. The facts do not support this view. Germans are deeply and subtly entrenched in the unostentatious key posts of the Spanish Army, economy, and administration. The secret police, a decisive institution in a terrorist state, is "made in Germany." Nothing indicates any removal of key Germans, though German names are purposely withdrawn from titles of Spanish firms, leaving the ostentation to the Italians.

#### "NEUTRAL" TRADE

Spain's present role is precisely like Italy's: through her neutral status to supply Germany with essentials in spite of the Allied blockade. There have been indications of a change in Italy's position; certainly Mussolini is open to real bidding from the Allies, but for the moment, Italy remains united to Germany and profits from acting as her import agent.

The trade between Italy and Spain, or rather Spain and Italy, is an important part of this supply chain. Further, there is evidence that Spain deliberately acquires reserves not needed in her own economy. Premier Serrano Suner on October 31 set Spain's requirements in wheat at the annual figure of 400,000 carloads of ten thousand kilograms each. Analyses of consumption for past years and estimates of this year's probable crop show that this figure is a gross exaggeration. Yet it is extraordinary for the fascists to exaggerate, in public, their shortages and difficulties. The conclusion is obvious: they want the Allied blockade to pass the larger quantity of wheat which will permit them to reexport via Italy to Germany. The pre-war anti-Comintern axis was smashed; but Spain still serves the fascist nations.

Is there a possibility of a change in orientation? Certainly, if there were, Franco would not hesitate to double-cross his partners. Knowing this, Italy maintains a force of approximately 100,000 soldiers in Spain. That makes a simple shift difficult. Like Mussolini, Franco expresses sympathy for White Guard Finland "in this difficult and heroic hour"; no doubt Il Duce and the generalissimo would like to solve their problems by a "glorious" anti-Soviet crusade.

Spain and Italy, however, offer an excellent example of the difficulties facing the rival imperialisms which desire such a "solution." The logical ambition of both Spanish and Italian imperialists is in the direction of British and French holdings: Italy looks toward Nice, Savoy, Tunis, Djibouti, Suez, Cor-

sica; Spain toward Gibraltar, Tangiers, and so on. The present rulers of both countries have for many years instilled in their followers a consciousness of this direction. It is unlikely a way out of their domestic difficulties can be found through the purely "spiritual" release of a war against the Soviet Union.

The "victorious" Spanish reaction is a class of zombies. Neither Falangists with a German-Italian orientation nor Monarchists with an Anglo-French bias have a perspective or a future. Pitifully Franco pleads, in his New Year's message: "I ask of all Spaniards in this period of depression such as naturally follows every war, that they stop the mouths of the murmurers and allow no enemy of the state to take advantage of the situation."

But the Spanish people will continue to make themselves heard. They know that only the miracle-working energies of the masses, turned loose as in 1936, 1937, and 1938, can reconstruct a healthy, prosperous, free Spain from the ruins now plundered by the fascists.

MARION GREENSPAN.

## Geishas COD

ONE of the results of the increasing economic decline of Japan is the practice of *miuke*, whereby a patron of a certain geisha girl buys her outright for the sum the girl owes to her employer. As the *Miyako Shim-bun*, Japanese paper, puts it: "This is an indication of wisdom which geisha-patronizing men have acquired after years of money squandering. For it is manifestly more economical to buy a geisha of small price outright than to pay by the hour for days and months—provided one likes the girl."

## Hand Bites Man Feeding It

"FRENCH reaction continues to make the people dance to whatever tune the military pipes. Although Blum is supporting the war and even causing distress to many fellow Socialists by his rather generally uncritical attitude toward the dictatorial control seized by the wartime regime, his articles are censored whole and *Le Populaire* (Socialist Party newspaper) is forbidden to circulate its editions, even after censorship, among the troops."—DEVERE ALLEN, quoted in "Socialist Call," January 27.

## Menace at Large

"ALFRED EDWARDS, a Laborite, said the United States 'is doing great services for this country.' But, he added, there is a member of the House of Commons who is going around America telling Americans what they ought to do. He is a menace, and the prime minister ought to bring him back and put him in a detention camp. 'Duff Cooper?' someone asked. 'A good guess,' rejoined Edwards."—FRANK R. KELLEY, reporting a session of Parliament, New York "Herald Tribune," February 2.

# Congress and the Poll Tax

Adam Lapin tells what is happening to poll tax legislation in Washington. The campaign to "Free America First" enters a new stage.

Washington.

**E**DWARD EUGENE COX is a congressman from the second district of Georgia and dictator of the powerful House Rules Committee because 5,137 persons favored him with their vote in 1938. Cox had no Republican opponent, and he received the total number of votes cast. Martin Dies got 12,824 votes when he was reelected last year. Lee E. Geyer of California, who has introduced a bill to outlaw the poll tax in elections for federal office, obtained 56,665 votes out of a total of 86,000. Geyer's district has fewer inhabitants than those of his two Southern colleagues. For that matter, the population of Alabama is more than five times as large as Arizona but the size of the vote in the 1938 senatorial election was practically the same in the two states.

Statistics seem a little futile to prove so obvious a point. Most of the people in the eight Southern states where there is still a poll tax are effectively deprived of the right to vote. And that goes for poor whites as well as for Negroes. Not many Northerners or Westerners would be able to vote either if it cost them \$1.50 or \$2 a year. In Alabama and several other states the tax is cumulative from year to year. In Mississippi the tax is \$2 a year, and the counties are permitted to levy another \$1; the total tax is cumulative for two years.

The poll tax remains an almost impregnable barrier against a progressive political movement. The new CIO unions, the growth of sharecropper organization, the development of the Farmers Union have been but slightly reflected either in Congress or in the political life of the Southern states. Reactionary Democratic politicians maintain their grip. All that men like Garner, Harrison, Byrnes, and Cox need is a tight little machine of office holders and the good will of the powers that be to feel pretty sure of feeding at the public trough for the rest of their lives. After twenty-five or thirty years in Congress at \$10,000 per, they can declaim against the evil of keeping relief workers on the government payroll for eighteen months.

## FIGHTING THE TAX

Now at last something is being done about the poll tax. Representative Geyer's bill, which is in the form of an amendment to the Hatch act, has enlisted the support of the CIO, the AFL, and several national progressive organizations. John L. Lewis' speech to the Youth Congress spotlighted the administration's failure to prosecute a single poll tax case in order to test the constitutionality of the state laws. The House Judiciary Committee may soon be forced to hold public hearings on the Geyer bill.

One of the most significant things about the current drive against the poll tax is that it has deep roots in the South. Although no Southern congressman had the courage to introduce the Geyer bill, the measure is by no means a Northern product. "Free America First" is the slogan which the Southern Conference for Human Welfare has inscribed on the penny stamps it is selling to finance its anti-poll tax campaign. Mayor Maury Maverick of San Antonio is chairman of its civil liberties committee, which is in charge of the drive.

Groups as diverse as the Tennessee League of Women Voters and the Alabama Negro Baptist Church have come out against the tax. So have the Kentucky Federation of Labor and other AFL bodies—their stand gives substance to the hope that national AFL chiefs can be induced to translate their endorsement of the Geyer bill into active support. Several Southern newspapers, including the *Birmingham News*, the *Memphis Commercial Appeal*, the *Chattanooga Times*, the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, and the *Birmingham Age-Herald* have editorialized against the tax.

## CONSTITUTIONAL TEST

If the Department of Justice has taken no action to test the constitutionality of the poll tax, the Southern Conference for Human Welfare has. Its civil liberties committee is sponsoring a case which will soon come up for a decision in the Sixth Circuit Court in Cincinnati. The complainant is Henry Pirtle, who drives his own coal truck in Tracy City, Tenn. The attorney in charge is Crampton Harris of Birmingham, a former law partner of Justice Hugo Black.

Pirtle recently tried to vote without paying his poll tax, in a special congressional election to pick a successor to the late Sam D. McReynolds. Grundy County election officials said, nothing doing. So did the local court and the federal district court in Nashville. Whatever the decision of the circuit court in Cincinnati, the case is pretty sure to be appealed right up to the Supreme Court. Pirtle and his attorneys believe that they are on firm legal ground. They contend, first, that local and state officials were impairing the sovereignty of the federal government when they deprived Pirtle of the right to vote in a congressional election which involved no contests for state or local offices; second, that he was being deprived of his rights under the Fourteenth Amendment. The Pirtle case will probably come up at the same time that the fight for the Geyer bill in Congress is gathering momentum.

Administration officials have been cool to

the whole drive against the poll tax in recent months. They have been particularly upset about the attempt to force the current session of Congress to take a stand on the Geyer bill. They do not believe that a showdown on the poll tax issue now would have a salutary effect on the unity of the Democratic Party during a campaign year. Strategists Corcoran and Cohen have suggested ever so tactfully to some of the backers of the Geyer bill that it might be a good idea to go slow until after the election.

## GEYER'S SUPPORT

Despite the lack of encouragement from the administration, Representative Geyer and the officials of the Conference for Human Welfare believe they can rally considerable support at this session. They expect the united backing of the labor movement to be a key factor in mustering the vote of many recalcitrant congressmen. If the Judiciary Committee or the Rules Committee assigns the bill to the old pigeonhole, Geyer and his supporters will probably initiate a discharge petition.

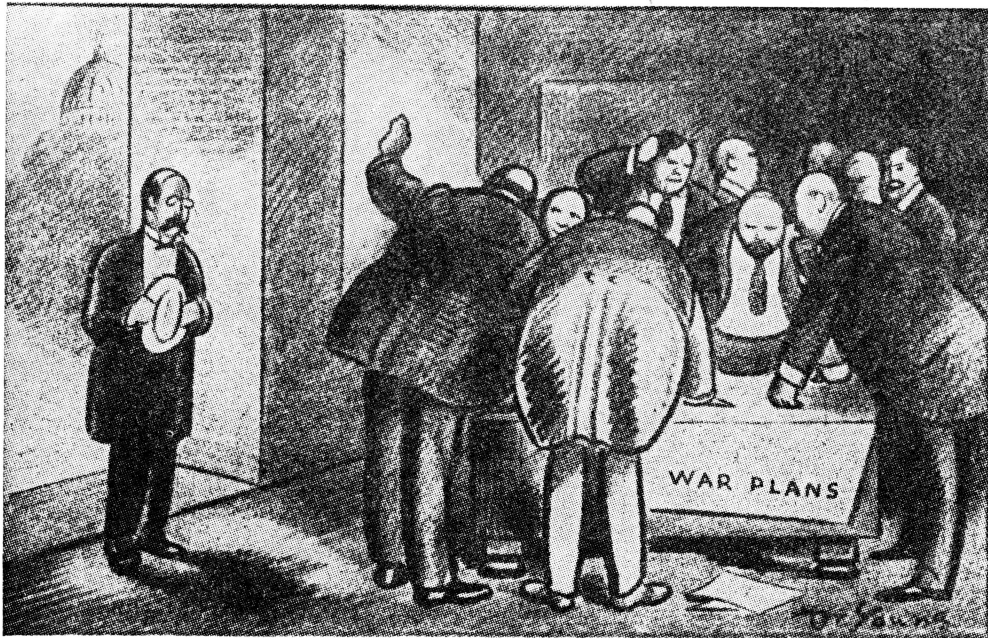
Proponents of the bill think that about one hundred or 125 Northern and Western congressmen out of the necessary 218 will find it convenient to sign such a petition early in the game. And if that happens, almost anything can follow. It is even possible that some of our Southern statesmen will decide to try to ride the crest of the anti-poll tax wave. There are at least twenty-five representatives from the South who aspire to the greater security of the Senate. If they feel that the poll tax is actually in serious trouble, they may make a wild dash to sign the discharge petition just in time to proclaim themselves champions of greater democracy for all.

Such an about-face on the part of Southern congressmen is, of course, still in the realm of speculation. Meanwhile, the diehard Southern Tories will try to kill the bill with all the parliamentary strategy of which their long tenure has made them masters. They have managed to tie up the Anti-Lynching Bill for years notwithstanding the huge majority which the measure commands in both houses. The Geyer bill has enlisted enough support to give it a real chance, but it faces a fight against ruthless opponents.

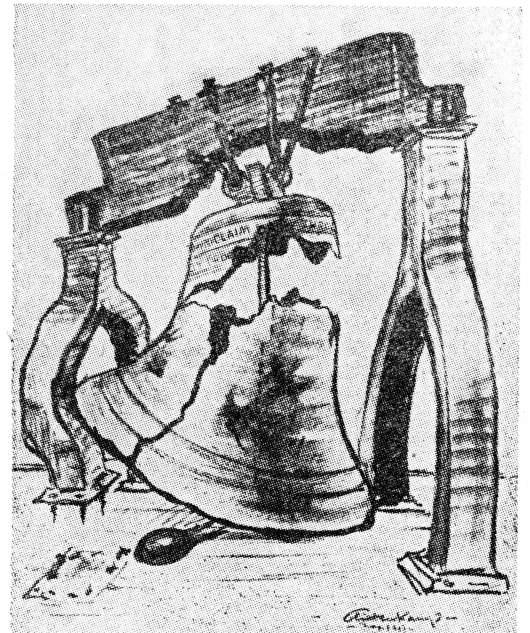
ADAM LAPIN.

