

# new masses

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June 24, 1947

THE LOW-DOWN ON

# *THAT COMING DEPRESSION*

By **RALPH J. PETERS**

*ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:* Behind Franco's Curtain, by Estelle

Manning; Dresses for Eve, a short story by

Dan Davis; London Letter, by Derek Kartun;

Budapest on the Potomac, by John Stuart;

The Judge is Benched, by Virginia Gardner.

# just a minute



WE WERE able to catch no more than a glimpse of the huge New York CIO parade against the Taft-Hartley bill because we had to hurry home to look after our future union member while her mother did the marching for the family. But what we saw—largely Negro and white members of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers—conveyed that sense of power and hope that is rising in all parts of the country. Whatever the fate of the bill—and at this writing President Truman has not yet acted—there will be no peace for those who make war on the people. In city after city AFL and CIO unions have fought together against the slave bill—and the language of unity will not be forgotten overnight. It wasn't a labor fight alone. The wide public response to this issue was indicated by the veto days proclaimed by the mayors of New York, Detroit and other cities and the support for the veto given by the governmental bodies of many communities and by a conservative group like the Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. Who, knowing the strength and the temper of Ameri-

can labor, can believe that any act of Congress can whiplash it into impotence?

One thing that strikes us in viewing the American scene is the way the battle against reaction is cut up into bits and pieces. The trade unions concentrate on the Taft-Hartley bill and ignore the same reactionary trend in foreign affairs expressed in the Truman Doctrine; another group of people hammer away at the Truman world crusade against "communism," but pay little attention to its domestic counterpart: the drive against Communists and other progressives by the House Un-American Committee and the Department of Justice. As a result, each of these issues, which is of transcendent concern to the majority of our people, suffers from being isolated from all the other issues to which in actual life it is linked. And the entire progressive movement suffers from this division.

ONE of the functions of a Marxist magazine like NEW MASSES is to bring all these seemingly disparate struggles into single focus and to illuminate the common strategy that must be followed in order to

achieve maximum success on any front. That's why we feel that to strengthen NM is to strengthen the cause of progress everywhere.

Though we have ended the public appeals that appeared for four months in each week's issue, our campaign for funds must go on if NM is to survive. But suppose we let N.A.Z. of Los Angeles do the talking.

"I am a T.B. patient in a sanatorium," he writes, "and feel the rage of impotence at the present plight of NEW MASSES. How can progressive people stand idly by while America's surest voice for peace and freedom calls out for help? Woe be to *all America* if NEW MASSES should fall on the field of battle just when we need her most!

"I give you my heart and hand—don't fail us now. Too much depends on your survival. Enclosed is \$2. It is as much as I can scrape up from where I lie."

And from J. T., Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada, comes this suggestion:

"I understand how difficult it is to scrape up that dollar or two. . . . But I solved it by putting aside two dimes each day in a little box or bank; and even if a few days are somehow overlooked, there is at least \$5 by the end of the month. If half of your readers were to do this, the drive for funds would be over in no time."

A good idea. And don't forget too that a sub to NM helps win friends and influence people as well as keep the wolf from the door.

A. B. M.

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Behind Franco's Curtain	Estelle Manning	3
That Coming Depression	Ralph J. Peters	6
Dresses for Eve: a short story	Dan Davis	9
Portside Patter	Bill Richards	10
London Letter	Derek Kartun	11
Budapest on the Potomac	John Stuart	12
Gropper's Cartoon		13
The Judge is Benched	Virginia Gardner	15
Book Reviews: The Republic of Silence, by A. J. Liebling and Three Short Novels by Vercors; Milton Blau; Appeal to the Nations, by Norman Thomas; David Goldway; Poems of Dedication, by Stephen Spender; S. Finkelstein; If a Man Be Mad, by Harold Maine; Selden Murray; The Neon Wilderness, by Nelson Algren; Alan Stoltman		17

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# BEHIND FRANCO'S CURTAIN

"There was a deep restlessness among the people, a bristling feeling of fear in the air. . ." A first-hand report on fascist Spain today.

By **ESTELLE MANNING**

Paris (by mail).

THE smooth-shaven little man in the Spanish Consulate in London leaned over the counter.

"And why do you want to go to Spain?" he said.

"As a tourist," I replied.

"Not as a journalist?" he said.

"No."

"Perhaps you have friends there? Who are they and where do they live?"

"I have no friends there," I said.

"You were in Spain before? During the war perhaps?"

"No, I was never in Spain. I merely want to see the country."

"Very well," he said, a little half-heartedly. "You may pick up your visa tomorrow. But let me warn you that you must stay in touch with the police when you move from place to place. Precautionary measures, you understand."

Two weeks later I stood on a crest of the Pyrenees and looked over the French border into Spain. By a stone hut on the Spanish side stood three *carabineros*, border police, their rifles slung over their shoulders. Their grey overcoats, modeled exactly after the Nazis, were ankle-length.

"They are the toughest police in Spain," a fellow traveler said. He was a little fellow, an American, who made frequent trips to Spain as a representative of an American movie company.

"They have to be tough," he confided. "They say there are *bandits* up in those hills. Some of them have been

there for as long as ten years. They come down sometimes to get food." He went on in a hushed tone. "That's when the *carabineros* have to be on their toes."

"And what about Spain?" I said. "What about the people there? Do they like Franco?"

"Well," he said, "some of them do and some don't, but everything would be all right here if other countries would just leave Franco alone. He's not a bad sort. And, after all, he is saving the country from communism. The firm I represent is allowed to conduct its business as usual."

By that time, the Spanish taxis had arrived to take us down the mountain-side to Port-Bou and the little man scurried off to attend to his luggage.

At the customs shed, an official gave me a "*triptico*."

"You must take the *triptico* to the police as soon as you arrive at your destination," he said. "And when you leave a city, you must check with the police for permission. The police must know at all times just where you are staying."

I nodded.

"You are a tourist?" he said.

"Yes."

"But your passport says you are a journalist." So it was beginning again.

"Yes, that is my profession," I said wearily.

"But you will not write while you are here?"

"No."

The official smiled faintly. "All right," he said. "Be sure, otherwise. . ." I walked away.

AT FIRST glance, Barcelona seemed a serene enough city. People went to and from work, they paraded on the Rambla del Centro on Saturday night, they went to the movies and they drank wine at the sidewalk cafes. But there was a deep restlessness among the people, a bristling feeling of fear in the air that I was later to find throughout Spain.

Franco too must have sensed the feeling, for thousands of soldiers, police, civil guards and *carabineros* clogged the streets, moving slowly through the crowds, their rifles flashing in the sunlight. And everywhere—past the expensive shops, past the restaurants that served some of the best food in Europe—was the never-ending parade of beggars. Women, children, men and women of all ages, yellow with tuberculosis and malnutrition, walked aimlessly about searching for cigaret butts, asking for a peseta, or just sitting in the sun.

"Franco does not trust this city," a longshoreman on the docks told me. "He knows that some day we will have the guns and we will fight him again." He pointed to the hills on both sides of the city. "Up there are the cemeteries. During the great purges in Barcelona after the war, Franco tried to fill all those cemeteries. And he succeeded. Sometimes there were



so many bodies that they left them in the streets. More than half the country was in mourning for those slain by the Falange."

The longshoreman looked across the harbor to a ship tied to the jetty.

"I," he said bitterly, "a soldier in the Republican Army, must now unload ships like that for my living."

He pointed to the American flag, drooping lazily from the mast of a cargo ship. "As long as those ships keep coming here with help for that man, we will stay in misery."

The longshoreman said he earned fifteen pesetas a day (a little more than a dollar). And bread, he said, cost ten pesetas a loaf on the black market, the only place it was available.

"But what about your rent, and clothes for your children, and all the other things you need?" I said.

"What about Spain?" he said simply.

"You want to see how we live?" he went on. "Go to the Barriochino, a section of town up near the hill. But you'd better have a strong stomach. You will not believe what you see up there."

I walked slowly in the sun-filled morning toward the Barriochino, and looked out at the fine harbor, empty except for a couple of tiny trawlers and the American cargo ship. It was a harbor that would hold many ships—ships with food and clothing and materials to build a healthy country. But the harbor, like the city, was rotting under the sun, and the longshoremen stood on the dock looking out to the sea.

In the Barriochino I saw a young man who had set up housekeeping. Against a stone wall that faced the sun, he had hung a blanket to form a makeshift tent. Under it, on the ground, his wife lay sick. On the dirt walk played his two children. They were thin, with swollen bellies, and their eyes shone brightly in their drawn, tubercular faces. The young

man sat at the opening of the tent, talking softly to his wife. His face was a dark green color, as if someone had painted it so. The children played in the garbage in the gutter, and occasionally they found something they could put in their mouths and swallow.

The sound of the young man's voice rose and fell in the warm morning air.

From the Barriochino there is a beautiful view of the city and the harbor. And in the spring and summer the sun spreads gently over the streets and makes the sidewalks warm under your feet. But the people living there very rarely look at the view of the city and the sea, and if they notice that the sun is shining, it is only because they can get some warmth from its light. The people there are occupied with only one problem, and it consumes all their time, all their thoughts. It is the problem of keeping alive, from one day to the next.

Further along, on Calle de Pique, several families had formed a "paper village." From the streets and garbage heaps they had gathered bits of paper and wood and had built small huts that stood about four feet high. Some had fashioned chimneys out of scraps of iron. Others were cooking in the gutters. And everywhere were the children, some covered with sores, some with nothing on at all, all with the swollen bellies and the large burning eyes. The children did not run and shout. They sat in the sun and stared listlessly into the street.

FROM the Barriochino I walked to the fashionable shopping section of Barcelona. It was lunch time and along the Rambla del Cataluna well-dressed men and their women sat in the sidewalk cafes, drinking expensive wines and liqueurs. They laughed and talked and when the beggars came to stare at the food they ate, the men shooed them away impatiently.

In the stores was anything the lady wished—from nylons to silverware to alligator purses. Anything—for a few thousand pesetas. The prices would have put many a Fifth Avenue store into the Woolworth class.

At one of the cafes I stopped for a glass of wine. After I had ordered, a thin man with a small wooden box approached me.

"May I shine your shoes?" he said.

"Yes."

Quickly he bent down and started to work.

"You work very fast," I said.

"I have to," he said, not looking up.

"You are able to make a living shining shoes?" I said.

"Yes, better than most." His quick, nervous hands slapped on the polish.

"But it is still not enough?"

He turned his head and looked at the neatly-dressed man at a nearby table. Apparently satisfied that he was not being overheard, he continued. "None of us make enough."

"How long have you been shining shoes?" I said.

"Since the war ended."

"And before that?"

"I was an artist. Just beginning, true,



but I showed promise." He stopped for a moment and then picked up the polish again. "Tell me," he said, "do grown-up men have to shine shoes for a living in the United States?"

"Yes," I said.

"Do they shine shoes in the streets like I do?"

"Yes, many men try to make a living that way, too."

He seemed surprised, then looked again to see if anyone were listening.

"They report you if they hear you talking against the government," he said. "There are hundreds of them who do nothing all day but sit in the cafes and bars and listen to what the others have to say. Then at night the police come and sometimes they are never heard of again."

"What is going to happen in this country?" I asked.

"I don't know," he said. "After the end of your war, we looked for you people to help us. No one ever came, nothing ever happened. And Franco is still here. After ten years of this—after ten years people get disillusioned and discouraged—the ones that don't die of hunger."

