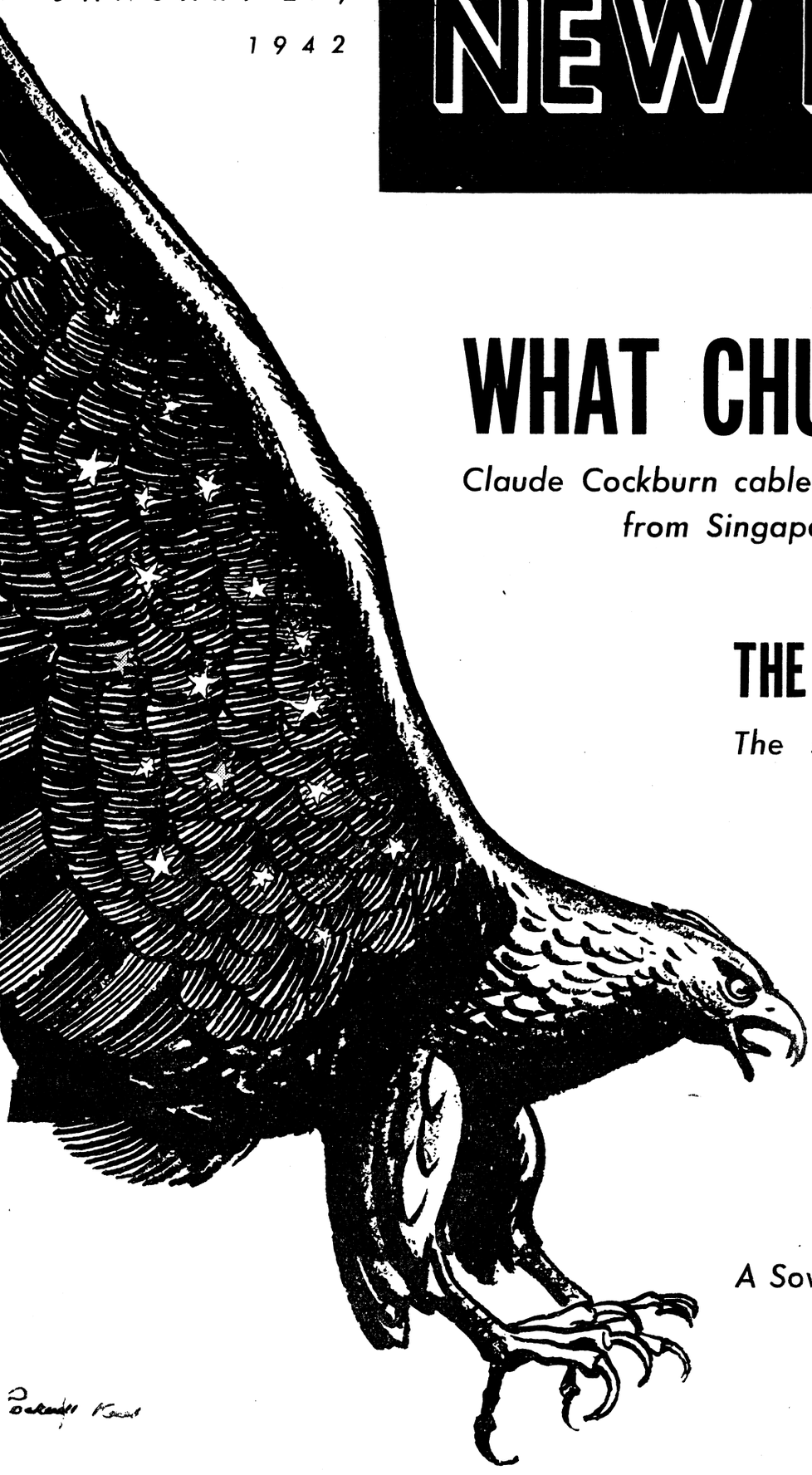
**WILL NELSON DO THE JOB?** By Bruce Minton



FIFTEEN CENTS
JANUARY 27,
1942

# NEW MASSES



## WHAT CHURCHILL FACES

*Claude Cockburn cables the story of Duff Cooper's recall from Singapore. What Britain wants to know.*

## THE MAN WILLKIE DEFENDS

*The story of the Schneiderman case. By Abraham Unger*

## TRUMAN X-RAY

*The tell-tale evidence uncovered by the investigating committee. By the Editors*

## THE RAZOR

*A Soviet short story written at the front.*

# Between Ourselves

WE HOPE none of you will miss the story on page 9 of this issue, "The Razor," by Konstantin Paustovsky. Read it and see if you don't agree with us that this is perhaps the finest story to have appeared since the beginning of the war. It came to us as a cable from Kuibyshev, via Inter-Continent News, which also sent us "Raid by Night," the personal account of guerrilla fighting behind the enemy lines by Konstantin Nepomnyaschy, published in NM two weeks ago. We expect many more dispatches of this kind from Inter-Continent News, among them articles by Ilya Ehrenbourg and other outstanding Soviet journalists and authors.

In addition to cables we can also promise for the near future a short story about France under the Axis by the German anti-Nazi writer and refugee Anna Segher; a report from the novelist Ben Field on Connecticut folk; the experiences of an air raid warden in Moscow; and a piece on Soviet trade unions, written by Maurice Dobb, distinguished British politico-economist.

To turn from writers to readers—one of our editors, Joseph Starobin, spent a few days last week out in Michigan, speaking one evening at the university in Ann Arbor and the next to a group of NM readers and friends in Detroit. He says he found the students and faculty members in Ann Arbor an attentive and searching audience, and although the college administration still resists the idea that the country is at war, the students are fast shedding the isolationist and pacifist attitudes of the past. He found a group of loyal NM readers on the campus who, by their questions and comment, showed they were following the magazine intently. It was the kind of meeting that makes an editor want to go to college all over again. Spirits in Detroit were equally high. A number of doctors, trade unionists, "just housewives," and friends gathered at the Fort Wayne Hotel to go over the world situation. It was Starobin's impression that both meetings were successful and satisfying; his own satisfaction with the trip, he says, was more than an impression; it was a fact. Moreover, he got some subs for the drive—half of which go to the quota of the Detroit committee, the other half boosts Starobin's standing in our own inter-office competition.

It seems that our Open Editorial Board Meeting in New York on January 9 started something. Last week we said on this page that it was a real beginning but only a beginning. Well, it's growing, though not as fast as we'd like. Many of the letters we get these days begin, "I wasn't at the meeting but . . ." and there follow suggestions to the editors. Or again, the correspondent *was* at the meeting but he thought of something later that should have been said. M. W. was inspired by Ruth McKenney's victory talk and remarks that "the best possible column of humor is a McKenney each week"; he also suggests that NM "take its place in the front rank as a cultural force in the present war by publishing some of the fighting songs of the past, with music. . . . New songs for the present, too, are much needed." F. McK. thinks a short story contest would result in some fine material. N. D. sends a whole list of interesting proposals for discussion of the art field. H. K. S. wants science, plenty of it, in terms that "ordinary guys like me" can grasp without the help of textbook or dictionary. And so it goes. Nor do the enthusiasts neglect the drive for 5,000 New Subs to Sink the Enemy. They have ideas on that too—how to persuade friends and influence people to subscribe, not borrow; how to make the best use of group meetings; how to organize committees. From outside of New York come reports of some heavy offensives in the drive, notably a subscription conference held in Chicago last week with forty representatives of leading organizations taking part, with a similar one scheduled shortly in Detroit. Again, these things are only a beginning, the start of a real all-out. We'll need all the recruits, all the ammunition obtainable to do our most effective firing. In short—we need you on the firing line.

Alvah Bessie's piece last week on "Morale for Six-Year-Olds," has brought a great deal of comment which shows how intensely parents and teachers are thinking about the problem of protecting children, physically and psychologically, during time of war. Some of this comment appears in our Readers' Forum, on page 23. We invite further remarks and suggestions on this subject from our readers. There have also been letters on Mr. Bessie as a dramatic critic, especially in regard to his recent discussion of Clifford Odets. One reader describes it as "an essay so beautifully written, so just, and so meticulously and wisely restrained (and this is something, with a subject that can easily run away with you) that I think a little special order of merit should be struck off and pinned on the breast of a man who is not only the most rewarding commentator on the theater writing today but a superb novelist as well."

There's still time to register for the current session at the Workers School in New York. Classes, which just opened, include several courses under the general subjects of "The World at War," American history, trade unionism, Marxism-Leninism, economics, and miscellaneous studies. NM editors on the faculty this session are Joseph Starobin, lecturing on "Areas of World Conflict," and Bruce Minton on "American Policy in the Last Decade." The school is located at 35 East 12th St.; phone ALgonquin 4-1199.

"Listen to the People"—the anti-fascist people of many nationalities—as they sing their songs in a program presented by NM the evening of January 24, at the Hotel Diplomat, NYC. Among the groups participating are the Chinese National Chorus, Finnish Greater New York Chorus, the Negro American Singers, German Anti-Nazi Singing Clubs, Ukrainian "Leontivich" Chorus, the American Peoples Chorus, and the Jewish Peoples Philharmonic Chorus. Bart von Schelling, Arthur Atkins, and other soloists will sing international working class songs. There will also be dancing to a swing orchestra. For further details, turn to page 29.

NM is planning a special Mid-Winter Weekend for people who like to skate, ski, toboggan, and hike. The place is Plum Point, in the Hudson Valley country, about fifty-three miles from New York; date, Friday night, February 6, through Sunday night, February 8. Besides the winter sports, there will be bowling, dancing, and ping pong, as well as a program of lectures, music, and theater. The entire cost, aside from transportation, is ten dollars. Reservations are somewhat limited, so it's wise not to delay yours.

## Who's Who

KONSTANTIN PAUSTOVSKY is a young Soviet fiction writer and poet. . . . Abraham Unger is a New York lawyer. . . . William Allan is a journalist living in Detroit. . . . Margaret Schlauch teaches at New York University. . . . John Howard Lawson is a playwright and screen writer, now on the West Coast.

## THIS WEEK

NEW MASSES, VOLUME XLII, NO. 4

*January 27, 1942*



**Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification sent to NEW MASSES rather than to the post office will give the best results.**

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# FOR A FULL INTELLECTUAL LIFE

riod since September, 1939.

***NM Puts Faith In Common People***

We have just re-read a great many back issues of the "New Masses" and we find a happy contrast. There is little that was said in them, on the main issues of the day, that requires any re-examination or restatement. That is not to make any claims to perfection for the editors. But it is to say that having put their faith in the common people of the United States, in the democratic future of our country, in the devotion of the Soviet Union to peace and progress, and guided by their own Marxist sympathies and understanding, the editors, contributors and supporters have come through a very stormy and changeable period in the political weather of the world, with magnificent credit. There are few weeklies indeed that can justifiably say that of themselves.

The magazine is devoted to...

...New Masses" ... valid ... lent medium for exchanging views and clarifying them.

Have we made it clear that we believe the "New Masses" the best weekly publication in the United States devoted to current events and the arts? It is that by a wide margin. And it is indispensable to a full intellectual life.

———

*Many of the problems ...*

*Daily Worker, January 8, 1942*

Some months ago a number of prominent Americans—Harry F. Ward, Paul Robeson, Richard Wright, and others—wrote what they felt about New Masses. Today we are happy to reproduce an excerpt from an article another great American —William Z. Foster—wrote about this publication recently. The author of "From Bryan to Stalin" and "Pages from a Worker's Life" needs no introduction to our readers. What he has to say on any public matter is of importance to all enquiring Americans regardless of their political affiliations. And when Mr. Foster says that he believes New Masses is "indispensable to a full intellectual life," we trust that they will either agree with him, or ascertain why he said what he did.

We invite you, therefore, to become one of our subscribers. Will you turn to page 32 to see how you can be of further aid in building this magazine to the stature it deserves in these furious days?

NEW MASSES
VOLUME XLII JANUARY 27 NUMBER 4

# WHEN CHURCHILL CAME HOME

***Claude Cockburn reports the story behind Duff Cooper's recall from Singapore. The tin and rubber barons and the scorched earth policy. Questions the British people are asking.***

*London (by cable)*

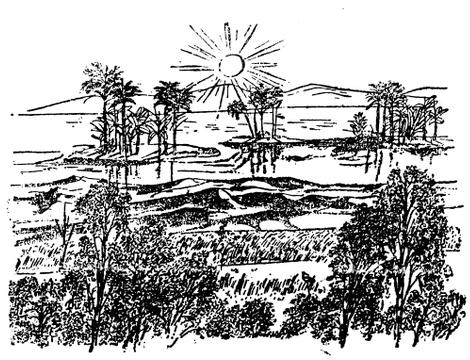
FOR many months there has been in common use here a convenient yardstick for measuring the depth of public agitation, anger, or dissatisfaction with one or other phase of the war effort: the yardstick is the state of public feeling after the fiasco of the Norwegian campaign in the spring of 1940. Using the same measurement, I should say you would find agreement here that "not since Norway" has anything stirred and shocked the general public so much as the sight which met the public gaze when defeat took the lid off the situation in Malaya. It is not the defeats themselves—not even the vast losses in tin and rubber that shook people. Everyone would be prepared to listen to a reasoned and reasonable explanation of why it could not be otherwise. What has shocked people and stirred them to a degree comparable to that achieved by the ineptitudes of the Chamberlain government in Norway is the revelation of just how the thing came about.

Naturally, attention has centered on the failure of the scorched earth policy. Quite simply, millions of people think of Dnieprostroy and then they think of Penang. And just as they are thinking, certain ill-advised metal and rubber interests in the city of London have the indiscretion to come out quite openly in sections of the financial press with the suggestion that after all it would be a bad thing to scorch the earth too much in Malay. Their reason is that the Japanese have, or are alleged to have, such stocks of tin and rubber that the new supplies in Malay will not be of immediate use to them. And because if they are scorched now what will happen "when we get back after the war"? Such stuff is an insult to the intelligence, and the public takes it as such. Moreover, the declaration of this policy in the City is virtual proof that these same City interests must—if that is a policy they are prepared to avow in public—privately have been exercising their by-no-means inconsiderable influence in the same direction.

In other words, if this was the avowed policy in Mincing Lane and on the Metal Exchange, what must have been the mental attitude of the subordinates on the spot in Malaya itself? And no one familiar with the lurid history of the tin pool and the tin control, and the proceedings which a few years ago got Mr. John Howeson, Britain's tin Napoleon, sent to jail, can be unaware of the degree to which the policies of the great tin interests and those of the British colonial office have been interwoven.

The second point that people are shocked about is the picture of the "tea party" administration at Singapore, the revelation of fantastic intrigue and incompetence.

Third, and perhaps most important of all, is the total and tragic failure to take adequate steps to mobilize the Malayans and the Chinese inhabitants of Malaya in the defense of the country. It is freely alleged here—and the London *New Statesman* prints the story—that it was because Duff Cooper tried belatedly to make some changes in the Singapore policy toward the Chinese and Malayans that he incurred the apoplectic hatred of the local authorities, and strongly hints that his recall represents a major victory for blimpism there. Duff Cooper, says the *New Statesman,* "is credited with persuading the British authorities that the Chinese, who are half the population of Malaya, are on the same side as Britain in this war, and that since Russia came into the war, Communists are our allies. The chief political organization of the Chinese is the Kuomintang, and its leader, of course, was in jail. I am told that Duff Cooper was responsible for getting him out, and also that it was he who arranged for a Communist manifesto urging resistance to the Japanese to be circulated in Malaya. . . . Duff Cooper did at least know that the Chinese had been fighting for four years while we were still providing the Japanese with the means of fighting, and it was under his leadership, I believe, that both the bourgeois Chinese Kuomintang and the Malayan Communist Party have actually been allowed to help in the defense of their own country."



Editorially, the *New Statesmen* goes this week to the heart of the matter with the remark "What threatens to destroy our empire in those regions is not merely that the men on the spot were second or third rate: it is that their contempt for brown and yellow skins unfitted them for realistic thinking and adequate action. This is obvious in Malaya because the news records our monotonous retreats. Is it really less obvious in India?"

THERE'S the rub. As I reported some time back, there is rising an angry and urgent demand for a new approach to the question of India and Burma. It has intensified immeasurably as a major factor in the situation here. For now, for the first time, our policies and our administration in the Far East have had turned on them a limelight so fierce and pitiless, that the whole country—including millions who never before have taken the slightest interest in "the colonial question"—is forced to see and to recognize the ghastly and abominably dangerous diseases from which it suffers. A sort of nemesis has fallen upon a whole caste and a whole tradition. And the political repercussions here will be enormous. It is at this point that the political situation here shows itself complex, critical, dangerous, and yet full of possibilities for real progress, real and healthy education as a result of our mistakes.