## After All These Tears

"IT APPEARS now from material which has come to light only recently that we have 'celebrated' the death of the Communist Party prematurely and all too sympathetically."—HENRY HASKELL, writing in the *"Socialist Call,"* February 17.



CONGRESS: "Excuse me, gentlemen—Where do I come in?"  
 BIG BUSINESS: "Run along now!—We got through with you when you declared war for us."



Glintonkamp



Boardman Robinson

Making the World Safe for Capitalism



Conscription

Glintonkamp

## The August Issue Was Suppressed

THE four cartoons printed on this page are from the August 1917 issue of the *Masses*. They caused the exclusion of that issue of the magazine from the United States mails. It was banned by the Postoffice Department, which claimed these cartoons violated the Espionage Act of June 15, 1917. The assistant United States district attorney explained that the Postal Department construed the Espionage Act as giving it power to exclude from the mails anything which might interfere with the successful conduct of the war.

A preliminary injunction against the postmaster was then granted by Judge Learned Hand, who said that the *Masses* cartoons and editorials "fall within the scope of that right to criticize, either by temperate reasoning or by immoderate and indecent invective, which is normally the privilege of the individual in countries dependent upon free expression of opinion as the ultimate source of authority."

Judge Hand expressed "high admiration for those who have held and are holding out for their convictions even to the extent of resisting the law."

Before the order to the postmaster could be put into effect, the U. S. Circuit Court in Vermont stopped Judge Hand's order. The August issues never went through.

As free expression again becomes the object of attack, NEW MASSES will not be caught napping. It went through one Imperialist War. It will defy another.

# The "Case" against New Masses

What the freedom of the press means—in 1917 and 1940. The methods of suppressing news and opinion. Why New Masses will go on.

ON JULY 5, 1917, the editors of the old *Masses* received a letter from Postmaster T. G. Patten of Manhattan stating that the issue was unmailable under the Act of June 15, 1917. That statute was the Espionage Act. The celebrated case of the *Masses* began.

Art Young, in his Autobiography, writes:

For three months after the United States had declared war on Germany the *Masses* kept on assailing the jingoists, the profiteers, and the capitalists who caused the beating and deportation of strikers, the Post Office censorship, and other evils which had been loosed in the campaign to silence all critics of the war administration. If anyone questioned the magazine's course, the editors were able to point to a statement by President Wilson for justification. Shortly after the declaration he had said:

"I can imagine no greater disservice to the country than to establish a system of censorship that would deny to the people of a free republic like our own their undisputable right to criticize their own public officials. . . ."

What actually happened under the war regime of the great protagonist of the New Freedom is down on the books for everybody to read.

In the Feb. 10, 1940, issue of the *Nation*, the protagonist of the New Deal, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, wrote:

The important thing is that everywhere and always — particularly in a democracy — minorities shall have a means of expressing themselves, and the *Nation*, we all know, has often represented minority opinion and mighty unpopular minority opinion at that. It has not seldom vindicated the principle laid down by Voltaire: "I disapprove of what you say but I will defend to the death your right to say it."

To return to President Wilson: the *Masses* was suppressed by the war government the same year he made the aforementioned declaration. We don't want to press the moral. . .

The question today is this: does the administration project the suppression of NEW MASSES? Those of us identified with the magazine believe that the Roosevelt government, committed to a policy veering towards war, is planning to stop this publication. We have said that for several weeks. Naturally, the administration and its friends deny this. There is freedom of the press and nobody in Washington has designs on that basic guarantee of the Bill of Rights, we have been told by some liberal friends. Let us see.

On Friday, Dec. 29, 1939, a couple of FBI men cornered the business manager of NEW MASSES, Carl Bristel, grabbed him by the arm, hustled him into his office. They refused to permit him to call anybody into

the room, stopped him from picking up the telephone, questioned him roughly. They asked for some items of identification, took his membership card in the Advertising Club and his press card, and refused to return them. They held him incommunicado in his office. After this display of law and order, they recovered their manners long enough to wish him a Happy New Year and handed him a subpoena. New Year's greetings from Frank Murphy: augury of 1940.

The subpoena, made out in the name of the Weekly Masses Co., Inc., required Bristel to appear with sundry books of the corporation, the following Tuesday morning before a grand jury in New York in an investigation involving conspiracy to violate the laws of the United States. It was news to Bristel and to the editors of NEW MASSES that the magazine or anyone connected with it had conspired to violate the laws of the United States. Apparently the Department of Justice hadn't heard of it either prior to the outbreak of the Second Imperialist War.

On Jan. 2, 1940, Frank Murphy, traveling fast, sent a letter to a Mr. Henry O'Donnell, of the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice. It deserves to be quoted in full:

Dear Mr. O'Donnell: As an attorney and counselor at law you are hereby especially retained and appointed as a special assistant to the attorney general of the United States, under the authority of the Department of Justice, to assist in the trial of the case or cases growing out of the proceedings hereinafter mentioned, in which the government is interested; and in that connection you are specifically directed to conduct, in the District of Columbia and in any other judicial district or districts where the jurisdiction thereof lies, any kind of legal proceedings, civil or criminal, including grand jury proceedings and proceedings before committing magistrates, which district attorneys are authorized by law to conduct.

The Department is informed that International Publishers, Inc., Workers Library Publishers, Inc., World Tourists, Inc., Robert Minor, Wallace E. Douglas, Rebecca Grecht, Israel Amter, Alexander Trachtenberg, Abraham A. Heller, Joseph Brodsky, N. J. Golos, and other persons, companies, corporations, and firms unknown to the Department, have violated in the District of Columbia and in other judicial districts of the United States Section 5 of the Act of June 8, 1938 (52 Stat. 631; Section 233e of Title 22 of the United States Code), entitled "An Act to Require the Registration of Certain Persons Employed by Agencies to Disseminate Propaganda in the United States and for Other Purposes," as amended by the act approved Aug. 7, 1939 (Public Law No. 319, 76th Congress, 1st Session) by willfully failing to file a statement required under the act, making false statements of a material fact, and omitting to state a material fact required under the act; Section 233 of Title 22 of the United States Code by acting as foreign governmental agent without notice to the secretary of state; Sec-

tions 220, 221, and 222 of Title 22 of the United States Code by making false statements in applications for passports and using or attempting to use or furnish to another for use passports obtained by false statements, unlawfully using passports issued or designed for the use of another, and falsely making, forging, counterfeiting, and altering passports, or causing to be so done; Section 140 of Title 18 of the United States Code by using a false certificate of citizenship; Sections 31, 32, and 34 of Title 50 of the United States Code by unlawfully obtaining or permitting to be obtained information affecting the national defense, unlawfully disclosing information affecting the national defense and conspiring so to do; Section 338 of Title 18 of the United States Code by using the mails in furtherance of a scheme to defraud; and have violated other criminal laws of the United States and have conspired to commit all such offenses in violation of Section 88 of Title 18 of the United States Code.

You are to serve without compensation other than the compensation you are now receiving under existing appointment. Subject to law and the regulations of the Department, you will be allowed your actual and necessary traveling expenses and \$5 per diem in lieu of subsistence while absent from your headquarters at Washington, D. C., on official business in connection with this appointment.

Please execute the required oath of office and transmit a copy thereof to the Division of Personnel Supervision and Management, Department of Justice.

One need not possess a trained legal mind to spot this letter of Mr. Murphy's as an extraordinary one. Before the grand jury has even begun its investigation, a number of organizations and individuals are accused of grave violations of the law. The grand jury is given remarkable powers: to seek information upon which to base charges—literally, any charges—against the individuals and organizations named in the letter and unnamed "other persons, companies, corporations, and firms unknown to the Department." The bugaboo of the "foreign agent" crops up—precisely as it did in 1798 when the Hamiltonians sought through the Alien and Sedition Acts to expurgate Jefferson's democratic ideas and prevent the growth of those ideas in the new republic. The letter also contains dark hints about crimes affecting the national defense. Does this mean that if an editor of an "unpopular" journal — unpopular with the authorities—publishes an article criticizing the huge expenditures for war preparations, he can be indicted on the ground of "unlawfully disclosing information affecting the national defense"? Furthermore, the letter speaks of conspiring—may not such an editor be drawn into any net of conspiracy that the authorities wish to weave around any individuals with "unpopular" ideas?

Mr. Murphy released the gist of the above letter to the press. Headlines promptly blossomed across America with sensational charges



of "military espionage." The headlines tried and convicted the organizations and individuals named before they were even indicted—before the grand jury had been picked to consider evidence. The conservative Washington *Post* was moved to make the following editorial comment on the Murphy letter:

These individuals and firms are all said to have Communist connections. But their guilt must not on that account be assumed. They have not yet been convicted. They have not been tried. Indeed, they have not even been indicted. . . .

The procedure is, to say the least, extraordinary. The suspects may or may not be guilty of the four types of offenses of which they are suspected by the attorney general. . . . But it would be more in line with the demands of fair play to have charges follow grand jury proceedings rather than precede them.

About this time Mr. Murphy was holding his regular weekly conference with the press in which he religiously promised that there would be no repetition of the Palmer Red-raid hysteria. Well, let us see.

On January 4 our business manager, Carl Bristel, was grilled by the aforementioned Mr. O'Donnell. The grand jury was extremely busy, the federal man said, and he asked Mr. Bristel's cooperation. Would he answer some questions pertaining to NEW MASSES? Since the full activities of this magazine appear in its pages every week and we make no secret of our viewpoint, Mr. Bristel complied with the plea for cooperation. It became clear, however, after several hours of the inquiry, that Mr. O'Donnell was on what the lawyers call "a fishing expedition."

The second week in January George Willner, former business manager and now West Coast representative of the magazine, was subpoenaed and brought across the continent to Washington for the grand jury hearing. The next week editors A. B. Magil and Joseph North were handed subpoenas to appear in Washington before the same jury. The subpoenas were earmarked *International Publishers et al.* This was the now-famous "spy case," as the press called it. NEW MASSES representatives were summoned as witnesses.

While in Washington the "witnesses" were held, at one time or another, in custody of the marshal or of their lawyers. Technically, this is tantamount to arrest. Summoned as witnesses, it became rapidly clear that they were being treated as possible defendants.

The nature of the questioning soon indicated that this was a fishing expedition on a grand scale. The task of the grand jury was to ferret out information; no stray fact was missed, all was grist to the inquisitorial mill.

The chief inquisitors were Messrs. O'Donnell, Rett, and Balch, young attorneys who certainly labored on their assignments. They worked diligently, were obviously up all hours of the night, and, as they cheerfully admitted to the witnesses, they were poring over the law books seeking precedents for the case.

After three weeks' absence from home, Mr. Willner, sole support of his family, asked

Mr. O'Donnell when he could notify his wife he would return. "If I were you, Mr. Willner," the federal authority said, "I would not be worried about going home. I wouldn't be thinking about that at all."

Testimony before grand juries is traditionally secret and we have no desire to violate that tradition. However, the authorities at work on this case did release several statements to the press concerning the proceedings and we believe we have the same right. First of all, the grand jury did not act upon information at hand. It fished, shamelessly, tirelessly. It threw out bait; every question was designed to implicate. Many of the questions were clearly improper. They dealt with political opinions of the witnesses; they pried into personal and family history; they probed into the lives of mothers and fathers and wives of the witnesses before them.

The inquisitors were hunting for any technicalities to put these embarrassing fellows away on one "legal" pretext or another. That would be handiest for the administration. Vide: the case against Earl Browder and William Wiener. It's so much cleaner indicting on the letter of the law than for political ideas. Result: Earl Browder gets four years on a passport charge that usually brings a suspended sentence or six months. The district attorneys who steered the Washington grand jury found it difficult to concoct even such technical pretexts against NEW MASSES or its officials. But they still haven't given up.

The witnesses reminded the authorities of the Fifth Article of the Bill of Rights; that individuals before grand juries had the right to refuse to answer questions which may involve them in the event they become defendants. Everyone called knew he might become a defendant, might be indicted on any one of a thousand possible charges. Consider the jurisdiction conferred upon this grand jury: as broad as the continent, even though it was a

federal body that rightly was limited to the confines of the District of Columbia. Properly, it had no right to delve into anything that may have happened in other federal districts. The inquisitors seeking technicalities, were themselves violators of technicalities.

It became obvious to the editors of NEW MASSES that we might be "suppressed by subpoena." This is a magazine that works on a mighty slim margin and the authorities know it. We have made no secret of it. Involve the publication in legal expenses, keep a few key people out of the office for a week or more, harass them with journeys to Washington, create an atmosphere that may intimidate readers and supporters, and the magazine can be seriously crippled. Even without any indictments, this tactic, if continued long enough, might put us out of business. But of course the government will insist that the last thing it wishes is to infringe on freedom of the press.

