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# No. 1 The Fight

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### With the Readers

THERE is one thing about all these set-downs that has us completely flabbergasted. In fact, we are like Rodin's Thinker. We sit all day, chin in palm, thinking and thinking. In fact, it is Mister Mussolini's thought, our thoughts are so revolutionary, we would be swallowing gallons of castor oil.

WELL, our thoughts, friends, run something like this. We imagine ourselves a worker in Detroit, or Anderson, Indiana, or Cleveland, Ohio. We have worked in that plant for a little over twenty years. For over twenty years now, we leave our house promptly at 6:40 (except during lay-offs and there are plenty of them) and at seven we are part of the bit.

FOR over twenty years we have been part of that belt. We know that belt. We know every part and parcel of that belt.

I AM telling you, I, John Chace, know that belt. I am telling you, I know that belt, as I know my wife and four kids. That belt is part of me. That belt is my life.

WE remember during the War and many times since, the production manager and other bosses would call us together and make speeches. In fact, only last summer, we recall such a speech. Those speeches have sunk deep into us. They sounded so natural. Thousands of us would stand listening to those speeches about "our plant," "our plant." This was a joint enterprise, they told us. We were building this great institution for ourselves. This was ours, they said.

I, JOHN CHACE, live as much in the plant, at the belt, as I do in my home. Three of my four kids were born when I was at the belt. When my only sister was married, I hurried from the belt to the wedding. When my brother died, I was at the belt. I am telling you, that belt is my life.

FOR over twenty years we have passed through the same gate at 6:50 in the morning. Occasionally a new young fellow at our side would murmur to himself, "the bastards, the bastards." We never paid much attention to those young fellows. But throughout the plant we would hear men whisper about the new machinists in one of "them" buildings. There were always whispers in the plant. We never paid much attention to the young fellows and the whisperers.

NOW we are out on strike. We are sit-down strikers. We read the papers. They tell us this is illegal. They tell us about the sacredness of "private property." The plant is no longer "ours." We are no longer part of the plant. We have no rights. We never worked here. We never built this. Now it turns out that our jobs and the belt are only theirs.

I AM telling you, that I, John Chace, and my kind are part of that belt. We built that belt. We know every part of that belt. That belt is our life. I, John Chace, say that that belt is my wife and my kids.

WELL, friends, you can't really expect us to be Rodin's Thinker with chin in palm for very long. Our palm is tired and our chin is pining for a little exercise of the jaw. We ask you, with spring right in our midst, did the great desire ever come over you to give a swift kick in the pants to our sanctimonious editorial writers?



Young Basque Loyalist defenders in San Sebastian, Spain

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JOSEPH PASS, Editor

The Fight Against War and Fascism, published monthly by the National Executive Committee of the American League Against War and Fascism, 268 Fourth Avenue, New York, N. Y. Chairman, Harry F. Ward; Vice-Chairmen, Robert Mervin Lovett, Mrs. Victor L. Berger, Earl Browder, Max S. Hayes, Jacob Mirsky; Treasurer, William P. Mansfield; Secretarial Staff: Executive, Paul Reid; Administration, Clara Bodian; Education, Robert K. Spear; Publications and Publicity, Frank E. Blumenthal; Youth, James Lerner; Women, Dorothy McConnell; Trade Union, John Masso; Religious, Rev. Herman F. Reising; Single Copies, 10 cents. Yearly subscription, \$1.00. Six-month subscription, 55 cents. Canada and Foreign, \$1.50 a year. Entered as Second-Class matter, February 20, 1935, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879.

### The Contributors

LESTER B. GRANGER, who opens this number with an excellent factual story on the Negro worker, is Secretary, Worker's Bureau of the National Urban League, an organization devoted to social service among Negroes.

H. C. ENGELBRECHT scarcely needs any introduction to socially minded and alert Americans. Mr. Engelbrecht's *Mercenaries of Death* will be remembered for a long time and for that reason, if for no other, we are looking forward impatiently to his next book, *The Keys Against War*, slated for fall publication. Mr. Engelbrecht is editor of *Norontar News Service* and a World Events.

SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER, author of *Summer If I Show, Mr. Fortune's Magnet, Lolly Wallowe*, etc., etc., sent us the short story on Spain from London. She had recently been to that war-torn country where she had seen and heard things only as Miss Warner can see and hear things.

MAINE SEEBINDER, who illustrated Miss Warner's story, is what we call a "find," and we don't often find "finds." The artist has out of Portland, Oregon, and this is her first contribution to our pages.

WILLIAM N. JONES is editor of the *Baltimore Afro-American* and to our way of thinking the best editor of the best Negro newspaper in America.

OSCAR AMERINGER, of the *American Guardian*, contributes here the third chapter of his autobiography. It may interest our readers to know that we have recently received a letter from Sylvia Townsend Warner, saying: "If you have the opportunity, will you please tell Mr. Ameringer how much I appreciated his *Feeling for Glory*. I think it is very valuable to have this kind of light-hearted satirical propaganda. We are too apt to march to drums."

CARROLL NORLING, who writes on Iowa, was born in that state and lives there now. He is connected with the *Midwest Literary League* and is one of the editors at *Hatefield*.

WILL BARNETT is a painter and lithographer out of New England. He has had his work on exhibition in New York City and other centers throughout the country.

LANGSTON HUGHES, who has recently been devoting his time to play writing, is the author of *Dear Lonely Death, Dream Keeper, Ways of White Folk*, etc., etc. To find a good humorous story is difficult for any publication and doubly difficult for THE FIGHT. But we think Mr. Hughes has done the job.

E. P. GREENE writes on Czechoslovakia and we better keep an eye on that country. Our dear friend, Mr. Hitler, covets that land and would like to put his gentle claws on it.

WILLIAM GROPPER made the cover of the remarkable exhibition of paintings and water colors (Spain was the subject) which he held recently in New York. Mr. Gropper has also recently received the Guggenheim award as well as the commission to do the biggest and most important mural for the government in Washington, D. C.