Here are some of the factors in the situation: (1) the public wants a showdown on Malaya, a showdown on production (the London *Times* articles I quoted last week have produced the expected earthquake), and immediate progressive action in relation to India and Burma. (2) Churchill has so far done practically nothing about India or the demands for a Ministry of Production. (3) The Australian press, for example the Sydney *Daily Mirror,* has openly declared that the fall of Singapore would mean the fall of the

present Cabinet, and though that is oversimple, it is true that the Cabinet faces now one of the most critical moments of its history. (4) The people, however, want these showdowns and cleanups, but they by no means want to lose Churchill. Yet everyone can see that if the Cabinet delays and the popular agitation rises, a first rate Cabinet crisis may result. (5) There are important elements on the right of the Conservative Party who are "gunning" for Churchill. (6) Their reasons are exactly opposite to those animating the honest public which wants to get on with the war in an efficient way. The view of best informed political opinion is that largely by virtue of the prestige and the connections established as a result of his Washington and Ottawa visits, Churchill can weather this storm. (7) It is obvious that if Churchill chose openly to ally himself with all except the old men of Munich and the right wing elements of the Conservative Party, he could establish an impregnable progressive political alliance.

IT IS impossible to think of any alternative that would not be a change for the worse. In this apparent political impasse the most hopeful thing that could happen is that everyone should unite to defend Churchill against extreme right attempts to dislodge him. At the same time the force of the public demand for vital changes in personnel and policies should be raised to such a pitch that even Churchill with his exceedingly obstinate views should feel compelled to undertake those changes while remaining himself at the helm.

As I have reported, there have been similar threats of crisis before, and in each case the huge reserves of good health and good sense in the British people have defeated the reactionary forces. And despite all the setbacks and the incompetences, more healthy forces are not diminished but increasing.

CLAUDE COCKBURN.

## The Indivisible War *An Editorial*

CHINA is such an important nation for the future of all Asia, and so integral a part of the world front against the Axis, that criticism from China cannot be taken lightly. In the past week there has been a surge of such criticism: several Chungking newspapers have taken the British to task for their failure to conduct a resolute "scorched earth" policy in Malaya, and their hesitation to mobilize the native peoples of India and Burma for defense against Japan. A group of Chinese organizations in the United States sent a sharp telegram to the President protesting Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox' recent speech in which he placed the job of defeating Hitler ahead of the job of defeating Hirohito.

And finally, there was a striking statement from Dr. Sun Fo, a leading Chinese statesman who has always been identified with circles somewhat to the left of the Generalissimo, and was incidentally the negotiator of many of China's loans from Soviet Russia. According to the United Press for January 17, he said among other things that "If the United States and Britain intend to allow Japan a free rein in the Far East while they are finishing off Hitler . . . there is grave doubt in Chungking as to the wisdom of continuing to fight as she is now doing so successfully."

In all of this, some serious questions are involved. As for the wisdom of mobilizing the energies of the native peoples of Asia, it is not the Chinese alone but the Australian and even the leading British newspapers who are demanding it. The British public realizes that the empire will be lost to Japan if, as the *Daily Express* puts it, "the whiskey swilling planters and military birds-of-passage" are permitted to do what they did with the island of Penang. The ancient way of defending the colonies has been by hand-picked native and white soldiers, and the classic technique of government has been to divide the Malayans from the Chinese and the Burmese from India. That won't work any more. Japan is too close and too formidable. The mobilization of the millions of native peoples in the Dutch East Indies is still possible and was never more urgent. Britain's agreement with the Indian nationalists, the rapid development of India's war resources—these are urgently needed war measures and would certainly be as inspiring to China as guns and planes.

BUT this is only part of the problem. The mere fact that the Chinese feel as they do discloses the absence as yet, of a truly *world-strategic conception* of the war. The Chinese themselves would agree that such a conception must be based on the indivisibility of the war. And this implies that just as Britain, or the United States, or Russia cannot really make peace with the Axis, neither can China—not a peace which would justify her sacrifices and safeguard her sovereignty.

Within the concept of the indivisible war, however, there is no doubt that Hitler's Germany is the chief protagonist of the fascist alliance. But in saying this, Americans will have to avoid a double error: first, the idea which the appeasers are bruiting about that all our energies ought to be centered on Japan. That is clearly intended to be of help to Hitler alone. The second is the idea that we ought to do nothing in the Pacific, just pull our punches, because some day, somehow, when Hitler is finished, the Pacific will be automatically regained. Both of these attitudes lead to confusion and defeat.

WHERE to strike hardest, at which particular moment, becomes a technical matter once the basic strategic conception of the war is established. Our own feeling is that if the notion of postponing the Allied offensive until 1943 were revised, it would still be possible for ourselves and the British to occupy North and West Africa and open up a second front on the European continent. In conjunction with the Red Army's pressure on Hitler's rear guard, it would be possible to break the Axis in 1942, and thereby to isolate Japan.

To argue for such a perspective, however, has nothing in common with "a free rein" for Japan. As the New York *Times* suggests in a cogent editorial, it is possible that a rapid Japanese victory in the western Pacific this winter might bring about a thrust against Russia in the spring, and if that were timed to coincide with a renewed Nazi assault upon Russia in Europe, the whole fortune of the democratic side would hang in the balance. To hold as much as we can in the Pacific as long as we can becomes of vital importance for the Russian front, the decisive front for Britain, the United States, and China as well.

To hold our positions in the Pacific, therefore, does not require the revision of our conception that Germany is the heart of the Axis. It requires a determined, last-ditch attitude toward the fighting. It requires, as China correctly insists, the mobilization of the native peoples in India, Burma, and Java. It requires a truly world strategic plan, which we still do not have. And above all, it requires a speedy increase of war production on the part of the American people, so that they can do their share, and more, against the common foe.

News Note: "We're straightening out our lines for the winter."
Berlin military spokesman

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Berlin military spokesman

# WASHINGTON NEWSREEL

***Bruce Minton tells of the man-sized job before Donald M. Nelson. . . . Whom is Martin Dies shielding? . . . What is happening to the Bridges Plan?***

*Washington.*

THE publication of the Truman committee's report immediately on the heels of Donald M. Nelson's appointment as the all-powerful head of war production, was by no means accidental. It is generally conceded that the President studied the committee's conclusions prior to their release; and that the report's blistering indictment accusing OPM officials and business-as-usual advocates of downright dereliction of duty was the final evidence that determined the President to centralize authority in Nelson's hands.

The creation of a single office responsible for production and procurement, backed by the widest powers to allow Mr. Nelson complete freedom of action, has been welcomed unanimously—except by those against whom reorganization will be directed. As yet it is too soon to say whether the kicking of William Knudsen upstairs will do the trick. Mr. Nelson is confronted with a gigantic task. He can count on the full support of the President, of the labor movement (AFL, CIO, and Railroad Brotherhoods), of smaller business people, of all those who realize that there dare be no further delay. The problems are admittedly of staggering proportions, calling for the exercise of the most ruthless thoroughness and for a hard-boiled disregard of the personal feelings of the men responsible for the mess in which production finds itself today.

In trying to appraise the quiet-spoken, bespectacled Nelson, the tendency has been to examine his record of recent months. He opposed Knudsenism—but he disappointed many by not standing up and fighting it out with those who allowed things to drift along their "normal" pre-war course. Nelson seemed inclined to threaten and then to relapse into silence. But now that he has been given the key job, even his critics are willing to suspend judgment. They point out that perhaps Nelson was hesitant about entering a knockdown fight because had he done so, he could then have been accused of diverting the OPM from its job, and as a result, he could have been partially blamed for failure. Perhaps Nelson was biding his time so that the complete bankruptcy of Knudsenism would expose itself. Perhaps he figured that the fastest way to win reorganization was to give the Knudsen crowd enough rope.

On the other hand, it would be naive to imagine that the mere appointment of Nelson solves all problems and that production will automatically boom henceforth. The first nut that the new administrator must crack is conversion—particularly in the automobile industry. Will he insist that the industry proceed without further ado to convert present equipment and to pool facilities? Can he rectify the harm already done in the non-ferrous metals industry, where the precedent was set, just a day before he was named chairman of the War Production Board, that only after the great corporations are granted price increases, promising profits on a scale that staggers imagination, will they consider expansion?

Even more, does Nelson understand the imperative need of welcoming cooperation offered by the labor movement and consistently rebuffed by Knudsen? Or put it this way—will Mr. Nelson accept assistance and constructive advice from no matter what source it may come? Perhaps the appointment of formal committees on which labor has a place is not the full answer: more to the point would be an ability to use the ablest assistance to best advantage, whether that help can be had from management, government, or labor. The forms to channelize this necessary aid are up to Mr. Nelson. But there can be no all-out program unless labor has a definite and indispensable place.

Recently there has been a steady and progressive demoralization among government personnel in OPM and related offices. Those who wanted to speed the war effort saw Knudsenism blocking every move to get things done. They saw the automobile industry conference fail. For the last week or so, this large group had about given up the struggle, resigned to defeat. Nelson's appointment has been a shot in the arm. Now there is new energy, new enthusiasm. Those who abandoned hope expect Nelson to cut through the red-tape of army and navy procurement agencies, to spread contracts, to increase the number and distribution of subcontracts. They anticipate speed of performance.

To do the job, Mr. Nelson will undoubtedly be forced into extensive housecleaning. He has intimated as much. Moreover, the Truman committee has given some clue to the extent to which he must purge high places of those whose chief contribution has been delay. For example, the report finds that dollar-a-year men "in a very real sense . . . can be termed 'lobbyists' . . . [who] subconsciously reflect the opinions and conclusions which they formerly reached as managers of large interests with respect to government competition, with respect to taxation and amortization, with respect to the financing of new plant expansion, and with respect to the margin of profit which should be allowed on war contracts." Therefore, "the committee is opposed to a policy of taking free service from persons with axes to grind."

From what he has already said, Mr. Nelson undoubtedly intends to act on the committee's recommendations. And he will undoubtedly heed the long list of other abuses involving procedure, exorbitant costs to government, lobbying by special interests, failure to spread contracts, inferior equipment due to bad planning, sharp and unethical actions of certain corporations—and innumerable other practices hampering our war effort. The Truman findings, in conjunction with previous revelations of the Tolan committee, can serve as a valuable guide.

MARTIN DIES, crusader against anybody and anything guaranteed not to be in the slightest way inimical to American security, has undertaken to suppress murder evidence and to give protection to alleged murderers.

In his zeal Mr. Dies has refused to hand over testimony of importance to the cause of justice, even when asked for this testimony by Sen. Sheridan Downey of California.

Here are the facts. Back in 1939 Philip Carey, organizer on the Gulf for the National Maritime Union, was murdered. A year later New Orleans police were hunting for William C. McQuistion, notorious stoolpigeon. Martin Dies, before whose committee McQuistion was busily slandering Harry Bridges, the NMU, and all things progressive, did not think it worthwhile to inform the New Orleans police of McQuistion's whereabouts. When Chief of Detectives Grosch finally located McQuistion and came to Washington for him, Dies refused to allow his witness to be extradited.

However, McQuistion subsequently made the mistake of visiting Pennsylvania, where Grosch caught up with him. He brought the accused man to New Orleans for trial. Dies was horrified. He rushed South, subpenaed all the state's witnesses, and having forced from them details of the prosecution's entire case against McQuistion, handed this material over to the defense attorney. When McQuistion came to trial, the defense possessed advance knowledge of just what the state would contend. The accused man's lawyer refused to allow his client to take the stand in his own behalf; instead, the defense pleaded that McQuistion had given valuable aid to the Dies committee, and though no direct denial was made of his involvement in murder, McQuistion was acquitted.

So much for the background. What has not previously been published is the sequel. The New Orleans police have continued their investigation of Carey's murder. After many months the police have secured the arrest of three men in California on the charge of participation in the crime.

In preparing the prosecution this time, attorneys naturally requested the opportunity to see the testimony given before the Dies committee just before the McQuistion trial. Senator Downey lent his weight to this request.

Dies has refused up to now to allow the record to be seen or used. The obstinacy of the hulking, vulgar Red-baiter raises some questions. If the men under indictment are innocent, why does Dies keep the transcript secret? If they are guilty, then why is he so anxious to protect them? Either way, Martin Dies is helping to suppress truth and obstruct justice.

But after all, that is nothing new for Martin Dies.

BY VISITING the Maritime Commission in the huge rabbit warren of the Commerce Department, I hoped to find out what was happening to the Bridges Plan for speeding up the loading and unloading of ships. It is common gossip that both the Army and Navy have complained about the slowness with which cargoes are handled in San Francisco and elsewhere on the West Coast.

The Bridges Plan was approved at one time by Frank Foisie, president of the Pacific Coast Waterfront Employers. It was approved in principle by Roger Lapham, powerful shipowner, now a member of the new War Labor Board. Captain Macaulay of the Maritime Commission expressed agreement with the purpose of speeding up handling of ships in port. But suddenly Frank Foisie took back his previous kind words. The shipowners were all for speeding up the loading process, but they objected to the union's request for government supervision, and they would not sit on a production board in which labor was represented. They took as "socialistic" the intimation contained in the Bridges Plan that charges for loading ships were exorbitant. It costs about $7,000, with longshore labor, to load an average boat; charges by the employers to the government for this same job come to about $40,000. The spread between the cost of labor and what the government pays seems unduly large to account for even the most generous estimates covering overhead, use of machinery, use of docks, interest on invested capital, etc., etc. But when labor began to press the Bridges Plan, certain powerful employers made it clear that they would retaliate by pressing for Bridges' deportation.

At the Maritime Commission, where there is a distinct nautical flavor—the secretaries referred to Captain Macaulay as the "skipper"—they told me that they considered the plan's general purpose splendid. They could not, however, pass on details. And they couldn't hurry its acceptance, because they didn't think they had jurisdiction. Their new Maritime War Emergency Board didn't think it had jurisdiction. The appointed arbiter on the West Coast, Dean Wayne Morse, didn't think he had jursidiction—and furthermore didn't want to have it. Perhaps the new War Labor Board could do something —when it got around to the problem.

"But don't worry," they reassured me. "We're keeping our eye on the plan. We'll keep an eye on it for months. We won't forget it."

Business-as-usual has taken to the sea. In the meantime, the Bridges Plan, like the Reuther Plan, the Murray Plan, the copper, lead, and zinc plan, every other plan presented by the trade unions for increased production, is getting exactly nowhere.

MORE and more, complaints are filtering into Washington about the failure to educate the people as a whole—including the army—on the full meaning of an anti-fascist war. Union leaders in particular point out that workers are asked to make sacrifices, but the reasons for those sacrifices have not as yet been made sufficiently clear. As one unionist explained to me, "We're still fighting a war based only on a desire to avenge Pearl Harbor, to show the Japanese that they can't sneak up on us and kill our boys and get away with it. The fight against fascism must go even deeper, particularly in view of the heavy lay-offs. Our war must be seen as even more meaningful than revenge over a murderous stab in the back. We haven't yet made clear enough that the Nazis are just as much our enemies as the Japanese."

To illustrate the need for perceptive education, he told of an experience encountered by labor editors invited by the Army to look over a camp near Washington. The editors were delighted at the chance to see what was going on, and at the courtesy of the War Department. They rode in tanks, examined machine guns, were shown the living quarters, and tasted the food. On the tour one of the officers conducting them was asked: "What is done to explain the meaning of the war to the men?" "Well," came the answer, "sometimes men ask what the war is about. I had to give an answer a few days ago. So I told them that we're fighting for three things." He lifted up his fingers, and ticked them off one by one: "In the first place, this war is being fought so that the United States can sell its products abroad for its own price, not for a price made in Berlin. In the second place, we are fighting to determine whether Washington or Berlin shall rule the world. And third, you've all seen pictures of workers in Europe riding to their jobs on bicycles. In this country, even the poorest workers, even those on WPA, own a car. So this war is to protect the American standard of living."

The editors took it and said nothing. But most of them are now privately pointing out that more and better education would certainly not be amiss—both for officers and men.

BRUCE MINTON.