There was a time when Mr. Murphy didn't think so harshly of NEW MASSES. That was in the days when he was running for reelection as governor of Michigan. Then he posed as a crusading liberal and welcomed the support of progressives, including those on the left. In its Aug. 23, 1938, issue NEW MASSES published an article by Stephen Peabody on Frank Murphy and his campaign for reelection. Mr. Peabody later received the following letter from Mr. Murphy, which was published in our Nov. 4, 1938, issue.

Dear Mr. Peabody: You do me much more than justice, and I am profoundly grateful for your fair and intelligent treatment of the work we are doing here in the interest of social justice and good government. In the midst of so much discussion that is misrepresentative and inaccurate, it is a pleasure to read a story that deals honestly with the true facts. Thank you for what you have done.

But all that was before the war, before Mr. Murphy felt it necessary to wash away the sins of his wild-oats Michigan days. Put the Communist leaders behind the bars. Prosecute trade unions under the anti-trust laws. Break into homes at night and arrest American citizens because they helped the Spanish people fight fascist invasion. Silence NEW MASSES—USA's only national anti-war weekly.

But this crusade against civil liberties isn't a personal peccadillo of Frank Murphy's. It is part of the pattern of the Roosevelt administration in its new phase. The forces of big business reaction and war have taken over.

Popular protest forced the dropping of the case against the Spanish veterans and their friends. But the case against NEW MASSES and the other organizations and individuals under investigation by the grand jury has not been dropped. The method pursued here is less sensational, less obvious, but no less lethal to civil liberties. It is time President Roosevelt and the Department of Justice heard from all who cherish freedom of the press and the other guarantees of the Bill of Rights.

JOSEPH NORTH and A. B. MAGIL.

No announcement has been made as yet by Attorney General Jackson regarding the productive Grand Jury proceedings at Washington which were also commenced under Attorney General Murphy.

It is publicly known that this Grand Jury has under way an investigation of various subversive publications, including the Communist *Daily Worker* and the Communist *New Masses*, and likewise of "travel agencies" suspected of complicity in the Communist fake passport "mill."

It is further known that the Washington Grand Jury was designed by Attorney General Murphy to serve AS A FEDERAL "CLEARING HOUSE" OF INVESTIGATION, with the Grand Jury either returning indictments itself when indictments were called for, or passing its evidence along to United States Attorneys having jurisdiction in other Districts where law violations were found.

Does Attorney General Jackson's "policy" in behalf of "minority groups" mean that the Washington Grand Jury will discontinue its uncompleted inquiries into subversive activities?

WHAT HEARST WANTS. *The N. Y. "Journal and American,"* on February 23, called for further prosecution of *New Masses*.

# Flying for a Beer Pocketbook

Alvah Bessie tells about the Jimmy Collins Flying Club of Floyd Bennett Field where workers fly.

**T**HERE is a story in the existence and struggles of a growing organization in New York that is trying to teach people to fly who cannot really afford to fly. After two years of almost heart-breaking effort, it is succeeding; and it bears the proud name of Jimmy Collins, the celebrated working class test-pilot who fell to his death four years ago diving a new Grumman pursuit-plane for the Navy.

Organized originally under the auspices of the International Workers Order, the Jimmy Collins Flying Club was faced with what appeared to be an insuperable problem: flying is a rich man's hobby, when it is not the perquisite of the military pilot. Thirty-six years after the Wright brothers first flew, and despite the unprecedented progress that has been made in aviation, flying remains a rich man's sport—and the perquisite of the military arm. The cheapest light airplane you can buy will cost \$1,200, flyaway factory. Instruction in that airplane will cost you between \$12 and \$15 an hour at any commercial flying school. The Civil Aeronautics Authority requires a minimum of thirty-five solo hours (add about ten hours of preliminary instruction) before it will grant you a private pilot's license. Simple arithmetic makes it apparent that if you are a normal, healthy human being and want a private pilot's license, it will cost you an average of \$450-\$675 for that privilege. Instruction and flying time in heavier ships run into astronomical figures.

Bitter experience plus an inflexible determination to lower the price of instruction and time formed the foundation of the Jimmy Collins Flying Club's program. First off, it was necessary to organize the group on a strictly cooperative basis. There was to be no profit from instruction or the rental of the ship, but both instructor and ship had to be the best that could be found; they had to conform to the CAA's rigid requirements of experience and safety. A pilot was eventually found who met these requirements—a commercial transport pilot with many hundreds of hours of experience; it is typical that he had flown for a year in Spain as a military pilot for the loyalists: Joe Rosmarin. The club operates a 1939 Piper Cub Coupe, with a 65-horsepower Continental engine, the least expensive to operate and the most airworthy of the light planes in the 1-S category (under thirteen hundred pounds).

This is the equipment and the "plant" of the Jimmy Collins Flying Club, operating the year around from Hangar 3 on Brooklyn's Floyd Bennett Airport. And since its reorganization a year ago, the club has made strides that astonished its most optimistic members. At the present writing it has some fifty flying students, who are drawn from

every occupational group in the city, male and female; they may be divided, experimentally, as follows: seventeen students; twenty solo pilots (they may fly themselves, no one else); ten private pilots (they may fly passengers, but not for hire); three commercial pilots (two with instructor's rating). With the exception of Joe Rosmarin, the chief flight-instructor, none of these people had ever seen an airplane two and a half years ago; all received their training through the club. And the prices they pay as members of a non-profit making organization are more than a third lower than those charged by the commercial outfits, who are less interested in teaching people to fly than they are in a steady, year-around income.

Naturally, under the cooperative procedure, the larger the membership the lower the costs of instruction and solo time. The club started two and a half years ago, charging one-third less than the standard price for dual or solo time. The possession of another Cub plane, which could be turned over to the exclusive use of those rated solo-pilot or higher, would result in an almost immediate reduction of the cost of solo time to about half of what it now is—and the purchase of such a plane would be warranted by the addition of only thirty new students to the club roster. There are many intangibles in the operation of aircraft, aside from the weather and the diminishing possibilities of accident. It stands to reason that better instruction can be provided by an organization that *wants* people to fly than by a business interested only in its pocketbook. Thousands of prospective pilots—and the universality of air-mindedness will be apparent to anyone who visits any large airport in the country—have been shamelessly bilked by the commercial flying schools. Their rates are as high as the trade permits; they are engaged in cutthroat competition; they are not in business for their health. These schools will accept students who are manifestly incapable of learning to fly (some few people are) and string them along endlessly, "encourage" them. They are naturally dependent on their students staying alive, and hence they cannot safely neglect their equipment. The greatest loss to the student comes through the quality of their instruction, which is bent to the uses of self-interest, not to a desire to spread the enjoyment of this new extension of man's personality.

Against this setup, such an organization as the Jimmy Collins Flying Club offers a different type of appeal, and advantages that should be obvious to the least perspicacious. The word of its flight-instructor is law on the field; if he feels that it would be unprofitable for the student to fly on any particular day, the student does not fly. (No private operator can



ALVAH BESSIE, novelist, dramatic critic, short story writer, translator, and flyer, was one of the founders of the Jimmy Collins Flying Club.

afford to turn down an hour's flying time.) The club organizes lectures, seminars, and discussions of those subjects necessary for the student to learn before he can come up for his license—meteorology, navigation, air-commerce regulations, theory of flight. Its more advanced students assist and criticize the beginners. It is a truly cooperative community that possesses only one objective—to teach those who have champagne tastes and beer pocketbooks to indulge those tastes at prices within pocketbook range. Its students are insured as well.

On the purely practical side: the initiation fee is \$1, the dues 50 cents a month (neither applies to honorably discharged members of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade). Its telephone on the field is NIGHTINGALE 4-2100; the field may be reached by BMT Brighton Beach Express to Kings Highway, thence by bus to Floyd Bennett; or by IRT Express to Flatbush Ave., Brooklyn, and Green Bus to the airport—10 cents. Its corresponding secretary, Pearl Mullin, will answer all inquiries from 252 West 10th St., N.Y.C., and its plane is waiting at the field for your first half-hour of instruction. A trial lesson costs \$2.

This is an advertisement!

ALVAH BESSIE.

## Biggest Laugh of the Week

**F**RIENDS of Alexander Kerensky, premier of the shortlived democratic republic overthrown by the Bolsheviks, are urging him to go to Finland and set up a provisional Russian republic on Finnish soil. Not a bad

idea. The Bolsheviks set up the Kuusinen regime in Finland; the Allies are supporting a Polish government in France, and there is no reason why the enslaved masses of Russia should not have a similar arrangement for them in Finland. Knowledge of it might contribute to a rising against the Russian dictatorship and that prospect is worth rooting for."—*Editorial in the "New Leader," February 10, entitled "A Good Suggestion."*

## Wally Fights On

EVIDENCE of the bitter self-imposed privations of the upper classes in Europe, engaged in the sacred war for democracy, appears in a UP dispatch from Paris. The duchess of Windsor has "taken sides in a new fashion dispute," centering around "whether dinner gowns should reach the instep or the floor. Those advocating the instep point out that the shorter skirt saves materials, which are none too plentiful in wartime." "As a further wartime limitation," the duchess was reported to have "adopted a standard color chart for the entire wardrobe. The limited color chart was designed to curtail efforts of chemical color makers during the war."

## Sharecropper

Joe Strimple tells the story of a sharecropper's dream; the dream of millions of Americans banned from their land.

MIKE ALLEN remembered when he had owned land. He remembered when he had a car to drive and a house for his family to live in. He remembered when he had been able to get food for his family without stealing. It was even hard now to steal food. When there were so many foraging there was nothing left to steal. Mike had gotten used to not buying clothes. Clothes for the most part were silly anyway except for a few months a year. A shirt and a pair of pants were all one needed. When they fell off you could sometimes replace them with others as good from some of the relief agencies. What hurt was when they told Mike there was no more food. It hadn't been much before. Beans, a few potatoes, and a little flour. Not the sort of things that growing children were supposed to eat but it had been food. Now there wasn't that.

Mike was camped with his family now by the side of a Missouri highway. There

were hundreds of others like him strung out along the road. They were all without food.

Mike was lucky. He had an old piece of canvas stretched over a stick and the corners fastened to the ground. It made a windbreak and you needed one. It was February and cold. Mike had a fire burning from wood he had picked up along the road. If there had been any food Mike would have been as well off and comfortable as he had been in the fallen-down sharecropper cabin he had left to join the march. It was night and the fire threw shadows across the dirty canvas. Mike was sleepy but he couldn't lie down. There was barely enough cover for his wife and the kids. Mike had two children—a boy, eleven, and a girl, eight. Mike sat there hunched over the smoky fire. His head fell forward on his chest and he slept a little.

There was a movement in the corner. Mike's oldest child was awake. He slipped out from under the rags that had covered him. He was thin, dirty, and as old as Mike in suffering. Mike had not always been a sharecropper.

The child stood over the fire. His thin body was shaking, his teeth chattered. "No food, huh?" he said.

"They said tomorrow," Mike told him. "Tomorrow the State Police will send us back, I suppose. They won't tell us where to go or what to eat. Just get off the highway. Get out of sight!"

"I've been dreaming," the boy said. "I dreamed we were all eating. And Mary and I had shoes. There were lots of people around like this, only no one was hungry. It wasn't cold like this. The sun was shining and kids were playing there. And there were houses where people lived. They were white and pretty. They weren't dirty and leaky like the house we left."

"You wasn't dreaming of us, son," Mike said. "There's no place like that for us. We have to go on, get out of sight, starve, but don't make any noise. There isn't any sense to it but we have to go on."

JOE STRIMPLE.

## Graveyard

Grundy County, Tenn.

Afternoon. It is train time in Chattanooga; bank closing time in New Orleans; rush hour in New York. It is hot. The sun hot on the red clay roads, the clouds sluggish on the hills.

At the first turning is the graveyard where the dead are lost in broken stone. Husbands and sons have dug these graves piling them in red clay mounds. At the heads they have left rusted cans of flowers. On the upright stones, the epitaph of birth and death.

Come Home to Jesus.

Here is a small mound. Henbye Hall, age 1. Behind us we have left the children in their dungaree overalls, blond and barefoot on the black weathered porches, their pale faces thin and sharp against the boards. We have met them ragged in the hills sitting in a wheelbarrow their fathers pushed. Scurvy knows them better; hunger their permanent boarder.

Henbye Hall, age 1, come home. James Shetter, Gracie Lee Levan, Henbye Hall, come home, come home to Jesus.

Their fathers have eroded with the land, gullied faces and thick ridges along the backs of their hands. These are the children who escaped, moving safely from hunger to hunger, from death to death in the rotted shacks. These are the fathers who cannot cry, but watch the small coffin propped on two chairs with hard rimmed eyes, their mouths cut into their faces.