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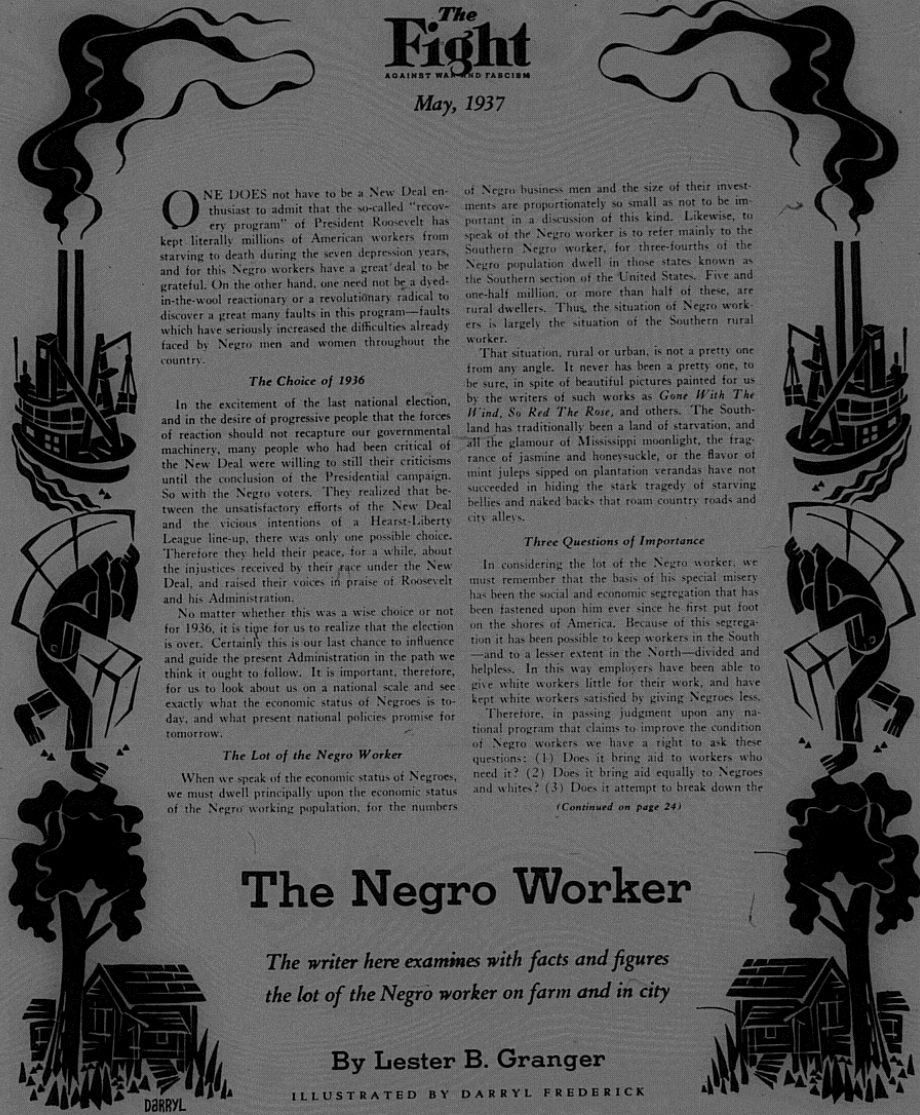
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AGAINST WAR AND FASCISM  
May, 1937



ONE DOES not have to be a New Deal en-  
thusiast to admit that the so-called "recov-  
ery program" of President Roosevelt has  
kept literally millions of American workers from  
starving to death during the seven depression years,  
and for this Negro workers have a great deal to be  
grateful. On the other hand, one need not be a dyed-  
in-the-wool reactionary or a revolutionary radical to  
discover a great many faults in this program—faults  
which have seriously increased the difficulties already  
faced by Negro men and women throughout the  
country.

*The Choice of 1936*

In the excitement of the last national election,  
and in the desire of progressive people that the forces  
of reaction should not recapture our governmental  
machinery, many people who had been critical of  
the New Deal were willing to still their criticisms  
until the conclusion of the Presidential campaign.  
So with the Negro voters. They realized that be-  
tween the unsatisfactory efforts of the New Deal  
and the vicious intentions of a Hearst-Liberty  
League line-up, there was only one possible choice.  
Therefore they held their peace, for a while, about  
the injustices received by their race under the New  
Deal, and raised their voices in praise of Roosevelt  
and his Administration.

No matter whether this was a wise choice or not  
for 1936, it is time for us to realize that the election  
is over. Certainly this is our last chance to influence  
and guide the present Administration in the path we  
think it ought to follow. It is important, therefore,  
for us to look about us on a national scale and see  
exactly what the economic status of Negroes is to-  
day, and what present national policies promise for  
tomorrow.

*The Lot of the Negro Worker*

When we speak of the economic status of Negroes,  
we must dwell principally upon the economic status  
of the Negro working population, for the numbers

of Negro business men and the size of their invest-  
ments are proportionately so small as not to be im-  
portant in a discussion of this kind. Likewise, to  
speak of the Negro worker is to refer mainly to the  
Southern Negro worker, for three-fourths of the  
Negro population dwell in those states known as  
the Southern section of the United States. Five and  
one-half million, or more than half of these, are  
rural dwellers. Thus, the situation of Negro work-  
ers is largely the situation of the Southern rural  
worker.

That situation, rural or urban, is not a pretty one  
from any angle. It never has been a pretty one, to  
be sure, in spite of beautiful pictures painted for us  
by the writers of such works as *Gone With The  
Wind*, *So Red The Rose*, and others. The South-  
land has traditionally been a land of starvation, and  
all the glamour of Mississippi moonlight, the frag-  
rance of jasmine and honeysuckle, or the flavor of  
mint juleps sipped on plantation verandas have not  
succeeded in hiding the stark tragedy of starving  
bellies and naked backs that roam country roads and  
city alleys.

*Three Questions of Importance*

In considering the lot of the Negro worker, we  
must remember that the basis of his special misery  
has been the social and economic segregation that has  
been fastened upon him ever since he first put foot  
on the shores of America. Because of this segrega-  
tion it has been possible to keep workers in the South  
—and to a lesser extent in the North—divided and  
helpless. In this way employers have been able to  
give white workers little for their work, and have  
kept white workers satisfied by giving Negroes less.

Therefore, in passing judgment upon any na-  
tional program that claims to improve the condition  
of Negro workers we have a right to ask these  
questions: (1) Does it bring aid to workers who  
need it? (2) Does it bring aid equally to Negroes  
and whites? (3) Does it attempt to break down the

(Continued on page 24)

**The Negro Worker**

*The writer here examines with facts and figures  
the lot of the Negro worker on farm and in city*

**By Lester B. Granger**

ILLUSTRATED BY DARRYL FREDERICK

THE FIGHT, May 1937

# Armament Madness

Billions and more billions of dollars poured into armaments and the outstanding feature of this mad race is the unashamed profiteering of the arms makers

By H. C. Engelbrecht

EVERY country in the world has joined the armament race, except little Luxembourg. The Grand Duchy has a volunteer army of 176 men and a small supply of obsolete arms. Its frontiers are unfortified and it has definitely refused to build its own Maginot Line. There was even some kind of a government crisis when a demand was made to add some more horses to its army.

Happy Luxembourg! No taxes for past wars, no taxes for future wars! By contrast the rest of the world is a madhouse. Armament expenditures rose from \$4,000,000,000 in 1931 to \$9,000,000,000 in 1935 and almost \$11,000,000,000 in 1936. Moreover, several countries have projected four-year programs which run their arms outlay into astronomical figures.

All this will have to be paid for. This is not a very cheerful thought, since we have only just begun to pay for the last war. It is estimated that the 1917 plunge into the whirlpool will cost this country alone \$100,000,000,000 before it is paid for—perhaps in another hundred years.

It is well to remember, further, that these official figures do not by any means include all military expenditures. In Europe, provincial budgets frequently contain items covering fortifications or air bases. Nor is there included the interest on war debts, pensions, soldiers' bonuses, hospitalization of veterans, subsidies for merchant marines and air lines which are always justified for reasons of national defense. As a curious sidelight, it is worth noting that the Italian figures for the last two years do not include the cost of the Ethiopian campaign which is still in process.

The outstanding feature of this mad armament race is the open and unashamed profiteering of the arms mak-

ers. The British Admiral, Lord Wemyss, once remarked about the "moral objections to the present system, which makes warfare a direct occasion of private gain." The same objection holds in regard to the preparation for war. The so-called "national emergency," the crisis which demands frantic rearming in order to save the nation, is nothing but a heaven-sent opportunity for profiteering for the war contractors.