# THE RAZOR

***The older boy screamed. When night came he and his brother were dead. Then the barber. . . . A great short story from the Soviet Union.***

*Kuibyshev (by cable).*

AT DAWN two Red Army men brought into the major's cottage an old, bent man. Without a word the men placed on the major's table a passport, straight razor, and a shaving brush—all they found on the old fellow. Then they reported that he had been detained in Gully near Well. The old man was questioned. He gave his name as Avetis Akorov, Armenian barber employed by the Mariupol Theater, and he told a story that later went the rounds of all the units in the district.

The barber hadn't been able to get out of Mariupol before the Germans entered the town. He hid in the cellar of the theater along with the two small sons of his Jewish neighbor. The day before the children's mother had gone to town for bread and hadn't returned. Evidently she was killed in an air raid.

The barber spent more than twenty-four hours with the two boys. The children sat huddled close together, not sleeping. On the second night the younger boy began to cry loudly and insistently. The barber soothed him and he quieted down. Then the barber took a bottle of water from his pocket and the child drank loudly, greedily gulping down the water along with his tears.

On the second day a Nazi corporal and two soldiers pulled the children and the old man out of the cellar and took them to their chief, Lieut. Friedrich Colberg, who lived in an abandoned flat that belonged to a dentist. The smashed windows were boarded up. It was cold and dark in the rooms. An icy storm was sweeping over the Sea of Azov.

Colberg was crouching before a stove, thrusting legs of chairs and gilded picture frames into the fire. "What have you got there?" he asked, when the soldiers and captives halted at the door. "Three of them, Herr Lieutenant," the corporal replied. "Not exactly," the lieutenant replied softly. "The brats are Jews but that old freak is a typical Greek noble descendant of Hellenites, I wager. What's that? You are Armenian? How can you prove it to me, you old ape?" The barber didn't reply. Kicking the last piece of frame into the stove, the lieutenant ordered the prisoners removed to a vacant apartment next door.

Toward evening the lieutenant came in with his pal, a fat flyer named Erli. Under their arms they carried large bottles. The lieutenant sat the boys at the table, opened up the bottle, and poured out four full tumblers of vodka.

"I won't give you any, Achilles," he said to the barber. "I want you to shave me this evening. Going to pay a visit to your local belles."

The lieutenant forced open the boys' mouths and poured a full glass of vodka down their throats. The children choked and spluttered. Tears streamed from their eyes. Colberg clinked glasses with the flyer, drained his and said, "I always favored the humane way, Erli." He poured another glass of the fiery liquid down the throat of each child. The boys resisted as best they could, but the lieutenant held their hands and made them swallow every drop. The smaller boy began to vomit. His eyes grew red and inflamed and he slipped from the chair onto the floor, but the flyer put him on the chair again. Then the older boy screamed a loud, piercing scream. He stared at his tormentor with eyes round with horror. Then he toppled off the chair and crawled over to the wall, obviously searching for the door, but blinded by alcohol he struck his head against the door jamb, uttered a groan and fell silent.

"By night they were both dead," the barber said. "Their little corpses were black as if lightning had struck them." "Yes, go on," said the Red Army major, reaching for the document on the table. The paper rustled loudly. The major's hands were trembling.

"You want to hear the end? As you please. The lieutenant ordered me to shave him. He was very drunk, otherwise he would never have done anything so foolish. The flyer had left. I lighted a candle in an iron candlestick, heated water on the stove, and began to lather his face. I put the candlestick on a chair beside the mirror. Then I thrust the soapy shaving brush right into the lieutenant's eye. He hardly had time to cry out when I struck him a heavy blow on the temple with the candlestick." "Kill him?" interposed the major. "Outright. Then I made my way over to you. It took me two days."

The major glanced at the razor. "I know what you are thinking," the old man said. "You are wondering why I didn't use the razor. That would have been more certain, of course. But to tell you the truth I couldn't bring myself to use my razor for that job. I worked with it for ten years."

KONSTANTIN PAUSTOVSKY.

*Young members of a Soviet Popular Volunteer Force*

# THE SCHNEIDERMAN CASE

***How an unfavorable decision "will cast doubt on every naturalized citizen." The issues in the trial now before the Supreme Court. Wendell Willkie for the defense.***

THE celebrated Schneiderman case is shortly to be passed upon by the United States Supreme Court. The case presents a question of great importance to every naturalized citizen, and an issue of civil liberties which concerns all Americans, native and naturalized alike. It has aroused increasing interest and discussion to the point where Wendell Willkie has agreed to appear as counsel. Mr. Willkie has already filed his brief with the Supreme Court and is now awaiting the answering brief of the Attorney General. When that is served, the appeal will be ready for argument.

William Schneiderman, now secretary of the Communist Party of California, was brought to this country when he was three years old, and when he was eighteen, as soon as the law permitted, he applied for his first papers in Los Angeles. In 1927 when he was twenty-one, he obtained his final or citizenship papers. For twelve years thereafter he was undisturbed in his citizenship, exercising its rights exactly as all other Americans. Suddenly in 1939, without warning and for no apparent cause, the United States Attorney in San Francisco, where Schneiderman then lived, started proceedings in the United States District Court to revoke his citizenship.

Schneiderman then learned through the complaint served upon him that he was accused of having obtained citizenship "fraudulently and illegally." The basis for the charge was the fact that in 1927 he had not volunteered the information that he belonged to organizations known as the Young Communist League and the Communist Party. And the complaint alleged that his not volunteering this information constituted fraud, since he had therefore not behaved as a person attached to the principles of the Constitution and well disposed to the good order and happiness of the people.

The prosecutor did not contend that Schneiderman had falsified any statement or that he lacked any of the qualifications set forth in the law, as contained in the Declaration of Intention and Petition for Naturalization, which all aliens are required to fill out. Nor did he contend that Schneiderman had misstated or falsified any information to the Naturalization Inspector, when he came up for examination. Finally, no explanation was given for holding up these proceedings for twelve years, although Schneiderman had lived in an open-and-above-board manner and was a well known California citizen.

NEVERTHELESS the complaint was filed and Schneiderman was required to meet it. His attorneys were the well known labor lawyer, George Andersen, of San Francisco, and Robert W. Kenny, state senator from Los Angeles and national president of the National Lawyers Guild. In Schneiderman's answer and at the trial before Federal Judge Michael Roche in December 1939, he denied flatly the charge of fraud and illegality. He insisted, and the prosecutor did not deny, that he had answered every question fully and truthfully and had no reason to believe that he was expected to volunteer information about his membership in the Young Communist League and the Communist Party any more than about other organizations of political, social, religious, or economic character.

His lawyers pointed out to the Court that Congress, which alone has the power to set standards for citizenship, required no such information of any alien. Just as it set no religious or economic conditions, so it set no political or social tests except these: Behavior as befits a person attached to the principles of the Constitution; non-belief in polygamy and non-belief in anarchy.

And Schneiderman met all these tests. That was obvious not only from his own testimony but even out of the mouth of the government's own witness—Capt. "Red" Hynes, notorious on the West Coast as a police stoolpigeon, provocateur, and labor spy. Hynes cheerfully admitted that Schneiderman's behavior was above reproach and that he had never come into conflict with the law. Schneiderman, of course, was no polygamist and not only was he not opposed to organized government but believed in the theory of a strong government.

Under these circumstances the naturalization court in 1927 was altogether within its rights in granting citizenship. To have done otherwise would have been contrary to the decisions of the United States Supreme Court which hold that an alien who complies with the naturalization statute earns his citizenship as a matter of right.

It is difficult to follow Judge Roche, in his decision in 1939 to reverse the stand of his colleague in 1927. Under the law it was the Naturalization Court alone which had the duty, through the naturalization inspectors, to examine an alien and determine whether he had "behaved as a person of good moral character, attached to the principles of the United States Constitution . . ." and was otherwise qualified to become a citizen. Had the government been dissatisfied with the decision of the naturalization court in 1927, it could have appealed to a higher court, the Circuit Court of Appeals. None of the information upon which it based its action in 1939 was newly discovered and all of it was available to the government in 1927. Its failure to appeal indicates that the government officials at that time had no complaint to make of the decision of the naturalization court to grant Schneiderman his citizenship.

The harm done by this case goes far beyond the injustice to Schneiderman. No one has pointed this out better than Mr. Willkie in the reasons he gave when he agreed to appear as Schneiderman's counsel. The New York *Times* of Nov. 29, 1941, announcing Mr. Willkie's intervention in the case, stated:—

"While Mr. Willkie declined to discuss the case pending its hearing in Washington . . . it is known that he agreed to take it because he firmly believed that the decisions of the lower Federal courts . . . seriously threatened constitutional rights guaranteed to all citizens, regardless of their political beliefs. . . .

"He [Willkie] is known to feel that despite the fact that Mr. Schneiderman is an admitted member of the Communist Party, the individual liberties of an American citizen, and not the Communist Party, will be on trial during the appeal. If the Supreme Court upholds the decisions of the lower courts, Mr. Willkie believes that a dangerous and decidedly un-American precedent will have been set that would permit court reviews of the citizenship of all naturalized Americans.

"Such a step, Mr. Willkie is said to believe, would be contrary to all the principles of the American way of life and would cast a doubt on every naturalized citizen."

The Circuit Court of Appeals to which Schneiderman appealed Judge Roche's decision conceded that there was a conflict of opinion as to the views of the Communist Party, admitting at the same time that the Constitution of the Communist Party of the United States opposes the advocacy of force and violence. Having recognized, as was to be expected, the existence of divergent views on that question, the Circuit Court should have as a matter of law decided that Judge Roche had no power to reverse the judge who granted naturalization in 1927. For obviously, if honest persons can disagree, Schneiderman's holding of one set of views can never constitute fraud, and fraud was the only charge upon which Judge Roche could act.

At the trial Schneiderman not only introduced his own testimony but that of Prof. Walter Thompson and Prof. Harold Chapman Brown of Leland Stanford University while the government relied upon the opinions of Capt. "Red" Hynes and one Miles J. Humphreys, a disgruntled ex-Communist who had been expelled from his union and who had been designated by Dean Landis in the Bridges case as a witness unworthy of belief. On the basis of this testimony the Court stated: ". . . We find sharply conflicting views as to what method the Communist Party advocated." But then, instead of accepting Mr. Schneiderman's opinion as to what he believed the Communist Party meant to him, the Court decided to accept the views of his enemies and then to ascribe its own interpretation to Schneiderman.

THE Schneiderman case creates grave and ever-present dangers for naturalized citizens from which they can never escape. Citizenship by naturalization becomes not only second-class citizenship but provisional citizenship, always subject to revocation. For so long as a man can be challenged for his political, social, or economic views and opinions, so long will he be at the mercy of powerful interests and officials who oppose his views. Reactionary employers, fascist agents, fifth columnists, and unpatriotic officials can prey upon trade unionists and hold over them the threat of revocation of citizenship. And what is there to stop them if a court can at any time five years, ten years, thirty years after citizenship, accept an unfavorable version of a naturalized citizen's opinions?

Such a theory is alien to every concept of Americanism. Article XIV of the United States Constitution provides:—

"Section 1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside."

And 118 years ago Chief Justice John Marshall of the Supreme Court set down this statement of American policy on citizenship:—

"He becomes a member of the society possessing all the rights of a native citizen, and standing, in the view of the constitution, on the footing of a native. The constitution does not authorize Congress to enlarge or abridge those rights. The simple power of the national legislature is, to prescribe a uniform rule of naturalization, and the exercise of this power exhausts it, so far as respects the individual. . . . He is distinguishable in nothing from a native citizen, except so far as the constitution makes the distinction. The law makes none." *Osborne vs United States Bank, 9 Wheaton 738 (1824)*

That is the only issue coming before the Supreme Court and which Attorney General Biddle will be required to meet: Shall the policy of the United States be that enunciated in the Fourteenth Amendment or shall there be two classes of citizen, one native, forever protected from those who might seek to deprive them of their citizenship, the other naturalized, who hold their citizenship on sufferance and always subject to revocation?


That, as Mr. Willkie has so well said, is the issue, and not Communism.

The Supreme Court in the Schneiderman case once again has the opportunity to sweep away obstacles which clutter the path of constitutional progress and the Attorney General of the United States can aid in that task by enunciating as the policy of the government that no naturalized citizen need ever fear for his citizenship because of his views or opinions, and that citizenship once lawfully obtained will remain forever inviolate.

No more fitting comment can be made on the Schneiderman case than is to be found in the words of President Roosevelt:

"I am deeply concerned over the increasing number of reports of employers discharging workers who happen to be aliens or even foreign-born citizens. This is a very serious matter. . . . By discharging loyal, efficient workers simply because they were born abroad . . . employers are engendering the very distrust and disunity on which our enemies are counting to defeat us.

"Remember the Nazi technique: 'Pit race against race, religion against religion, prejudice against prejudice. Divide and conquer!'

"We must not let that happen here. We must not forget what we are defending: Liberty, decency, justice. . . ."

ABRAHAM UNGER.

# SCHOOL FOR DEMOCRACY

***A new kind of educational institution founded by the victims of the Coudert inquisition. Its unique personnel and student body.***

YOU get to feel your age when you remember that you were graduated from college in 1924. And when you think of college, of the expensive education your parents provided for you, and which you accepted because it was the thing to do, what do you remember? Well, of the three and a half years—if you were I—you would remember little enough. Not that it was entirely the fault of my university; not that it was entirely my fault. My education was a gift to me, and therefore not completely appreciated; my college was an enormous institution, in which there were several inspired and genuine teachers—not enough. I remember three who loved their work and fired me with their own enthusiasm: one French teacher, one teacher of zoology, and one English teacher who, because he was something of an actor and could weep when he read *The Trojan Women* aloud, accidentally developed in me a passion for reading. But these men were in the minority: they were giving their best under adverse circumstances. Much of the rest I remember was cut-and-dried, pre-shrunk. The ancient history seemed terribly ancient and remote; the modern history seemed to have nothing to do with *my* life, the economics was a "science" that applied to nothing I knew.

All of this is prelude to announcing the fact that a perfectly astonishing organization is operating in an old red brick building on Astor Place in New York. The number is 13. The name of the building, ironically enough, is the Alexander Hamilton Institute. Ironical, because the institution itself, which occupies the entire fifth floor, is dedicated to the principles enunciated by one Thomas Jefferson, whose ideas were considerably at variance with those of Alexander Hamilton.

Upon the occasion of the founding of the University of Virginia, this Thomas Jefferson wrote: "The institution will be based on the illimitable freedom of the human mind. For here we are not afraid to follow the truth wherever it may lead or to tolerate any error so long as reason is left free to combat it."

The School for Democracy is a new sort of school—the sort of college I wish I might have gone to in my youth, so it would not have been necessary to spend about fifteen years disgorging the cut-and-dried "education" that cost my fond father so much money. This school, which owes its very existence to the Messrs. Rapp-Coudert, is unique in its kind, in its personnel, in its purposes.

There exists only one parallel in the history of our educational institutions in America: Oberlin College, in Ashtabula, Ohio. It too was founded by blacklisted students and teachers who were the radicals of their time: they were Abolitionists. And the institution they founded has contributed greatly to our society. The School for Democracy was founded by blacklisted teachers who possess a perfect idea: that there is a connection (direct, immediate, and passionate) between man's knowledge accumulated down the ages, and the life he lives from day to day.

About sixteen "ousted" teachers who had felt the reality of democracy in their fight for it with the witch hunters, hung up their shingle last fall. They offered twenty courses, taught in weekly sessions for twelve weeks. These courses ranged up and down the history of human institutions, human experience in living. They related the world, as we know it and live in it, to the past, the present, and the future. Their students—but that is getting ahead of the story. They taught classes in The World Today; The History of the American Labor Movement; The Rise of Fascism; The Meaning of Intelligence; What Is Philosophy?; The Biological Sciences in the Service of Mankind. Have you ever attended such a school?

THESE original teachers included scholars of accredited brilliance and accomplishment in their several fields. There was Dr. Howard Selsam, author of *What Is Philosophy?* (who is the director of this school), Drs. Walter Scott Neff, Lewis Balamuth, Morris U. Cohen, Philip S. Foner, Morris U. Schappes. These men, and others, are men possessed—possessed with their subjects, intent upon the conviction that the relationship between education and life is a living thing.

Their convictions bore astonishing fruit. The new school met haphazardly. It expected nothing. It offered these courses at eight dollars a semester (it still does). Much to its astonishment, it enrolled a student body of some 600 individuals, who were eager, hungry, starving for education. Many had never gone beyond the elementary grades; many were high school, college, graduate students, professional people. Classes grew until a stop had to be put to them—there were seventy and eighty people in a class! A physician, a man who had been a scientist all his life, came to the new school to study biology and its relation to society! A dressmaker from Brooklyn came to learn how to listen to music. A factory hand wanted to study psychology and its relation to education. A machinist took a course in arts and crafts and a housewife attended classes in the history of American thought.