Death takes part of the living along; one less cataract of laughter, one less hand to run through the neck of the hard-limbed dog.

Henbye Hall, under the red clay, under the cutting of mine wages, the relief rolls; James Shetter, under the worked out hills and fields; Gracie Lee Levan, deep in the red clay graves of Grundy County—under the fresh field flowers in the rusted cans each Sunday morning—come home, come home.

RAPHAEL HAYES.

## Nothing's Too Good . . .

FROM the 1940 election platform of the Republican Party as reported by the *Chicago Tribune*:

11. Realistic improvement of the administration of social security and the extension of its benefits to farm laborers and domestic servants. Retention of the present maximum of \$0 a month for old age assistance.

We know, we know . . . but do you have to be so obvious about it?

# The State of the Nation

**T**HIS DEPARTMENT, which NEW MASSES presents weekly, is the joint work of a group of correspondents who send us a letter each week telling about the state of their part of the nation. As more correspondents write in, our coverage will increase. We invite our readers to send their contributions of significant happenings, anecdotes, etc., to "The State of the Nation," NEW MASSES.

## The Finn Grift

CONNECTICUT.—The shakedown for White Guard Finland must be lagging behind schedule in Connecticut because additional lists of Mannerheim "sponsors" are being published, made up of top industrialists, reactionary clergymen, and the like.

Helpful was the fact that on the latest Bridgeport "relief" committee there appeared the name of Horace B. Merwin, banker and accused swindler in the notorious McKesson & Robbins \$21,000,000 scandal. Mr. Merwin is now under indictment by the federal government on a mail fraud charge and it is the hope of honest people here that the case will be brought to trial sometime before all now living die of old age.

The New Haven Central Labor Council, AFL, put another spike in the "Mannerheim forever" guns the other night when it voted unanimous opposition to the United States assisting the Finnish government or any European nation engaged in war. The vote resulted from the reading of an appeal by the Hoover "relief" committee. A short time ago the Council approved a resolution against any federal act which might involve us in war. The CIO state executive board here has already gone on record as opposed to involvement in the Finnish situation.

## Norfolk for Orders

NORFOLK, VA.—Visitors to the Naval Base and Navy Yard here are unusually restricted, since the employees were handed leaflets which call their attention to Sections 31 and 32 of the Espionage Act of January 1935. However, in the government shipbuilding yard at Portsmouth where the new *Alabama* is being built, the Civil Service restrictions are being waived in order to get shipfitters who know their trade but who otherwise do not qualify because of health, age, or even citizenship.

## Scales from Toledo

TOLEDO, O.—That gas workers' strike we were talking about was settled here last week—the men getting a 3 percent wage hike now and a promise of 3 percent more when the rate difficulties are settled with the city. . . . The relief situation here is as critical as ever. The Finn-Fund drive goes on while a dog shelter hostel has asked that castaway dogs be directed to the house for the winter. This humane note brought an editorial from the *Toledo Blade*

which lectures its public on the fact that "there are still unenlightened persons who have been abandoning dogs along the roads these cold days." . . . Gordon Allen and Henry Jones, both aged nineteen, were sentenced by Judge John M. McCabe of Common Pleas Court to serve from seventy-two to two hundred years in the Ohio State Reformatory. Pretty desperate kiddies, eh? . . . Homer Martin addressed the Civil Liberties Union here last Sunday week. Said that Communists were running the CIO and John L. Lewis gets his orders directly from Moscow. Ah there, Homer!

## Strange Fruit

OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLA.—Oklahoma's grapes of wrath, fermenting since the election of tory Gov. Leon C. Phillips, fell with a vengeance last week on the head of this reactionary proxy of the oil and utility interests whose campaign financing Phillips has been paying off at the expense of the state's vitally needed social services.

At its annual convention, the cup of bitterness and anger of the Oklahoma Educational Association's fifteen thousand members ran over and blistered the governor. For a long time the OEA has seethed over Phillips' decapitation of educational appropriations, his vicious assaults on the political convictions of teachers through Red-hunts and intimidation, his wage cuts and withholding of teachers' salaries, and his overbearing dictatorship in regard to educational matters. Now the association became a galvanizing agent for the labor, unemployed, and farm forces throughout the state, whose resentment has matched that of the educational bloc.

Launching the attack against Phillips' cry of economy, E. H. Black, chairman of the Association's policy commission, asked: "Are we spending too much for education when Oklahoma ranks thirty-ninth among the states in salaries of school employees and thirty-ninth in per capita cost? Are we spending too much for education when our state ranks fourteenth in wealth and thirty-eighth in education? Are we spending too much for education when 40 percent of all tax dollars goes for roads? Can a state that ranks at or near the top in production of zinc, lead, oil, gas, cotton, corn, wheat, cattle, automobile sales, lumber, coal, and wealth afford to provide a full term of school to its children?"

The association, almost unanimously, passed four resolutions which expressed: condemnation of Phillips' budgetary attacks on education; authorization to the board of directors to censure the constitutionality of the governor's quarterly budget estimate powers with which he has been trimming legislative appropriations for school aid; favoring the closing of schools when funds are depleted rather than making teachers work without pay; refusal to condemn a leaflet distributed by a non-teachers' group to the delegates.

The leaflet, drawn up by a Committee for Honest Government, was the reprint of a reso-

lution adopted by the Seminole County Democratic Committee, condemning the governor for his strikebreaking activities against the Oil Workers International Union and urging Phillips "to allow the people of Seminole County to conduct their own affairs in a legal manner, without interference from organized capital, aided and abetted by state officials."

## Welcome to Florida

MIAMI, FLA.—J. Edgar Hoover may complain of the dips and con men with whom he has to associate in Miami Beach but the police of that city are not going to have him bothered by labor organizers if they can help it. Last week they took seven organizers in for questioning after a Miami Beach detective had deliberately picked a row with two or three of them. Everything seemed to be working out well when a citizen of the Beach declared that the policeman had instigated the row. Then it was discovered that some of the men hauled in were well known labor men, among them the head of the Central Labor Union of Cleveland. The case became too hot and three of the men were freed, the others being held as ex-gangsters. Miami Beach police simply can't understand how any laborer dares to visit the Beach without a pair of overalls on. It is a well established fact that any labor organizer runs the risk of enjoying Miami Beach from behind the bars if he shows up in Mayor Levi's night-club-hot-spot town for the idle rich.

Tourists in Florida, long used to being gouged by native racketeers, are now experiencing a new "thrill." The recent freeze which destroyed perishables is being blamed for the high price tacked on to vegetables not touched by the low thermometers. Tourists take it with good humor. They seem to agree that they have to be stuck to get the real advantage of the Florida sunshine.

## Milk vs. Mannerheim

GREAT FALLS, MONT.—D. L. Manning, leader among the organized farmers in this state, put the Hoover-FDR-Mannerheim sympathizers on the spot by starting a fund for "Milk for Needy Children in Great Falls, Mont." His drive was inspired by two articles in the *Great Falls Leader*: one, on the front page, was headed, "Clamor Rises for Aid to Finland"; the other, on page 8, quoted Health Officer Gibson to the effect that the lack of milk for many needy people in Great Falls will result in the spread of tuberculosis and other diseases following malnutrition. Manning sent a \$5 bill to the *Leader* and challenged all those who feel charitable towards the "poor little Finns" to do likewise for the kids of Great Falls.

## Nix on Fink Hall

BUTTE, MONT.—The Butte miners exploded the Anaconda Copper Mining Co.'s bunk that only a small minority of "Reds" opposed their central hiring (blackball) system. A referendum vote brought out 4,346 workers against it: 387 for it. Well?

# NEW MASSES

ESTABLISHED 1911

*Editors*

A. B. MAGIL, RUTH MCKENNEY, JOSEPH NORTH,  
SAMUEL SILLEN.

*Associate Editors*

JAMES DUGAN, BARBARA GILES.

*Business Manager*

CARL BRISTEL.

*West Coast Representative*

GEORGE WILLNER.

★

## Extending the War

ONE thread unifies and explains news from Europe. That is the Allied effort to extend the war, to compromise the neutrality of small nations, to outflank Germany, to draw the Soviet Union into the conflict. This is an expression of the weakness of the Allied position. It is a confession of the frustration, but also of the essentially aggressive character of the Allied aims. It promises a further assault upon the living conditions of the French and British peoples, a more comprehensive blackout of their liberties and democracy. It spells repressive efforts to maintain empire unity; a complete disregard for the weaker nations. It presages a desperate plunge to merge the war against Germany with war against the USSR. This is, in fact, the ultimate and unifying aim of all capitalist diplomacy. On this platform such diverse and contradictory forces as Mussolini, the pope, the Social Democracy, Mr. Roosevelt, Baron Mannerheim find common ground.

Herein, also, lies the essential significance of the *Altmark* controversy. The high moral pretensions of British diplomacy are unmasked; the violation of Norwegian neutrality discloses that international law means the law of the powerful. It is a velvet glove for the mailed fist. But British high-handedness toward Norway involves more than an effort to deprive Germany of north Atlantic waters. Above all, it is vindictive; revealing how disappointed the British are over Scandinavian disinclination to become instruments of anti-British designs in Finland. King Gustav's neutrality declaration, evoked by the anti-war sentiment of the Swedish masses, puts a crimp in British strategy. Chamberlain and Churchill wanted the northern countries to man the frontline trenches of imperialism on the socialist frontier. Britain wanted Swedish and Norwegian assistance in the transport of troops to Helsinki, hoping even to employ the Covenant of the League of Nations for this purpose. Apparently the Swedes are unwilling; apparently, they appreciate that the prolongation of war in the north means the inevitable involvement of the Scandinavian peoples.

British strategy menaces Scandinavian security in another respect. Allied autarchic trade policies, confining economic relations to their own shaky empires, have betrayed the reliance of the small nations upon the British

market. British and French warships off the north Atlantic shores are not only a threat to the Soviet Union; the blockade of iron ore shipments to Germany would be disastrous for Swedish economy. Stockholm's latest financial measures reflect its economic uncertainty. Stringent exchange controls, and discussion with other Scandinavian countries, disclose the crisis which the breakup of traditional economic relationships has engendered. Swedish measures to prevent the flight of capital remind us that the London money market once brought a French Popular Front government to its knees by financial warfare.

Mr. Chamberlain's speech was intended largely to sweeten the pills in store for the British people. His words could encourage only a Labor MP; certainly the blarney about peace aims flatly contradicts war policies. Hitler's speech likewise added little to what we already know. More important than both was Leslie Hore-Belisha's open invitation to anti-Soviet war. Coming after his magazine article had been censored by the government, the original statement is thus revealed as a government trial balloon. The speech itself therefore gains authority. Clearly, the dominant British strategists are sold on the idea of merging the two fronts in Europe. If they have received a setback in Sweden, that makes them all the more desperate. Whether they may also be receiving a setback in the Near East is unclear. Upon the disruption of telephone communications with Ankara last week the wish-fulfillment of the American press was more than obvious. Banner headlines feasted on the prospect of Soviet-Turkish clashes; fantastic canards about Soviet troops immediately took over the front pages. Both Turkish and Soviet dispatches deny that any clashes took place. Yet preparations by Turkey are evident. Exchange control and troop mobilizations, as provided by the special decrees of last January, are continuing. Whether Turkey means to attack the Soviet Union is unclear, but the Allies themselves are clearly preparing their large Near Eastern forces for such an eventuality.

## American Attitude

AMERICAN interest this week centered on the progress of Mr. Welles through Europe. NEW MASSES for February 27 discussed in detail the significance of his mission. All the evidence supports our editorial analysis that American imperialism hopes to keep the war going, hopes to achieve preeminence in European capitalist destinies, hopes to give the war anti-Soviet emphasis. The Finnish loan proposal is now before the House. Jesse Jones admitted last week that the administration alone would decide when, and for what, the money would be used. Mr. Jones confessed that he would not throw good money after bad; but if American help could make a bad situation better, Mr. Roosevelt was going to try. The forcible seizure of American mail from the trans-Atlantic clipper at Bermuda brings home to all Americans what weak nations have to face from Britain.

But nothing proves how widely at variance the American people are with administration policy than the result of the latest Gallup poll. Sentiment against joining the war *even if the Allies were losing* stood at 56 percent last September; it *increased* to 71 percent in October and now stands at 77 percent. Three people out of four believe that "keeping out of war is even more important than giving unrestricted aid to the Allies." These figures tell the story of increasing suspicion and mistrust of *both sides* in this war. They are an indictment of the assumptions and directions of the Roosevelt policy. If organized, these 77 percent give the guarantee that the United States shall not enter the second great holocaust of our century.

## In the Midst of Plenty

OLD MAN MARS went to bat for the big business team in September. He took a swipe at the ball and instead of hitting a drive to the far fences for a boom, popped high into the heavens. The ball is dropping now with sickening speed. Business is way off; six of the seven components of the New York *Times* business index sank last week—miscellaneous and basic carloadings, steel, power, motors, and cotton. Lumber was up a miserly 0.2 point. The net decrease since January 1 is 10.1 points, to the level of mid-September.