## Armament Profiteering

There are various ways by which this profiteering may be studied. One is by an examination of stock prices over a period of years. Everywhere there has been a notable rise in quotations. Some of this may be due to the general economic advance made in recent years, but most of it is due to armament orders. *Reynolds' Illustrated News*, a British publication, contained the following analysis of British arms companies showing the gain made in a single year:

| Company       | February 1935 | February 1936 |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| John Brown    | 4 3/4         | 4 1/2         |
| Cammell Laird | 3 0           | 1 4/9         |
| Halsfield     | 3 0           | 1 5/6         |
| Vickers       | 9 6           | 1 7/4         |
| De Havilland  | 2 15/9        | 4 1/3         |
| Rolls Royce   | 5 8/0         | 9 10/0        |

A similar tabulation could easily be made for every great country—with the same results.

Another method of approach is the analysis of the increasing profits of the arms firms and their growing dividend payments. A few illustrations must suffice. Vickers, greatest British munitions company, not only increased its dividend payments from 6 to 8 per cent, but it gave to its shareholders a bonus of \$40,000,000. Bethlehem Steel's profits rose from \$550,000 in 1934 to

\$4,291,000 in 1935. Montecatini in Italy, which manufactured explosives and poison gas for the Ethiopian war, declared a dividend of 67,425,000 lire and in addition gave to each stockholder one free share for every six owned. The Fabrique Nationale d'Armes de Guerre of Belgium increased its dividends from 3,751,000 francs to 10,050,000 francs in a single year. Les Explosifs Cheddites in France announced a dividend of 1,768,000 francs plus a bonus of 100 francs per share. Krupp, the German cannon king, advanced in net profits from \$4,135,000 to \$5,760,000 in a single year. The gross profits of this firm rose from \$20,000,000 to \$115,000,000 in the same period.

## Contract Leaks

The same story wherever you care to look. And when governments are asked whether they intend to do something about this profiteering and whether it would not be wiser and cheaper to nationalize or conscript the arms firms in times of peace, as well as war, they merely shrug their shoulders in helpless resignation. Only the French have moved to nationalize their munitions companies. "The others do not even propose to do this in time of war," Stanley Baldwin, in England, deplored the profiteering in war time, but as for conscription of the companies, "he did not believe that the method suggested was practicable."

Instead of curbing or eliminating profiteering, governments have played hand in glove with the arms companies. In this country, for instance, the Nye Committee revealed that long before huge sums were allotted to the Navy from PWA funds, the various arms companies had already divided the contracts among themselves, each taking what it wanted. In Britain there was

a similar "leak" in regard to the government's plans for rearmament. The Tories had promised the country time after time that there was no intention of greatly increasing the arms budgets. But when the election was over, they laid their plans in secret in order to "make good the deficiencies in the defense forces of the Crown." Two months before these plans were made public, they were known to the leading industrialists, and any school child can guess what such advance information is worth to one "in the know."

## A Racket in Patriotism

In this country there are several instances of profiteering which our press has hardly mentioned. One of these concerns the aircraft makers, a matter which Congressman W. D. McFarlane has covered in a special report. This document charges that the "air trust" has not only kept the U. S. air forces pretty well at the bottom rank, in spite of enormous expenditures, but that it reaps rich profits from this patriotic work. Much of this is hidden in consolidated income tax returns and through holding companies. Still, it has actually happened that one company sold 50 planes to the Army at \$1 apiece, because its profits had been too high. Counting the cost of one plane at \$6,000, which is rather low, the company itself acknowledges excess profits of \$300,000 on 50 planes. Even after that, this company recorded a profit of 25 per cent—on 50 planes.

In January of this year, the press reported that Secretary of the Navy Swanson was outraged over the bids submitted for the construction of a floating drydock at Pearl Harbor. Private companies asked \$21,000,000 for the job while the Navy could build it for \$12,000,000. As for cruiser building, three government bureaus have

estimated that the government could save about \$2,000,000 per ship, if it did the work itself.

Nothing more significant on the attitude of the arms companies has come to light recently than the report of Drew Pearson on British rearmament. For a time, there was a great slowing-up of the entire British program. All kinds of reasons were advanced in explanation. The real reason was that the British industrialists insisted on 15 per cent profits on arms orders.

In spite of all the indignation expended on World War profiteering, the situation remains unchanged today. The arms business continues to be, at least in part, a racket in patriotism.

## Defense Frauds

An extremely interesting phenomenon in the present armament ramp is the persistent attempt of various groups to benefit together with the munitions makers. There are, for instance, the gas mask manufacturers. The mere fact that these industrialists exist and flourish is an eloquent commentary on international honor and morality. For the use of poison gas in war is solemnly banned by an agreement to which most nations have subscribed. Yet every Great Power is ready to unleash lethal gases and is absolutely certain that the other nation will do likewise. What is worse, they are probably both right.

Now if there were protection for the civilian population by gas masks, every man, woman and child ought to have his gas mask handy. But any child today knows that there are war gases which are not breathed in, but which are absorbed by the skin. Furthermore, a cheap gas mask offers very little protection and that only for a short period of time. The lowest price for a good gas mask today is about \$20. Moreover, there are many people who cannot wear

gas masks, such as children, asthmatics, the tubercular, and others. These must be evacuated from metropolitan areas. Finally, the attack from the air will be a combination of poison gas, high explosive bombs and incendiary bombs, the latter two probably worse than the first.

Yet almost everywhere there is a drive to equip the civilian population with cheap gas masks. Scientists, especially in England, have repeatedly denounced this campaign as a fraud and a bluff, calculated to keep up morale by promises of security. In England, the government is encouraging the gas mask campaign by tests at which the masks are tried on, by demonstrations in a chamber filled with tear gas in vans which go out into byways, by drills in the schools, and other means. The manufacturers are adding in every way they can—and are profiting handsomely on the side. One can only hope that this "protection" is never put to a serious test by mustard gas and arsenical smokes, which would show it up for the fraud that it really is.

In Denmark this search for protection against death from the air developed into a full-fledged racket. An Air Defense Society was organized which carried on extensive propaganda about the need for gas masks, bombproof cement shelters, and anti-aircraft guns. Suspicious of such patriotic altruism, the Danes put this society under the microscope and they found exactly what might be expected. Its organizers and leaders were members of the cement trust, a gas mask manufacturer ("absolutely gas proof"), a machine gun manufacturer, and similar gentry. Beware of the Greeks bringing gifts in the form of "air defense!"

What this mad arms race means for the people in various countries is only too evident. An ever-increasing portion of the national income is devoted to

armaments. Economically, this is pure waste. "The manufacture of arms," said Harold Butler of the International Labor Office, "adds nothing to national wealth. As a form of national expenditure it is sterile and unproductive. In so far as industrial prosperity is founded on warlike preparations, it is not only sinister but hollow and unreal."

## Butter into Guns

Nowhere is this more evident just now than in Germany. Raw materials for armaments are badly needed, and many of these are not available in that country, but must be purchased abroad. Since Germany virtually has no gold reserve, her international balance of trade must cover these imports. But Germany also needs wheat due to a bad harvest, together with fats and butter and other items of necessity and convenience from abroad. It has actually come to a choice between food and arms raw materials, and General Goering solved the problem with his usual brutal frankness. "Germany," he said, "has insured, through her rearmament, that in international affairs she will again be properly heard. Metal makes an empire strong; butter only makes people fat. Either they buy butter and go without freedom (sic!), or they achieve freedom and go without butter. We have decided for iron and steel as the cause of the butter shortage."