"There are so many soldiers," I said, "walking in the streets."

For the first time he smiled. "But they too are not paid enough. And they



rob and steal in order to feed their families. I heard that one *carabinero* sold his rifle to a guerrilla in the south so he could buy food."

The young man glanced around again.

"That will be one peseta," he said, suddenly very formal. I paid him, and as he walked hurriedly away, I noticed that the man who had taken the table near me was watching him move through the crowd down the Rambla.

IT WAS early morning in Madrid and the sun was shining for the first time after almost forty days of rain. The old women were setting up their little sidewalk stands of matches, lottery tickets and fierce, black tobacco as I walked to an address given me by a friend in Paris.

"This woman," my friend had said, "will tell you about conditions in Spain. She has had a tragic ten years."

Everywhere in the streets were young army officers, snapping along in their Nazi-like uniforms and all looking very much alike, as if they had been issued and not born. The click of their heels was hard in the bright morning air.

Senora B—— smiled when I told



her I brought greetings from her friends in Paris.

"How is it in Paris?" she said.

"Things are hard," I said, "but the country is rapidly getting back on its feet."

"Ah, what I would not give to see it again."

In the parlor of the tiny apartment, over steaming coffee, she began to tell me of the war and of what had happened to her family and herself after Franco had seized power.

"My husband," she said, "was in the Republican Army, and when the war was over he was imprisoned without trial for five years. He was thrown in a jail near here, a jail built for 400

persons. There were 8,000 people there, and sixty out of a hundred came out with tuberculosis. Almost all the others have bronchitis and ear trouble. Every week, even now, my husband must have his ears drained.

"In the winter, the prisoners were not allowed to wear coats. In the summer, for the slightest infringements of the rules, they were made to go without water—sometimes for as long as a week at a time. Those who brought food for the prisoners were never told when their relatives were to be tried and shot. Instead, the guard would simply say, 'It will not be necessary to bring food any more.'"

She pointed to her hair. "You see," she said, "it turned grey during the first three months my husband was in jail—when I didn't know from one day to the next whether or not he would be killed.

"But it is just as bad now. Every day hundreds are shot. When friends get together for a social evening, the police come to check on them to see that they are not holding secret meetings. There are people who live and eat well, but they too are frightened by the wings that touch everyone."

I asked her how the small shopkeepers were faring.

"They are in a peculiar position," she said. "Actually they make more money than most, because they sell on the black market. But the goods they sell must be in turn purchased on the black market. Then the police make them a visit and demand 'protection money.' If they don't pay for this so-called protection they find themselves in jail within the week. And there is no appeal from the 'justice' administered by the Franco courts."

Senora B—— went on to tell of the demoralization of the youth of Spain. "Flying Squads" of boys, members of the Falange youth organizations, she said, roam the streets of the cities in bands of five and six, usually at night. "These hoodlums are free to demand any information from anyone for any reason, and if they are not satisfied with the answers, they have the authority to take the person to police headquarters for further questioning. Of course they are encouraged in this practice by the higher-ups in the Falange. It keeps the people frightened."

I asked her how the people of Spain receive news from the outside world. She herself seemed well informed on international events.

"The Spanish newspapers," she said, "are of course completely controlled by the government. The Falange publishes fifty-two newspapers in Spain and they receive priority on paper supplies and ink. But it is a joke to call the other papers privately owned; for their directors are appointed by the regime, and if they do not please it, they are removed. Last year the non-Falange papers were forced by the government to pay the losses incurred by the Falangist press. They lose money because no one buys them. They tell no news, and print only anti-Soviet and anti-Communist propaganda articles.

"So the only way to find out what is going on," Senora B—— said, "is to listen to the radio. We receive broadcasts from South America, London, France and Moscow, but even these broadcasts are interfered with by the government radio. You see, we are really cut off from the rest of the world."

I asked Senora B—— what the situation was in hospitals and with public works, and her answer gave me the key to the Spanish people's poverty.

"A country like Spain," she said, "that spends seventy percent of its national budget for the maintenance of the military, has little left for anything else."

Then suddenly, as Senora B—— was speaking, the doorbell rang. She sat perfectly still for a moment. The only sound was the ticking of a small clock at the other side of the room. Slowly she got up and went to the door. "I wonder who—" I heard her say.

But presently she was back, smiling.

"It was only the boy with some crackers I ordered," she said.

(This is the first of two articles. The second will appear next week.)



# THAT COMING DEPRESSION

**What has happened to the "accumulated demand" which assured prosperity? An analysis of the economic picture today.**

By **RALPH J. PETERS**

THE other day Winthrop W. Aldrich, head of the Chase National Bank, stated at a meeting of the International Chamber of Commerce in Montreux, Switzerland, that a "corrective recession" may be on its way in the United States, but it would not "degenerate into a depression."

Recently President Truman told a press conference that he did not think we would have a depression. But only a week earlier the President had said that if prices did not come down we would have a recession.

Amid these conflicting reports it is difficult for the average person to know where the truth lies. But rising unemployment, which in New York City, according to a CIO survey, has now reached 450,000, is a barometer which indicates a decided chill in the economic weather. As a matter of fact, this depression or "recession" or "setback" or "shakeout" has been haunting the professional economists for many months. And as you see, they have thought up a lot of fancy names for it. I would award the prize so far to "cathartic readjustment," which combines the tragic connotations of ancient Greek drama with the prosaic modernity of Ex-Lax.

The business economists have constituted themselves into a grim Optimists' Club. They may expend a lot of ink and verbiage on the coming depression, but they have a magic formula which relieves them of all serious fears. This magic formula is "accumulated demand." So many needs accumulated during the war, they say, that industry can go on full blast almost indefinitely.

At first "accumulated demand" was going to keep us from having any depression. Now that declines have developed in certain areas of business activity, "accumulated demand" is going to prevent the depression from becoming a bad one.

What has happened in housing exposes the hollowness of the "accumulated demand" talk. Certainly the need for housing among millions of citizens is enormous. And housing construction was counted on to be a main pillar of continuing prosperity. But it has turned out that housing is one of the first sectors of industry where the slump has set in. In a recent interview US Commissioner of Labor Statistics Ewan Clague gave figures which showed that the number of houses started this April was considerably less than in April 1946.

It has always been the capitalists' claim that if freed from harassing government controls, they would fill the demand for housing and every other need of the public.

But when they were relieved of the confinements of OPA, the various building supply corporations pushed up prices as high as the market would bear and then some, until the market would bear it no longer.

The moral to this brief but eloquent story is that accumulated demand is not enough. It is not enough that there should be enormous human needs. Under capitalism it would be a little naive to believe that industry operates to fulfill needs. There must be a profit, and if all the profit is taken out by the exorbitant tribute levied by the material suppliers, then the building contractor won't build houses, no matter how many are needed. And if he builds houses, he won't sell them unless he gets his profit, no matter how many people are doubled up in cramped quarters.

Now *Business Week* adds this consolation: "But here is something to remember: Building put off pending a drop in costs constitutes a backlog to pick up business later."

The full circle has been turned. First the building backlog was supposed to guarantee continuing prosperity. Then it was supposed to keep the depression from being severe. According to this latest dictum, the building backlog will bring prosperity *after* the depression.

WE CAN now get down to a detailed consideration of the present state of our economic health so far as it can be determined from available statistics. The Department of Commerce publishes each quarter a series of estimates that go to make up the Gross National Product. This covers all goods and services bought by the government, business and private consumers. Let us consider the estimates (still incomplete) for the first quarter of 1947 in relation to the record for 1946, and see what we can learn about the prospects of our economic system.

## BILLIONS OF CURRENT DOLLARS

	1945	1946	GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT				1947
			1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	
Gross National Product..	199.2	194.0	183.7	190.2	196.6	204.7	209.0
Government Expenditure	83.6	34.7	39.6	36.7	31.3	30.8	31.5
Private Gross Capital Formation .....	9.1	32.1	23.1	31.4	35.7	37.9	39.0
Construction .....	2.6	7.9	6.5	8.0	8.3	8.8	8.9
Producers Durable Equip. ....	6.6	12.8	9.5	12.0	14.0	15.6	15.5
Net Change in Bus. Invent. ....	-.6	6.5	3.4	4.0	8.6	9.7	5.6
Net Export of Goods & Services .....	.5	4.9	3.7	7.4	4.8	3.8	9.0
Consumers Goods & Services .....	106.4	127.2	121.0	122.1	129.6	136.0	138.5
Durable Goods .....	7.7	14.1	11.7	13.1	15.0	16.7	.....
Non-Durable Goods..	65.6	77.3	75.1	74.0	78.3	81.8	.....
Services .....	33.1	35.8	34.2	35.0	36.3	37.5	.....

(Source: Department of Commerce, Survey of Current Business. The quarterly figures are at annual rates.)

These figures enable us to get a sweeping glance at the anatomy of the postwar American economic structure. Let us concentrate first on the changes between 1945 and 1946. The Gross National Product declined from 1945 to 1946. And the major factor was the drop of nearly \$50 billion in government expenditures. With the end of the war, the responsibility for maintaining our economic activity at the high rate achieved during the war period devolved upon private industry and individual consumers. But they did not quite make up for the drop in government expenditures even though business spending, or gross capital formation, in-

creased from \$9.1 to \$32.1 billion, and individual consumers raised their spending from \$106.4 to \$127.2 billion.

But even so, the rate of economic activity is high and appears to have increased rather sharply during the latter half of 1946. But since these figures are given in current dollars, the increase is more apparent than real due to the sharp rise in prices after the end of OPA price control in June 1946.

Let us turn now to the fourth quarter of 1946 and the first quarter of 1947 to see if we can arrive at any understanding of the possible course of future development. The preliminary estimates for the first quarter of 1947 show a rise to \$209 billion. But here again were we to deflate the figure for price rises, there would be a slight decline.

The same can be said about the rise in consumers expenditures from 136.0 to 138.5. It is due to the continued rise in prices and conceals a small decline in volume. What is important to realize is that there has been a general decline in retail trade in recent months and every prospect is for a decline in the dollar volume of consumer outlays. For instance, the Department of Commerce publishes an index of retail trade, eliminating price changes, which shows a decline of more than ten percent between February, 1946, and December, 1946. The basis for this unexpected performance in the realm of retail trade is the steady decline in real wages since the end of the war and particularly since the breakdown of price control. These figures give some indication of what has been happening:

	<i>Average Weekly Wages In Manufacturing</i>	<i>Consumer Price Index</i>	<i>Real Average Weekly Wages</i>
June, 1946 .....	100	100	100
February, 1947 .....	108	115	94

This little demonstration taken from Department of Labor data shows that real weekly wages in manufacturing have declined by six percent in the last eight months for which we can get the figures. This is a rapid drop and particularly

remarkable when we remember that it occurred during an upswing of industrial production.

Now if we turn our attention to the Federal Reserve Board index of industrial production, we find from its recent behavior that we may very well be at a turning point in its direction of change.

FRB INDEX OF INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION, UNADJUSTED FOR SEASONAL VARIATION

September, 1946 .....	184	January, 1947 .....	184
October .....	184	February .....	184
November .....	183	March .....	187
December .....	180	April .....	185 (preliminary)

After rising from its postwar low of 148 in February 1946, the index reached 184 in September and has hung around that point ever since. It is inadmissible to make any predictions just from looking at the index itself. But we know enough from daily newspaper reports of shutdowns, lay-offs and curtailments of operations to anticipate a further decline in the index when it is published for May and June. Besides, we have a fair indication of what to expect from the way the Department of Commerce indices of manufacturers' new orders and shipments have been diverging.