The 1,200,000 who found jobs in war industries are now being laid off. Some 800,000 WPA workers must go on the breadlines by July 1. Relief conditions throughout the nation are increasingly bad—appropriations are exhausted in California, Ohio is reaching a new crisis; in metropolitan New York an espionage system is driving workers off WPA to the slow starvation of the jobless. If President Roosevelt's request for \$1,000,000,000 for 1940-41 relief is approved, another 150,000 WPA workers must be fired during the next fiscal period. A committee to investigate relief in New Jersey recommends that those who have not been able to find jobs for three years or more be classified as paupers and denied the vote.

In opposition to this trend the Workers Alliance demands that WPA Administrator Harrington urge Congress to expand the current relief appropriation at once. Alliance president David Lasser points to the huge profits, said to amount to \$5,000,000,000 in the Federal Reserve Bank's stabilization fund and silver purchase account. Congressman Vito Marcantonio of New York has introduced a bill which would provide for 3,000,000 jobs on WPA at once. He proposes restoration of the prevailing wage scale, abolition of the relief test for WPA workers, a \$70 average monthly wage for 120 hours' work, repeal of the notorious eighteen-month layoff provision. Members of the House are becoming restive as their constituents rebel at the war and hunger budget. The Workers Alliance has announced a National Unemployment Day on March 23, when the unemployed will march for their food.

### Catch as Catch Can

A DEBATE between a Rooseveltian New Dealer and a Republican these days is like one of those grunt-and-groan wrestling matches. The big boys have to work hard to make it look real. The other night Assistant Attorney General Arnold came to grips with Dr. Glenn Frank, chairman of the Republican Program Committee. Tossing his opponent a vicious look, Arnold declared that the report issued a couple of days earlier by Dr. Frank's committee was "founded on the principles of the New Deal." To which Dr. Frank crushingly retorted—we quote the *New York Times*—that "there was 'no fundamental philosophical clash' between them on the functions of the government, though he shied away from the New Deal label."

Both gentlemen are right. The lengthy Republican program reveals that Tweedledum and Twaddle-FD see eye to eye on all essential points. Here in truth are the principles of the Wall Street model New Deal which the Roosevelt administration has established in place of the people's New Deal. On the one question that counts above all others today—keeping the United States out of war—there is not even formal criticism of the New Deal. The program's injunction to avoid "all commitments and courses of action that might involve us in other peoples' wars" and to "observe a scrupulous governmental neutrality" is one of those popular old records that ought to be played along with one of Hoover's pep talks for Mannerheim Finland. At least two other Republican candidates for the Presidency, Tom Dewey and Senator Vandenberg, have indicated their conception of "scrupulous governmental neutrality" by demanding the severance of diplomatic relations with the USSR.

Sweet-smelling liberal phrases cannot ob-

scure the odor that emanates from the rest of E. T. Weir's and Tom Girdler's program. Drastic amendment of the National Labor Relations Act is demanded. Here too the administration, through the activities of its fifth columnist on the Labor Relations Board, W. M. Leiserson, and the machinations now going on in Congress, is preparing to meet the Republicans halfway. In its opposition to any large-scale federal housing program and genuine health program the Frank committee's report is also in agreement with the administration. The mild criticisms of New Deal spending are concerned with ancient history. The Roosevelt budget, by slashing social expenditures and boosting war appropriations, really anticipated the Republican program.

### Roosevelt and Garner

IT IS Roosevelt versus Garner in the Illinois Democratic primaries to be held April 2. A year ago that would have drawn the issue clearly: progress versus reaction. Today it means the choice between two varieties of reaction. In fact, whichever way the election goes, Garner wins; it is his policies that have triumphed in the administration.

The failure of President Roosevelt to withdraw his name may mean that he is a candidate for a third term. Or it may merely be designed to place him in a favorable position to swing the support of the Illinois delegation behind his choice at the Democratic national convention. In either event he will have the upper hand—assuming that he defeats Garner.

Mayor La Guardia, in withdrawing his name, stated that he did not want to split the progressive vote; he urged Illinois Democrats to vote for the President. The mayor thus demonstrates that he is linking his fortunes not with the genuinely progressive

forces of the country, but with the war-mongering Roosevelt administration. In western Pennsylvania they have the right idea: The Allegheny-Kiski Valley Legislative Conference has urged John L. Lewis, as chairman of Labor's Non-Partisan League, to organize a national third party. That's where hope for the future lies.

### Chinese Armies Advance

MILITARY developments in China center around the reported Chinese recapture of Nanning, capital of Kwangsi Province, which Japanese troops occupied after unusually rapid progress from the coast last November. It was from this city that the Japanese High Command last week offered a truce, a promise "not to extend future operations" if the Chinese did likewise. The advance on Nanning may thus be interpreted as China's reply. The establishment of the Wang Ching-wei puppet regime involves feelers in Chungking on the possibilities of capitulation. Tokyo would obviously be willing to divide spheres of influence with a Chiang Kai-shek government, provided Japanese economic and political penetration in the occupied areas might be safeguarded. Whatever some elements may be thinking, it was clear this week that the Chungking regime, as such, completely rejected even compromise with the enemy. The new national constitution, to be adopted by a National Peoples Congress this coming November, was made public: it includes under central China's administration even those provinces lost to Japan from 1931 to 1937. The important newspaper *Ta Kung Pao* at Chungking named six conditions for peace which definitely uphold China's territorial integrity, demand the abolition of unequal economic relations with Japan, insist upon self-determination for Korea and For-



ASPCA and the Lion

Crockett Johnson

mosa, although welcoming the controlled investment of Japanese capital alongside that of other nations.

Meanwhile, discussion continues in Japan over its difficult economic and international position. Apparently the investigation of a new trade treaty with the United States is proceeding very subterraneously on both sides. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee this week deliberately snubbed both the Pittman and Schwollenbach embargo resolutions, acceding rather obviously to administration strategy. On the other hand, Japan is seeking improved commercial relations in South America; a trade treaty with Uruguay awaits ratification. Similar treaties, exchanging Japanese textiles and other finished goods for South American scrap iron, copper, oil, and raw cotton, are under consideration with Argentina, Mexico, Peru, Colombia, Chile, and Venezuela.

### After Earl Long

IT WOULD be a grand world if the downfall of evil automatically meant the ascension of good. History as a rule doesn't operate in so tabloid a style. In Louisiana an aroused citizenry, unwilling longer to tolerate the gargantuan debaucheries of the machine built by the late Huey P. Long, has sent down to defeat the last of his successors, his brother, Earl Long. But the man they voted into office as governor, Sam Houston Jones, is no Galahad of the people. He is, in fact, a successful corporation lawyer, who will serve the corporations less gaudily perhaps, but no less devotedly than his predecessor. The fact that among Jones' chief supporters was that disgruntled and discredited Huey Long wheelhorse, State Sen. James A. Noe, also shows that Jones may not be too particular about the amenities. Unfortunately in Louisiana, where the poor are among the poorest, the people's desire for progressive, decent government was diverted into self-defeating forms.

The defeat of Earl Long comes as the climax to the hundreds of government indictments which have lifted an edge of the lid on the cesspool of Louisiana politics. Huey Long, who came as close as any man to becoming the fascist fuehrer that Wall Street pines for, left many pretenders but no heirs. And now, four and a half years after his death, his kingdom has crumbled.

### ALP Victory

THE would-be wreckers of the American Labor Party suffered an important setback the other day when N. Y. Supreme Court Justice J. Sidney Bernstein dismissed suits to oust ninety-nine members of the ALP. These ninety-nine had signed petitions to place on the ballot the name of Israel Amter, Communist candidate for the City Council in the last municipal election. The mere signing of the petitions was regarded by the small clique of ALP reactionaries as enough to brand them as Communists. Communism, though legal in the United States, is, as everyone knows, illegal in the American Labor Party. The de-

votion to democratic ideals on the part of those who brought the suits is indicated by the New York Times' statement that these actions "were designed primarily to ensure the selection of a right-wing slate of Manhattan party officers at a special party convention."

Justice Bernstein's decision is a victory for the Progressive Committee to Rebuild the American Labor Party, headed by Morris Watson, vice-president of the American Newspaper Guild. The support which this committee has won among the ALP rank and file has caused the diehard state leadership to set up a special anti-Red body, the Liberal and Labor Committee to Safeguard the American Labor Party. Chairman of this committee—which is both illiberal and anti-labor—is Paul Blanshard, who had no hand in forming or building the ALP. On the committee are also such well known professional anti-Communists and disrupters of progressive movements as Norman Thomas, Sidney Hook, and Alexander Kahn of the *Jewish Daily Forward*. Obviously, this is a sort of specialized Dies committee, formed to do for the ALP what Dies is trying to do for the country. In the April 2 primaries the ALP membership will have an opportunity to clean out these usurpers.

### A Lesson from Mr. Lansing

IF YOU could look over Cordell Hull's shoulder as he writes memoranda to Franklin D. Roosevelt about Sumner Welles' trip abroad, you might learn a great deal about the foreign policy of the present administration. This you cannot do, but the State Department has just obligingly published two volumes of the state papers of Robert Lansing, Woodrow Wilson's foreign secretary during the war years; from them you can learn that diplomatic technique has changed but slightly since.

Mr. Lansing's memoranda and Mr. Wilson's replies prove many things. War loans and war orders tended to involve the USA in the conflict, in an effort to recoup losses and make certain of profits. The United States also forced a number of Latin American republics into the war. American business interests played an important role not only in the degree of military participation but in the peace terms. Wilson deliberately delayed our entry into the war until he was reelected in 1916.

When the Russian people demanded bread, peace, and land, American policy, according to the Lansing papers, was directed toward cutting off their bread, keeping them in the war against the Central Powers, and restoring the autocracy. Hoover's relief fund was supported by the State Department as a weapon of attack—food for the White Guards, no food for the Reds. The Root commission to Russia was organized to check Soviet control and to bring about counter-revolution. Threats of force were employed to win Danish consent to American purchase of the Virgin Islands. Here is history, and here is a key to contemporary American foreign policy.

### Arnold's Folklore

IN FEDERAL COURT, New York, more of the folklore of Thurman Arnold is now on display. It is a decidedly ugly thing. Back in November, it will be recalled, Arnold as assistant attorney general sent a letter to the Indianapolis Central Labor Union listing a series of "abuses" by trade unions which the Department of Justice intended to prosecute under the anti-trust laws. Since then Arnold has been handing down indictments against AFL unions and officials right and left. Now he has suddenly decided to make a test, not with an AFL union, but with a CIO affiliate. And by one of those coincidences in which the folklore of Thurman Arnold abounds, the union chosen for the slaughter is the International Fur Workers Union, frequently belabored in the press and in Dies committee reports as a "Communist front." For this purpose the Department of Justice has wiped the dust off an indictment that is six and a half years old.

The fur union and twenty-five of its leaders are accused of using gangsters to terrorize employers, in violation of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. It takes gall to make this kind of charge against the leadership of this particular union. It was they who drove gangsterism out of the fur industry and in 1936, uncowed by threats from the underworld, furnished the testimony that convicted Louis (Lepke) Buchalter and Jacob (Gurrah) Shapiro.

But the government isn't interested in facts or the integrity of the law. The trusts are allowed to get away with murder while union men are prosecuted for violating laws which were never intended to apply to them. One more example of the New Deal program in reverse, of Rooseveltian *Gleichschaltung*.

### Not a Dime from Rockefeller

BREAD costs 11 cents a loaf, milk 13 cents a quart, and John D. Rockefeller can never starve. He gave \$100,000 to the fund for the butcher shop reopened by General Mannerheim after a lapse of two decades. John D. contributed this sizeable sum as part of the war chest against Soviet democracy.

In the meantime—on the Lakewood estate of John D. Rockefeller, where his father spent most of the last twenty years of his life—live Archie Fawkes and his wife. Archie, now fifty-seven, used to supervise the sheepfold; now there are no sheep. He is unemployed save for odd jobs and must live mainly on the scanty contributions of his daughter, who is a nurse. John D.'s father had built a house for Fawkes; when the elder Rockefeller died, in 1937, Fawkes lost his job. Three years have passed and now the munificent younger oil magnate has served an eviction notice on his father's old retainer. The Fawkes family has no place to go, no future, no hope. In the court complaint, it is stated that continued occupancy of the house has damaged Mr. Rockefeller to the extent of \$750.

## Anti-Alien Bills

**F**OES of fascism in the United States are gathering forces to defeat the insidious anti-alien bills passed by the House and now on the Senate calendar. Attention is momentarily centered on the Dempsey bill which would make it illegal for an alien to express opinions concerning changes in the American governmental structure. So loosely is the bill phrased that trade unions and fraternal organizations would be unable to formulate legislative programs until they purged their rolls of the foreign born.