In Italy the situation is not much better. The Italian standard of living is the lowest of any great country in Europe. Mussolini himself was reported some time ago as saying that it is fortunate that the people had never learned to eat three meals a day. Now with the Ethiopian war, the inter-ference in the Spanish war, the vainglorious pretense of keeping up with the British in armaments, many Italians are pulling their belts tighter and tight-

er and are trying to live on the intoxication of militarism and imperialism.

## More Sacrifices for Arms

Another excellent illustration of the disastrous effects of armament expenditures is that of the Philippine Islands. Here an ambitious President, flanked by a glorified American general, worked out plans for a conscript army numbering 1,200,000 within ten years. The necessary war machines were also to be provided and a standing army was likewise included. Meanwhile, there was great misery on the Islands and much discontent due to economic distress. Schools were pitifully inadequate and taxes constantly rising. Fortunately, the Washington authorities, prodded by the peace forces, put a damper on these fantastic schemes.

In the wealthier countries this diversion of national energies to armament production has also had its effects. School budgets have been curtailed, unemployment relief funds have been drastically cut, bridges and national road systems have been "postponed indefinitely," new air routes, long since planned, have not been opened, the manufacture of new rolling stock for railroads has been delayed. More serious than that is the widespread decline in the standard of living and the sharp increase in national debts.

## A Welsh Protest

Two other stories worth telling show what unexpected by-products have resulted from these rearmament programs. One of these concerns the impetus which was given to Welsh nationalism. Without making inquiries as to the wishes of the people, the British War Office planned a number of air bases with their training schools for Wales. One of these was to be located on Llyn Peninsula, which has always

(Continued on page 29)

Arms! Arms!! Arms!!! (From left to right) In Nazi Germany, long lines of armored cars driving past the Garrison Church at Potsdam. In London, warning the public of a gas attack. In Fascist Italy, this long line of baby tanks on the way to army maneuvers. In Tokyo, haunting an imaginary air enemy

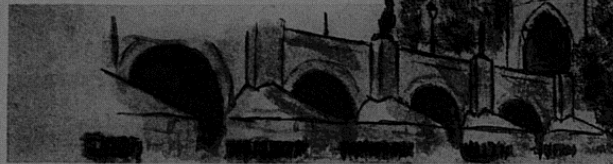


# Czechoslovakia

By E. P. Greene

ILLUSTRATED BY WILLIAM WESTLEY

There is today in the old land of Bohemia a young republic. After three hundred years of Austrian rule Bohemia had won its independence. But once again rises the spectre of foreign invasion. Berlin-Warsaw-Vienna. A triangle in politics



HIGH ABOVE the old city of Prague rise the grim walls of the Hradcany. This dark pile, for centuries palace and seat of the kings of Bohemia, symbolizes the power against which for generations the people of Bohemia have fought. No people of Europe possess longer, more heroic traditions of unending struggle against alien despotism, struggle for liberation from foreign yoke. In the 13th century Bohemia was one of the great powers of feudal Europe. Southward to the blue Adriatic extended the wide domains of King Ottokar II. But with his death in 1278 at the hands of Rudolf of Hapsburg began a struggle of the people to maintain the independence of their country, a struggle waged almost continuously until the fatal year 1620. Under King Charles of Luxemburg in the 14th century Prague became capital city of Bohemia and cultural center of Europe. Commenced a long period of darkness, broken by the flash and thunder of civil war. Ominous prelude to that long combat, waged by the people against the reactionary Hapsburgs of Austria and the Catholic Church which supported them, was the burning for heresy in 1415 of John Huss. Against these powers the followers of Huss fought with arms in hand, from 1415 to 1436. Though the Hapsburgs succeeded in placing their candidate on the throne, so unsteady, so insecure was his position that he dared not bring Bohemia under open Austrian domination. Stripping the Hapsburg King Ferdinand of much power, the Diet of Prague, in 1547, passed a sweeping law, granted wide democratic rights to the people. Fearful and sullen sat the king in the Hradcany. From weak

King Rudolf II was wrested in 1609 the Royal Charter, extending and reinforcing those liberties. In 1618 came the famous incident known to history as the Defenestration of Prague. From the window of the Council Chamber, seventy feet, were thrown two governors of the Council, notorious supporters of the Hapsburgs, by the infuriated citizens of Prague who burst into the room. This was the spark that ignited the Thirty Years' War, turned Europe into shambles and desolation. But at the Battle of the White Mountain in 1620 the army of Bohemia was crushed, the land lost its independence, became incorporated in the Austrian Empire.

Three hundred long and bitter years Bohemia groaned under the foreign Hapsburg heel. Into poverty and degradation unparalleled in western Europe the peasantry were forced. Two-thirds of all the land was in the grip of the new masters of the country, the Austrian feudal lords, proud successors to the Bohemian nobles whose estates had embraced but one-third. Officially banned, the Czech language became the despised tongue of the peasants; the masters conversed only in German. Huge taxes, mass misery, starvation, reduced the population by half, and brought in the 18th century peasant risings on all sides. Over Bohemia like a searing fire swept the Revolution of 1848. In Prague they fought for days on the barricades. Came in 1914 the World War, and collapse of the Central Powers. On October 18th, 1918, was proclaimed the Republic of Czechoslovakia. After three hundred years of Austrian rule Bohemia had won its independence.

In the Hradcany today sits the government of the

Republic. But once again rises the spectre of foreign invasion, once more appears a threat to the independence of the country. Not clothed in the ermines of the Hapsburgs, not bearing on his head the Imperial Crown, is this enemy. More à la mode for this year of 1937, he wears the Brown Shirt, carries in bloody hand the whip. Not from the south does he look but from the north, over the Erzgebirge. His generals, in field-grey uniform, are even now drawing up the final plans for the campaign. Within Czechoslovakia his agents plot. His shadow, like a black cloud, covers Central Europe. He has revived the Pan-German dream of Mittel-Europa.

Berlin-Warsaw-Vienna. Enclosed within this triangle is the very heart of Mittel-Europa. Said Bismarck once: "Who holds this triangle holds Europe." At its center, midway between Baltic and Adriatic, lies Prague. With the line Prague-Paris as radius, with Prague as center, describe a circle. Through Paris, through Rome, through Bucharest will pass the circumference. Thus Prague is seen to be center, pivot, geometric point of the axis of Europe; it becomes the point toward which are now drawn with irresistible attraction the eyes of Fascist aggressors, avid for conquest, and becomes too the barometer of restless Europe in flux. Violation of the independence of Czechoslovakia would almost certainly be immediate prelude to world war.

## Czech Industry and Agriculture

Not alone for its strategic importance does Hitler covet this small country. Chief industrial region of the tottering Austro-Hungarian Empire before 1914 was Bohemia, and also one of the richest and most productive agricultural districts of Europe. Rapidly increased is the pace, since 1918, of industrialization. Powerful factor in Europe has been the new heavy industry of Czechoslovakia, fed by coal from the great fields of Ostrava-Karviná, Kladno, Písek, and iron ore from Sweden. In Pilsen, famous city of beer, rise the smoking chimneys of the Skoda Works, greatest armament plant of Central Europe. Sugar, textiles, glass, porcelain, flow in an increasing stream to the world market. From the forests, which cover one-third of the country, comes the best timber of Western Europe. Greatly increased is agricultural productivity since 1924, when the large estates of the former Austrian aristocracy were sequestered. In the decade from 1924 to 1934 over ten million acres of land were partitioned.