	<i>Mfg. New Orders</i>	<i>Mfg. Shipments</i>	<i>Mfg. Inventories</i>
February, 1946 .....	100	100	100
January, 1947 .....	130	150	118

This comparison would indicate that shipments are increasing much faster than new orders, that the present rate of production is eating rapidly into that most tangible part of "accumulated demand" which is actually written down on an order blank in the hands of the manufacturer. The present process of shipping products so much faster than new orders are coming in, and producing more goods than are actually shipped, which go into inventories, cannot continue forever.

It is for all the foregoing reasons that I would consider it



"Quick—look deserving. Here comes Herr Hoover!"



"Quick—look deserving. Here comes Herr Hoover!"

reasonable to expect a decline in consumer outlay some time in the fairly near future, one that will not be concealed by an increase in dollar volume. I think it would be reasonable to expect a decline of at least ten percent in consumer outlay. That would mean a drop of \$13.8 billion in the gross national product as estimated for the first quarter of 1947. This should come mainly in the non-durable sector of consumer outlay.

Let us turn now to the category entitled Gross Private Capital Formation. This increased slightly from the last quarter of 1946 to the first quarter of 1947. And the increase is due mainly to a rise in exports. This may be taken as a small indicator of the rising importance of foreign trade and the export of capital, both of which are included under the heading of net export of goods and services. But if we look back at our big table on Gross National Product, we see that the magnitude of foreign trade is still so small compared to consumer expenditures, for instance, that our net export of goods and services would have to increase by an additional fifty percent to counterbalance the modest ten percent drop we projected for consumers' outlay. And how long net exports can plug the gap which has already appeared in net inventory changes and will soon materialize in producers' durable equipment remains to be seen. Never before has our annual net export rate approximated the figure of \$9,000,000,000.

Moreover, sometime in the future inventory accumulation will come to a halt. Since there are at latest reports about \$20 billion worth of inventories accumulated in the hands of manufacturers and another \$13-14 billion in the hands of retail and wholesale merchants, there is always the possibility that inventory accumulation will not only go to zero but to a negative rate, which would mean that something more than \$5.6 billion would have to be made up somewhere to plug a gaping hole in the economy.

It can also be taken for granted that the extraordinary needs of reconversion which produced the unprecedented rate of investment in plant and equipment for 1946 will not continue through 1947. It is reasonable to expect a drop of \$5 billion in producers' durable goods from the latest reported figure; that this is a conservative expectation is proved by the fact that it would still leave the rate at nearly twice that of the previous record year of 1941.

Now, if we add up all the possible declines in Gross National Product that we have shown to be eminently reasonable—consumers' expenditures, inventory accumulation, producers' durable goods—they total \$24.4 billion. Subtracting this figure from the total of \$209 billion reported for the 1Q of 1947, we would arrive at a figure of \$184.6 billion, which would not look too bad in comparison with 1945 and 1946. But it would look very bad if we made allowance for the fifteen percent price rise since June 1946; that would put it in the neighborhood of \$160 billion, as compared to \$190.2 for the second quarter of 1946. This would be catastrophic and would mean ten to twelve million unemployed.

Now it must be emphasized that the \$24.4 billion decline that we are discussing can very well develop in the ordinary course of events, without any sharp change of direction in economic activity. For instance, it won't take an economic crisis to make big business stop buying Producers Durable Goods. They will stop buying when they think they have enough, as the Steel industry announced recently when it said it would expand no more.

But if and when any or all of the declines start to develop,

then there may very well set up a chain reaction with most unexpected consequences. For example, if our anticipated drop in outlay for producers' durable goods should eventuate, it might entail a substantial drop in employment which in turn would make the decline in consumers' expenditures much larger than we projected, because we projected the ten percent decline in consumer expenditures on the basis of declining real wages and not necessarily on the basis of a sudden rise in unemployment.

THE economist who is imbued with New Deal conceptions may interject here the suggestion that if this situation should develop, then the government, even the present one dominated by Republicans, would be compelled to step in and fill the breach by a gigantic program of public works and relief. Perhaps. But let us see what this would entail. The government is already committed to expenditures of \$37-40 billion for the year 1947. And this is predicated more or less on the present rate of tax receipts. But if the developments we outline should take place, tax receipts might readily fall by at least \$10 billion. Then the government would be deficit financing just to maintain its present commitments and would not even be touching the gaping holes left by the failure of business and consumer spending. Then to maintain economic activity at anything like the present level the government would have to deficit finance to the extent of another \$20-30 billion per annum. Such a situation can only be visualized in the case of another war (which is not imminent today) or in the case of another huge New Deal development, dwarfing the first, in which government investment would have to overshadow the sector of private capitalism. This second alternative cannot be expected from the present anti-New Deal government. It is conceivable only as a result of wide popular struggles against monopoly domination of our economic and political life, struggles that would lead to radical readjustments in American class relationships.

The final and most probable alternative is a deep depression, coming as the last terrible act of a long period of economic stagnation and decline.

In view of the difficult times I envisage for the American capitalist economy, what line of action might soften the effects on the people of the approaching depression? The answer is usually found in higher wages, increased social security, and other measures of a New Deal type that will buttress purchasing power.

In addition, I would like to raise the following question: Have we not arrived at the point in American economic development when the issue of nationalization of basic industries should be discussed, not as a distant slogan, but as a concrete demand? For as long as the corporations are powerful enough to nullify by price rises and anti-union legislation the greater portion of any increases in wages, it is only part of the solution to strive for a New Deal type program.

Consider, for example, the national housing shortage. Unbridled capitalism has been unable to solve this problem. There are no technical obstacles. What stands in the way is the exorbitant profit requirements of the various private corporations that have a stranglehold on the construction industry.

It is the same with our national prosperity. We have a rich country and the most skilled workers in the world. The only obstacle to our prosperity are the exactions levied upon our economy by the small group of men who privately control our industry and our natural resources.

# Dresses for Eve

**In the show room my uncle made it seem like they were doing business in the garden of Eden. But it wasn't exactly Paradise behind the scenes.**

**A Short Story by DAN DAVIS**

WHEN my Uncle Adam meets another dress manufacturer in the morning on the way to the office, he always greets him with a lot of pleasure. But he never says "Good morning," or "Hello," or "How are you?" Instead, as he sticks out his hand, he says, "How's business?" In the dress line they say you can't mix business with pleasure. But that was the way my Uncle Adam got rich. He could mix it.

Even in his show room, where the buyers came in, my uncle made it seem like they were doing business in the Garden of Eden. In fact, that was what the show room was supposed to represent. All around there were potted palms, and rubber plants, and flowers in all colors. From long red boxes hanging from the ceiling green vines dropped down. On one side of the room a big painting covered the whole wall, showing Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Adam was naked except for a tape measure that hung around his neck, and pins stuck out from his mouth. He was holding out a dress to the naked Eve, who stood looking at it with her hands on her hips.

Adam's face was painted to look something like my uncle, and he was even a little bit bald. But the rest of him didn't look much like my uncle because there were too many muscles. Over the top of the painting was my uncle's name, and right underneath it said, "Dresses for Eve, Designed by Adam." This made the designers mad. They said my uncle shouldn't use his name on their creations. Sometimes, when they got mad enough, they got fired. My uncle always wanted his business to be a pleasure.

Still, there was one part of my uncle's business he couldn't make a pleasure. That part was the factory. You could always tell when my uncle was going into the factory by the way his face changed and the way he but-

toned his coat. Especially when he had to go in to speak to Abe. Abe was the shop chairman, and to him, business was business, with no monkey business. But my uncle couldn't fire him. He would have to fire the whole shop.

When my uncle gave me a job in

his cutting department so I could learn a trade, he painted Abe to me like a Devil. He told me to stay away from Abe and to keep my nose clean, and not to have much to do with the other workers as well. But the way I ran up and down the long cutting table



"Camouflage," drawing by ex-GI Bill Sanders, in Artists' League of America exhibition by veteran members. At ALA's new gallery, 77 Fifth Ave. Included are works by Reinhardt, Hirsch, Loew, Barr, Ambellan, Wynne, Borisov, Toney, Rohowsky and others.



stretching out the rolls of goods like I had roller skates on, they stayed away from me. All of them except Abe.

ABE came over to me the first day. The three-quarter of an hour lunch bell had rung and everybody was already washing up, but I was still running up and down by the cutting table. At first Abe just stood near the table and watched me working. I noticed he looked just like the other operators, with a white skin from the factory air, bent over a little bit as though he was still sitting at the machine, and with his clothes full of threads. He had glasses on but he looked over the top of them like they were in the way. He was smiling, almost to himself, it seemed. Then he began to smile like it was at me.

"Boychick," he said, "you want to get us all sick?"

I stopped with the stretch of goods in my hands and with my mouth open, as though I should say something. Eventually the words came, and I said no, I didn't want to get anybody sick and why did he say such a thing.

"Because, boychick," he said, still smiling, "if we have to eat and watch somebody else work we get indigestion, and from indigestion comes the worst things."

He walked over to me and put his hand on my arm. It was light as a feather, but warm. "So better go eat," he said. "Better go eat when everybody does and you won't make us sick. Also, you will have a full lunch-time and be able to rest a little bit. Then you won't get sick, too. Go eat. Yes?"

I nodded my head and put down the goods. As I walked to the wash-room I could feel everybody looking at me. I didn't know exactly why, but I felt a little bit ashamed.

It was something like the way I felt ashamed when my father sent me to ask my uncle to give me a job. We weren't rich like my uncle and my father always said that was why my uncle didn't like us. But after I told my uncle that I was learning to cut at a trade school, he said that of course he could give me a job, especially since it was very busy in the shop.

When I came back from lunch my uncle was telling Abe that he had to have the lot I was stretching cut out right away. He said that since he also had to get out the style the men were already cutting, they should show me how to use the cutting machine. Abe looked surprised. He said I was just a boy, and it was my first day in the shop, that I would cut myself. But

my uncle got very angry and asked who was running the business, and walked out. So I began to cut with the machine, and, like Abe said, I cut myself.

IT WAS a deep cut, and at first I couldn't tell whether I was missing a piece of finger or not. The knife on the machine was so sharp, and went around so fast, you didn't even feel you cut yourself until the blood came out. And soon it began to spill, all over the paper with the patterns on it for the machine to follow. It spread out and made a design like from a spilled ink bottle. Abe came running over and bandaged my hand. Then he led me out to the elevator landing.

The elevator was crowded and my uncle had just gotten in. When he saw my bandaged hand he stepped out to make room for me, clicking his tongue slowly with a noise like from a dripping faucet. He said there was a doctor in the next building who took care of such cases. I got into the elevator and Abe squeezed in with me. As the door closed I heard my uncle ask whether any goods were spoiled.

After the doctor took care of my hand I came back to the shop and Abe told the other cutters that I was lucky, only a piece of pinkey cut off. Then he told me that I shouldn't worry about whether or not my uncle gets his lot out in time, but that I ought to go home and take it easy and come back in the morning. By this time I was ready to listen more to Abe than to my uncle.