This repressive measure is but one of more than a hundred anti-alien bills which have been introduced in the present Congress. Other measures, sponsored by Congressmen Smith, Hobbs, and McCormack, await Senate action. Throughout the country liberal and labor organizations, among them the CIO, are petitioning the Senate to reject

these proposed laws. The campaign of opposition reaches a peak on March 2 and 3 at a conference in Washington called by the American Committee for Protection of Foreign Born. Dr. William Allan Neilson, president of Smith College, and Ernest Hemingway are co-chairmen of the conference. The New York City Bar Association has gone on record against anti-alien laws. Senators Murray and Schwollenbach will speak against attempts to destroy civil liberties by new legal formulae.

## NM Defense Meeting

**J**UST in time to stop the presses, we want to say that the meeting in defense of NEW MASSES, held in Webster Hall, New York, last Monday night, February 26, was a honey. It made us feel warm all over. It achieved that rare *rapport* between readers and writers which is the foundation of our common venture. That meeting was an answer to the

government's efforts to harass and suppress the magazine which editors A. B. Magil and Joseph North describe elsewhere in these pages. It was a fighting answer, a reply that will make them pause down in Washington. It was also a pledge from our readers: that NEW MASSES will overcome financial as well as political obstacles. The splendid contribution of \$748.00 from about 2,500 people made that clear. Above all, that meeting brought home to all of us, readers, contributors, and editors alike, the great tradition, the institution which is NEW MASSES, a unique forum in which all of us find common expression in common goals. This was New York's meeting. But we know that it spoke for the whole country, in which the greater proportion of our circulation lies. Let other towns and cities emulate this example. We are ready to provide speakers from among our editorial associates for a series of similar meetings in all parts of the land.

# Toast to Mannerheim Finland

Let's all drink to Finland,  
To brave little Finland  
Whose wonderful deeds we all know;  
She never forgets  
To pay her war debts—  
Provided we lend her the dough.  
(Ho, ho!)



Amazing, indeed  
That marvelous breed;  
When they set out in battle array  
They glide on their skis  
With the greatest of ease  
Two hundred-odd miles in a day.  
(Hey, hey!)

Nine phantom-like Finns  
Wrap't in sheets to their chins  
On a column of Stalin's men blundered;  
Concealed by some trees  
They dropped to their knees  
And mowed down the whole seven hundred.  
(O yeah!)

It's cold there in Finland  
On seacoast and inland,  
But the Finns marched right into Murmansk,  
While the Russian galoots  
Without mittens or boots  
Froze stiff standing up in their pants.  
(Tsk, tsk!)

Hell bent for Helsinki  
All ragged and stinky  
A Red brigade slogged through the snow;  
But a Finnish Boy Scout  
Put the Red horde to rout  
And captured a hundred or so.  
(Yea, bo!)



The Finnish wolves, too  
Hate the Russ bugaboo,  
They won't harm a Finn, if he's White;  
But show 'em a Red—  
Leastwise it is said—  
And they gobble him down at one bite.  
(That's right!)

A sharpshooting Finn  
Full of vigor and vim  
Saw some 'Reds dropping earthward in 'chutes;  
With unerring aim,  
(I forget the guy's name)  
He shot them right out of their boots.  
(Gadzooks!)

A fleet of Red tanks  
Lumbered into the ranks  
Of the Mannerheim boys—(Was that dumb!)  
For the Finns armed with bats  
Trap't the Roosians like rats  
And blew them to Kingdom Come.  
(Ho hum!)

God, too, loves the Finn,  
He'll see that they win  
Some time in the sweet bye and bye;  
For an angel He sent,  
She came and she went  
On a cloud right up there in the sky.  
(My, my!)



So wassail to Finland,  
To stanch little Finland  
As she holds the invader at bay;  
They advance while retreating,  
The Reds starve while eating,  
At least so the newspapers say.  
(Every day!)

A. H. REED.



## Richard Wright's "Native Son"

A distinguished first novel of Negro life in Chicago by the author of "Uncle Tom's Children" and "Bright and Morning Star."

NATIVE SON, by Richard Wright. Harper & Bros. \$2.50.

THE tremendous power of *Native Son* has its ultimate source in a revolutionary vision of life. It is, in the most profound sense, a philosophical novel, a creative affirmation of the will to live and to transform life. Wright has often said that the discovery of *meaning* in the suffering of an oppressed group dooms the social order that is responsible for the suffering. His novel is a dramatization of the tortured search for values by which Bigger Thomas is to struggle, live, and die. Every arrangement of a class society conspires to maim Bigger for refusing to submit without challenge. The overbearing environment which engenders his suffering mutilates the forms of his protest and aspiration. But if the process of discovery is tragic, it is also, in the end, emancipatory; and if Bigger is condemned to die at the moment he has learned to live, our own minds have been flooded with meaning. A bold conception of human dignity gives this novel its stature. The episodes of violence, the sensitive notations of life in a segregated community, and the subtle documentation of a social machine which grinds down human personality, are important only in so far as they materialize this conception.

Only a courageous novelist would have attempted so difficult a theme. Only a supremely gifted one could have executed it so perfectly. For Bigger Thomas, externally, is the stereotyped monster of a lynch-inciting press. So far as the police record is concerned, he is the murderer of Mary Dalton, the daughter of his wealthy white "benefactor." He is a "brutish sex-slayer." His Negro mistress is the victim of his "primitive blood-lust." His trial for murder is the subject for horrified editorials in the Jackson (Miss.) *Daily Star* and gory news columns in the Chicago *Tribune*. This is explosive material. And it does explode—in the faces of the stereotype makers. The police record is here turned into its opposite, an indictment not of an individual but of a brutal and discriminatory order.

Bigger Thomas is not a "sex-slayer" at all. He is a fear-ridden boy whose attitude of iron reserve is a wall between himself and a world which will not allow him to live and grow. A deepening sense of hysteria has accompanied the blocking of his normal impulses. "Playing white" with his friends on a Chicago street corner is a grim substitute for living white, for living in a world, that is, where one may presumably be an aviator, or a President or a millionaire or whatever

one wants to be. Bigger acts tough toward his poverty-stricken family, sensing that if he allows the shame and misery of their lives to invade his consciousness his own fear and despair will become intolerable. The victim of movie-inspired fantasies, he cannot find a possible order or meaning in his relations to other people. He does not know, at the beginning of the novel, that his crushed existence is part of a much larger pattern which includes Negroes and whites.

The events which lead to Bigger's unintentional smothering of Mary, his burning of the body, his flight from the police, and his murder of his mistress, Bessie, who he fears will betray him, create a sense of dramatic excitement that catches us up in the tensions and rhythms of Bigger's life. Though he did not plan Mary's murder, Bigger accepts it as his own act. Like Dmitry Karamazov, who felt guilty because in his heart he had wished his father's death, Bigger feels that he has killed many times before, "only on those other times there had been no handy victim or circumstance to make visible or

dramatic his will to kill." The murders give him a sense of *creation*. He feels that they have given a focus to the chaotic circumstances of his existence. The acceptance of moral guilt makes Bigger feel free for the first time.

But such a commitment to life was doomed to disillusion. After his capture, Bigger realizes that he is as defenseless in the face of death as he had been in the face of life: "a new pride and a new humility would have to be born in him, a humility springing from a new identification with some part of the world in which he lived, and this identification forming the basis for a new hope that would function in him as pride and dignity." Having renounced fear and flight, he must possess a conception of man's fate which will enable him to die. He cannot respect the submissive path of religion which his mother and Reverend Hammond urge him to follow. He must have an affirmative idea. And he discovers its spirit in the Labor Defender lawyer, Mr. Max, and the young Communist, Jan Erlone.

In an essay published two years ago, Richard Wright declared that "If the sensory vehicle of imaginative writing is required to carry too great a load of didactic material, the artistic sense is submerged." He might have added that when the artistic sense is submerged, the didactic material becomes ineffective. In *Native Son*, as in the stories of *Uncle Tom's Children*, he has skillfully avoided the danger. Idea and image are remarkably integrated. Only a critic whose esthetic senses are blunted or whose social prejudices are unalterable will attempt to shout this novel down with the old cry of "propaganda." And yet, like *The Grapes of Wrath*, it will jar men and women out of their routine ways of looking at life and sweep them toward a new conception of the way things are and the way they ought to be.

But an effort will undoubtedly be made by some people to distort the plain meaning of the book in order to bolster their own bigotry. The reader must be warned against the blurb by Henry Seidel Canby which appears on the jacket of the book, and I hope that the publishers will be persuaded to withdraw it as a gross and vicious misrepresentation. Canby describes Jan Erlone, the Communist, as a "negrophile"! He suspects that the book will be "less of a surprise to, and more readily understood by, Southerners than by Northerners." He relishes the "deadly satire in the portraits of the young radicals—Mary who is killed, and Jan, the Communist, who chooses Bigger to work on,



RICHARD WRIGHT. His "Fire and Cloud" won an O. Henry Prize; his "Bright and Morning Star" is included in O'Brien's collection of the best American short stories; his "Uncle Tom's Children" won first prize in the Federal Writers Contest; his distinguished work earned him a Guggenheim Fellowship; and his first novel is the March choice of the Book-of-the-Month Club. A brilliant figure in American writing.

not realizing that this kind of political pity is more offensive to a Negro than color prejudice."

This is the most blatant stuff I have ever read. It angles the novel away from itself to the very stereotype which the novel demolishes. For the plain fact is that the radicals, Mr. Max and Jan Erlone, are the only ones who make Bigger aware of his dignity as a human being. To be sure, this does not happen overnight. To be sure, Jan makes an initial blunder in treating Bigger as a comrade before Bigger has learned to believe in the very existence of comradeship. But if one reads the novel in its full sweep one cannot mistake the overwhelming significance of Bigger's final remark: "Tell . . . Tell Mister . . . Tell Jan hello." It is, at last, a dropping of the Mister, an affirmation of that solidarity with other human beings in which only Jan and Max have taught him to believe.

It is difficult to think of an American novel that provides a more brilliant analysis of the interplay of social and psychological factors in experience. Wright has fused the valid elements in the naturalistic and psychological traditions, and the result is something quite new. For lack of a better phrase, "dramatic realism" will do. Structurally, the novel is divided into three sections corresponding to the three acts of a play. The action is not chopped up into chapters; it moves in a long sweep toward three climaxes. The tonal unity and psychological tension which we associate with an intense drama can be sustained only with great difficulty in fiction. As a sheer achievement in structural craftsmanship, *Native Son* is worth careful study. There is nothing wayward, either in detail or in mood. It is the work of a writer who feels his material deeply and authentically at the same time that he can view it from an ideological perspective.

What this perspective is, Wright has explained elsewhere. The Marxist analysis of society, he holds, "creates a picture which, when placed before the eyes of the writer, should unify his personality, buttress him with a tense and obdurate will to change the world. And, in turn, this changed world will dialectically change the writer. Hence, it is through a Marxist conception of reality and society that the maximum degree of freedom in thought and feeling can be gained for the Negro writer. Further, this dramatic Marxist vision, when consciously grasped, endows the writer with a sense of dignity which no other vision can give. Ultimately, it restores to the writer his lost heritage, that is, his role as a creator of the world in which he lives, and as a creator of himself." *Native Son* is his first full-length embodiment of this conception in the warm and living terms of fiction. It is a first novel, but it places Richard Wright, incontrovertibly, in the first ranks of American literature in our time. There is no writer in America of whom one can say more confidently: He is the creator of our better world and our greater art.

SAMUEL SILLEN.

## Sir Norman Angell

FOR WHAT DO WE FIGHT? by Norman Angell. Harper & Bros. \$2.50.

THE imperialists also have their fellow travelers. They balk at most of the reasons and swallow most of the objectives. For thirty years, Sir Norman Angell has been a very model of the type. His latest book, as he himself insists, does little more than repeat the essential argument of an earlier work published six months before the end of the last war. This would be entirely proper if only he drew lessons from the intervening experience. The old moralizing in favor of a union of capitalist states to preserve peace has been submitted to the final test of history. It has been found wanting the necessary grip upon reality. What is Norman Angell going to do about it? He will tell the customers, as he does in this book, that "the way is less important than the will." The way, that is decided by the imperialists, men of action and iron who know little and care less about a moral mythology, a "will," which does not hinder them in pursuit of the world's loot. But Norman Angell thinks it is of lesser importance. Perhaps that is why Norman Angell, and hundreds of liberals like him, have been people of lesser importance than the Bonnets and the Chamberlains who seem to know much less and do much more because they never separate ends from means, or ways from will.

The duality is characteristic of the fellow traveler. There is a hardheaded and a soft-minded Norman Angell. He finds it hard to make up his mind, and when he does, it is usually for the wrong reasons after skirting close to the right ones.