Before the World War, it was the policy of the Austro-Hungarian government to focus on Vienna and Budapest the commerce of Bohemia. As result, Prague, although the political capital, was isolated and played a relatively minor economic rôle. Through the Austrian policy and the peculiar geographic features of the country, the provincial capitals of Bohemia came to dominate the commerce, to draw the economic life. Even today the people of Ruthenia and Slovakia look southward for their market. This situation the Republic has attempted to change, and it has built a series of railroads calculated to enhance the economic importance of Prague. But the

fact that Czechoslovakia extends from east to west 600 miles, from north to south a mere 75, makes this a task of extreme difficulty.

## A Peace-Loving Republic

To war in 1914 marched the Czech regiments, singing: "My red scarf waves in the breeze. Against Russia I march, I know not why!" No troops more solidly against the war. Regiment after regiment mutinied, was disbanded by the Austrian government. Greatest comic epic of the World War is *Good Soldier Schweik*, by Czech author Hasek, in which are ruthlessly laid bare for all posterity the degeneracy, stupidity, brutality, inefficiency of Austrian militarism. In Switzerland and France a professor and a student of philosophy, Masaryk and Benes, worked ceaselessly to obtain help from the Allies. Of the four chief founders of the Republic, they alone remain. Stefanik, once general in the French Army, organizer of the armed forces of Czechoslovakia, crashed in a flaming plane. Rasín, restorer of the country's finances, fell before the bullet of an assassin. Masaryk, President of the Republic from 1918 to 1935, has retired. Benes, today the only outstanding statesman of Western Europe, has succeeded him and holds the reins of power. Foreign Minister of the Republic for many years, he has been from its inception the moving spirit of the Little Entente, has been a firm advocate of the maintenance of peace in Europe. Organized in 1921, with the help of France, to uphold the *status quo* in Europe, the Little Entente has since 1933 been weakened by pressure on the part of Nazi Germany, into whose orbit are moving Yugoslavia and Roumania. Titulescu, Foreign Minister of Roumania, was forced out of office by King Carol and the pro-German court clique. Only Czechoslovakia remains firm in its efforts to render the Little Entente a weapon of defense against Hitler. In 1935 Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union signed a Treaty of Mutual Assistance. At once German staff officers, attended by spectacular publicity, held conversations with Polish and Hungarian officials. Raged the German government: "If the Bolsheviks are planning to use Czechoslovakia as a corridor for the Red Army, we shall use Poland and Hungary as our field of deployment."

## Hitler's Agents

The Republic of Czechoslovakia, which consists of Bohemia, Moravia, Slovakia, parts of Silesia and Ruthenia, contains within its borders 3,500,000 Germans out of a total population of 15,000,000. In 1930 Konrad Henlein, agent of Hitler, Honorary Member of the German National Socialist Party, organized the National Socialist Party of Czechoslovakia, shouted for incorporation with the Reich. His party dissolved at the order of President Masaryk, Henlein, in 1934, formed the Sudeten German Homeland Front (S.H.F.). This formidable instrument of Fascist aggression today numbers in its ranks more than 150,000 organized and militarized members, well supplied with arms, watered by German funds, holding in virtual control one quarter of the country. In Germany, at Dresden, the S. H. F. maintains a training school and propaganda center, directed by Krebs, former deputy of the Czechoslovak Parliament, now member of the German Reichstag. On the border of Czechoslovakia, Germany is erecting two radio stations in an attempt to drown the Republic in a sea of Fascist propaganda. In Bohemia and Slovakia Henlein has organized Fascist "autonomist" movements, which demand "independence" from the Republic. Concrete evidence of the long arm of Hitler was ex-

hibited in 1935 when nine Nazi agents, arrested by the authorities, were placed on trial in Prague. Great the surprise when they admitted having conducted in Czechoslovakia espionage on a large scale, directed by the Gestapo from Annaberg, in Germany, and by Reichswehr officers.

At the elections of 1935 in Czechoslovakia, the German Homeland Front won a victory, had more delegates returned than any party, became the strongest force in Parliament. Now a powerful factor in politics, Henlein, in 1936, established a front of the most reactionary political parties—the S. H. F., the Czech Fascists, the Slovak Autonomists, and a section of the Czech Agrarian Party. As a result, Benes faces the greatest threat which his rule has yet encountered.

## Benes' Strategy

Sweeping concessions to the German minority have recently been offered by President Benes, Premier Hodza, Foreign Minister Kroha. Of all German parties only the S. H. F. refuses. Henlein cries in loud tones for "Völkische Autonomie," a demand which he is at extreme pains to render vague as possible, relaying the aspirations of his master in Berlin, who dreams of incorporating the German districts of Czechoslovakia into the Third Reich. This shrewd move of Benes has placed Henlein in a difficult situation, has isolated his movement, driven a wedge into the reactionary front, exposed before Europe and the world the sinister and villainous intrigues of Hitler's agents in Czechoslovakia.

Sole cradle of Democracy in all the lands of Central and South-eastern Europe, last barrier to the grandiose Fascist dream of a new Mittel-Europa, is Czechoslovakia. To no avill have been other dreams or offers of friendship from Berlin. It is in two quarters in the autumn of 1936, aims strong endeavors to force Czechoslovakia to renounce the treaty of alliance with France, signed in 1924, and the pact with the U. S. S. R. In September, M. Stojadinovich, Premier and Foreign Secretary of Yugoslavia, attempted the task without success. In October, King Carol of Roumania, Hohenzollern and comrade of Hitler, hero of a thousand blood-battles, proceeded to Prague, rode through the streets in state in gala uniform, posed graciously for the photographers, faded in his mission.

## Defense Against Nazi Aggression

Meanwhile Czechoslovakia prepares, builds fortifications along the German and Austrian borders, constructs air bases, plans an air force of 1,000 planes. "Bolshevik," hysterically cries Hitler to Benes. And General Von Reichenau, Commander of the Munich District of the German Army, informs his staff officers: "By March 15th, 1937, preparations for general mobilization must be sufficiently advanced to insure the effectiveness of a complete and absolute mobilization on any date following that day. It must be expected that general military mobilization will be required as support for a great action in the field of foreign politics by the *Führer*." Ominous words. For the special field of operations of the Munich District is Austria and Czechoslovakia.

The old, medieval city of Prague, capital of a modern and progressive state, has experienced for centuries the ruthless march of invading conquerors, cruel subjection under foreign despot. But a brave people who never submitted, preserved in darkness the flame of freedom, threw finally on the scrapheap of history the golden eagles of the House of Hapsburg, may send crashing into the dust the iron swastikas of Hitler.

# The Faggot and the Rope

By William N. Jones

THREE times in my own life I have had some very practical experiences with the American lynching system. The first time was when as a young man, fresh from school, I tried to assist an uncle, William Nesbitt, to figure out with a South Carolina plantation store manager how he was due more cash from the sale of the eight bales of cotton he had grown on his farm. Result: a pretty practical lesson in what you could not tell a white man in South Carolina.