So I went out to my uncle's office to tell him I was going home. My uncle was on the telephone and he had his back turned to me. In front of him, on the desk, was a big piece of paper with a big blot of blood all over it. It was the paper with the patterns marked on it that I was using when I cut myself. He was straightening it out with one hand while he held the telephone in the other, asking whether he was connected with a textile printing company. Then he said he was mailing them a new design he wanted made up. He said it was an original, and they should be careful not to let anyone copy it. As he held the paper up in front of him so the light came through, he said that on the selvedge of the material he wanted printed, "Dresses for Eve, Designed by Adam."

I didn't wait until my uncle got through, to tell him I was going home.

## portside patter

By BILL RICHARDS

*News Item: "Newsweek" magazine adds its "expose" of the Communist Party.*

Actually there aren't very many Communists in America but there are at least 100,000,000 sympathizers, relatives, union members and thinking people who swell their ranks. The Communists are able to control unions despite the fact that they are a minority. They work themselves into positions of authority by the sheer trickery of devoting their lives to the unions.

*Moreover, Communists will stop at nothing. There is a drive underway at the present time to breed Communists with two heads to negotiate with two-faced employers.*

The Reds have no allegiance to America. It is an established fact that their first loyalty is to the people. They follow the Soviet line faithfully. If the Russians advocate peace as an alternative to war the American Communists will echo this line. If the Soviets

call for a continuing fight against fascism their American cohorts will immediately pick up the cry.

*A word of caution. Do not call a person a Communist until you have all the facts. Just because a man advocates a forty-hour week is no reason to assume that he is a radical. He should merely be placed in a more comfortable concentration camp.*

Before you join an organization make sure that there are no Communists in it. The Communists are usually right in back of their fronts. If an employer offers his workers thirty cents an hour, the first man to ask for thirty-one is probably an agent of Moscow.

*The Communists have already overrun Hollywood. There are dozens of actresses who are radicals. These figures will bear watching. Only the Bolshevistic Johnston Office keeps them from being exposed.*

In all fairness to actresses it should be pointed out that some of them aren't as bad as they're painted.

# LONDON LETTER

by Derek Kartun

WE WERE walking along the promenade at Margate, where the Labor Party conference was being held. With me was Pierre Courtade, foreign editor of *Humanite*, and a couple of English newspapermen. As the sunlight flashed on the sea and long-legged girls in print beachsuits lounged attractively about, we talked about Social Democracy. I was speculating on the Social Democratic mind; Courtade raised the question of the Social Democratic soul. Altogether it was a gloomy little conversation.

Coming toward us I saw a small, trim figure in a grey suit. As he approached, all alone, I noticed he had a moustache. He looked like one of Margate's shopkeepers out for a little fresh air. It was, of all appropriate people, Professor Harold Laski. A few yards further on there was a large panama hat coming up from the beach. Beneath it as it approached could be plainly discerned the bronzed features of John Strachey, minister for food. Beside him, hatless and indeed hairless, strode Hugh Dalton, in charge of national finances. The Social Democrats of the Labor Party had invaded Margate in force.

Now that the conference is over, speculation, recrimination and argument are waxing furious. How did Bevin secure such an overwhelming personal triumph? What has happened to the Labor "rebels"? Why was the revolt on manpower not reflected, as it logically should be, by a similar revolt on the foreign policy which has produced our manpower shortage by keeping over a million men in the armed forces? Why was the government not tied down to some declaration on dollars, exports and economic planning?

One thing must first of all be said in favor of this year's proceedings. They did not take place like those of a year ago in an atmosphere of rosewater, bouquets and utopian oratory. The Labor Party has had much of the woolly optimism knocked right out of its system by the fuel crisis and the speeches of Will Clayton, the American Undersecretary of State. Dalton, who talked last year of the song in his heart, spoke this year of the desperate need to "close the gap." The gap in question which yawns menacingly before Britain is that between the dollars we now use from the American loan and the dollars Britain will need when the loan runs out. Within twelve months we shall all be standing looking over the edge, holding Mr. Dalton by the hand. We shall ask him what we do next. And he—judging by what he said at Margate—will not be able to tell us at all.

For although he and other leaders sounded a stern warning of the dangers ahead unless we increase our exports, reduce our dollar imports and improve efficiency at home, none of them were prepared to say how it could be done. Dalton declared emphatically that Britain must not rely on another American loan, and he was cheered by the delegates for saying it. Herbert Morrison, Lord President of the Council, said "we must turn out the goods or bust," and he too was cheered. The delegates demonstrated a lively understanding that any future American loan is bound to carry with it political strings which would play havoc with plans for nationalization at home. The deep anxiety that exists through-

out the British Labor movement over the increasing dependence on America was plain to be seen among the delegates at Margate. And it is certain that they were disturbed and puzzled by the fact that their leaders posed the problem, explained it, warned against it and shook their fingers at it without telling them what they were going to do about it.

The Labor Party leadership knows perfectly well what are the realities of world power today. They understand that Great Britain is at the receiving end of a mighty American drive for domination of the richest areas of the world. They understand the stubborn facts that have led and will continue to lead America along a path of aggressive expansion which can only spell disaster for Britain unless we reorganize our world trade and shift its emphasis from the dollar areas.

At the same time we have, in order to survive, to maintain protection for our trade with the Dominions. To shift our exports we need, first of all, sufficient exports to shift. And then we need relations of a friendly nature with those countries of Europe with whom we could profitably trade. It is here that the full bankruptcy of Labor becomes evident. For the existence of vast armies denies us the manpower to boost our export industries. And the existence of Mr. Bevin's policies denies us those friendly relations we must have with Poland, Russia, Yugoslavia and many other new democracies. The delegates understood the needs of the situation. It was therefore all the more disappointing to see Bevin dancing rings round them in the debate on foreign affairs.

IMAGINE that it would be difficult to find a more astonishing display of demagogy than Mr. Bevin's speech at Margate. Every trick in his wide repertoire was used to the full. The bulldog stance, the asides to other leaders on the platform, the sudden, carefully-managed rage, the long, "reasonable" exposition of his case, the sneer, the plea, the halftruth, the untruth. One has to say quite frankly that Mr. Bevin's speech was full of the most monumental untruths. He lied about Greece; he lied about Poland; he lied about Germany. He gave a totally false picture of the position of the troops abroad (it was interesting that from his list of countries from which we would evacuate our forces he carefully excluded India). His speech was anti-Russian. And it said never a word about the Congressional attack on American labor, about American expansion and its dangers for us.

The better Labor delegates, like K. Zilliacus and Tom Driberg, were horrified and said so in their speeches. They, and a small group of rebels, have understood that Ernest Bevin is the most catastrophic Foreign Secretary we have had in recent times. And it needs to be understood that Mr. Bevin has not only been a disaster for the people of Greece and the people of the Middle East (he declared flatly that Britain had no intention of leaving this area); he has also been a disaster for the people of Britain by pursuing a policy which spells economic collapse for this country.

And now Margate is over and the fight for a democratic foreign policy continues. What now has to be done and done quickly in Britain is to clear away the sentimental illusions that the Labor Party has about Bevin and his works. I understand that after their week of labors at the conference many of the delegates took a few hours off to enjoy themselves at the swings and sideshows of Margate's Coney Island. It is reported that they had a very jolly time there and expressed the wish to come again, for this fun-fair is one of the finest in the country. I noticed it as I drove back to the station to take the London train. Its name—blazoned across the summer sky in brilliant lights—is Dreamland.



# BUDAPEST on the POTOMAC

By JOHN STUART

MY FRIEND from Saturn rushed into the office and parked himself at the side of my desk. "Look here," he said waving a copy of the *Washington Post*. I could see that he was excited again and that the New York heat wasn't doing him much good. His face was drawn—that big face with its enormous ears which distinguish the Saturnians from the Martians—and his old eye tic was back again. "Take it easy," I advised. "You know that the atmosphere here never does you much good. It always sends your blood pressure up, especially after you've been to Washington. Just relax." But what I said didn't help to calm him. "I have a story to file for my paper back home," he replied. "The next interplanetary ship leaves in three hours. So don't give me any of your grandmother's advice." At that point he shoved the newspaper on the desk and all I needed to see were the letters in the first word of the headline and I knew what caused his high tizzy.

"So this time it's Hungary." "Yes, Hungary, and what about it?" he roared at me. I tried to remind him of our last meeting when he nearly blew his top about Yugoslavia. It was only a few months ago. . . .

"But what's that got to do with Hungary?" he demanded.

I refused to answer that one for the moment. "Where have you been getting your information about Hungary?" I asked.

"From the Department of State." This he uttered very formally and I thought a little too sanctimoniously.

"So you've been to the Department of Hysteria again," I said. "You know that Secretary Marshall doesn't like 'overdoing the truth.' That's a phrase he used last week before a Senate Appropriation Committee when he reported what his ambassador to Moscow thought of American broadcasts to Russia. But that's neither here nor there."

"You bet it's neither here nor there," he said. "My informants in Washington tell me that this is a Communist coup and that Nagy's resignation was forced by a minority party in order to communize the country."

"That's what you heard in Washington. But what you didn't hear is the inside story of Nagy's connections with what the Hungarians call, out of diplomatic politeness, 'certain foreign circles.' You Saturnians ought not to pay too much attention to the niceties of diplomacy. Dean Acheson, who has corresponded with Nagy, would hardly tell you that a large part of the work of Washington's foreign emissaries in Eastern Europe, especially in the Balkans, is devoted to keeping in close touch with every useful political scoundrel. Take the trouble sometime of finding out who are the bosom friends of American officials in Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, in Poland and Austria. But best of all read Bartley Crum's book *Behind the Silken Curtain* for the real lowdown on State Department duplicity and double dealing. He tells that story in connection with Palestine, but the moral code of the Truman doctrinaires is the same everywhere. The few

honorable exceptions don't stay in their jobs very long. My opinion is that the hysteria over the Hungarian business—an hysteria deliberately contrived—is to cover up the State Department's connections in one way or another with anti-republicans in Hungary."

"That's a long speech and I haven't time for long speeches," my friend from Saturn insisted. "I agree," I answered, "but unless some long speeches are made the short ones are going to do terrible damage."

"No one can tell me that the Americans are against a republic," he went on. "They live in one themselves." "That's true," I said. "But Washington is opposed to certain kinds of republics. It likes the republic of Argentina but it doesn't like the republics of the Soviet Union. It likes the republic of China but not of Hungary. It's what's in the republics and what makes them tick that counts. And Washington simply doesn't like a republic over which it will have no control and which will act independently of American oil companies and American bankers."

"Yes, but that doesn't answer my question about the Communist coup. Just because the American State Department likes only certain type of republics does not make right what the Communists have been doing," he said. And as he said it he smiled as if to say crack that one, my boy.

"Be assured," I started to say when he interrupted: "Don't assure me, just give me the facts." "Fine," I said quickly. "I'm glad to hear that the facts count with you. That would be hard to tell from the nervous state you're in. But you'll have to listen to a long speech again."

He nodded reluctantly. "In the first place," I continued, "American officials have known right from the beginning what the arch Tories, the diehard Horthyites of the Hungarian Smallholders Party have been up to. Washington's demand for an examination of the documents is sham, pure sham. Did you know that some members of the Smallholders Party have been on trial in Budapest for the last several months? These trials have been open, public affairs with all the rules of evidence that are observed in any American courtroom. American officials knew about these trials. They knew about the charges and they knew the evidence. They would like us to believe that they knew nothing because that suits them at the moment. When it became clear that those on trial were engaged in a conspiracy to overthrow the republic, when they began writing signed confessions, a demand rose up within the Smallholders Party itself that it be purged and overhauled. Other parties demanded the same thing."