The hardheaded Norman Angell submits to punishing criticism the past policy of the French and British governments. He is not taken in by their recent revision of pre-war history. There was very little in it that he likes, especially in the last seven or eight years. Moreover, he insists that the next victory will not be any better than the last unless the Western powers admit their mistakes. How much likelihood is there of that? Or that Norman Angell will fail to find a way to support them even if they don't break down and confess?

Nevertheless, Norman Angell continues his personal search for a better victory. For example, he raises the point whether the neutrals ought to trust the Western Allies and join them against Germany. His question is a brave one: "On what grounds are we to persuade ourselves, our allies, potential allies, America, that this time victory will mean something better, more hopeful, more permanent than the last time?" As he develops his position, England and France seem to have no valid claim at all. In his view, as matters stand at present, the Western powers have determined to prevent Germany from dominating them only in order to dominate Germany. For this war aim he has no sympathy. In addition, since he has not forgotten the

fates of China, or Ethiopia, or Spain, or Czechoslovakia, he even believes it likely, on the basis of present policy, that gullible neutrals would be betrayed in the end as soon as they exhausted their usefulness for the Anglo-French bloc. Why, he asks, should the neutrals help us if "perhaps just when their need of our help is greatest, we may have some new mood"?

Norman Angell's questions are usually good. This is a good one. Only his answers deeply hurt. They are like lattice-work over a volcano. In this book, he does not make the slightest effort to pretend that the Western powers have earned our confidence. On the contrary, he is still a lonely, pleading prophet because they have not listened to him. They have not listened to his passionate appeals for a "union of democracies," a League of Nations, the "principle of liberty," a "system of order," the "right of each nation to existence," the "rule of law." This neglect has not weakened his faith, but neither has it led him into channels of thinking which would contribute any additional concreteness and decisiveness to his ideas. He still seeks the fulfillment of his beautiful abstractions wholly within the capitalist order. He still thinks that material interests count less than "popular unwisdom." Have twenty years of world experience shown that the imperialist powers cannot build a true league of peaceful nations? Well, then, repeat the need for such a league all over again and let it go at that! Are we in the midst of a rule-or-ruin war? Hope that it ends in a stalemate!

### FOR THE WAR

In the end, despite his misgivings, Norman Angell supports the war. He wants a better victory, but he wants victory. He wishes to convert his government to the rule of reason in international affairs, but only because he thinks that is enlightened self-interest. In short, he never breaks away from the ruling powers in the immediate test of concrete objective. His sensibilities are only hurt by the unnecessary brutality with which imperialist diplomacy goes about getting there.

In one sense, the Norman Angells are doomed to futility. Time has shown that. But not in another and deeper sense. They play their useful role whether they plan it that way or not. Lord Lothian may not appeal to many Americans, and Neville Chamberlain even less, but Sir Norman Angell may do much better. His very critical apparatus establishes confidence. What does it matter to the Lothians and the Chamberlains that the Angells also do their bit for victory, even if in their own way? Afterwards, they settle accounts as they please. Meanwhile, for those who like that sort of thing, the Angells provide the vision of the future, the beautiful and empty promises, the power and the glory. It has been said before, but it is still good. If there were no Sir Norman Angell, British imperialism would have to invent him.

THEODORE DRAPER.

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**Kentucky Home**

RIVER OF EARTH, by James Still. The Viking Press. \$2.50.

THIS first book by James Still is lyric rather than dramatic; in its framework it resembles a poem rather than a novel. The plot is negligible, consisting of a series of incidents told by a seven-year-old boy about his family and its struggles for existence in the Cumberland section of the Kentucky mountains. At first the book holds you almost by its music alone; then suddenly you are aware of people—hungry people, uprooted people, wandering, always wandering among the mountains. The picture comes to you simply and gradually with the subtlety that only a careful artist can conjure up. You see the father of the family, restless because the mines where he once worked are closed, and the vain attempts of the mother to root the family in a soil too thin to provide sustenance for her children. You see the feuds of the mountaineers, life in the tiny schoolhouse, the grandmother reminiscing of life long ago among the clans; and finally you see a boy emerge into awareness and early maturity.

James Still is a writer who recognizes the value of words. His ear is sharp and sensitive to the color and accents of real speech; and the people become human for you slowly and imperceptibly as people do in life.

But more important, this is a novel of American proletarians, children of this country's first settlers, told by one of them without even the slightest degree of self-consciousness. The note of anger is so quiet that it is sometimes difficult to hear. But it is there, implicitly rather than explicitly. And the result borders on irony rather than pathos or sentimentality: the first immigrants who came to this country, who burrowed in its mines and worked on its soil, are still homeless, wandering always, looking for work, for roots.

ALFRED J. BRENNER.

**Good Neighbor**

GUATEMALA, PAST AND PRESENT, by Chester Lloyd Jones. University of Minnesota Press. \$5.

GUATEMALA is a little land lying just below Mexico and north of Nicaragua. It has a population of something over two million people, the backbone of which is Indian tribes. The largest of the Central American republics, it comes into the news most often in connection with a dispute with Great Britain that harks back to 1859. The British, it seems, promised £50,000,000 for the construction of a highway or river route to the Atlantic. They welched on the pledge; latest reports have it that Washington will mediate the century-old dispute. Occasionally, Guatemala bobs into view in connection with arms smuggling across the Mexican border. But behind the news is the typical colonial picture: coffee and bananas form the major export crop; foreign holdings—German in coffee, and American in bananas—dominate

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half to three-quarters of the output. German, British, and American loans have saddled the population for decades to come: illiteracy runs way past 90 percent. It's a perfectly happy little good neighbor of ours. Chester Lloyd Jones, well known authority on Caribbean affairs, has written a painstaking study of Guatemala's development since the days when one of Pizarro's cronies first came upon its peaceful Mayan villages. It makes an indisputable place for itself on the reference shelves. Mr. Jones closes with a fanciful chapter on what he would do if he were a Guatemalan dictator: benevolent, of course. It makes pretty gloomy reading. Obviously, only some fundamental changes in the major capitalist countries hold out the hope of raising these people to modern, industrial civilization.

J. S.

### Two Decades Past

ON A DARKLING PLAIN, by Wallace Stegner. Harcourt, Brace & Co. \$2.

IN 1918, if you had come out of a world war gassed and wounded, hating conflict and at odds with the hypocrisies of peacetime society, what would you have done? Very likely, gone off to some hermit hideout and measured your soul by the stars. That is what Mr. Stegner's hero does, building himself a hut on the plains of Saskatchewan, five miles from the nearest farm. But the world will not let him alone. He is pulled back into it by (1) the neighboring farmer's daughter, a "sweet, grave child" to whom he reads Arnold's poetry; and (2) the necessity of taking part in another kind of war, the flu epidemic that sweeps over village and farms. His experience in this emergency solves his individual problems by teaching him that mankind has more to it than he thought.

Young Edwin Vickers' return to society is about the only thing that distinguishes this novel from the "poet versus insensitive world" literature of the twenties. Otherwise the tone is as archaic as those terribly contemporary phrases one hears about "Allied democracies" and "a new order in Europe." A decade or so ago, when writers enhanced their ivory towers by building them on Main Street and spitting on the burghers below, we might have been more appreciative of Mr. Vickers' devastating replies to the village "pack's" curiosity about his affairs. The reader would also feel warmer toward Mr. Vickers if he did not smile so consciously at his own heroics; and if his struggle and final conversion were not so blurred by romantic vagueness. After all most of us have learned, since 1929 at least, that there are many battlefields, many opportunities to recognize and fight for man's dignity, outside of flu epidemics. It is curious—and rather disturbing—to find a thirty-four-year-old novelist, in the first year of World War II, preoccupied with the lonely confusions that beset the generation which came out of World War I.

BARBARA GILES.

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## The Dilemma of Clifford Odets

In "Night Music," presented by the Group Theater, our most gifted dramatist subordinates his great talents in the interests of problematical "success."

IT MAY soon become necessary to write an extended and considered treatment of the development, the accomplishments, and the shortcomings of Clifford Odets; but however desirable such commentary might be, there is neither time nor space for it in this review of his new play, *Night Music*, which the Group Theater is presenting at the Broadhurst. For it would involve a documented study, not only of Odets himself as man, artist, and revolutionist, but of his relationship to the Group Theater—in which he occupies a pivotal position—and of that organization's originally expressed objectives, its present setup, and its current direction.

That Odets is our most greatly endowed and distinguished practicing dramatist can no longer be disputed by any serious commentator on the American theatrical scene. The work that this man of thirty-three has turned out in the past, and the genuine flashes of creative genius that still illuminate his scripts, do not permit of the type of critical sniping and caviling that have so frequently been leveled against him. Nor is it exactly pertinent to state that he has yet to produce a completely satisfactory full-length play, for he is at a crucial point in his career that demands our still withholding judgment, and the work he has produced since *Waiting for Lefty* burst like a rocket at the old Civic Repertory Theater, is so far beyond anything that any other contemporary American playwright has given us, both in its theatrical conception and deeply felt humanity, that comparison becomes more than invidious.

Yet *Night Music* must be placed in relation to his talents and his times, and a point of reference established for evaluation of any future work. It goes without saying that this comedy is the most interesting and vital new work on the Broadway stage, if only because Odets is still the most creative and living talent among our contemporary stage-writers. But, what has he tried to say in this latest comedy; what has he accomplished? What he has attempted is so slight in comparison with his potentialities, and so inadequate a reflection of modern American life, that we are justified in expressing our disappointment with the superficial manner in which his material is handled. For Odets, as a serious dramatist, deals with basic human and social problems, and as such he challenges us to demand that he deal with them in as basic and fundamental a manner as the present level of his high talents will permit.

In twelve scenes *Night Music* deals with the dilemma of Steve Takis, Greek-American boy from Brockton, Mass., and Fay Tucker, the Philadelphia girl he accidentally met on

the streets of New York. Odets starts his fable with a trivial incident: Steve, employed by a moving-picture company, is taking two valuable trained monkeys to the Coast; rather, he is accompanying the monkeys—they are important; he is not. They frighten the girl, an aspiring actress on her way to the last (and third) night of her first stage job. Both are arrested by A. L. Rosenberger, philosophic detective; the curtain rises on the stationhouse.

### BASIC PROBLEMS

From this point, the fable becomes elaborate and significant; it builds. What we are dealing with here are the basic problems of youth, poverty, unemployment, and war. The boy possesses the natural rebelliousness of youth—he is the young Odets, the young American. Torn by insecurity, loneliness, starvation, hopelessness, and fear of death, he lashes out at everyone, the police sergeant, the detective, the girl, the hotel bellboy, anyone in sight, himself. He is the complete synthesis of youth everywhere in a capitalist world—there is only one thing left him, to enter the army, where at least he will be fed and clothed until he is killed. That is his "solution," and so stated, his dilemma, his problem, his existence, should tear the heart out of the most complacent Broadway audience and throw it in its well fed face.

The girl comes to love him; she gives him shelter. The kindly detective watches over both with a paternal eye. He is the grandfather of *Awake and Sing!*, redivivus. He tells the boy to use his head; he exhorts him; he begs him; he pleads with him. He is dying himself, and he hands on the torch of life, of truth, of American aspiration for a future in which youth will have hope and old age the satisfaction of a life well lived, with dignity. He says to the boy, Go out and fight for your generation; you are the hope of America; struggle, talk, shout out loud, speak your piece, "and if they tell you that you can't start a third party, start one; call it, Party to Marry My Girl!" In other words, fight for the right to the pursuit of happiness. Stay out of war; avoid death; live!

This sounds deeply exciting, and exciting it should be, but it is not. Not in the way that Odets alone can profoundly excite you, tear you apart and put you together again, exalt you and throw you down. When the last curtain falls on *Night Music*, the burden of the song is too similar in content and conclusion to Elmer Rice's song in *Two on an Island*. Work and fight! "Be tough," says Mr. Rice's theatrical producer to the Broadway hopefuls. "Fight," says Mr. Odets' paternal detective to his two-on-an-island. And

although Rice is to Odets as night is to day—from the standpoint of human creativity and sensitivity and understanding—neither has involved you deeply with his people and their problems: Rice because he cannot; Odets because he did not care to.

Why? That is the problem of Clifford Odets. No one can tell him how to write a play. He knows how to write a play, and he could write the greatest play of this generation and many others. He knows why his Sid-and-Florrie scene in *Lefty* not only wrings the heart of any audience, but compels action of that audience. And he knows why his Steve and Fay in *Night Music* fail to engage anything more than the top levels of our mind. The reasons are many and various; they involve Odets' attitude toward himself and his fellowman, toward the Steves and Fays of this world, and the grievous personal and social problems with which we all are struggling.