Another instance came when I represented an insult to a young woman I was escorting, at a state fair in Columbia. Seven young white men, one of whom offered the insult, proceeded to put me in my place. The result: a mob fight and three permanent scars.

The other, and most lasting experience, was when my own mother told me of a girlhood occurrence on a South Carolina plantation, when the Ku Klux came and drove the family from their home after a white man had been presented by a grand jury on which her father had served. The home was burned, and my mother spent an anxious period huddled in some bushes in the woods.

Since that time I have been within looking distance of a mob in action in South Carolina, when I ventured to go along with a photographer from a Columbia (S. C.) newspaper to a place where the mob had caught a colored man. They were holding him while the governor, standing on a platform of rails thrown across the corner of a rail fence, pleaded with the mob to let the law take its course. They waited till the governor was through talking, and then strung him up and riddled his body with bullets.

In Memphis, Tennessee, I saw the severed head of a lynch victim which had been hurled by the lynchers from a car into a saloon on Beale Avenue. That particular lynching actually had been advertised and publicized in the daily papers, step by step, until a crowd of more than five thousand people was on hand to see it.

So, from first hand, I can say that the story of mob violence in America makes up one of the most bloody and deep-seated tragedies which have warped the Democracy of the Western Hemisphere.

The first thing one must realize about this evil, however, is that the term "lynching" cannot be narrowed to the classic hangings, burnings and riddling of bodies with bullets, which have dramatized it throughout the

world. These virulent outcroppings have been but the surface manifestations of the more deep-rooted disease from which thousands and thousands of other individuals have died by the same lynch law. But for the purposes of computation it is necessary to deal with these classic cases, as a basis of discussion.

## Lynch Statistics

Nor can lynchings be regarded as a racial or sectional problem, as a study of lynching figures will show. Race and geography have been incidental. In fact, behind all of the classic cases and, of course, the more subtle forms, has been the same economic background as the motivating stimulus.

In 1882, according to the most conservative figures, there were 65 whites and 49 colored people lynched in America. During the ten years following 1882, the proportion of white and colored lynchings varied but little, the recorded totals being 875 whites and 911 colored.

It is interesting to note that during this ten-year period the economic background of many white and colored workers was relatively the same. The colored workers were being "put into their places" on the farms and in lower brackets of industry, while white workers were meeting a stiff resistance

against budding labor organization movements.

When a study is made of lynching figures for the years between 1882 and the present, it is found that up to the peak year of 1892 when there were 100 recorded white and 155 colored lynchings, these followed the clearly outlined track of economic and political fluctuation in which white workers rose more rapidly in the scale and were able, in consequence, to offer stiffer resistance to mob rule.

So, from 1892 on, white lynchings have decreased; while until recently, when colored people commenced to stiffen their resistance, Negro lynchings have been on the increase.

Take a look at the annual figures, in these ten-year periods: 1882, 65 whites, 49 colored; 1892, 100 whites, 155 colored; 1902, 11 whites, 86 colored; 1912, 4 whites, 61 colored; 1922, 6 whites, 51 colored; 1930, 1 white, 20 colored. They tell their own story. Colored people have loomed more largely in the lynching records only because they formed a group more easily isolated for exploitation, and because they had less effective weapons at their command to react against it.

## Economic Forces

It must also be pointed out that the crime factor behind all these lynchings has been merely a subterfuge to halt economic changes and perpetuate exploitation by mob terror. Even the crime of rape, which has been such a stimulus to the lynch appetites in the South, has been an artificial creation of economic forces designed to preserve a well-defined breach which would pre-

vent organized cooperation of whites and colored people in the same economic brackets. Wherever this breach has been closed—as, for instance, between the white and colored sharecroppers in the South—lynch law wreaks its work on white and colored alike.

It is necessary, therefore, in arriving at the basic cause of lynching to go behind the inciting criminal charge, if any, and look for the economic or political motive. Whenever this is done, the general lynch formula will be found to be the combination of one dominant group endeavoring to exploit another, working sometimes through paid mobs and at other times through the shaping and directing of mob sentiment. For the Negro this formula breaks up into segregation, denial of the protective right to vote, prohibition of equal and just participation in the products of human toil, and the application of a color stigma designed to keep the subordinate group forever in a proscribed and exploited status for the benefit of capitalism.

From this angle, therefore, the whole American lynching question becomes for the colored citizen a problem within a problem. Since 1882 there have been 5,105 formal lynchings. Five states: Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont, have had no recorded formal lynchings. But these states have not been free from lynch terror.

Of the 4,761 formal lynchings recorded between 1882 and 1930, 3,386 were colored victims. It has been this preponderance of colored victims which has caused many colored leaders to regard the lynch fight as a colored fight; and to take the lead in efforts to stamp out the evil.

## American Fascism

It is hard to avoid the conclusion that the basic cause of lynching, in this country, is the American brand of world Fascism which seeks to keep groups of working people in a position,

socially and economically, where they can be exploited by force. It has special meaning for black men and women only because, by the color of their skin, they are more easily set apart and kept in the oppressed group. Incidentally their color, wherever Negroes are found in the world, likewise makes it easy to array people of another color against them in economic and social solidarity. This develops into what we generally call race prejudice.

Accepting this conclusion, it follows that it is the class of people in any country who are interested in keeping another group exploited which makes up the directing force behind the lynching bee. In Europe these people are the imperialists who enslave the natives, by terrorism, racial proscription, and bloody massacres such as those just perpetrated in Ethiopia by Mussolini. In America there are certain captains of industry who, by the control of public sentiment have kept a strangle grip on industry; have inflamed race antagonisms wherever they would keep white and colored workers apart; have used the slogan of states' rights when it would keep children chained to low-wage industry, and have advocated federal control where—as in the automobile sit-down strikes—they wanted to use the federal law machinery and troops as a lynch mob to beat strikers into submission. Naturally they have put the dirty work of formal lynchings and lawless mob terror into the hands of moronic, mentally warped, and misled whites—and sometimes misled blacks. But it has been their hidden hand which has prevented the enacting of any federal law which would bring lynchers to justice, just as it has been their hidden hand that has forestalled any federal law against child labor, or legislation to set up minimum wages, abolish Jim Crow practices, residential segregation, any other measure indeed that would tend to make this country a real Democracy.

With the sources of the lynching evil exposed, what then is the cure? The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has been carrying on a fight, for several years, to place on the statute books a bill which would empower the federal government to bring to justice and mete out punishment to lynchers, and at the same time compensate financially the families of the victims.

This fight, which has rested on the admitted fact that many states are not disposed to punish lynchers within their borders, has, I believe, had wide educational and publicity value and has done much to dramatize the evil of formal lynchings. Even with the efficiency and strength with which it has been pushed, however, the American Fascist forces have been powerful enough to keep the Congress from passing such a statute.

But supposing such a bill were passed, it would still be but one initial trench captured in the fight towards effectively stamping out lynchings. At best, this procedure offers only a palliative for the festering cancer of formal mob rule. The real disease will still be there to pump its virus into the life stream, and wreak its toll in other ways.

Lynchings in America can be wiped out only by wiping out the cause. The fight against the lynch system, therefore, must aim to wipe out the whole system of American group exploitation. It must clean out the germs of profit exploitation. For as long as there is group exploitation, the Negro is bound to be one of the groups exploited.