"That's your story," Mr. Saturn interjected. "Where's the proof?"

"WELL," I replied, "I have it straight from the horse's mouth." And with that I walked into the library and took from the shelf some recent issues of the *Daily Reports* of the foreign radio broadcasts issued by the Central

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**HAD ENOUGH!**  
**BUILD 3<sup>RD</sup> PARTY**



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**HAD ENOUGH!**  
**BUILD 3<sup>RD</sup> PARTY**



Whopper

Intelligence Group in Washington. They are available to anyone on request. "Here," I pointed to one of the reports, "is the issue for June 3, 1947." And I began to read aloud quotations from three Hungarian newspapers. "This is what *Kis Ujsag*, a Smallholders Party newspaper, says: 'He [Nagy] caused great harm to the Smallholders Party by exposing it to severe upheavals.' If that isn't satisfactory, listen to what another newspaper of the Smallholders Party, *Reggel*, says: 'The process of purification and the era of consolidation has begun. An end has been put once and for all to the policy of adventurers. The ghosts of the past can never again be resurrected.'"

"What about other parties?" my friend from Saturn inquired.

"All right. Other newspapers said practically the same thing but I think you will be interested to know what another non-Communist paper wrote not only about Nagy but about the newspapers of other countries farther west. This comes from the Hungarian Socialist paper *Vilagossag*: 'The political crisis and the resignation of Nagy evoked confused comments in the press of many countries because in more distant lands people were unable to form a clear picture of the Hungarian political situation. Some news agencies published slanderous and wilfully misleading articles. . . . The British press too began to carry excited and biased comments on possible developments, but after the quick and constitutional solution of the crisis the majority of the British press has resumed its factual and favorable tone.'"

"Uhhmm," said my nervous listener.

"Uhhmm, my eye," I snapped back. "That's why I say this hysteria stirred in Washington is an enormous fake. Not even in England will you find it. In fact what you will find there is considerable caution. Too bad you didn't pick up a copy of the *Times* of London when you were in Washington—you know, the paper that has been competing with the *Times* of New York in demanding that their government annex all the planets. You've complained about it to me several times. The London *Times*, whose every edition is blessed by the Anglican Church and the financial pillars of the City, commented that Nagy's party had 'attracted to its ranks many right-wing adventurers.' Now if that paper is willing to use such impolitic language you can get a fair idea of what was going on in the top inner circles of the Smallholders. And that's only a small part of it.

"If you want to read the whole dirty story get hold of *New Times*, the Soviet publication, for March 28, 1947. Almost two months before Nagy ran off to Switzerland to escape facing trial, it was more than clear that a plot had been uncovered involving the use of secret codes, the intelligence services of foreign powers and a plan to assassinate Soviet military authorities preliminary to a seizure of power. These fine gents had even set up a shadow government to take over.

"The virtuous, hypocritical wrath that you have found in Washington is a measure of the fear that too much may be exposed. The British Foreign Office is in this game up to the top floor, too, but its much less vociferous attitude is dictated by the hope that the whole affair will blow over. They are trying very hard to have the world forget how the British ambassador in Warsaw, until he was recalled, was involved in plotting the overthrow of the Polish government."

I was somewhat breathless after this outburst and I sat back to see what effect it had. By now Mr. Saturn had cooled down somewhat. Whether it was my words or the

fan across the room was hard to say. But I noticed he was writing in those peculiar hieroglyphics that make up the Saturnian language.

"What have you got there?" I inquired.

"I was just jotting down my next question. You talk so long I'm liable to forget what I want to ask. Tell me, what can the United States gain from intervening on behalf of Nagy? I don't get the motive of all this. After all, the United States has given Hungary fairly large loans. And when you lend somebody money you don't like to stir up trouble in their backyards."

"GOOD question," I replied. "Only you won't like the answer because it won't square with what you've heard in Washington.

"The point about all this is, why has Washington been so tender in the past year with Hungary, when throughout the Balkans the State Department has wielded the big stick and made with the rough talk?"

"Oh, let's not use this jargon," he insisted.

"Very well, let's not. Let's use a map." So I pulled out my map and there was Hungary bounded on the north by Czechoslovakia, by Yugoslavia in the south, by Rumania in the east, and in the west by Austria. "Here is a large part of the story, motive and all. If Hungary can be converted into a power center of reaction she can be a direct threat to her neighbors, particularly if she has the right kind of government—like Greece or Turkey—to be the receiver of Truman Doctrine largess from arms to food. But more, she can be used as a wedge against the social progress which Prague, Bucharest and Belgrade have been making without benefit of private bankers, the usual coterie of money-lenders and foreign investors.

"And Hungary can do such a job as long as her own economy is not wrenched from the hands of the thousand families, which controlled her best arable land and worked it much the way the Junkers worked theirs in East Prussia. That's why the right wing of the Smallholders Party is mad, furious. The wrenching process has begun with legislation introduced to nationalize the largest banks, preliminary to a three-year plan of reconstruction, in addition to agrarian reform which gave land to 800,000 peasants who never owned an acre of their own. In other words, Hungary is beginning to finish up an internal change which would have taken place years ago if it hadn't been for terrorism, anti-Semitism—all the *isms* that mark a land in the grip of foreign imperialism and internal corruption.

"Washington calls this communism. The Hungarian peasant calls it liberation. Washington fooled with a man like Tibor Eckhardt, whom it skimmed from the scum of Hungarian ruling society. The Hungarian peasant and worker join in a coalition bloc, which includes several parties, to advance the interests of their own country and not the political policies of the United States or of any other state. There you have the drama and the conflict and there you have the reason for the goodwill toward the Soviet Union which after all does not stand in the way of peasants having land and workers bread. . . ."

But something strange happened at that point. I rose to open the window an inch or two more. As I turned around my friend was gone. All that was left was his copy of the *Washington Post* and a pencilled note which I still cannot decipher. But I suppose I shall have a chance to ask him what he wrote next time he comes—when there is another crisis.

# THE JUDGE IS BENCHED

Washington.

THE ticking of the clock above the heads of the three robed justices in the United States Court of Appeals was audible as the blurred voice and incisive words of Chief Justice D. Lawrence Groner flowed on. The comfortably filled courtroom sat tense, riveted with the sense that history was being made. From a legal standpoint, it was the first time in history that a writ of mandamus has compelled removal of a federal judge who continued to sit in a case after being charged with bias and prejudice. The judge in question was Alexander Holtzoff, who was trying the sixteen members of the executive board of the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee.

But this was only half the story. For the Appellate Court's decision was the only serious reversal the Un-American Committee of the House has experienced in its current witch-hunt embracing Communist officials, liberals, educators, labor leaders, motion picture

**Manager Parnell Thomas' ace is knocked from the box as Justice' blasts a clean hit.**

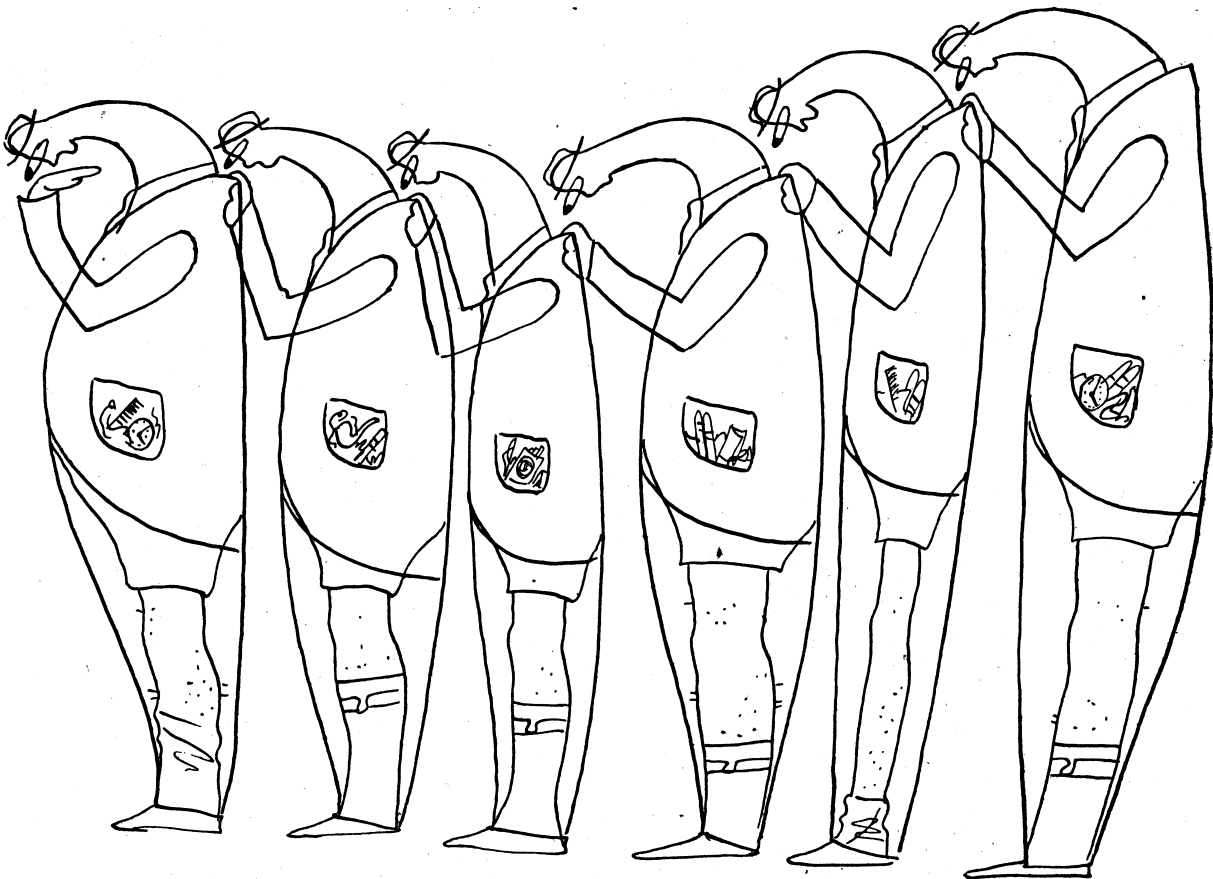
**By VIRGINIA GARDNER**

actors, scientists and government workers. The committee, which was repudiated during the war and excoriated by the late President Roosevelt, only to be elevated by the current reaction to the role of arbiter of our national "conscience," had run into something it couldn't intimidate. Even as Martin Dies, the old chairman who was driven to political oblivion, was reported to be campaigning again in his Texas bailiwick, the Appellate Court was reminding his Little Caesar counterpart, Chairman J. Parnell Thomas, that we

still are a democratic country with some notions of justice.

"The principal influence of the court depends on the confidence of the people," rustled the tired voice of seventy-four-year-old Chief Justice Groner. The big sagging shoulders of Defense Counsel O. John Rogge, grown rounder since the tragic days when he worked tirelessly and fruitlessly to bring to justice some twenty-eight alleged seditionists, stooped as he bent forward to hear. Now he was engaged in another mass trial, the conspiracy and contempt case against sixteen members of the board of the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee.

The voice went on, while Justice Groner stared absently at the ceiling: "Unless the court is supported by practically a universal feeling of the people in the country and community that it is fair and above criticism at least in motive, then our whole system of justice would become a farce; and our



*Kneeland*

**The Century of the Investigated Man.**



whole country—what we are working in every way to avoid—something other than a democracy.”