In this new play Odets has definitely subordinated his peculiar genius (and it is real) to the demands of the Broadway theater. Can it be that he feels that a truly revolutionary play cannot survive on Broadway? Let us assure him that it can, that there is an endless potential audience for such work; and let us remind him that America has taken to its collective heart John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (both in its printed and celluloid versions), with a fervor that is the dismay of the reactionaries. For he *must* know that he has dealt us off the bottom of his deck; he *must* know that this is the most crucial period in the world's history, and that he has failed again to do what he advises Steve Takis to do—speak your piece! get it off your chest! say it! fight! What he does say, he says in innuendo, by indirection, in overtones and undertones; but mostly he has diluted the true expression of the revolutionary passion that *could* be Odets, for superficial sentimental values that will catch the laughter of our audiences and the ready money of Hollywood.

### HAROLD CLURMAN'S DIRECTION

In this process he has been brilliantly abetted by the direction of Harold Clurman, a man who in many ways is one of the most sensitive and gifted directors we have. Yet, if you listen to what these characters say, and how the audience reacts to it, you will see that not only has Mr. Clurman failed to reveal those values still inherent in an inadequate script, but he has further attenuated them. Playing continuously for laughs, gagging stage-business, he has vitiated the significance of many characters and scenes that might still have moved you by their pathos, their tragedy, and their call for action.



SEARCHING FOR AN ANSWER. A. L. Rosenberger (Morris Carnovsky), Fay Tucker (Jane Wyatt), and Steve Takis (Elia Kazan), in a scene from "Night Music."

This tendency to cheapen and vulgarize Mr. Odets' work has been evident in his director since the days of *Paradise Lost* in 1935-36.

The Group Theater actors still perform as a group, and it is difficult to single out any individual for special praise. Elia Kazan has power and intelligence as Steve—and a certain lack of restraint; Carnovsky as Rosenberger easily captures your tenderest emotions, but tends toward the academic in his conception of the role; my apologies are due Jane Wyatt for an uncalled-for comment a couple of weeks ago to the effect that she was "an indifferent movie star." As Fay, she has charm, sweetness, and an attack that reveals a serious approach to her craft. There are sound characterizations by Philip Loeb, Sanford Meisner, Art Smith, Ruth Nelson, Roman Bohnen, Walter Coy, and a brilliant piece of creative acting by William Hansen which shines in spite of misdirection. The bit-parts, as usual with the Group, are more than adequately handled; they are part of an ensemble. Mordecai Gorelik's sets again reveal his true genius, and Hanns Eisler's charming incidental music is perhaps too muffled by the production.

All things being equal, the Group Theater and Clifford Odets still remain our best hope—short of a national theater—for a real theater, a theater of, by, and for the people. Let them get down to work.

#### REFUGEE ACTORS

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Their new revue, it is true, seriously lacks apt material and they have fallen between two stools in their attempt to transmute their peculiarly Viennese charm to the uses of speedy Broadway entertainment. It simply can't be done. But they provide an evening of more than average entertainment.

Note especially the highly individual talents of Lotte Goslar (guest dancer in the satirical vein), Paul Lindenberg, who could act anything from farce-musical-comedy to Shakespeare; Fred Lorenz, a delightful clown; Maria Pichler, Henry Peever, and especially Katherine Mattern, who is a minor genius.

ALVAH BESSIE.

## "Of Mice and Men"

The movie version of Steinbeck's book and play.

AFTER the Giant Stage Presentation at the Roxy the curtains sweep open on another historical event for the American screen, the motion picture version of John Steinbeck's book and play, *Of Mice and Men*. With *The Grapes of Wrath* this film takes its place as one of the great works of the domestic movie.

It is a story well fitted for the screen. The short novel itself was written to be played;

its small compass and Steinbeck's visual conception presented less of a task to the adapter and director than the epic *The Grapes of Wrath*. This does not minimize Lewis Milestone's and Eugene Solow's doughty job of filming it and their remarkable deed of getting it financed, produced, and distributed. The picture cost \$120,000, which is a horse opera budget; Steinbeck got only \$5,000 for the screen rights plus a cut of the profits; and the production was made possible only because of a busted seam in the monopoly structure of Hollywood. Lewis Milestone was involved in a litigation with Hal Roach of United Artists, and his suit was so good that he was able to bargain away his claim for permission to make *Of Mice and Men*.

The book is not Steinbeck's best; it has sentimental faults, and the basic theme of the disinherited man's hunger for land and comradeship is not realized in a sharp enough way. It will be difficult for members of the audience to identify themselves with Lennie, George, or Curly's wife, who are characterized in an almost detached fashion. Lennie, the moronic giant, is an idea rather than a person, and despite the commendable effort of Lon Chaney, Jr., Lennie is a constant strain on the credulity. It is as though the author wants us to feel sorry for their plight rather than to arouse us against their tormentors, to recognize our identity with them. The later work, *The Grapes of Wrath*, does not have this weakness, and although it deals with people caught in a worse situation, Steinbeck emphasizes their awakening to struggle. The theme develops dynamically until we are confronted with the happiest of endings—Tom Joad's dedication of himself to the class struggle.

#### REALISTIC, INTENSE

*Of Mice and Men* is a fatalistic work, moving steadily through the classic pessimism of high tragedy, to its culmination in frustration. But in its deeply moving details, *Of Mice and Men* is a magnificent film. At least a half-dozen scenes have never been matched in intensity. The episode in the stableroom of the pariah, Crooks, in which the damnable fact of Jim Crow hits the screen in all its ugliness, is a revolutionary thing in the American movie. Crooks, Candy the discarded old worker, Lennie the humble giant, and the lonely girl in a crude male world come together in a scene as beautiful as anything in drama. It is the beauty of reality—Steinbeck's social conscience expressed with tenderness and eloquence.

Burgess Meredith is George, in a portrayal which must have been chastened by the director, because Mr. Meredith does not indulge his corny style. Lon Chaney, Jr., as Lennie is not impressive and his interpretation is spotty, but the fault may largely be the author's. The rest of the principals are downright startling. Roman Bohnen as old Candy delivers a wonderfully poignant characterization. Leigh Whipper as the crippled Negro, Crooks, takes advantage of the film's

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first honest characterization of the Negro to give a mordant and haunting performance. Charles Bickford gets a chance as Slim, the muledriver, to show his acting ability for the first time. Betty Field as Curly's wife is the inspiration of the film. I cannot think of another Hollywood actress who could touch Miss Field's performance of the pretty young girl married to a belligerent little man and denied her womanhood in a community of men. Her voice is high and monotonous, it becomes shrill under stress, and her pantomimic talent is as expressive as a thousand frames of montage. When the film becomes as real as this one the hangovers of stage acting technique are not called for; Miss Field and director Milestone have made a mark for all other actresses to shoot at. Naturally none of these actors would have gotten out of the rut without Steinbeck's and Milestone's understanding to base their work upon, but they make you glimpse the vast art of acting that Hollywood has drowned in bilge.

### ON LOCATION

As in *The Grapes of Wrath* the story called for a real *mise en scene* and the director has taken most of it outdoors on a California barley ranch, with the luminous sun of the Pacific lighting the picture. Such actuality serves to point up the few sound stage sets and reveal them as frauds. George and Lennie's creekside rendezvous, used at the beginning of the story and in the melodrama at the end, is a creation of the set builder and painfully out of character with the rest of the story. Why this could not also have been taken on location is a mystery to me. I have the idea that nothing but the obligatory interiors should be made artificially. If the location company runs into rain, damn it, shoot it in the rain. It often rains in life. If an airplane roars overhead, spoiling the soundtrack, let it roar. Realistic films should not only be made in relation to the script but shaped by the actual places in which they are filmed. Jean Renoir appreciates the suggestiveness of his camera's environment; the prison castle in *Grand Illusion* demanded alterations in the script, and the telling effect of *The Loves of Toni* is due largely to the demands and inspiration of the French Pyrenees locale. The motion picture is uniquely privileged as an art in that it can approach life more closely than any other medium. The stage must use interpretive scenery and must accept limitations on its effects. But the film is weighted with few of these characteristics. Lewis Milestone has shown here that he appreciates the idea, but I wish he could have used it completely.

*Of Mice and Men* is a very significant film and it would have been a greater one but for the weaknesses of the material. I am talking now in terms of the absolute. Comparatively only four or five American sound films can contend with it for quality. One of these is also by Steinbeck, and another is by Milestone—*All Quiet on the Western Front!*

JAMES DUGAN.

## Gropper's Harvest

The annual Gropper exhibition at the ACA Gallery.

PROLETARIAN art has passed the theoretical stage. Today the emphasis is on doing rather than talking about it. Joe Jones, who has written a manifesto against the chauvinist school of Midwestern painters in his foreword to the catalogue of William Gropper's third annual show of paintings at the ACA Gallery, furnishes a detail of the kind of "collective work" the class-conscious artist is doing today. Jones and Abe Birnbaum habitually gather at Gropper's house in the evening. Instead of electing a chairman, marshaling texts, and clearing the throat for masterful summations, the three artists draw all evening. There is a candid exchange of criticism and a real sense of competition toward a common goal.

Gropper is the master of revolutionary painting in America, an artist historically more fortunate than his great forebears such as Daumier because he lives in a time of an orderly and confident socialist movement. A considerable study could be made, for instance, of the importance of the Communist Party to the art of such men as Gropper. Although he is not a Communist he can smile indulgently at the rancor of the critics who seek to exorcise his meaning by calling him a Stalinist. No less a luminary than Lewis Mumford has plunged into this trap. In refusing to sponsor the meeting that marked Gropper's twentieth year in the service of the working class, Mumford expressed his admiration for Gropper's art, and his abhorrence for Gropper's "Stalinism." If Gropper were dead, said Mr. Mumford, I could forgive his politics as I forgave Cezanne his Catholicism. This is indeed Christian charity and perhaps the last alms Mr. Mumford will give to living art. The critic has solved an old bourgeois dilemma in a new way. Style is now divorced from content by calling up the magic word "Stalin."

While the Benton-Curry-Wood school is riding hell-for-leather back to Currier & Ives and Parson Weems, Gropper's American art is an international and contemporary one. There are traces in it of two Spaniards, a half-dozen Frenchmen, certain Flemish painters, and a great school of Asian art. Even an American painter, Albert Pinkham Ryder, begins to have suggestion for Gropper's vision. An odd and very droll little oil in this exhibition called *Rip Van Winkle*, and a night piece called *The Shepherd*, recall Ryder's thick and ominous brush.

This is not borrowing. It has been demonstrated by Daumier that a master painter can actually anticipate the various styles of his successors. Gropper is not such a fool as to painfully invent an "original" style, like the surrealist poet who discards the English language because others have used it. He is busy working. If Picasso was aroused by Guernica to paint tormented and optically deranged

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forms, Gropper can appreciate this special mode in *Candide*.

This show is a revelation of the prolificity and variety of Gropper's second stage as a painter. Great advances have been made in color and breadth of subject matter, and the increasing painterlike quality of his technique. Where his first work was almost uniformly painted thickly, he has arrived at much variety of texture; in the *Museum of Modern Art Opening* the brush is as light and frivolous as Dufy or Matisse. In the forty paintings, representing one year's work at the easel, there are not more than five or six humdrum works, and a half-dozen that can take first place in contemporary art. A painting in memory of Moissaye J. Olgin, taken from his last slogan, "There is much to be done," is a superb allegory in epic style. This sordid association of art with the saying of a Marxist politician will no doubt madden the bourgeois critics, and they will piously lament the bad taste of the painter. They would prefer to wait like Mr. Mumford for the healing balm of a few retrospective centuries before they may recognize the nobility of this tribute.

Gropper has celebrated another politician in a furious painting called *Joshua Fought the Battle of Jericho*; he has become deliciously topical in *Brenda in a Tantrum*; and he has made a mordant observation on war in *Over the Top*, two figures falling wildly into an abyss. There is a tender painting of one of his young sons in *Hallowe'en*, and a startling Goyaesque in *Wool Over Their Eyes*, in which an ancient crone rocking in the sky knits an enormous black mantle which streams down to cover the eyes of workers struggling on the earth. *Pickets* and *Open Spaces* are the only works which remind one of the first period.

Several things, like *Political Speaker*, have barely emerged from the sketch form. As in the case of Daumier the cartooning profession has made a fast, decisive painter of Gropper, and sometimes he does not articulate his details as much as could be wished. The speaker's hands gripping the rail and the hands in certain other paintings are too sketchy. *Stab in the Back* is the only painting with really empty handling. Gropper has a healthy disregard for the formalities of composition and the current show displays considerable virtuosity in solving this problem with natural logic, rather than stereotyped theory. Joe Jones' funny description of Benton's "general tendency to exhibit fifteen-foot Indians in the foreground" has no counterpart in Gropper's work.

The ACA show is a harvest of splendid painting, but it is not final. Gropper's work in oil is in transition and many promises of coming achievements are indicated. Like the working class movement in which he is proud to march, nothing is good enough. No prodigious production quota is great enough. The other day he went into the *Daily Worker* sports department and asked Lester Rodney if he couldn't do a sports cartoon once in a while.

J. D.

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