These were the people whom "education," as it is currently defined, had passed by. They had no money to go to college, but they were excited and enthusiastic about the course they were taking, enrolled for others. About half of them were trade union members, belonging to twenty-eight different CIO and AFL unions. They had heard that there was a chance to learn, along political and trade union lines. Clifford T. McAvoy, legislative representative of the Greater New York Industrial Council of the CIO, said of the school:

"It is founded on the idea that knowledge is the key to the attainment of the objectives of the American labor movement. Courses at the school are given with the objective of bringing political and labor education within reach of the average rank and file trade union member."

BUT the school itself was not so easily satisfied, nor is it complacent. This session it confidently expects an enrollment of 1,500 students. It has built the better mousetrap, the better school—out of nothing (that is a figure of speech)—out of the *only* things of which a school should be built: teachers inspired with the meaning of the educative process and a profound understanding of the past history of man's institutions on this earth. "Even these low fees," says the school, "are out of reach of the great group of low-income people whom the school is dedicated to serve. If education for democracy is to be meaningful, it must reach out to those millions for whom education beyond the elementary schools has always been a luxury."

Progress is being made toward this great objective. The school has the backing of many unions. The Greater New York Industrial Council has already allocated funds for a number of scholarships in the school's trade union division. Individual unions are following suit. Individual students have made it their personal business to raise money for the school, aside from their own tuition fees. They are raising it. A private individual, attracted by what the school was doing, has offered the facilities of a completely equipped laboratory to three of the school's distinguished scientific scholars, for research in their specialities—gratis, *carte blanche,* no strings, no demands. They are free to work, and show results (for the people) when they have them—something that has been impossible for them before, that is impossible for many scientists in America today, who are subject to the whims, necessities, and prejudices of great foundations and commercial research corporations.

Miracles continue to happen. From the twenty courses in the first fall semester (1941), the school has grown to offer over fifty this session. From a handful of original teachers, it has attracted to itself a staff of faculty members, instructors, and special lecturers that numbers eighty-eight! People from the ages of sixteen to sixty are enrolling. People as far distant as Peekskill, N. Y., have demanded, and are receiving, extension courses. Wherever there is a group of people who want a teacher, the school will send a teacher to work with that group. They meet in private homes, in union halls, and local clubhouses. There were fifteen such extension classes last semester. There will be more this year.

"To meet these people," said Dr. Selsam, "is to gain an education yourself. They are tremendously excited by the idea of going to a school dedicated to the principles for which we stand. Many of them have never been to school beyond the grades, or have forgotten what it feels like to sit in classrooms. Many of our classes are conducted on the public forum basis; the students participate directly in the work of the school through their council, and their democratic involvement in classroom work. There is suggested reading; it is not required; but most of them do it anyhow. They are getting no 'points,' no 'credits' for a degree—they have come to *learn.* They are eager and hungry to learn."

THEY can learn almost anything they want to know: biology, anthropology, ethics and psychology, child behavior, short story writing, Negro history, world politics, European history, economic thought, life and culture in the USSR, music for children, parliamentary procedure, trade union principles and problems, poetry, folk music, the role of Japan in the Far East. Trade unionists are studying arts and crafts; physicians and lawyers are studying the relationship of trade unions to the war. For culture and politics are handmaidens in this unusual school—they are interrelated and inseparable; this is a *people's* school that has grown out of the life of the people and leads right back into it.

The choice of teachers—instructors and special lecturers—is catholic. Among instructors and special lecturers, you will find representative educators and scientists, public figures and students; Rep. Vito Marcantonio is lecturing, so are Vilhjamur Stefannson, the explorer, Paul Strand, the noted movie photographer, Max Yergan, president of the National Negro Congress, and Elie Siegmeister, the composer, Samuel Sillen, Paul Kern, president of New York's Civil Service Commission, Corliss Lamont, Alain Locke, professor of philosophy at Howard University, W. C. Handy, famous blues composer, H. W. L. Dana, and Osmund Fraenkel, the lawyer, Ruth Benedict, the anthropologist.

These teachers and their school are demonstrating many things, and not the least among them, the resiliency of decent, honest Americans whose Americanism and democratic convictions have always been challenged and distorted by the most reactionary elements in our great democracy, ever since its foundation. They are restoring the school to its proper function in our life, and the thousands of students they expect will be forthcoming. They are restoring to the American way of life that "illimitable freedom of the human mind" which is our necessity and our original heritage.

ALVAH BESSIE.

# THIS WAS

***"He was a man made in the mold of Lincoln***

***Ralph Fox's memorial to one of the greatest figures***

THE world today is full of dictators and would-be dictators. A moment's glance at any one of them is sufficient to convince one that Lenin was not such a "dictator." He was a man made in the mold of Lincoln and Cromwell, very simple, very rugged, very great, fully conscious of his own importance in the history of the world, but who never gazed at himself in the mirror of history, never in his life made a false gesture, played at heroics, or spoke hysterically. He had knowledge, intellectual power, vision; the power of swift decision and decisive action; courage beyond the normal; but yet the most striking thing in his whole character is that he was a man like other men. No one could have more detested the idea of a superman than did Lenin, or more heartily despised the false culture and cheap philosophy that lay behind it. If in the world's history there have been few men his equal, it is only because the great tragedy of that history has been that the talents of man have been wasted, mocked, suppressed, and vilely extinguished by the ferocity of human society.

In certain circles, in the camp of his enemies, the impression that he was cold, heartless, and relentless has grown up. Ruthless and merciless in struggle he certainly could be. His whole life of polemic is proof of this, the stern vigor with which he led the revolution confirms it. Yet it is not explaining Lenin to apply any of these Caesarean adjectives to him. From the moment he began political agitation until his death he fought untiringly against opportunism, that is, against bringing into the politics of the working class the ideas and outlook of other classes. His war against the Populists, the long battle with the Mensheviks, the fight with Trotsky's centrism, his violent attacks during the war and after the revolution upon deviators both of the right and the left wing, are the marks of this overwhelming certainty of his that the working class could only achieve its task in history by undeviating adherence to the lessons of its own experience, expressed in terms of revolutionary Marxism.

Perhaps history will eventually record him not as the leader of the Russian Revolution, for that would have happened without Lenin, but as the creator of a new kind of political life, of a new kind of political party. In the Bolshevik Party, which grew up in those struggles and debates which Lenin initiated and led, history created a new factor of immense and world-wide significance. At least there is no doubt that Lenin himself would have desired this above all for his memorial.

He was "old-fashioned" in his life and tastes, loved the classics of literature and music, Beethoven, Tolstoy, Balzac, Dickens—men who perhaps approached his own direct simplicity of outlook, his own intense love of life. Yet he understood perfectly clearly that the younger generation has little respect for the gods of the old, and he smiled understandingly when the art students whom he visited told him they were for the futurists and "against *Eugene Onegin*," Pushkin's masterpiece.

Few men have ever had his capacity for work, yet he worked always rationally, orderly. He got up usually about nine, read the papers or looked through new books which interested him until eleven, and then began his real work-day: receptions and interviews, consultations on a thousand and one questions concerning the life of the huge country in revolution, meetings of the government, of the Central Committee of the Party, its Political Bureau, articles to write (he did not often dictate, until after his illness), speeches to prepare. Once he had gone into his study he rarely left it before late at night, or, often enough, early in the morning. After the revolution alone his works fill eight large volumes, and here it must be said that few political leaders have ever written so little that was mere words, so little that consisted of covering up an unpleasant truth or evading a direct answer. Every speech, pamphlet, or article consists of hard, crystal-clear thought on problems that would have appalled nine-tenths of the world's statesmen. The style, like the thought, is hard and clear, simple and direct, full of plain, almost homely, similes, of motherwit, and almost proverbial humor. For words as words he had no use. They were for him a means of expressing thoughts, of arranging facts.

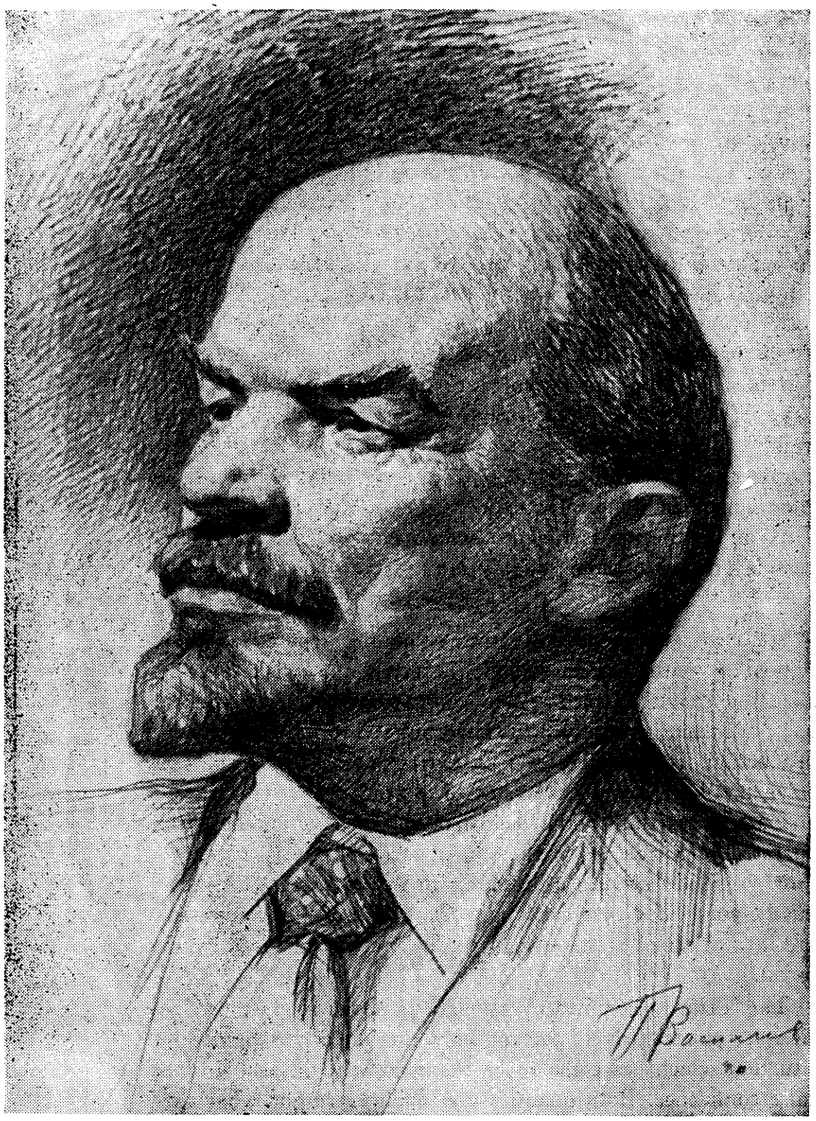
A man full of energy, loving nature and children, with a sharp humor and a simple manner; a man who could be impulsive, whose temperament was nervous and highly strung, though controlled by an indomitable will and courage; a man with none of the affectations and all the marks of genius, who could love and was loved intensely; he made a new landmark in the history of our race: the philosopher who was a leader of men, the leader of men who was a lover of men, the lover of men who loathed the hypocrisy and cruelty of the exploitation and torment of the many by the few.

THE first stroke had come in May 1922. It became clear afterwards that the disease—hardening of the arteries that feed the brain—was much more advanced than any physical signs gave evidence of, though those who worked closely with him, his wife, his secretaries, had often noticed with secret alarm the terrible, completely exhausted look that came into his face from time to time after a particularly exhausting day. In October he had come back to work, and on November 20 made his last public appearance with a speech on internal and foreign policy at the Moscow Soviet. But the brain was already irreparably damaged. When the post-mortem was made, the doctors marveled, not at the quantity of work he had done, but that any man had been able to work at all in such a condition.

His wife tells us that two days before his death she was reading to him Jack London's tale, *Love of Life*. "In a wilderness of ice, where no human being had set foot, a sick man, dying of hunger, is making for the harbor of a big river. His strength is giving out, he cannot walk but keeps slipping, and

# LENIN

***. . yet he was a man like other men."***
***of history. The anniversary of Lenin's death.***



*A drawing by P. Vasilyev*

*Lenin and Stalin at Gorky in 1922*

beside him there slides a wolf—also dying of hunger. There is a fight between them; the man wins. Half dead, half demented, he reaches his goal. That tale greatly pleased Ilyich."

He did not really believe that disease would beat him. On Dec. 16, 1922, the second stroke paralyzed his right arm and leg. A few days later he called his secretary, dictated some letters, and gave her a list of books he needed. In the spring of 1923 he is busy preparing the articles which form his testament, his political heritage. He works more slowly, dictating for an hour or two a day, but the grasp is as firm, the thought as clear as ever. On May 9, 1923, the third stroke deprived him of speech, and he was carried to the village of Gorky to begin that long and awful struggle with the wolf of death.

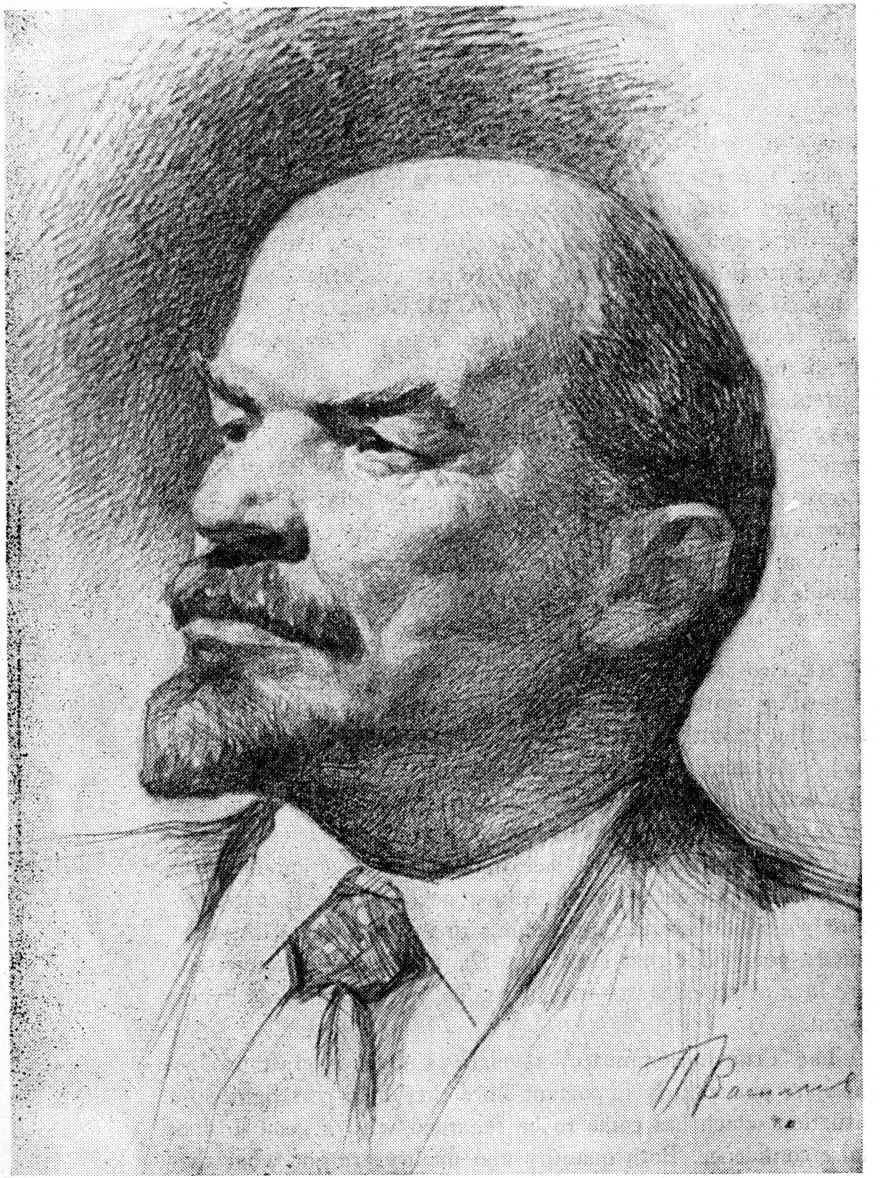
What he thought of while lying there helpless, what scenes and memories passed through his mind, we can only guess. But there was no loss of hope; there was a last tremendous conflict, a fight for life such as few men have ever made. He was in his beloved Russian countryside, amid the meadows and forests, among the sights and sounds of which fortune had so long deprived him. As the summer wore on it looked as though he were winning. His speech came back, his paralysis grew better. On October 19 he passed a few hours in Moscow. In January 1924 his eyes began to trouble him, but to the oculist he seemed well and full of courage. At 6:50 on the morning of January 21, a fourth and last stroke killed him.