These are words which at other times might be taken for granted, but now are eloquent and startling, so commonplace has become the flouting of civil liberties in this country as press and government do obeisance to the Thomas-Rankin committee, the main arm of reactionary big business. Only the previous week the newspapers had treated as routine the quick brushoff Judge Holtzoff gave to a similar petition that he remove himself because of bias and prejudice. This was the judge picked—“especially assigned,” a prosecutor delicately put it to the Appeals judges—to try twenty-one defendants this month on charges growing out of various “investigations” of the Un-American Committee.

What, rule himself out because he had been special assistant to the Attorney General and a “close personal friend” of J. Edgar Hoover, head of the FBI? Because he had been legal adviser to the FBI from 1940 to 1945 with “numerous contacts with the bureau, sometimes almost daily?” (Letter from Judge Holtzoff in the *Congressional Record* cited in affidavits.) Or because he “played a part in advising and determining the policy, nature and scope of the bureau’s investigations, specifically including that of the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee and its predecessor,” as Rogge’s affidavit charged? Or because Hoover prejudged the issue and designated the JAFRC as a Communist-front organization, “carrying the inference that it was subversive and un-American and with the connotations that that was worse than being a horse thief,” as Rogge told the Court of Appeals? Or because that very report was released to the press “by the House Committee itself, the very committee which had demanded the investigation of the JAFRC?”

When Rogge asked Judge Holtzoff for a stay of forty-eight hours, he was told, “No, I will not grant a stay.” Asking for twenty-four hours, he was told, “No.” Asking for a grant of one hour to file a mandamus petition, he was told, “I am granting no time at all.”

This is the showoff jurist who replied to the earlier petition of the German Communist, Gerhart Eisler, asking that he bar himself because of prejudice, “If opposition to Communists were ground for disqualifying a

judge, I daresay it would be a baffling problem to find a federal judge who is qualified to sit.” He is the judge who instructed the jury that the government had proved that Eisler was in contempt of Congress, that all that remained was to decide if it was wilful, and that Eisler had no legal right to try to state his objections to testifying before being sworn, although his counsel advised him to do so.

WHEN the three justices stepped out from behind faded portieres and climbed into their high-backed chairs, Dr. Edward Barsky and his fifteen co-defendants, all members of the board of the JARFC, wore for the most part expressions of dogged patience. The rest of the Un-American Committee contempt defendants, Eugene Dennis, general secretary of the Communist Party, Leon Josephson, a Communist, and Eisler, the refugee, are Chairman Thomas’ own babies—in a purely professional sense, of course, and with no offense meant to the defendants. Dennis and Josephson, whose trials are pending before Judge Holtzoff, and Eisler, who now will be heard by another judge in a pending passport case, defied the committee after Thomas became chairman. But the JAFRC cases are more than a year old. So are the cases of George Marshall, of the old National Federation for Constitutional Liberties, and Richard Morford, executive director of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, set for later in June.

Scattered about the courtroom, the distinguished assemblage of doctors, lawyers and others who are defendants in the mass conspiracy trial rubbed shoulders with such characters as Ernie Adamson, former Un-American Committee counsel with a penchant for warning radio commentators against the use of the word “democracy.” I saw Herman Shumlin, the theatrical producer (*The Corn Is Green, Watch on the Rhine, Little Foxes*, etc.), studying the scene with a professional gleam in his eye. The judges of themselves made a group a producer might envy—the handsome Justice Edgerton, with black eyebrows and white hair, the frail and fascinating Groner, whose face was a mask of complete indifference, the florid but expressive face of Justice Prettyman on his left. I saw Howard Fast, the novelist (*Citizen Tom Paine, Freedom Road, The American*, etc.), one of the JAFRC defendants, clutching an awkward

package under his arm, which I learned on inquiry was an Indian doll for his three-year-old daughter, and peering quizzically at some of the militant-looking DAR types among the lady spectators, a few of whom always turn up at any Un-American Committee hearing. Then, as the warm, confident voice of Rogge began, with its slight nasal twang redolent of the Middle West, I saw the defendants’ faces relax, grow hopeful, eye the judges carefully—faces of college professor, publisher, labor union officer, dermatologist, lawyer, medical practitioner, housewife.

These gallant men and women, whose cases date from Wood-Rankin days, have remained steadfastly together in their refusal to be intimidated by the Un-American Committee for more than a year, a year in which the country has been engulfed in a flood tide of Red-baiting. What is more, they were actually the first persons in the lifetime of the old or new Dies committee, barring the several Communist officials whose six-year old cases finally were heard last year, to defy the Un-American Committee’s authority to demand anything and everything of witnesses. During the years, the committee bullied, threatened, intimidated, attacked by innuendo—and was appeased by many. The humiliating spectacle of an otherwise sane and self-respecting government official taking the little elevator to the fifth floor of the House Office building to bargain with the committee was not unusual. Had the committee put its finger on some obscure government clerk in a war agency? Then could she be transferred to an agency less in the public eye, for which Congress wasn’t gunning, and be safe? Rats and vermin and stool-pigeons went in the committee’s back door to put the finger on labor leaders, and too often these labor leaders squirmed and in turn Red-baited in their denials.

But the committee, which had thrived on blackmailing and smearing and use of Congressional immunity against redress, was finally forced to go into court, or lose face, by the courage of this band of men and women who refused to turn over their records to allow others to be intimidated and maybe deprived of their livelihoods.

ASSISTANT US ATTORNEY CHARLES B. MURRAY at one point in arguments before the three justices took the  
(Continued on page 23)

# review and comment



## UNDYING REPUBLIC

***The French nation, reborn in the Resistance, must be defended continually by the people.***

By **MILTON BLAU**

THE REPUBLIC OF SILENCE, by A. J. Liebling. Translation by Ramon Guthrie. Harcourt, Brace. \$4.

THREE SHORT NOVELS BY VERCORS (JEAN BRULLER). Little, Brown. \$2.

A. J. LIEBLING's informal history of the French Resistance and Vercors' three tales of that period have many important values and belong, certainly, to the uncrowded class of good war books.

In *The Republic of Silence* Liebling resets that historical moment (May 10, 1940 to Aug. 25, 1944) when battered France rose up and bathed itself in blood and courage to stand, at last, as a free nation. Vercors in his *Three Short Novels* explores the hearts and guts of Frenchmen to find out what this means. Taken together or separately the books are rich and meaningful and open large and provocative areas of thought.

Liebling's account is put together by employing those written materials by Resistance fighters which trace the struggle from the time the armies of France collapsed to the time Paris was liberated. Throughout the book Liebling threads his own comments and articles, which, aside from serving to tie the volume together, enrich it with background and information and observations which are keen and rewarding.

Stories, articles, essays, diaries, letters, FFI communiques and reportage unfold the Resistance in bright and somber colors and display both the complex and the simple heroism of the French. It is only toward the end when Jean-Paul Sartre, Francois Mauriac and Charles Vildrac begin to evaluate the meaning of the Resistance (and in a broader sense the meaning of

the war for national liberation) that we begin to understand not only what brought Frenchmen of various classes and views together but what would begin to pull them into different and, not infrequently, opposing camps soon after the liberation of Paris. The point of union and departure is the concept of the nation. (Liebling, writing the last piece in the book, senses this although he does not elaborate on it. He writes: "But people in France are not living happily ever after, any more than are people in the United States, or Norway, or the United Kingdom or Russia. I do not think this cause for disillusionment. Escape from [national] extinction is a pretty good thing in itself." And, of course, it is.)

Jean-Paul Sartre's essay and the one by Vildrac are not so important as the one by Mauriac, which poses the question most squarely: "What shall be the relations of the political parties revived within the nation? United as they will be in their loyalty to the nation, the causes of division among them will nevertheless continue to exist."



Mauriac is aware that we cannot discuss the nation without simultaneously discussing its class structure and its state. Vichy even in the darkest moment of its treason spoke in "nationalist" terms, but it could not represent the nation for Vichy was the state which acted against the nation and for the French ruling class and for the Nazi oppressors of the French nation. As we know, the French ruling class, which supplied the Germans with the personnel for treason, has gone unpunished and, although weakened, it still retains its grip on France.

Communists and non-Communists, were able to join hands during the Resistance period because the ruling-class Vichy state had completely severed itself from the nation. It was not too difficult for the various patriotic elements to realize at that time that their first job was to free the nation in a primary and minimal sense: that is, to bring it under a state which was more or less attached to it and which could more or less represent it.

But Mauriac in his essay calls for unity in the undefined name of the nation, which he does not consider in its historical development, making of it a mystic concept, an empty god-head, which stands at all times above all class differences and, if we go by Mauriac, is indifferent to all of them. Yet we have seen in the events leading to the war, in the war itself and in postwar events that the real interests of a nation cannot be defended without a vigorous defense of the interests of the working classes and other classes oppressed by finance capital. On this score we need no better example than the events in France today, where the Communist ministers are ejected from the government for supporting the demands of the workers and where the remaining government begins to appear as the agent of the US State Department.

It is unfortunate that no work by a Communist was used in the summation, if only for the reason that Marxists can offer clarity in place of bourgeois confusion on the question of the nation.

The richness of *The Republic of Silence* makes it difficult to single out particular works. The short stories by Vercors, Adam, Thomas, Kessel and Aragon have not only their literary values but contribute a specific intelligence about Resistance life and problems. There is also the excellent excerpt from the novel *The Edge Of*

*The Sword*, by Vladimir Pozner, which helps in telling the big story. The letters and diaries add a vital dimension to the book while the accounts from the large clandestine press give *The Republic* a feeling of movement. (The reportage by Claude Roy, which includes a portrait of the Communist leader of the Paris Resistance, Colonel Rol, is a fine sketch of a steadfast anti-fascist worker and fighter.) And there is Liebling shouldering through France, observing but in no way aloof; when the events call for tears he cries and when men deserve to be scorned, Liebling's tongue is sharp.

**V**ERCORS also concerns himself with a national problem. In two of his short novels, *Guiding Star* and *The Verdun Press*, this theme burns its way across the pages. *Guiding Star* is the story of Thomas Muritz, a Czech, who falls in love with France, conceiving of it as a perfect nation. This conception impels him to leave his family while he is a student. He settles in Paris and devotes his life to his new nation. His son is killed in the First World War. And this sacrifice is all part of Muritz' devotion to his France. When he is an old man, Petain and the Germans control France. Muritz wears the yellow star which is used to mark out the Jews in order to show his defiance. But he cannot oppose Petain because to Muritz Petain is a Frenchman, a Marshal of France. And how can a Marshal betray his nation? Even when he is taken as a hostage Muritz is untroubled: the Germans will kill him for France and this is an honorable way for a patriot to end his days. It is only when the old citizen faces his executioners that his lifetime mirage about the "nation" is shattered and his death is horrible for him—because his executioners turn out to be not Germans but French gendarmes.

*The Verdun Press* is the story of Vendresse and Dacosta, two printers who fought together at Verdun during the First World War and were in the army together in the second. Dacosta is a Jew. Vendresse tries to defend his buddy from the various snares and tortures the Germans have laid out for Jews and patriots. Vendresse learns bitterly how little the nation means to certain Frenchmen, who commit crimes in its name. His own "patriotic" notions result in the death of Dacosta's wife and children. As for the traitor Paars, who has hounded Vendresse,

he lives to become "a big shot in the Allocation Bureau."