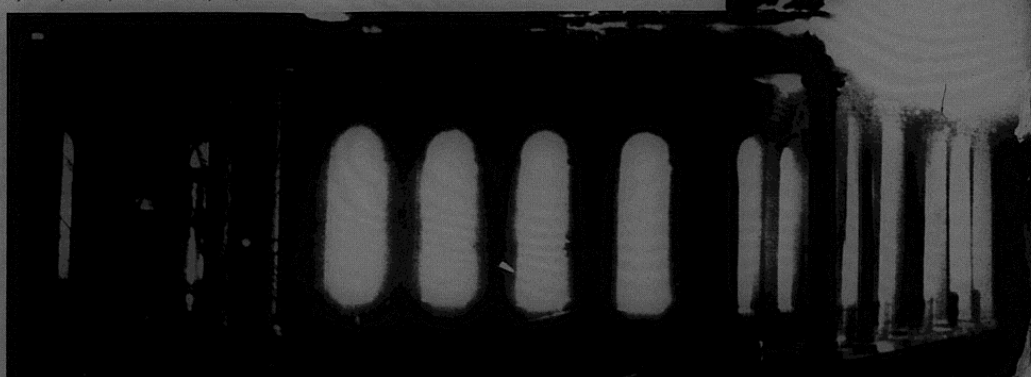
(Continued on page 29)

The editor of a Negro newspaper writes from his own personal experience and knowledge of America's curse—lynching . . . and presents a solution

Fear! Fear!! Fear!!! Children of share-croppers, Little Rock, Arkansas



Lynch! Lynch!! Lynch!!! The Shelbyville, Tennessee, courthouse fired by mad lynchers





Harry Baur and Germaine Aussey in "The Golem," based on the legend originated in medieval Prague

THE GENTLE zephyrs of spring always have a peculiar effect on the movies. As surely as the first crocus lifts its modest little head, as surely as the first robin chirps its cheery little song, so surely does Will Hays burst forth, every year, with his Annual Report.

This is Elder Hays' fifteenth Annual Report, and just like all fourteen previous reports, it is filled with a jocular gladness at what he contemplates. Words and phrases such as "preeminence of American films," "notable rise in cinema art," "highest cultural levels," "fifteen years of progress," "outstanding entertainment," and "very definite cultural and educational values" skip lightly and gaily through his pages. He pays tribute to such matters as original screen plays, improved industrial relations, actors, writers, directors and technicians, and in one wonderful clause, even to the "meticulous fairness" of the newsreels which covered the Ethiopian war, the Spanish conflict, and similar events. Yea verily, Elder Hays is a happy, happy man.

True to the Hays tradition, this fifteenth report is also a case of bliss engendered by ignorance. Ignorance or bland omission of the facts. Elder Hays writes flowery words about the social responsibilities of the movies, uttering unctuous noises about the need for public opinion, the demand for informative and cultural services, and the growth of "a complete consciousness within the industry of the social responsibilities incident to a universal service of entertainment." Conveniently forgetting the past season's production of pictures like *Red Salute*, *Sazy*, *The Road to Glory*, *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, *I Stand Condemned*, and similar affairs. Elder Hays says that films based on great works of drama and literature "no longer are made in the resigned expectation that they must fail at the box office." Conveniently overlooking such things as *The Informer*, *Winteret*,

# MOVIES

Elder Hays reports once more and verily he is a happy, happy man. Now Hollywood is moral

*Nine Days a Queen*, and others, all of which displayed an amazing lack of popular appeal. Elder Hays writes of newsreels that they have been handled with "such meticulous fairness that notwithstanding such subjects as the Ethiopian war, the conflict in Spain, and other events, American newsreels were featured without objection in theatres throughout the world." Conveniently losing sight of such matters as the alternate cheering and hissing that greeted the Presidential candidates only last fall, the voice of Graham McNamee describing a union convention as looking "pretty red," and more important than anything else, the vast uprising against the Hearst newsreel that eventually forced that name off the screen entirely.

It only remains to be noted that in this fifteenth annual report, Elder Hays has run true to form. Once again he assumes an appearance like that of Voltaire's Dr. Pangloss, believing that this is the best of all possible worlds.

The Hays report, however, was not the only matter meriting attention during the past month. Such things as the Alexander Korda-Robert Flaherty epic, *Elephant Boy*, made their appearance, such news items as Paramount preparing the first of the Spanish war films were printed, and such incidents as the withdrawal—again—of *Amphitruo* developed more than passing interest.

This *Elephant Boy*, for instance, is based on Rudyard Kipling's *Toomai of the Elephants*, and in many matters reflects the spirit of Britain's greatest chauvinist. Here once again the white man rules supreme, whether in the villages or out in the jungles on an elephant hunt. Here once again the people of India are shown bowing and scraping before the all-powerful English sahibs. And here once again, the whole picture is pretty sickening. It was a master stroke of publicity, however, to time the release of *Elephant Boy* just as India's general strike, coincident with the granting of the new constitution, hit the front pages. British imperialism works in devious ways, but it always manages, somehow, to get what it wants.

The Spanish war will come to the screen first with *The Last Train from Madrid*, that script being the first of many to receive official approval. In the offing, however, are other stories still awaiting the Hays nod, and the near future may see a whole flock of Spanish stories on the screen. In addition to the Paramount item, Walter Wanger plans *The River Flows Blue*, and Universal is scheduling *Delay in the Sun*. Darryl Zanuck, the little Napoleon of the 20th Century-Fox studios, however, has not disclosed any plans to revive *The Siege of the Alcazar*. That one, apparently, is permanently out of business.

There was a brief flurry for a couple of days over the showing of *Amphitruo* again. This was the picture brought in some months ago, and the exhibition of which was stopped by a mass protest against its Nazi production. After the protest was over, somebody thought it might be a good idea to start something all over again, and so *Amphitruo* was brought back into circulation again. It lasted for less than a week, with pickets in front of its theatre at all hours. Nobody knows what has happened to it since.

Three or four notable foreign films made their appearance at various little theatres during the past month. The first was *Raxator*, filmed in France and based on Joseph Conrad's *Under Western Eyes*. It proved to be a powerful absorbing screen document, acted with superb ability by Pierre Fresnay and Jacques Copeau, and realizing with exceptional power the brooding tragedy of the young student who unwittingly betrayed a friend and found himself involved with revolutionaries. In all a tremendously impressive photoplay.

France also gave us another edition of *The Golem*, with Harry Baur as the half-mad Emperor Rudolph of Prague, and with more than obvious parallels to be drawn in the present situation of Jewry the world over. This too was a brilliantly handled drama, although the emphasis was placed upon Rudolph, rather than upon the stark terror that gripped his people in those dark days. Incidentally, the French



Michel Simon in "Raxator," based on Joseph Conrad's remarkable novel, "Under Western Eyes"

cast was transported to Prague for the filming. And Soviet Russia came through with a charming little comedy of youth and music titled *Bethoven Concerto*, wherein a twelve-year-old lad plays a fiddle to the great edification of all concerned.

Hollywood's most notable contribution during the month was *Moytime*, sung by Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy with considerable effect, and acted by John Barrymore with considerable power. It was a lavish, lush, and at times overwhelming operetta, taking cognizance of Tschaiakovsky's Fifth Symphony in the form of a grand opera, bringing in the page's song from *Les Huguenots*, and having Miss MacDonald travel all over the world as a great prima donna, singing excerpts from almost every opera ever written. It cleaned up grand opera for the movies in pretty thoroughgoing fashion, and as one newspaper critic remarked, if you can take it, they can dish it out.