The winter was a severe one. Great fires in the Moscow streets were lit to warm the crowds who passed through in endless procession to say farewell to him. They were a strange funeral pyre against the frozen background and the quiet, ever-moving crowds. From January 23 to 27 the procession through the great hall of the House of the Trade Unions never ceased—workers, peasants, professors, engineers, Russians, Germans, Uzbeks, Chinese, every race and every nation. At nine in the morning on January 27 his comrades carried his body from the hall to the Red Square, to the Mausoleum under the Kremlin wall. For the first time in history a man at his death was mourned in every country of the world.

RALPH FOX.

*The above is from Fox's biography of Lenin. Fox died fighting in Spain.*

*Lenin and Stalin at Gorky in 1922*



*A drawing by P. Vasilyev*

# Truman X-Ray

***The evils the senators uncovered. How they can be eliminated. What about Knudsen? Will the dollar-a year men still lobby for their companies? An editorial article.***

THE appointment of Donald Nelson to head the war production effort comes as an answer—how complete an answer remains to be seen—to the criticisms of the Senate's Truman committee, the House's Tolan committee, the trade union movement, and other groups and individuals who have been pressing for all-out production to defeat the Hirohitler combine. At long last there is a commander-in-chief on the factory front instead of a host of bickering generals getting in each other's way. And it augurs well that President Roosevelt has passed over the proponents of Knudsenism and selected a man who is reputed to be hostile to business-as-usual.

The executive order establishing the War Production Board, headed by Nelson, states that the chairman shall "exercise general direction over the war procurement and production program" and shall direct the work of the various federal departments and agencies involved. If this means what it seems to mean, here at last is that over-all civilian agency which has long been urged and which can plan and direct the entire production effort. It would, however, be disastrous to assume that this by itself will automatically solve the production problem. Certain basic weaknesses pointed out by both the Truman and Tolan reports still remain.

These weaknesses were highlighted by the publication two days after Nelson's appointment of the interim report of the Senate committee investigating the defense program, headed by Senator Truman of Missouri. This committee is composed of seven Democrats and three Republicans, a majority of them leaning decidedly toward the conservative side. Its report can therefore hardly be dismissed as radical or labor propaganda. That report, based on searching investigation and the testimony of 252 witnesses, lays a heavy burden of blame at the door of certain industrial interests, of the OPM, and of the procurement divisions of the armed forces.

THE Truman report inevitably projects the question: what are the tools that Nelson will work with to get the planes, tanks, guns, and other war materiel necessary for victory? Will they be the same tools whose incompetence has already cost so much in blood, treasure and strategic position in the Pacific? In other words, will the same dollar-a-year men whom the Truman committee charges with being lobbyists, with reflecting "the opinions and conclusions which they formerly reached as managers of large interests" be entrusted with carrying out the production chief's order? The remedy suggested by the Truman committee, that these men disassociate themselves from their companies and that they be given regular government salaries, may respectablize their activities, but is hardly likely to change their outlook.

One wonders too just what contribution to the victory program can be expected from William S. Knudsen in his new post as director of production for the War Department. One of the reasons for our production mess is that the penalty for failure at one job is generally appointment to another. What is Knudsen's record? The Truman committee says of the OPM which Knudsen headed: "Its record has not been impressive; its mistakes of commission have been legion; and its mistakes of omission have been even greater." And furthermore: "Instead of assuming the responsibility of presenting a clear-cut program to the businessmen, the Office of Production Management in almost every important instance (as, for example, automobiles, aluminum, steel, copper, lead, zinc, and numerous others) either has failed to foresee the nature and extent of problems or has tended to minimize the difficulty and to take half-hearted measures in the vain hope that the problem would solve itself."

The removal of Knudsen from the OPM and his subordination to Nelson is excellent. Business-as-usual's loss is the country's gain. But if there is more than gold braid to his job as production director for the War Department, he may well prove to be a formidable bottleneck. Perhaps it is capitalist *esprit de corps* that causes the New York *Herald Tribune,* which has itself been critical of the production effort, to write: "The retention of Mr. Knudsen in a post of great responsibility is, in effect, an official expression of confidence in the industry he represents." The *Herald Tribune* has here unwittingly put its finger on what is wrong with Knudsen and his tribe. Despite his gesture of resigning from the presidency of General Motors, he has, in fact, been using his government post to represent the auto manufacturers. What we need throughout the whole production setup is not men who will represent their business associates, but *representatives of the United States.*

The Truman committee documents its indictment of government and industrial business-as-usualists by presenting the facts regarding aluminum, copper, lead, zinc, steel, auto, and aircraft. Its report fully corroborates charges made in recent articles in NEW MASSES by Bruce Minton, A. B. Magil, and Bert Talcott. If anything, the committee tends to pull its punches; in its discussion of aluminum, for example, it goes to ludicrous extremes in order not to hurt the feelings of the Aluminum Corp. of America and Secretary of Commerce Jesse Jones, who negotiated a scandalous contract with Alcoa that left the government holding the bag and the country holding very little aluminum. Yet despite this squeamishness, the case which the Truman committee builds up against Knudsenism inside and outside of government is highly impressive.

THE two most important sections of the report are those dealing with the automobile industry and with aircraft. Like the recently issued Tolan committee report, the Senate body condemns the failure to convert the auto industry to war production. It cites figures which show that "the automobile companies have scarcely even started to produce defense articles" and attributes this to the fact that war production has been operated as a sideline, with only a negligible part of the industry's facilities being utilized for this purpose. And the committee points out that even now plans, if any, for conversion, are in a nebulous state—which confirms criticism made by the union.

The Truman committee's revelations about aircraft production are particularly important since they help cast light on a situation which has come to be regarded with a good deal of false confidence. Both quantity and quality are not what they

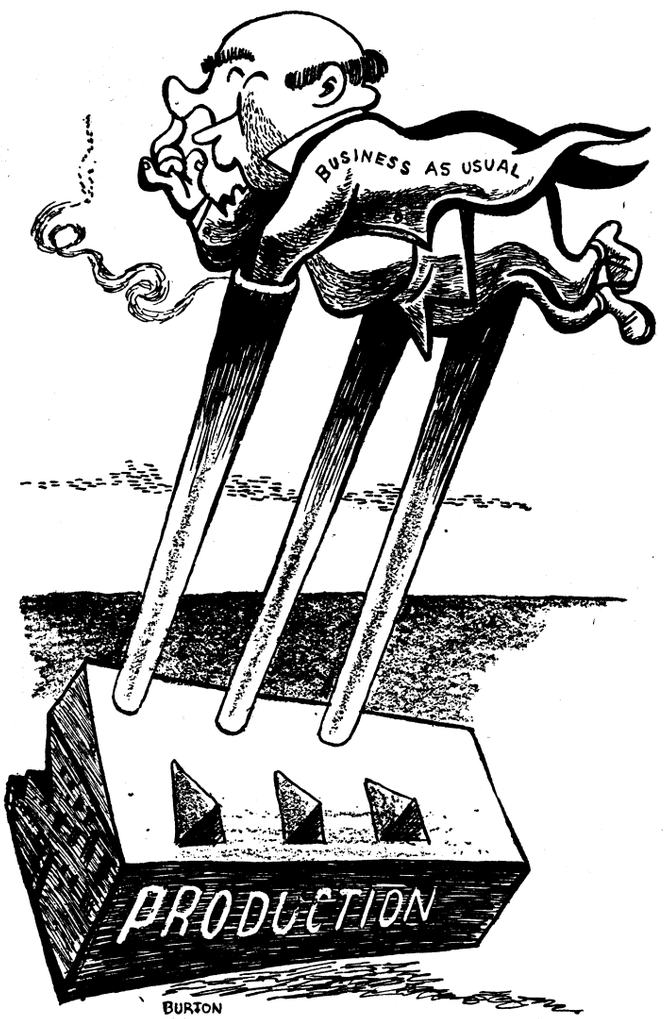
should be, according to the report. It declares that "only a limited amount of our present production is of combat types considered to be equal or superior to the best types produced abroad." Our bombers, the committee finds, are equal or superior to foreign types, but our pursuit planes are not. "On the drawing boards we have many high-performing pursuit ships, but in January 1942 very few will be produced which can be considered better than mediocre, and there will be no long-range pursuits, a type so vitally needed for our present operations."

As for quantity, the committee finds that "The prospects for future production are not too good"—this when President Roosevelt has set a goal of 60,000 planes in 1942.

Who is to blame for these deficiencies? ". . . although the reasons for our present production weaknesses are difficult to tie down, they appear to be almost entirely the result of the procurement policies of the service agencies [Army and Navy] and the Office of Production Management." "Apparently," the report continues, "there never has been and is not now any real planned and coordinated program for the production of aircraft. Our services have merely purchased what the manufacturers had to offer instead of planning to use available facilities to produce what they needed at maximum capacity."

The report is particularly critical of the practices of the service agencies: their prejudice against mass production methods, their refusal to standardize types, their resistance to new developments such as multiple guns and leak-proof gas tanks, their ignoring of the production facilities of smaller manufacturers. On the latter point it is shocking to learn that there are more than sixty aircraft companies "which have been unable so far to secure any substantial place for themselves in the production of aircraft for national defense," and that these companies can produce a minimum of 2,000 planes a month—which would double the present output!

It should be added that in regard to the whole production program the Truman committee emphasizes the necessity of breaking the present logjam of war contracts concentrated in a few large companies. Subcontracting that will spread the work to small and medium firms is essential for speed and the attainment of maximum output, the committee points out.




THE major shortcoming of the Truman report is its wrong approach to labor's place in the production effort. It blames strikes for hampering the defense program, ignoring the fact that it is the selfish attitude of certain employers that has been responsible for most defense strikes. And despite the fact that both the AFL and CIO have agreed to dispense with the strike weapon during the emergency, the report asks "careful consideration" for the anti-strike bills sponsored by two members of the Truman committee, Senators Connally and Ball. Yet, while blaming labor for being insufficiently concerned about the needs of the production program, the report dismisses with a few perfunctory phrases labor's proposals for increasing the output of war materials. For example, after itself indicting the OPM and the mine operators for failure to step up production of copper, lead, and zinc, the report summarizes the proposals of the CIO International Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers Union and then states: "The committee does not take the position that labor should dictate to industry, but the committee believes that the contentions of labor representatives, when based upon factual statements, should be checked very carefully. Both labor and industry should be consulted, but the decisions should be made by the government."

Who constitutes the government? That very OPM whose decisions the Truman committee so sharply criticizes? Though these decisions will now be made by Donald Nelson, it cannot be denied that even if he is endowed with all conceivable virtues, he will have to lean for advice and for the execution of his orders on many of the people who have failed so miserably in the past. Why handicap him in that fashion? Why deny this great people's war everything the country can give? We believe it essential that industrialists participate in planning and organizing all-out production. But we believe it no less essential that labor likewise participate. That is cooperation, not dictation. For labor has demonstrated by its foresight, constructive suggestions, and readiness to make necessary sacrifices that, unlike the Knudsens, it represents not its own class alone, but the interests of the country as a whole.

President Roosevelt has taken an important step toward unleashing the enormous war potential of American industry by getting rid of Knudsen as head man and placing Donald Nelson in command with greatly augmented powers. The next step should be the inclusion of labor in the Washington setup and the organization of joint management-labor production committees such as have already proved their worth in England and in the few factories here where they have been tried. National unity is not an abstraction. It must flow with invincible power through the arteries of production to build the sinews of war that shall crush the fascist juggernaut of Berlin and Tokyo.

**TWO-GUN DIES RIDES AGAIN**


*Michaels*

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*Michaels*

# NEW MASSES

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## Toward Labor Unity

THE exchange of letters between Philip Murray and John L. Lewis has focused attention on a matter of vital importance to labor, and to the nation as a whole. This is the business of unity in labor's house—one of the most important questions in a nation seeking complete integration behind the war. The exigencies of a successful war effort have brought the overwhelming majority of labor's millions to the wisdom of burying the hatchet—in Hitler's head. A nationwide movement of cooperation between AFL and CIO for maximum achievement toward victory has been growing; the initial successes in California, the recent developments in New York, similar instances in many other cities and states, have clearly outlined the workingman's wishes. All friends of labor have welcomed these developments; they look forward, all the more, to the coming CIO Executive Board meeting at which the resumption of negotiations for unity will be toward the top of the agenda.

Considerable speculation on these developments has appeared in the daily press the past few days, much of it distinctly unhelpful. Speculations concerning leading trade union personalities, rather than basic discussion of the issues, contribute no clarity to the scene.

This much is clear: labor unity cannot be the business of a few individuals alone. Too much is at stake. It would be no exaggeration to say that victory itself depends upon the speed with which all elements of the populace achieve genuine, maximum unity—and labor is the keystone to the war effort. It is therefore no platitude to say that unity can be achieved only on the basis of the full involvement of the memberships of both great trade union centers, and on the basis of their complete equality. Mr. Murray poses the question well in his reply to Mr. Lewis, who had written a letter to the presidents of the CIO and AFL proposing resumption of unity negotiations. Mr. Murray assures that the matter will be discussed in a "fair and democratic way."

The program for unity will be successful to the degree that it is based upon trade union democracy. That would ensure the involvement of all unions and individual unionists. The statements and actions of both AFL and CIO memberships since Pearl Harbor indicate that this is the way they want the matter handled. That is distinctly the way most damage can be done to Hitlerism.

## Resolution in Rio

AS THE conference of American republics in Rio de Janeiro enters its second week, the most publicized and still unsettled problem is whether there will be a unanimous and complete severance of relations with the Axis. As was expected, Argentina is the chief obstacle. While its Acting President Ramon Castillo has taken some sharp measures against Nazi agents in the last ten days, he is still fighting hard for a *de facto* rather than a full and legal break with the Axis. Paraguay, which is under Argentina's pressure, is also undecided; Peru, where the pro-Nazi Falangista activities have been notorious, tends to side with Argentina; and Chile, which is caught between these nations geographically, and is at the same time going through a difficult presidential election, also plays less of a forthright role than might have been expected.

Of course, the Nazi, Italian, and Japanese ambassadors are working very hard to torpedo the conference, just as the U-boats off the eastern American coast undoubtedly have tried, by the sinking of four merchantmen last week, to create the impression that the United States can't defend itself, and therefore can't be relied upon to defend the Hemisphere either. But Getulio Vargas, president of Brazil, gave a strong answer to Berlin, when he announced shortly after the conference had opened that Brazil could not be threatened by Germany, that Brazil was no longer neutral. This stand has been of great value in consolidating inter-American unity. It tends to isolate Argentina and may even result in enough pressure on the Argentines to bring them around to a unanimous severance of relations with the Axis.

But the success of the conference depends upon more than the precise character of the resolution on severance of relations. It hangs on the economic relations that will be negotiated. In his vigorous and generally fortunate speech to the conference, the leading American delegate, Sumner Welles, made it clear that the United States is ready with economic and financial assistance to the Hemisphere. He emphasized the need for conserving and exchanging vital raw materials, stressed the necessity of a shipping pool, and pledged Washington's special attention to the priority demand in Latin America for manufactures from the United States. On the political side his speech took pains to point out the worthlessness of Hitler's promises and the emptiness of all concepts of classic neutrality in a world at war. With considerable emphasis on the role of the Red Army, Welles hammered home the fact that the war was turning in favor of the United Nations, that this would be made more certain if the danger of Nazi-encouraged upheavals in Latin America were eradicated in advance.

Much of the work of the conference is going on behind the scenes, as always. And one of the sorest points is the war between Ecuador and Peru, which looked for a while as though it might keep Ecuador away from Rio altogether. It would be a big step forward if this controversy were settled and it would not be surprising if Argentina had a large hand in settling it. Throughout the Hemisphere, the conference is attracting wide attention. In countries like Cuba and Chile popular support for an active policy against the Axis is unmistakable; in Argentina Castillo definitely faces a growing association of the Radical Party, the working class groups, and sections of his own National Democrats, who are prepared to unseat him should Argentina continue to prove the stumbling block to inter-American solidarity.