*Night And Fog*, with its account of a Resistance hero whose spirit has been laid waste by the Nazis, rounds out the book and establishes with considerable force the meaning of fascist perversion of human beings.

Vercors' style is simple and his organization of materials is so skillfully handled that the reader is swept up by his powerful stories without being mindful of the large task he has completed in each of his novels. The stories are excellently done and the author's tendency to sentimentalize some of his heroes is not enough to impair their value.

A. J. Liebling and Vercors place fine books on our shelves.

## Dog Bites Man

APPEAL TO THE NATIONS, by Norman Thomas. Henry Holt. \$2.75.

**A**MONG the assorted propagandists for American reaction Norman Thomas occupies a prominent place. He is part of that crew which voices left-sounding arguments for reactionary programs. His special usefulness to American imperialism comes from his attenuated connection with the Socialist Party, which gives him just enough "independence" and just enough of a tie with the "left wing" to make him more valuable than most of his fellow anti-progressives and anti-Sovieters.

His new book's only virtue is its brevity, for it is both vicious and dull from beginning to end. Its only interest is the insight it gives into the perverted way a leading isolationist ideologist mutates into an "internationalist." Thomas feels impelled to make his "flip-flop" because "here in America there is a general recognition that safety cannot be found in the older types of isolationism. . . ." And he writes his book to prove that "the spirit—and it is by no means wholly stupid or wholly bad—which produced the old isolationism lives on." In the light of this "spirit" he examines the major roads to peace proposed in the past two years, and finding them all inadequate, he advances a threadbare scheme of his very own as the "minimum price of peace."

The first idea rejected by Thomas is "Peace By Total Victory." Flying into a rage at the memory of President Roosevelt, he finds the slogan of unconditional surrender to be chiefly re-

sponsible for all our postwar ills. He laments the fact that we did not "shorten the war" with a negotiated peace but insisted instead on destroying Hitler's military might. This policy of "vengeance," Thomas contends, was merely appeasement of Stalin, although "Roosevelt himself was probably blinder than Stalin concerning the feasibility of dealing with Germany in terms chiefly of destruction." It is no wonder, then, that to him the Potsdam Declaration is "a specimen of infamous stupidity" and the Nuremberg trials were merely "one-sided exaltations of vengeance in the name of justice." The one bright ray he sees is that the "Japanese surrender was not literally unconditional, and, partly as a result, Americans may take some degree of satisfaction in the postwar developments in Japan."

What is the logical conclusion to be drawn from this evaluation? Thomas clearly indicates his belief that there was guilt on both sides in the war and that therefore we must apply the "Christian virtues of mutual repentance and forgiveness." Since *we* happened to have won the "total victory," the chief burden of magnanimity rests on us. Thomas doesn't dare spell out the implications of his position, but they are inescapable. They mean restoring to the German financiers, and militarists and top Nazis the power over their country we have "vengefully" taken away. How else can one interpret Thomas' blanket denunciation of the Nuremberg trials? They mean abandoning all such measures as reparations and border revisions, for such conduct is certainly not consistent with "repentance and forgiveness." They mean, in short, liquidating our "total victory" and starting all over again in the hope that this time we will find the right—that is, the anti-Soviet—war.





Having disposed of "peace by total victory," Thomas turns to "Peace Through the United Nations." In his eyes, the UN "in its underlying principles defeats its declared aim of establishing lasting peace." He is violently opposed to the concept of the Security Council and fulminates most of all at the idea of Big Five unanimity. At the same time he objects to the General Assembly because of "the dangerous and amoral fallacy of equal rights of 'sovereign' nations." In other words, he just doesn't like the UN. Yet, newly converted "internationalist" that he is, Thomas cannot merely reject the UN. That would be isolationism "old style." His new role demands that he learn the techniques of the boa constrictor and find ways of embracing the organization to death. That is why he says, "I agree with Senator Vandenberg that the world is even more at the mercy of the Big Three 'without the San Francisco Charter than with it.'" Exactly how to twist the UN into an instrument against Big Three unity has been worked out by more adroit and more influential plotters than Thomas, and their line has unfortunately dominated the policies not only of Truman, Byrnes and Marshall, but also of that other great "Socialist," Ernest Bevin. As is to be expected, Thomas goes along with every divisive proposal that has been raised in the UN, from the abolition of the veto to the Baruch formula for atomic control, and even adds a few of his own.

The author next looks at "Peace By Fear" and "Peace Through World Government." He rejects both on the ground that they are not adequate "safeguards against totalitarianism," and then, under the guise of discussing "Peace Through Communism," he settled down to his main job—straight-out anti-Sovietism. He devotes fully half his book to a stale rehash of all the old anti-Communist canards, leaning heavily on such "authorities" as Dallin, Koestler, Kravchenko, Barmine, Bullitt, etc. Naturally enough, the chief victim of Thomas' vitriol, next to Stalin, is Henry A. Wallace, who like Roosevelt before him commits the unpardonable sin of calling for Soviet-American friendship.

So much for Thomas' refutations. How about his own plan? We find it couched in the pretentious garb of "An Appeal to the Nations" and described by the author as "the minimum price of peace." The essence of the plan is stated to be "universal disarmament

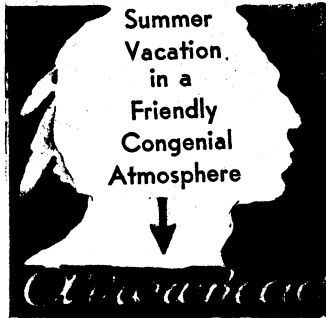
and the liquidation of imperialism." But one has to know what Thomas means by his words "disarmament" and "imperialism." For in his hands they are the sheerest demagoguery, put forward to trap the unwary into accepting the program of the worst imperialists and militarists in our country. Take his plan for disarmament, for example. Thomas proposes a five-point program, the fifth and crucial point of which is Ely Culbertson's notorious "Quota Principle" of international security. Stripped of all its verbiage, this Thomas-Culbertson idea boils down to a liquidation of the Security Council of the UN—that is, a liquidation of Big Three unity. It thus becomes clear that it is not disarmament that Thomas wants, but the destruction of one of the major instruments through which the peace can be won, the UN, and the removal of the biggest obstacle to World War III, peaceful collaboration between the United States, the Soviet Union and Great Britain, on a basis of equality and reciprocity.

As to Thomas' second slogan, "liquidation of imperialism," one does not have to read far to discover that the only thing he wants to liquidate is the Soviet Union. He dismisses as of secondary importance the drive of American, British and other finance capitals for world markets and colonial conquests, for "it is not colonial imperialism that is the chief menace to world peace, but Soviet imperialism." This vile charge of "Soviet imperialism" is, of course, the foundation of every reactionary program in international affairs. It is the age-old technique of attributing to your innocent victim the very crime of which you yourself are guilty. Who is it that yells "Soviet imperialism"? It is everyone in the camp of reaction, from Henry Luce to Norman Thomas. Nowhere is there concrete proof of a single imperialist act on the part of the Soviet Union. Like Hearst and McCormick, Thomas finds "proof" in the existence of democratic regimes in the countries of eastern Europe. He pours out all the meaningless phrases, like "Bolshevik menace," "power vacuums" and "Soviet expansionism," etc., etc., and when he runs out of relevant "arguments," he drags in everything from the case of Julia Poyntz to the charge of "slave labor" in Siberian "concentration camps."

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enough about imperialism to understand that it has something to do with markets and profits. He admits this when he briefly refers to capitalist imperialism. Yet nary a word about economics when he talks about his terrible, terrible "Soviet imperialism." For he cannot explain away the fact that the Soviet Union, a socialist state in which the motive of private profit has been eliminated, is by its very nature incapable of imperialist exploitation of foreign markets. It has no fear of competitors and therefore looks with approval on the industrialization of neighboring countries like Poland and Czechoslovakia, whereas American imperialism uses its dollar diplomacy to stultify the development of such countries. In its economic as well as its political relations the Soviet Union deals on a basis of equality, because that is the nature of its system.

And all the while Thomas has not a word about American bases encircling the globe. Not a word about atom-bomb-rattling (except to defend it). Not a word about the shameless use of American dollars and American guns and American wheat to bolster up every reactionary regime and every would-be fascist dictator in Europe or Asia or South America. In all fairness, it must be said that Thomas is gently critical of American policy in China and, by implication, opposes American support of Britain's tottering empire. But after everything else he says, one can hardly avoid the suspicion that this is merely a smokescreen.

Thomas concludes his book by envisaging a "world confederation," the stepping stone to which are a series of regional federations. He fondly hopes that "the Soviet Union and a handful of her satellites" will be outside the confederation. Exactly what guarantee of peace this organization will provide he doesn't make clear. To be sure, his book was written before the enunciation of the "Truman Doctrine." It is safe to predict that if he were writing the book today, he would be bolder, and would come nearer admitting that the "world confederation" of which he speaks is really designed as nothing more nor less than an instrument of war against the new people's democracies and the Soviet Union. It becomes, therefore, a menace to the American people themselves, who would have to provide the blood and the treasure for these imperialist adventures which have Thomas' blessing.

DAVID GOLDWAY.

## Grown Lonely . . .

POEMS OF DEDICATION, by Stephen Spender.  
Random House. \$2.

STEPHEN SPENDER is not one of the precision poets who can always turn out an immaculate stanza. His is an oratorical attitude toward poetry. His forms are loose, and not often functional. His lines are drenched in metaphors.

They are always intelligent images, but sometimes they weight down his line and thought, as in the following:

*Absence had the quality of ice  
On a high peak, above a landscape  
of snow.  
It is a freezing lens which magnifies  
The valley of the roofs and hearths  
below.*

One feels at such points that a simpler statement would be better poetry. Here is such a one, with what to me is a more thoughtfully worked out image:

*Yet all the past, the race,  
Knowledge and memory, are un-  
furled  
Within each separate head, grown  
lonely  
With time, growing, shedding the  
world.*

There was a time when Spender was an active anti-fascist. I liked his poetry better then. Its images were partly supplied by the world and a multitude of people. Now he is fighting a last-ditch battle against a complete negation of the world. He has not embraced a mystical "other world," like some of his English fellows; he stands, however, on the threshold of his consciousness, wondering about the exact relation between the individual, mortal "I" and the apparently chaotic world beating at his senses. Since the world has become a blank, confused place to him, his images have a similar blankness, coming from cultural memories rather than real scenes. It is significant that the first group of poems, which constitute an elegy for a close relative, convey the poet's grief most poignantly but give no picture of the dead woman.

The most successful poems to me are the group of free sonnets called "Spiritual Explorations." Like a seventeenth century metaphysician, Spender debates with himself the nature of reality, trying to convince himself that

life is good, and exists outside of the mind, but intensely aware of:

*Those flesh and bone parcels in  
which you're split  
O thing of skin and words hanging  
on breath.*

The poetry in this thin volume is always on a high level of serious thought and imaginative writing. It is uneven, because the poet is so unsettled in his mind, and therefore in his art. Spender feels the need for communicating to people:

*Show him your own existence as  
you are  
Teach him his blindness, teach him  
to rise.*

It is a pity that, feeling so about his fellow men, he has so little of value to say to them. I have never been able completely to understand the poets who speak so earnestly of the great message they alone have for their fellow men, and yet whose work is like an open diary of their own doubts as to the very existence of their fellow men.