## The Sick Generals

IT SEEMS that Herr Hitler is having a tough time not only with his armies but with his generals. Since the Fuehrer took over the reins from von Brauchitsch, the former commander in chief, the German armies have suffered continuing setbacks at Leningrad, in the Crimea, and now at Mozhaisk and in the Kharkov region. One after another his leading generals have either resigned or been demoted: von Bock, who was defeated at Moscow, von Rundstedt, Guderian of the tank armies, von Kleist, and List. Now comes the death by "apoplexy" of Marshal von Reichenau, one of the really leading figures in the Germany Army, a former chief of staff and the organizer of the successful break into the Ukraine last autumn.

The strange thing about it all is the fact that Reichenau was the athlete among the German generals, and boasted much physical prowess in boxing and swimming. As far as is known, he was not subject to apoplectic ailments. Another thing is that von Reichenau was among the leading Nazis on the German military staff. From away back, he had supported Hitler and profited by the reduction of von Blomberg in 1938 and the humiliation of von Fritsch. Whereas several of the generals who have disappeared in the last month were not of the Nazi Party, von Reichenau was.

It's hard to say what it all means, and the same thing goes for the latest report from the Moscow radio that the Chief of

Staff, General Keitel, a close pal of Hitler's, has also been taken ill. The Nazi party leaders and the generals may be in conflict; perhaps the Gestapo is cleaning up some of those who were dubious about the possibilities of the Russian campaign. Perhaps Hitler is trying to liquidate those military elements who might, in the face of reverses in Russia, be considering a coalition of certain big business elements and army forces to get rid of Hitler and to sue for peace, as Heinz Pol suggested only recently in the *Nation*. At any rate, trouble, trouble boils and bubbles for Hitler—in Germany itself as everywhere on the continent.

## Remembering Pearl Harbor

"MACARTHUR paid high tribute to his American and Filipino veterans of six weeks of heavy fighting, who have made the invader pay dearly in life blood and equipment for every foot of gain."

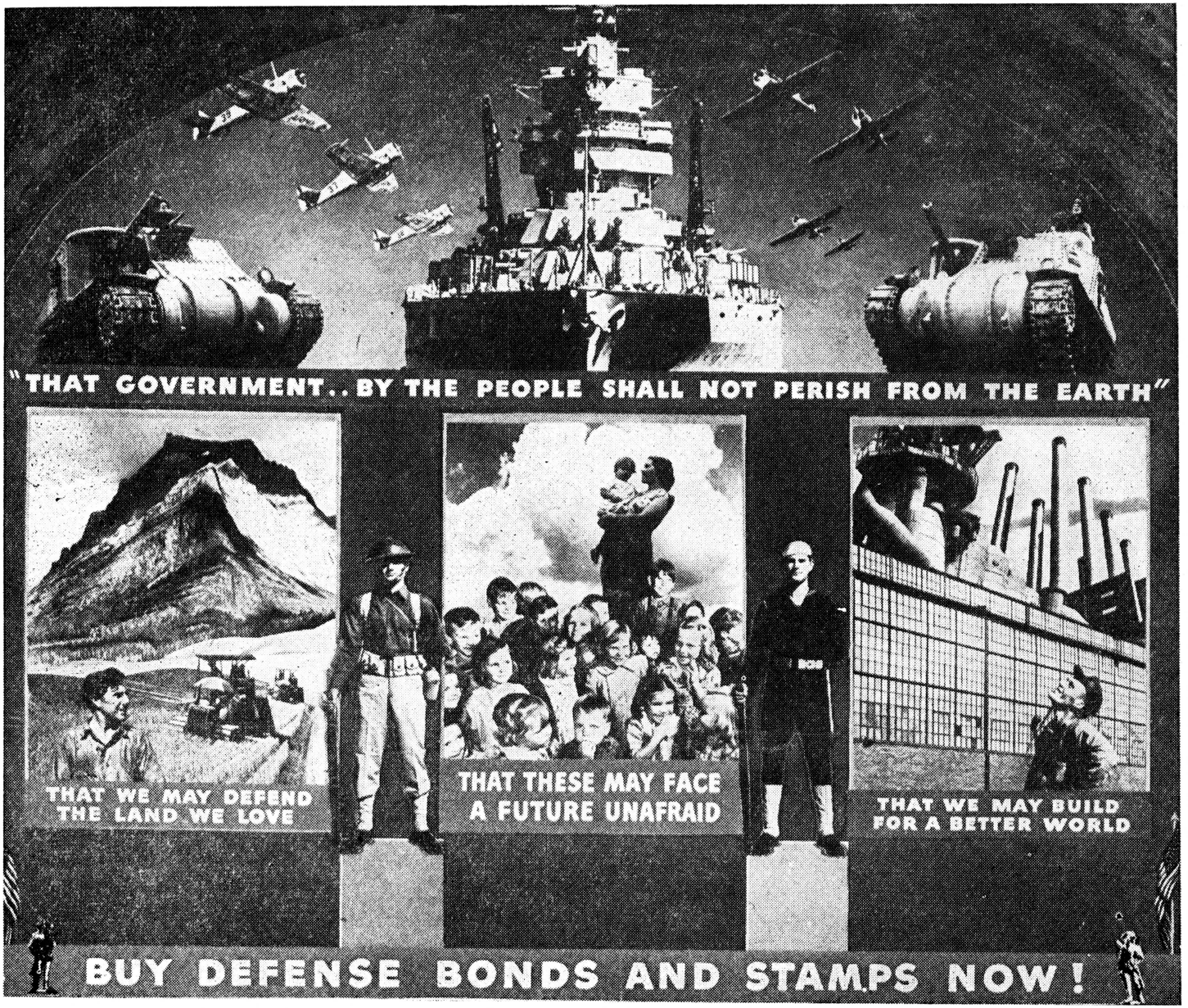
Behind that terse passage from a recent United Press dispatch lies a more eloquent story. Those American and Filipino "veterans of six weeks" have, at this writing, halted the Japanese at the Bataan Peninsula despite the enemy's immense superiority in numbers, and despite grueling attacks from dive bombers and artillery. The mercilessness of the Japanese troops toward Filipino residents, whose homes they despoil and loot, has not lessened resistance on the Island. To the defenders, both military and civilian, there is no such "give up" spirit as prevails in some defeatist quarters in the United States. Fighting back fiercely, even when retreat is necessary, MacArthur's troops delay and cripple the Japanese advance, thereby contributing to the grief of the whole Axis.

Elsewhere in the Pacific front American heroism also displays itself. To keep the vital Burma Road lifeline open, 1,700 members of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (AFL) pass under a barrage of bombs daily, driving trucksful of supplies necessary to the Chinese people. These men, under the leadership of Clarence Bowman, a former Philadelphia truckdriver, volunteered to go to the war zone. For this highly hazardous service they left the safety of jobs at home. AFL unionists in the building trades some time ago replaced their tools with guns, on Guam and Wake Islands. Their eager, valiant patriotism, like that of MacArthur's troops and the teamsters on Burma Road, is a thrilling indication of what we may expect when "the Yanks" really get over there in large numbers.

## Threescore Years

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT will not observe his sixtieth birthday alone. The nation celebrates with its Commander-in-Chief this January 24. While many of the festivities, notably the Birthday Ball, will be gay as befits such occasions, there will also be more serious undertones. This is bound to be in a national tribute to the leader of a people at war, especially in a war such as this one


A MURAL *in Grand Central Station, New York. The mural is made up of photographs taken by the Farm Security Administration.*




A MURAL *in Grand Central Station, New York. The mural is made up of photographs taken by the Farm Security Administration.*

with the goal of victory over democracy's worst enemies. It is in keeping with the times that the President continued the custom of making his birthday celebration an occasion for nationwide help to the victims of infantile paralysis. This is as the American people want it—that even in war, or especially in war, the health and well being of a democracy's citizens are a primary consideration. The "march of dimes"—may it be longer than ever before—is a token of the nation's best wishes to its Executive, a symbol of its unity under his leadership to preserve American democracy against aggression.

## Get the Real Enemies

GERMAN, Austrian, and Italian anti-fascist refugees are properly resentful at being classed as enemy aliens. At a time when certain State Department officials, congressmen, and industrialists were very much preoccupied with doing business with Hitler, many of these refugees were risking their necks in uncompromising war against the Berlin and Rome dictators. And some of them found getting into free America almost as difficult as getting out of enslaved Germany, Austria, and Italy, though wealthy fascists had no trouble opening the proper doors.

In a recent column Dorothy Thompson calls attention to the problem of these refugees and urges that other tests than that of nationality be applied to them. Miss Thompson cites the experience of France and England, where anti-fascists were interned by those very appeaser governments that had been so friendly to Hitler. We have avoided that tragic error, yet the designation "enemy aliens" when applied to Lion Feuchtwanger, Heinrich Mann, Count Sforza, and thousands that are lesser known, like "so-called Free French," betrays an outlook out of tune with the spirit of a people's war. This coolness toward the best friends of America and democracy contrasts sharply with the tolerance shown toward many who are really enemy agents.

"But what about the native-born or naturalized Americans of the German-American Bund who were cheering the swastika to the very outbreak of the war?" Miss Thompson asks. "How about all the rest of our native fascists who have been handing out the Stuttgart line for the Nazis, and who even now are fighting only the eastern end of the Axis —which is still the Nazi party line. And this latter line has never been repudiated by Lindbergh."

She also points out that Senator Reynolds of North Carolina, "an outright pro-Nazi," is still chairman of the Senate Military Affairs Committee.

These are contradictions in an anti-fascist war, contradictions that may become dangerous sources of infection. They spring from the fact that labor and the common people do not yet have a sufficient voice in our government. We need in high places men and women with a passion for democracy rather than a passion for protocol *vis-a-vis* Vichy.

## Hobgoblins and Haemoglobin

THERE'S no difference between a Negro's and a white man's blood, except to the "scientists" who squeak and gibber in the streets of Rome and Berlin. This obvious truth needs to be forcibly impressed on whoever is responsible for the rejection of Negro donations to the American Red Cross blood bank for aid to those wounded in battle. According to Red Cross officials, their refusal was based on instructions from the Army and Navy. Rear Admiral Ross T. McIntire has denied this in a letter to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. While the buck-passing goes on, no one can be made to stand up and give the reason for excluding Negroes as blood donors. What reason could there possibly be? Sound medical practice certainly makes no such racial distinctions. Nor can we afford them—besides being unscientific and harmful to the medical aid program, they are as insulting to our Negro patriots as Hitler's "blood and soil" hysteria. Moreover, they violate the avowed policy of the United States government. A few days ago President Roosevelt reiterated that policy, when the federal Maritime Commission directed the United States Lines to employ Negro seamen as well as whites. In a letter to Joseph Curran, head of the National Maritime Union (CIO), the President again gave assurance that the government's purpose is "to encourage full participation in the National Defense program by all citizens, regardless of race, creed, color, or national origin, in the firm belief that the democratic way of life within the nation can be defended successfully only with the help and support of all groups within its borders." These words should be studied by anyone who admits racist hobgoblins into considerations of a nation's life-and-death struggle.

## Just a Beginning

COUNT another little Hitler helper behind prison bars—George Hill, secretary to Rep. Hamilton Fish of New York. Mr. Hill was convicted of perjury on two counts: he lied to a Grand Jury about his friendship with Nazi agent George Sylvester Viereck, and about his part in spiriting away mailbags of appeaser literature from the Viereck-supported Islands for War Debts Committee. The fact that his employer, Mr. Fish, still considers Hill "100 percent okay" and a "loyal and patriotic" person does Mr. Hill no good. It may, indeed, do Mr. Fish a good deal of harm. For, as we said editorially last week, Hill is only small fry—the big fish are Hamilton and his friends, the men who loudly praised Hitler and all his works, who chummed with other appeasers and pro-Nazi organizations. These are the individuals who should be investigated. Surely no one will assume that Fish's secretary cooperated with Viereck without Fish's knowledge—or that he received $12,000 from unrevealed sources, and mailed out 500,000 pieces of appeasement propaganda on his own initiative. Hill's trial and conviction is a good beginning; so was Laura Ingalls' indictment; so is the pending investigation of Viereck. But for America's safety these must be regarded as beginnings only.

More drastic mopping up is needed wherever the America Firsters still operate. They failed to get their boy Lindbergh an Army commission, but he did receive an appointment to do "research work" in a "civilian capacity." We feel that it was unwise to give him an assignment at all. The vagueness concerning the nature of his work is not reassuring, and Mr. Lindbergh has shown himself determined and energetic in working against America's interests. Only a few weeks ago he secretly informed his America First cronies that they would again have an "opportunity for action." What did he mean by this remark? An investigation which will thoroughly answer that question is in order.

## Carole Lombard

TO MOVIE goers Carole Lombard was rather more than an exceptionally talented comedienne who was in large part responsible for the engaging quality of a "screwball" series of films. Her performances left a very definite impression of a personality—intelligent, warm, genuinely humorous—which was not assumed for the screen. And off the screen she was known to be both generous and patriotic, a star who had retired but who returned to work when war was declared so that the taxes on her large movie salary would help in waging war for "the best damned land there is." The plane crash that killed her took place on a return flight from Indianapolis where she had gone to star in a Defense Bond rally. To millions of Americans her death must have seemed not only horrible but a little incredible—that a person so much alive should suddenly be smashed against the side of a mountain. The public also felt a deep personal loss in the death of the fifteen army flyers who were killed in the crash. There is profound shock over a national tragedy that occurs outside the war area but is nevertheless a tragedy for America's war effort.

# Readers Forum

## Children's Hour

To New Masses: Alvah Bessie opens up two questions in his article on "Morale for the Six-Year-Olds" that deeply concern everyone who works with youngsters. (And that is a very large part of our population.) His summary of advice to parents is helpful, and I would like to add one or two suggestions. Children in time of stress need an extra amount of affection and sympathy. We may find them apparently reverting to babyishness—losing some independence and leaning a little more on us. We must be flexible and meet this need for increased assurance with understanding. A hardening process will not prepare children. We cannot prepare them for even a separation from the family by evacuating them before it is necessary. It is better to give them security through their feeling of closeness to the adults they trust.

I would also like to amplify Mr. Bessie's statement that we *must* teach the children that this is a just war. There is an implication that this will be hard—though I am sure it was not meant so. It is not hard, for we are in the fortunate position in *this* war of having all the right on our side and issues so clear that any child will feel this. Now is a good time to teach children the real history of our country—its struggles for democracy. Now is a time to give them hero stories, and stories not only of military heroes and statesmen but also of those who fought for labor's right to organize, of women who won the measure of equality we enjoy, of those who struggled to build the public schools—and let them know too that the battle for democracy in our country is not over. They will feel a pride in their country and know what we are fighting for.

There are problems other than adult attitudes, however, that must be solved. Mr. Bessie points out that a multitude of agencies is working on the question of evacuation, care of children, etc. He also rightly says that there is so far no coordinating agency with power to insure action. Mr. McNutt, in a recent article, said that twenty-four federal agencies and many more private ones were planning for child care. This is fine, but time is a factor now and how can the plans get from paper to reality unless some agency has the authority to bring together all these groups? The situation is acute. In defense industries more and more women are becoming full time workers. They are young women with young children. In peacetime we have never provided adequately for the child under six, and now we are faced with a growing need not only for care for the pre-school child during working hours but for the school child after school. We need this care for all communities, not only the industrial centers—though of course they come first. We need it so that the civilian defense program may be really a democratic program, and not one in which only women who can afford a nursemaid may participate. If every defense council had an expert in nursery education and one in child health, we would have a beginning. There is money appropriated for child centers in defense areas, but who is to administer it? Boards of education which are usually made up of good businessmen but seldom include anyone with understanding of the nursery school problem? How can these centers be realized, how can we obtain in every community a place where young children can be given proper care during working hours, where children's health can be checked, where parents can be given help in meeting their problems? This, I think, is a job for the federal government. Only under such administration can we be sure of uniform treatment for all—uniform standards. Why is not the care of children under six at least as legitimate a field for government concern and authority as that of education for those over six? Parents and educators are discussing this everywhere. I hope New Masses will carry on the subject farther.

Marion Hoyte.

New York City.

To New Masses: Congratulations on Alvah Bessie's "Morale for Six-Year-Olds," a topic very dear to every parent. It is encouraging to learn that so many agencies are actively attempting to deal with the problem of children in wartime and I hope we can look forward to instructive literature on this subject before long.

The most important aspect of the problem to be stressed over and over again is Bessie's point that "the child takes his cue from the adult—in all things." And here the parent faces the difficult task of achieving that precise balance which presents the realities of the situation, and at the same time keeps from frightening the child with an over-emphasis on the dangers. Again Bessie stressed an important point: do not lie to the child; do not present a false front.

Here New Masses might perform a further service to its readers. Why not run an article by an expert dealing specifically with (a) games and play situations which can convey the realities of the world as we face them in children's terms; and (b) a definite survey of steps taken and experiences of experts in Spain, Britain, and the USSR?

I feel that material from the USSR would be especially helpful because of twenty years' concentration on the welfare of children and the very long period of war preparations. One glimmering of what the USSR does was conveyed in a recent newspaper description of the Soviet children's Christmas in Kuibyshev. Posters depicting a combination of figures dear and well known to children, and showing the fascist attack, seemed a most excellent method of bringing reality home to them. Moreover, the participation of children even younger than those indicated by Bessie, in the war effort, is a long established fact in the USSR. An article might analyze further the methods of involving children in civilian defense and of imbuing them with that spirited enthusiasm that is the core of children's effort in the USSR. The warning of the German General Staff to its soldiers to "beware of little boys" who are so expert at guerrilla tactics is a case in point.

Janet Feder.

New York City.

## Detroit Story

To New Masses: I thought Mr. Magil's article on war production was splendid (New Masses, December 30). It gave a fine picture of the industrial scene in Detroit at the present time.

From a friend who works at a copper and brass plant in Detroit, I learned that the plant, which is large, well equipped, and well staffed, is unable to operate at full capacity because of a shortage of copper ore. The plant has been making strips of copper used on bullets. The shortage of copper ore is due to the unwillingness of copper mine owners of northern Michigan to mine large amounts of copper since the government has fixed the price of the ore. No shortage of copper was noticed before the price ceiling was established.

Large numbers of Briggs auto workers have been sent to a trade school in preparation for jobs in Briggs Aircraft. I have heard several speak of the difficulties they and their families experience in living on the fifty cents an hour which they receive during the ten weeks' training period.

Ford trade school workers receive fifty-five cents an hour. They are required to purchase more than twenty dollars' worth of mechanical drawing equipment. Only two seven-hour shifts are being trained at Ford's and many of the workers would be glad to put in ten or more hours to hasten the training period and add to their salaries. There is a shortage of instructors in the school but the instruction seems thorough. I have heard the opinion that if the airplane engine trade school were being organized with typical Ford efficiency, three shifts would be rolling in well geared precision.

Shirley Goodman.

Detroit.

## Synthetic Rubber

To New Masses: "Gripping" is the word to describe F. J. Wallace's article, "No Time to Retire" (New Masses, January 13). It holds the interest of the reader from beginning to end. It is hard to believe how one item, rubber, can have such an effect on human behavior, until one follows the article to the end. Wallace builds his case up like the rolling snowball to what should be a grand climax. Here, however, he falls short. Here he disappoints me.

Wallace expects one to accept this state of affairs as inevitable. He barely mentions the possibility of manufacturing synthetic rubber. This should have been his cue. What of the obstruction of this plan for manufacturing rubber synthetically, a plan suggested a year or two ago by government experts? Did you hear over the air waves that now the government is going to override these obstructionists? Now they promise to manufacture rubber within eighteen months. Wallace should have rebuked those who have been standing in the way.

W. E. Lee.

Cleveland.

# CUE FOR DRAMA

***A new book surveying the theory and technique of the modern theater. Welding the elements of production. Where the actor and playwright come in. Reviewed by John Howard Lawson.***

PRODUCING THE PLAY, *by John Gassner,* with the NEW SCENE TECHNICIAN'S HANDBOOK, *by Philip Barber. Dryden Press. $3.25.*

HERE we have, for the first time, a comprehensive survey of the theory and technique of production in the modern theater. Other books have touched on aspects of production. But there has been no adequate attempt to study technique as a whole, or to analyze the various steps in the dramatic process from the point of view of a unified result. This book is designed primarily to meet the practical needs of the non-professional stage. But the material has been prepared by leading experts in the professional field, and it offers a summary of the whole production experience in our theater today. The book begins with the general theory of drama, and a brief historical outline of styles of presentation. It then traces the process of *producing the play,* from the inception of the idea to the selection of the best type of nails for scene construction, and the imitation of bird and animal noises.

MR. GASSNER has handled this monumental job with skill and scholarship. His task goes far beyond that of editorial supervision. The material contributed by experts is only a part of the whole scheme. Mr. Gassner supplies the groundwork of theory, which gives added value to the diverse experience of the various contributors. Philip Barber supplies a separate, and altogether indispensable, part of the book: his *New Technician's Handbook* has been in use for some years. In its revised form, the *Handbook* provides a detailed and accurate guide to the construction of scenery and properties, costuming, lighting, methods of rigging and handling scenery.

In his introduction Mr. Gassner points out that most books on the theater tend to be one-sided: some writers deal only with esthetic theory, while others are concerned chiefly with practical techniques. This gap between theory and practice has been so wide that it has had a serious effect on the development of the modern theater. The director, or the scene designer, or the actor, often achieves a high degree of technical dexterity in his own field. To be sure, the director seeks unity as a technical key to the effectiveness of a production. The scene designer seeks a similar unity as a key to an effective design. The actor knows that his dexterity will be of no value unless the unity of the performance is maintained. But all too frequently this *desire* for unity results in a scrambled and disjointed effort in the four hectic weeks of rehearsal. One can blame the trouble on the shortness of the rehearsal period. But one must also realize that a common effort (whether it covers four weeks or four years) depends on a common understanding to make the effort meaningful. Practical technique is sure to be inadequate without this *wholeness* of theory and purpose.

IT CANNOT be said that *Producing the Play* meets this need. It rather serves to emphasize the need, and to give us a fairly accurate barometer of the present level of thinking in the American theater. The quality of the individual contributions is extraordinarily high. There is a wealth of technical information which can be found in no other work on the theater. The best articles are those on various problems of direction (by Worthington Miner, Harold Clurman, Guthrie McClintic, Margaret Webster, and others) and the exposition of "Lighting the Play" by A. Feder. It is natural that the director's viewpoint should be especially valid and conclusive regarding production as a whole. What one misses is the sense of any collective purpose binding the director and the actor and the scene designer and the playwright, or any substantial philosophy which might guide and define this purpose. Worthington Miner's chapter on "Directing the Play: The Complete Procedure" is one of the most important in the book. It is clear, practical, and packed with the experience of a knowing craftsman. Yet Mr. Miner begins by suggesting that the director's function is extremely limited and "interpretative": "If playwrights turned out nothing but completely stageworthy plays, if all actors had the intelligence, the integrity and the skill to work together and interpret these plays perfectly, the director would have no function to perform." One doubts whether many playwrights or actors would agree with this curiously limited, and at the same time curiously all-inclusive, conception of the director's task. Mr. Miner has little respect for theory: "The theater is flooded with theories of action, theories of production, theories of everything under the sun."

We can all agree that theories-in-a-vacuum are worse than useless. The problem, which Mr. Miner recognizes obliquely, is the finding of workable principles and their concrete application to the job of production. Mr. Miner sets down fourteen rules of conduct to guide the relations between director and author. Most of these are concerned with overcoming the author's distrust and unwillingness to cooperate: "Let the director start off by saying all the nice things possible. . . . Don't *tell* an author anything, if it is humanly possible to avoid it. The truer it is, the more he will resent it. . . . Make him tell what the play is about. He may resent it a little, but less than he will resent anything else." I do not present these quotations either as a defense of playwrights or an indictment of Mr. Miner. Unfortunately there is a good deal of practical wisdom in this advice to directors; playwrights bear a large share of responsibility for the confusion and cross-purposes and nonsensical egotism which plague the majority of our dramatic productions.

Perhaps the most serious defect in this book is the lack of adequate presentation of the experience and viewpoint of the playwright and the actor. It may be argued that everything in the book relates to the work of the dramatist as the creator of the play, and the essentials of dramatic construction and play analysis are ably covered by Mr. Gassner. But I cannot feel that this is sufficient. The development and revision of the play in production, the specific role of the writer in this collective process, are problems which should be fully dealt with—and of which the playwright alone can offer a convincing solution.

It seems to me that the omission of a specific contribution from the actor is even more significant. To be sure, there is a first-rate discussion of "Acting and the Training of the Actor," by Lee Strasberg, with supplementary articles on rhythmic movement, gymnastics, and voice, by Ernst T. Ferand, Gertrude Eckardt, Marian Rich, and Alice Hermes. This approach is excellent as far as it goes. But it fails to take sufficient account of the performer as a technician in his own right. Mr. Strasberg deals (all too briefly) with the history of acting, and with modern methods of training. But he stops short at the moment when the actor steps upon the stage: "I feel a certain helplessness or frustration in writing about it. It is like *describing* a picture, instead of painting it." Thus the problem of the actor is always treated at a tangent, as a subordinate element in work planned and managed by others. We see the actor being cast and rehearsed; we see him against the background of the set, moving rather vaguely amid the wonders of modern lighting. But we get little understanding of him as a living artist, as a creator whose skill and technique are the very sum and substance of effective production.

THE PROBLEM of the actor (and that of the writer and the designer and everyone else in the theater) cannot be considered separately. There must be a unified approach, a welding

together of all the elements of production. This requires a basic theory of dramatic art, an understanding of its history, growth, and present function. *Producing the Play* contains provocative references to the history of the theater (as in Lee Strasberg's outline to the development of acting, and Philip Barber's three-page summary of 2,000 years of scene construction), but there is far too little historical material, and no recognition of its value in integrating and making more specific our approach to the theater today. This fault, like the others which have been mentioned, springs from the limitations of production technique in the present period. Mr. Gassner has done an impressive job in going beyond these limitations. He has opened new possibilities to the theater worker. He has shown the inter-relation of all the elements in production, and has pointed the way to a deeper understanding of the whole process.

JOHN HOWARD LAWSON.

## Semantics Manual

LANGUAGE IN ACTION: A GUIDE TO ACCURATE THINKING, *by S. I. Hayakawa. Harcourt, Brace & Co. $2.*

PROFESSORS and other intellectuals often lament the ignorant apathy of the reading public toward serious matters. They should find consolation in the large numbers of laymen who buy popular handbooks on mathematics, physics, psychology, biology, and latterly linguistics, in their eagerness to understand the universe and the troubled world about us. Many more would doubtless buy these books if the consciously misdirected shapers of public taste—the movies, radio, magazines, and so on—aided instead of hindering the creation of a high popular culture. A huge potential public awaits our scholars, if it can but be reached by them.

The recent interest in linguistics, attested by the unprecedented success of various popularizing expositions, is in some ways a pathetic affair. Word has got about, apparently, that many of our difficulties today are purely verbal. We have been victims of some kind of word magic when we engage in wars, strikes, family and civil strife of all kinds. Let us but exorcise the word-magic, and all will be well. This general impression has been heightened by non-linguists writing on language, more especially that aspect of it known as *semantics* or the science of meanings. Alfred Korzybski's *Science and Sanity* (1933), embodying pretentious and verbose claims to a semantic panacea of human ills, is in a sense the fountainhead of the illusion. Other contributions heavily indebted to Korzybski are Stuart Chase's *Tyranny of Words* (1938), Hugh R. Walpole's *Semantics* (1941), Irving J. Lee's *Language Habits in Human Affairs* (1941). They all contribute to the impression that language may offer us a painless solution of current misunderstandings if we will but define our terms, avoid epithets and abstractions, and remember that "the label is not the thing."

No wonder the general reading public is impressed. Optimism from whatever source is welcome. The "semantic" principles advanced in these books are in many ways salutary, to be sure; but they are neither so original nor so efficacious as the proponents claim. Moreover, they are actually dangerous in so far as they lead us to look for short cuts where none exists.

Without approving of all contributions to the subject, professional linguists may at least rejoice in such evidence of popular interest. The moment is propitious for the dissemination of sound and useful knowledge about language and its social implications. Remove the facile optimism (which acts as an opiate) and popular semantics may produce a healthy critical attitude about the things we read, hear, and say in our everyday lives.

There is in S. I. Hayakawa's *Language in Action* a contribution to this more modest goal. It does point out how misuse of language may endanger our relations to our environment. It is freshly and entertainingly written. Though many of the rhetorical principles are old and familiar, the illustrative material is diverting. The better part of Korzybski's contribution is presented quite competently in the scope of a few pages. At the same time Hayakawa shares some of the dangerous tendencies of the school to which he belongs. A chapter subheading, "Why Is the World a Mess? One Theory," promises the solution, in three pages, of a truly staggering problem. (The author means, of course, "One Contributing Factor," not "One Theory.") The answer given is "Linguistic Naivete," which leaves much of the mess unaccounted for. Again, a mere space of two pages is devoted to a topic announced as nothing less than "The Foundations of Society." Even the subtitle of the book arouses unrealized hopes.

THE CRITICAL READER must be on the alert, therefore, for significant omissions. For instance, when the author discusses "intentional orientation" (p. 230), he raises the question: Why are Negroes and Communists never presented as "charming" people in mass production fiction? The only answer given is: Because readers want facile reading and authors welcome facile writing. There is no hint that the "intentional orientation" may be consciously directed for social and economic reasons. The attitude to so-called insoluble problems in a democracy is explained merely by our "inertia" in attacking problems, whether they be soil erosion or national defense. Not a word or even an implication appears in passing about deliberate obstruction and sabotage on the part of those who place profit above the common good in time of crisis.

These omissions are characteristic of the socio-semantic school (if I may be permitted to use the phrase). They should be kept in mind by any critical reader of Hayakawa's manual.

MARGARET SCHLAUCH.

## Incomplete Brief

ROOSEVELT: DICTATOR OR DEMOCRAT? *by Gerald W. Johnson. Harper and Bros. $3.*

MR. JOHNSON'S book, addressed "to every man who cast an honest vote for Willkie," is an attempt to rally anti-New Dealers behind the foreign policy of the Roosevelt administration. His purpose is certainly a laudable one, but unfortunately his performance falls far short of what is required to convince such Americans of the need for national unity. The result is a good example of the inevitability of failure when a writer does little more than cater to the prejudices and methods of his opponents. And that is one of the most serious shortcomings of this book.

What emerges is a pleasantly written account of the life of Franklin D. Roosevelt and of the history of his administrations. The main concern is always to prove the President's "Americanism," which the author seeks to do by finding precedents in our national history for those aspects of Roosevelt's personality and policies which his Republican opponents have considered objectionable. Mr. Johnson hopes in this manner to convince the anti-New Dealers perhaps, not that Roosevelt is "necessarily right, but that he is profoundly American." Thereby, he reasons, national unity can be achieved. For, "not many Americans in such a crisis as the one existing now are disposed to be sticklers for detail; they can follow loyally, and even enthusiastically, a leader whose domestic policy they regard as completely wrong-headed if they are convinced that he is, even in his errors, American to the bone."

With such an attitude toward the intelligence of his countrymen, it is no wonder that Mr. Johnson's book rarely rises above the level of counter-propaganda. No attempt is made to discuss the wisdom of Roosevelt's foreign policy and the reasons why it must be supported by all true Americans. Occasionally there are gleams of insight into the social forces of the 1930's, but the author is too much the conventional newspaperman to develop these and broaden the understanding of his readers. Even within the limitations of his treatment, Mr. Johnson's book has serious shortcomings. Chief among these are his constant omission of the role of the Communists and other progressive forces in domestic affairs since 1932 and his deliberate grouping on all occasions of the Soviet Union with Germany and Italy and of Stalin with Hitler and Mussolini.

If anyone can find that caricature of the typical American which the Hearst press and the *Daily News* imagine their readers to resemble, this may be the book to persuade him that Roosevelt is a democrat and not a dictator. But the real flesh-and-blood American who wants to understand fully the necessity for national unity requires a more mature approach as well as more profound arguments.

TOM WIGGINS.