S, FINKELSTEIN.

## J'Accuse

IF A MAN BE MAD, by Harold Maine. Doubleday. \$3.

DURING the New Deal, the Republicans had a back-fence political story that ran like this: A psychiatrist went to heaven and found God suffering from delusions of grandeur. He thought he was Roosevelt.

When I was in a mental hospital, we patients created a different version. In our story, Roosevelt went to heaven and found God suffering from delusions of grandeur. He thought he was a psychiatrist.

What have they done, these institutional doctors, with the life-and-death power which they wield? Most of them have created hells that rival Hitler's concentration camps. You can read about them—if you can bear the pain and horror of the reading—in *If a Man Be Mad*. First as patient and later as hired attendant, Maine saw it all: the state hospitals, the ritzy private sanatoria, the Veterans' Administration institutions. He found little to choose among them.

"By merely holding an attendant's job," Maine writes, "a man was an accomplice to the worst sadists and criminals and bound to cover them up."

The instructions to attendants were: When you beat patients, use a heavy-ended rubber plunger; it doesn't leave marks. Hit the patients in the belly and double them up. Twist their arms behind them. Put your foot on the guy's chest and let your weight down. Flip your towel around his throat and twist it into an implement of garotte. Falsify your reports and always cover up for the institution.

The most terrifying chapters of the book describe Maine's experiences as attendant at a veterans' hospital. Soldier, you may have won medals at Anzio, but in a psychiatric ward you're just another pair of arms to be twisted, another nose to be bloodied, another tail to be kicked.

Neither Maine's book nor my review is intended as an indictment of psychiatry or medicine. Very few of the men who staff mental hospitals are psychiatrists; I have talked with them, and their theories on the subject approximate those of the late General Patton.

Into these mental institutions crawl the "medical scum," as Maine puts it, of every branch of the profession. These are the physicians with whom no free patient would deal: the failures in surgery, in internal medicine, in obstetrics. In the institutions, they become "psychiatrists." There are blessed exceptions among the doctors, but they are helpless against the all-pervading atmosphere of sadism and neglect.

And here, perhaps, is the time and place to state reasons. I would list them as follows: (1) The prevailing attitude towards mental illness is still medieval. (2) A person committed has few legal rights in theory, none in practice. (3) For the past decade or so, we have been living in a state of complacency on the subject, induced by the diligent whitewashing activities of writers like Edith Stern and Marie Ray—a complacency that Albert Deutsch, Ellen Philtine and a few other crusaders are at last trying to pierce. (4) American organized medicine has become a tightly-knit monopoly, deliberately creating and maintaining a shortage of doctors, and this monopoly is at liberty to do its worst in the mental hospitals, where no patient may change his doctor, where the patient's very presence renders his word valueless, where a patient who complains can be tagged a paranoid. (5) The private sanatoria are frankly money-grubbers, offering higher standards only in food, not in medical care. (6) The Veterans'

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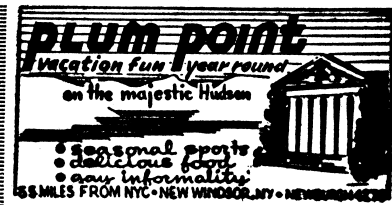
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Administration, having broken virtually all other promises to the veterans, feels no particular compunction about breaking its promise of adequate mental therapy.

Behind all these reasons stands the ultimate one—in an economic system where people outnumber jobs, human life and welfare are of little account.

Harold Maine is welcome to the ranks of the crusaders. His is an angry, relentless book. Ever since my release from a mental hospital, I have been hoping that someone would write a book like this.

SELDEN MURRAY.

## Walled In

THE NEON WILDERNESS, by Nelson Algren. Doubleday. \$2.50.

LIFE is mirrored darkly in Nelson Algren's collection of short stories. Algren has an undeniable and powerfully moving sympathy for the oppressed—but since man moves in a world of both light and shadow, the legitimacy of his unchanging sombre reflection is to be seriously questioned.

His slum people are drawn realistically from life—up to a point. But they are sealed in a circle of doom, in a circumscribed world where interaction with life is impossible, and they are left to churn about in fruitless struggle against their fate.

Even when they leave the slum, Algren's characters continue to be destroyed—often by themselves. Their new experiences net them nothing, struggle in no way elevates their consciousness, so that their lives are stripped of meaning. Typical is the story of Gino, a youthful South Side hot car artist, who rises to pursuit pilot during the war. As the result of childhood persecution Gino has waged an embittered lone-wolf war upon the rest of mankind. His new life cannot shake or in any way minutely alter his persecution complex. His last heroic act is thus reduced to a cynical gesture. Gino suicide—crashes into a Japanese cruiser because he "fancied he heard light mockery from the decks below . . . and the guns pointing like a jeer. Like that first time, so endlessly long ago, when the bigger boys had 'pointed on him'."

This, like any one of Algren's tales, might pass as truth, written as it is with tremendous talent and evocative mood of grim reality. Criticism here is not directed at Algren's artistic ability. Many pieces are handled with fine po-

etic feeling; and approach classic heights. "The Devil Comes Down Division Street" is Gorky-like with tough Chicago overtones. But the recurrence of self-destruction and futility shows that he is offering specific stories of despair as generalizations of life. That capitalist society grinds countless lives into despair is indisputable—but the same corrosive sharpens the minds of others, makes them participants in the fight for better life. Witness trade unionists; the Negro people. Witness writers like Jack London, who brought out of a bitter proletarian life the burning will to battle for workers' rights—and whose books inspired many Americans in that fight.

In Algren's book, his sympathy for the oppressed is canceled out by his static view of life as an unchanging entity. What price sympathy if no change is possible?

Only one of Algren's people wins his battle against an oppressive life. Interestingly, his triumph is through escape. He is an AWOL Negro soldier who flees with his Algerian girl to the native life in Africa, "the lion-colored hills of home." But actually, this "triumph" is a symbol of defeat for the Negro people, since it implies their complete alienation from the American people and their common struggle.

Admittedly it is a massive task for the writer of today, viewing the rise of reaction, to continue searching for light. It is much easier to react and write despairingly. Such writers are often hailed by the bourgeoisie—whose cause they now serve—as great champions of truth. But truth is the essence of things. Despair, since it represents only a fragment of man, cannot be his essence. Nor is blind hope. Man is of and by the world he lives in, is changed by it, and has the power to change it.

The "neon wilderness" of which Algren writes is part of that world, but he underestimates the potentialities of the people living in its shadows.

ALAN STOLTSMAN.

## Books Received

USSR: A CONCISE HANDBOOK, edited by Ernest J. Simmons. Cornell University Press. \$4.50. One of the best English reference texts on the Soviet Union. Prepared originally for the *Encyclopedia Americana*, it has now been published as a separate book with authoritative contributions by such experts as Corliss Lamont, Harriet L. Moore, Vladimir D. Kazakevich, Sergei Kournakoff, Henry Sigerist, Rose Maurer, Ernest C. Ropes, John Somerville, Louis

Lozowick and several others. Its subject matter includes sections on Soviet geography, government, diplomatic relations, medicine and health, agricultural development, communications, industry, culture, as well as a summary of the USSR in the Second World War. The book jacket serves as a useful map of the country.

BEST PLAYS OF THE MODERN AMERICAN DRAMA, *second series, edited by John Gassner. Crown Publishers.* \$3.50. Mr. Gassner gathered the plays for his first collection of modern American drama from the productions of the 1929-1939 decade. His companion volume draws from the productions of the succeeding eight years. It includes *The Glass Menagerie*, by Tennessee Williams; *The Time of Your Life*, by William Saroyan; *I Remember Mama*, by Van Druten; *Life with Father*, by Lindsay and Crouse; *Born Yesterday*, by Garson Kanin; *The Voice of the Turtle*, by Van Druten; *The Male Animal*, by Thurber and Nugent; *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, by Hart and Kauffman; *Dream Girl*, by Elmer Rice; *Arsenic and Old Lace*, by Kesselring; *The Hasty Heart*, by John Patrick; *Home Of The Brave*, by Arthur Laurents; *Tomorrow The World*, by Gow and D'Usseau; *Watch On the Rhine*, by Lillian Hellman; *The Patriots*, by Sidney Kingsley, and *Abe Lincoln In Illinois*, by Robert Sherwood. On the whole this is not a selection one can quarrel with. And the preface and comments of the editor, who is, perhaps, the soundest of American writers on the theater, are perceptive and informative and add much to the value of the compilation.

AMERICANS ONE AND ALL, *edited by Harry Shaw and Ruth Davis. Harper.* \$3.50. An anthology of short stories the heroes of which are members of different racial and religious groups in the United States. There are stories by Stephen Vincent Benet, Paul Green, Willa Cather, Ruth Suckow, Benjamin Appel, Sinclair Lewis and others.

THERE IS A TYRANT IN EVERY COUNTRY, *by Gilbert Nieman. Harcourt, Brace.* \$3. A novel about Mexico. The title promises more than the book delivers.

THREE WAYS TO MECCA, *by Edwin Corle. Duell, Sloan & Pearce.* \$3. Another novel.

HORACE GREELEY AND THE REPUBLICAN PARTY, *by Jeter A. Isley. Princeton University Press.* \$4.50. Mr. Isley traces Greeley's influence as editor of the New York Tribune, from the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill to the first battle of Bull Run.

ARMENIA REBORN, *by Charles A. Vertanes. The Armenian National Council of America, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York City.* \$3. A valuable document, clearly and simply written, on the Armenian people's struggles and the achievements of the Armenian Republic of the Soviet Union. Important also for the light it throws on another aspect of Near Eastern problems.

## The Judge

(Continued from page 16)

line of Judge Holtzoff. "You have here different political and ideological views," he said. He didn't see how you could get a judge to sit in the case who—but here he was interrupted by Justice Edgerton, who reminded him that Rogge's affidavit told of Holtzoff's part in shaping FBI policy on the JAFRC case.

"This charge is not that of engaging in Communist activities," said Murray. "The only criminal charge is failure to produce books."

"But what was the committee's investigation?" smiled Justice Prettyman, wobbling a forefinger at the prosecutor.

"Subversive activities," the prosecutor mumbled.

"And what was the Department of Justice's investigation?"

"Subversive activities," he replied in the same monotone.

"You can't omit the fact of the Congressional investigation," said Justice Prettyman. "It was the same subject matter and people the Department of Justice was investigating." Thus Holtzoff's connection with the FBI was a matter of interest.

When a recess was called it still was not certain that the Department of Justice specialist in such matters would not be the judge in the case. In the corridors, capitalist press reporters frankly praised Rogge's presentation in glowing terms. But a woman defendant said to someone: "They're interested. But it doesn't mean a thing."

"Your saying that Judge Holtzoff would in all probability be the trial judge and Rogge should have known that puzzles me," one justice said after the recess to Murray, who claimed Rogge did not file in time. Another justice chimed in, "I don't understand. Holtzoff was specially assigned, you said, yet there was no public knowledge of it." It was then that the prosecutor said helplessly, "This was an involved case." Shortly after that came the ruling that Holtzoff should have removed himself, that he was prohibited from continuing in the trial. "It became then his duty . . . to take himself out of the case." The ruling stuck. Holtzoff's motion for a rehearing was denied. The men and women whose "crime" is that they extended relief to Republicans who fought Franco crowded happily around the broadly smiling Rogge. "It's worth all we've been through," said one.

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