# RIFFS BY WALLER

***Thomas "Fats" Waller in a pianoforte panthalon. His Carnegie Hall concert gave him little opportunity to show his magnificent musical talent. . . . Ball of Fire in a blackout.***

AT THIRTY-SEVEN Thomas "Fats" Waller is a soundly trained, lavishly gifted musician and a prolific composer. He has been playing the piano and pipe organ in churches, theaters, studios, and night clubs since he was ten. But, as John Hammond puts it, "It was easier for managers to exploit him as buffoon and clown than the artist he is." An audience at Carnegie Hall last week finally saw him in the unexampled role of concert performer in a program of his own jazz and blues, Gershwin, Tchaikowsky, spirituals, and, to boot, Sir Edward Elgar, who, as Fats explained, provided "just the riff I needed for a release when I was monkeyin' around on the organ last week."

The managing element has so conditioned the pianist that he could not repress some clowning. He did low comedy takes, wound up numbers with an explosive "Yaaaas!", and brought his forearm roundly down on the bass. He interpolated instead of improvising, smuggled in a wretched jukebox item called "I Guess I'll Have to Dream the Rest," and brought sounds from the electric organ which must have made the Hammond Organ people fear they had unwittingly produced the air raid siren New York needs.

And altogether proved himself at bottom a magnificent musical artist.

IN SHORT, Fats is all that's right and wrong with American Negro jazz music. Right, because he is a fine jazz composer, dating back to "Squeeze Me" of 1919, which was written by the fifteen-year-old Thomas Waller and immortalized by the performance of the twenty-three-year-old Louis Armstrong. Right, because he has a technique and the musical feeling of a great virtuoso. In the "London Suite," which sketches his pleasant memories of Soho, Whitechapel, and Piccadilly Circus, Waller has composed a piece that bears more than favorable comparison with contemporary piano works. It has a beginning, a structure, and an end, something that could not be said for many of his variations. His little rhythmic fugue on a theme from "Pomp and Circumstance," "a bunch of riffs" contributed by Sir Edward, will bear playing after Fats' noodling around in the middle of the thing is edited off.

He can play superb band piano, although he had little opportunity to demonstrate this talent at Carnegie Hall. In sum, Fats Waller is one of the valuable American musicians.

The other aspect of his art, the elaborate horseplay, the mugging, and the deliberate playing down to an audience is not merely extraneous to his work, but, like Louis Armstrong's gaudy high C's above C, it enters the music itself. Waller nudges the audience in the ribs and winks at it with the keyboard. The *rapport* with his auditors is too often the disarming lick, the genial interpolation of a rankly familiar phrase from another tune, phony arpeggios, and forearm crashes that bring a surefire laugh. On the organ the possibilities for musical belching are, of course, greater, and Fats pulls every laugh pedal.

The audience at Carnegie Hall was no better than this side of the artist. It began applauding during the last sustained note and greeted each new piece of a Waller or Gershwin medley with the applause of recognition. Sometimes Fats didn't have an ending or hadn't telegraphed it to the crowd, and then he had to wheel around and shout "Yaaaas!", to touch off applause.

It was a self-conscious audience, and easily the most colorful Carnegie has ever seen. There were Negro and white troops, British seamen, jazz musicians, jitterbugs, record collectors and jazz critics, song pluggers, and a bewildered old lady or two in mink who thought this was the night to sit in the family box and listen to Burton Holmes on Amazing Arizona.

THE PROGRAM was loosely made and the artist sometimes didn't know when to stop experimenting with funny noises and get on to the next set. There were at least a million things wrong with Fats Waller's debut. Everything was wrong except the plain fact that Thomas Waller deserves a dozen more Carnegie Hall dates and that there is music in him only glimpsed in this bizarre affair. He needs a hundred people to clump him on the back and prove that they are listening for the art in Waller. He needs an audience which will refrain from snickering when he plays a sincere, guitarlike passage in his organ spirituals. It's a fine thing to thaw out Carnegie Hall with a friendly interchange across the footlights, and jazz is the stuff to do it, but somebody ought to help Fats shuck off the night club corn when he is playing his real music. Something else that would have helped the concert is a little plain old-fashioned woodshedding—jazz talk for rehearsals. The excellent pick-up band that ended the show with some 1929 Chicago style music was chaotic. When Gene Krupa, Pee Wee Russell, Bud Freeman, John Kirby, Eddie Condon, Max Kaminsky, and Fats Waller sound lousy, friends, that's lousy. A critical rehearsal might have also shown up many of the obvious faults in the programming, and chopped down Fats' funny filler.

Fats Waller's evening demonstrated that jazz concerts are no longer a novelty; the public now has every right to expect more care in the presentation, and less of the musical schmoozing that made a Negro soldier at my elbow remark, "This is a lot of sleep to lose." I offer my services to Fats for his next concert. I will be the fellow with the bungstarter in the center aisle, swinging on the first snickerer I hear. I'll bet I can knock them down as fast as Fats can set them up.

JAMES DUGAN.

*Thomas "Fats" Waller*

# Ingratiating Comedy

***Joy Davidman reviews Gary Cooper's new film.***

"BALL OF FIRE" is a valentine in the shape of a film, and everyone likes to get a valentine now and then, especially with Gary Cooper attached. Complete with frilly paper lace and a faint lavender odor, this fable tells how a gangster's moll, looking for a hideout, moved in on eight scholarly gentlemen who were writing an encyclopedia. Their innocence and unworldliness, needless to say, melted her congealed heart, and she ended by preferring the youngest encyclopedist and his $39.50 ring to the gangster and a hunk of ice big enough to sink the *Titanic*. The gangster's moll was very, very gorgeous; the gangster very sinister; the seven old men very quaint and lovable; and Mr. Gary Cooper was very demurely Gary Cooper.

It is only fair to add that *Ball of Fire*, nevertheless, has a great deal of charm and comedy, and its dialogue is intelligently contrived.

Perhaps its most vital section deals with the adventures of Mr. Cooper, as the grammarian-encyclopedist, in his search for living slang. Leaving his cloister, he wanders out and looks at the people of America; newsboys, girls in the subway, men at baseball games, students on the campus, barflies in the beer joint. There is real perception of the salt and flavor of American speech here, and some perception of the life that goes with that speech. It is true that the part played by slang in our conversation is somewhat weirdly exaggerated, but the best of the film's material is reminiscent of Sandburg's *The People, Yes.* Indeed, Sandburg's remark that slang is language that rolls up its sleeves, spits on its hands, and gets down to work, is used as the slogan of the grammarian's research. The technique of these sequences, too, is effective. On vivid shots of people in action are superimposed the sharp and vivid phrases they use to describe their action.

A certain affection for human beings enlivens many passages of the film, such as the sunlit opening shots of spring in Central Park, and a good deal of tenderness has gone into the acting. Oscar Homolka, Richard Haydn, S. Z. Sakall, and others almost humanize the eccentric old professors, while Barbara Stanwyck, always at her best as a tough wench, is competent in the heroine's role. Dan Duryea, last seen as the brat in *The Little Foxes,* individualizes a routine gangster part with unusual skill. As for Mr. Cooper, he rather exaggerates his innocence and long-legged awkwardness, but on the whole turns in an ingratiating and effective comedy performance. Yet, with all these charms, the superficially wistful and appealing *Ball of Fire* has many weaknesses. Its improbabilities may be forgiven, but not the patronizing tone which sometimes creeps into its love of humanity; not its assumption that scholars are quaint and silly, and that anybody over sixty is a museum piece. Caricatures of the old, even affectionate caricatures, are a little crass. The basic shallowness of the film is startlingly illuminated in one of its more touching moments, when the group of old men nostalgically croon the ancient college song, *Gaudeamus Igitour.* At first sight parallel to *Baltic Deputy,* in which the old professor, deserted by reactionary colleagues and students on his anniversary, plays the same song, this scene is fundamentally so different as to reveal escapist film-making for the petty thing it is. For the old professor in *Baltic Deputy* was alive, and the professors of *Ball of Fire* are not. They have no function except to sit on the sidelines, chew the cud of the past, and look on at other people's amorous affairs, which are tacitly assumed to be the whole business of life. But the old man in *Baltic Deputy* rolled up his sleeves and helped remake the world.

WITH our real blackouts only beginning to function properly, the film studios have leaped into the breach, presenting in *Pacific Blackout* an admirable photographic record of this man-made darkness. The lightless streets, the sudden anti-aircraft searchlights, the planes dropping flares in a mock raid, the vast confusion of humanity in a city suddenly grown unfamiliar—all are photographed with considerable beauty and some insight. Unfortunately the real human possibilities of a blackout are not studied at all. The film might have coupled its physical darkness with a sharp illumination of the lives of ordinary people, caught in this strange situation. Instead, it has used its dramatic background to enliven a silly story of cops and robbers.

The mess of sabotage and murder which serves *Pacific Blackout* for plot is not badly handled, in its way. A young man unjustly convicted of murder escapes in the darkness; during the blackout he tracks down the real killer, aided—you guessed it—by a casually met girl, and incidentally foils a dastardly plot for the destruction of the city. The cries and chaos of the blackout help keep this familiar story lively, as do good performances by Philip Merivale as the smiling villain, J. Edward Bromberg as an incidental pickpocket, and an engaging little snip named Martha O'Driscoll as the girl. This unusual young lady manages to look and act like a kitten without ever becoming coy. Robert Preston plays the heroic young man, much as such heroes are always played.

The combined efforts of cast and cameraman, however, do not obscure *Pacific Blackout's* failure to do anything significant with its material. Only once is there a genuinely powerful scene, in which small boys, whooping with delight, surround a fallen parachute flare —marked: Poison Gas—Death to Everyone Within 400 Yards. This sudden irruption of reality shows up the shoddiness of the rest of the film.

JOY DAVIDMAN.

## "The Rivals"

### *Bobby Clark in Mr. Sheridan's play . . . Another Broadway corpse.*

WELL, in answer to our prayer, we now have Bobby Clark, *with* a script. And the script is Richard Brinsley Sheridan's *The Rivals.* Could Mr. Sheridan witness what Mr. Bobby Clark does as Bob Acres in this "revival," he would most certainly spin in his early nineteenth century grave. Then again he might be grateful.

Looked at from the distance of time, *The Rivals* is pretty thin stuff. The Theater Guild, aware of this, has seen fit to jazz it up and push it around. The result is a curious hodgepodge, unjustified except for the presence of the aforesaid Mr. Bobby Clark, about whom more later. Yet in its time Sheridan's farce satire must have been great stuff. In its mannered eighteenth century way, it took delicious pokes at the rulers of the time, ridiculing their pretensions to culture (Mrs. Malaprop), their patriarchal code (Sir Anthony Absolute), their romantic young ladies (Lydia Languish), their idolization of the power of

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money. Sheridan had wit, and it was penetrating and much needed. For not since Congreve died had anyone written a play worth looking at.

What the Theater Guild and Miss LeGallienne (the director in this instance) have done to *The Rivals* is—as Sir Lucius O'Trigger might have said—a caution. The jazzing up does not jazz; the grace of Sheridan's manner becomes stuffy mannerism; the humor disappears into the wooden Indian style of Walter Hampden's Sir Anthony and the squeaking of Mary Boland's Mrs. Malaprop. Miss Boland has done something unusual with the role—she has made it extremely un-funny. Miss Haila Stoddard, as Lydia, is very cute and pretty and considerably to my taste otherwise, while Philip Bourneuf (an excellent Jaques in *As You Like It,* earlier this season) gives us an acceptable O'Trigger. The interpolated songs add nothing to the total effect.

But Bobby Clark—now this Bobby Clark is something. It is entirely worth your while to see *The Rivals* just to watch Mr. Clark, who is a great pantaloon. You must understand, of course, that what he does with Bob Acres has utterly nothing to do with Sheridan's *The Rivals.* In fact, he is much funnier than Sheridan was. Mr. Clark is not only a clown; he is a great comedian, endowed with tremendous imagination and wit, and a satirical bent that is startling. He illuminates the role of Bob Acres by making it his especial creation, by throwing a garish light on the frailties of humanity. This is his great accomplishment—for a fine clown is a fine artist as well.

Now that we have Bobby Clark *with* a script, forget the script and go see Bobby Clark.

ALVAH BESSIE.

★

"JOHNNY ON THE SPOT," which was on the spot very briefly, made great play with the assumption that nothing is funnier, on Broadway, than a corpse. Perhaps because its corpse was delayed too long, this small and unhappy farce failed to be more than moderately amusing. Nevertheless, the peregrinations of the late Governor Upjohn (unnamed southern state, take your pick) were frequently funny in a grisly way.

The handicap of a whole first act of exposition, unfortunately, prevented *Johnny on the Spot* from being funny soon enough. It need not have taken half an hour to establish that Governor Upjohn was a drunken debauchee, that his campaign for the Senate was being backed by a group of grafters. The humor was further diluted by an unnecessary romantic sub-plot involving the governor's harassed secretary and campaign manager, both of whom were slowly going mad, and by much frenzied leaping in and out of doors. Eventually the deceased governor was successfully smuggled into the executive mansion; the governor's ladylove, too much alive, was smuggled out; the grafters were forced to put back the new maternity hospital (which they had stolen, piecemeal),



# GOINGS ON

MARXIST ANALYSIS OF THE WEEK'S NEWS by SI GERSON, Sun., Jan. 25th, 8:30 P.M., Workers School, 35 E. 12th Street. Admission 25 cents.

and the harassed lovers escaped to New York. The best part of the play was the discomfiture of a sweet little southern girl, from whose honeyed voice and harpy claws the campaign manager successfully fled.

Will Geer did nobly with the role of Governor Upjohn's successor, a gubernatorial Jeeter Lester, and Dennie Moore, as Governor Upjohn's egregious Pearlie, rocked the foundations of the commonwealth. Other effective performances were turned in by Florence Sundstrom, Keenan Wynn, and Joseph Sweeney. The entire cast, indeed, was notably better than its material.

J. D.

# PROGRESSIVE'S ALMANAC

"PROGRESSIVE'S Almanac" is a calendar of meetings, dances, luncheons, and cultural activities within the progressive movement. This list is published in connection with NEW MASSES' Clearing Bureau, created for the purpose of avoiding conflicting dates for various affairs. Fraternal organizations, trade unions, political bodies, etc., throughout the country are urged to notify NEW MASSES' Clearing Bureau of events which they have scheduled. Service of the Clearing Bureau is free.

## January

22—School for Democracy, Registration all week, 13 Astor Pl.

23—West Side I.W.O. Forum. Mike Gold on "Writers in a War Period," 220 W. 80th St., 9 P.M.

24 — Crown Heights Victory Council, Dance, Program, I.W.O. Center, 1190 St. John's Pl., Bklyn.

24—NEW MASSES, "Listen to the People," an all-nations chorus festival and dance, Hotel Diplomat, 8 P.M.

24-31—Saturday Forum Luncheon Group. Lectures every Saturday by well known novelists and critics. Rogers Corner Restaurant, 8th Ave. and 50th St., 12:30 P.M.

24-31—Almanac Singers, Sunday afternoons, 130 W. 10th, 2 P.M.

25—Helen Tamiris, Sunday Eve, Dance Recital Studio, 434 Lafayette St., N. Y. C.

26—Workers School, Winter Term Registration all month. 35 E. 12th.

31—I.W.O. Trade branches, Star Concert, Town Hall.

31—Fur Workers—Annual Mid-winter Ball —Royal Palms Hotel, Los Angeles.

## February

6-8 (inclusive)—NEW MASSES' Mid-Winter Week-End—Plum Point.

7—Brownsville Old Timers'-New Timers' Reunion. Full Hour Pageant, Community Ballroom, 128 Watkins St., Bklyn, N. Y.

21—Unity Reunion Dance, Preview 1942, Webster Hall.

21—Oklahoma Book Sale. Benefit Oklahoma Book Trials. Place to be announced.

## March

1—NEW MASSES' Lincoln Steffens Memorial Tribute Meeting. Sun. afternoon, 2 P.M., Manhattan Center.

# Good and Welfare


Soriano

We don't know where your union local is located—New York, Aliquippa, Youngstown, Gary—but this holds true anywhere. The chairman has called for Good and Welfare and you've got plenty of ideas.

We have some ideas, too. One of them has to do with the good and welfare of your local.

We know you and your co-workers have a thousand and one questions about today's turbulent scene to which you want the answers. We know that clarity on many questions makes better trade unionists, better soldiers on the production front.

We have this suggestion for good and welfare. Why not get your fellow unionists reading one of America's outstanding weeklies? The answers to your questions are there—in a publication that began the fight against Hitlerism when fascism was but a word to millions.

Next time you meet your union brother in the hall, or in the factory, or office, pull out one of the blanks in our Subs-to-Sink-the-Axis-Campaign. And fire one of the shots that will help win the war.