There was a bit of international horseplay with a munitions magnate and a couple of newspaper reporters in *Espionage*, from M-G-M, but in the end it turned out that the munitions magnate was going on a secret honeymoon, and that his bride made him give up all his machine gun factories and airplane designs just to keep her happy. And the Coast Guard service was more than glorified by RKO in *Sea Devils*, with Victor McLaglen and Preston Foster, these two gentlemen carrying on the tradition of Captain Flagg and Sergeant Quirt to the great delight of their masculine audiences.

The rest of the Hollywood product can be lumped together as just about so-so, some pictures better than others and some worse. No doubt the Hays report for 1937 will describe them all as very uplifting and cultural. Elder Hays, as I have pointed out above, having a strange leaning toward such phrases.

—ROBERT SHAW

May 1937, THE FIGHT



## Children in Harlem

U. S. Senators Wagner and Van Nuys have introduced a bill for the better assurance of the protection of persons from violence and lynching. This bill is known as S. 1709 and deserves your support. Won't you write to your Senators and Representative.

Photo by Bernice

THE FIGHT, May 1937

**T**HE BITTER free-for-all battle between the radio networks, the independent stations and the government has taken several new turns.

Columbia made a surprise attack when it applied to the Federal Communications Commission for permission to construct at the top of the Chrysler Building a \$500,000 television station three times as powerful as the one operated by RCA-NBC on the Empire State Building.

The transmitter will have an effective broadcasting radius of 40 miles and probably will not project double images as its rival often does. The limited operating area is due to the fact that ultra short waves used for television travel in straight lines and can be picked up only to the horizon. Double images, the bane of television, are due to the "shadows" or refracting effects of the steel skeletons of skyscrapers. The Empire State is hedged around by tall buildings while to the north of the Chrysler Tower, where most of Manhattan's population is concentrated, there are few such massive structures.

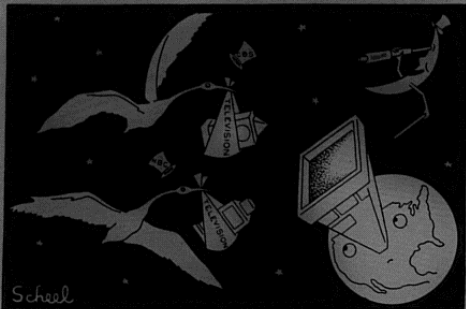
Because of the great expense involved and the necessity of building a station to serve each community, it can be seen that nation-wide television is a long way off. However, engineers expect that when W2XAX is completed, a year and a half from now, it will provide radio pictures for New Yorkers comparable in fineness of detail to images projected by home motion picture equipment.

The second surprise of the month occurred when WLW, Cincinnati's 500,000 watt station now gunning for network business, decided to use WHN instead of WMCA as its New York outlet. The switch was said to have taken place because WHN is controlled by three motion picture companies. Since the movies and the radio may have to merge when television gets out of the experimental stage, WLW is getting set.

Meantime NBC and CBS, recognizing the threat to their prestige implied by the expansion of WLW, the Mutual network and other independents, are signing stations right and left. A few years ago the little fellows almost had to crawl in order to tie up with a network. Today they can dictate their own terms.

The chains also are making a belated effort to improve the quality of sponsored shows by producing them themselves rather than letting some advertising agency do the job. First result of the new policy is that National will build the RCA Magic Key programs in the future, instead of the Lord and Thomas agency.

Uncle Sam has been busy during the last month, too. The Office of Education alone has five crackerjack programs on the air, and so far this sea-



And now television is causing constellation among the stars

## Radio

The free-for-all television fight in the radio world . . . The Negro on the air . . . An open letter

son has received 250,000 letters from folks who are tired of Major Bowes, Eddie Cantor and the rest of the old gang.

The Federal Radio Project of New York has just doubled its staff and now has 225 WPA workers writing, acting and providing music for the networks as well as for almost every New York station.

Down in Washington, a number of Congressmen are clamoring for a thorough investigation of broadcasting on the ground that programs are poor, and that monopoly is growing.

Other straws in the wind are the taking over by the State of Georgia of WGST in Atlanta, the proposal now before the New York Legislature that all advertising matter on the air be taxed ten cents a word, the pressure brought on the networks to carry an unprecedented number of talks on the Supreme Court, and the fact that many departments in Washington are building or planning to build radio studios and even stations of their own.

Rumor has it that the government is going to step into the picture in a large way very shortly, either taking over NBC's blue (WJZ) network, or building some of the stations it needs and buying the rest.

Negroes have little or no chance of gaining real recognition and decent pay for work on the radio, because of the prejudice of advertisers.

An exception which proves the rule is that for the first time, an all-Negro cast has found a network sponsor, and will be heard over the NBC blue network every Friday at 9 P.M. Eddie Green, often a guest on the *Vallee Hour*, is the comedian, while Louis Armstrong and his wild trumpeter lead the orchestra. Unfortunately, the script will be written by Octavus Roy Cohen whose Negro characters are always caricatures.

In the past, sponsors have avoided Negro programs for fear of unfavorable reaction in the South. This show solves that problem by omitting all Southern stations.

Another case in point is that of Clyde Barrie, protégé of Paul Robeson and undoubtedly one of America's finest baritones. Barrie was on *Show Boat* for a time and now has his own sustaining program over Columbia. His merits are well known but he seems destined to remain a "staff artist" drawing a very modest salary, unless the signing of the Green-Armstrong show indicates a general trend. Why eliminate good programs?

An iron cross, please, for WIRE, Indianapolis, which acted as strike breaker and scab during the recent newspaper strike in that city. The station, which is owned by Eugene C. Pulliam, reactionary Lebanon newspaper publisher, was turned into a radio news agency, and offered the

struck dailies all the free time they desired.

On the other hand, consider WEVD, which took its microphones into a Woolworth five-and-ten-cent store where the girls were on strike and obtained one of the finest and most exciting interviews of recent weeks.

And don't forget KFVB, Hollywood, which is presenting Donald Ogden Stewart's corking anti-Nazi serial entitled *Mr. and Mrs. Haddock in Germany*.

If you haven't already done so, tune in on station EAQ-2, Madrid, tomorrow morning, and hear the latest news about the Spanish War. Reports in English come in strong and clear at 31.65 meters, daily at 9:45 A.M., E.S.T., while additional programs are presented Mondays at 8:30 A.M., E.S.T., and Tuesdays and Fridays at 7:45 A.M., E.S.T.

Strangely enough, the German station which persistently jammed the original EAQ has no effect on the new station. Does that mean that Hitler has given up his intervention in Spain as a bad job, or that his radio engineers are spending all their time and kilowatts in an effort to drown out the phantom anti-Nazi station which has been broadcasting regularly from various parts of Germany despite all efforts to destroy it?

### An Open Letter

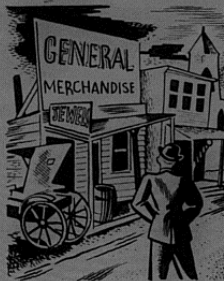
DEAR Mr. John J. Anthony, I am in receipt of your earnest letter complaining about my criticism of your program, *The Good Will Hour*, in the April issue of *THE FIGHT*. I have also received a letter from Larry Nixon, director of publicity for station WMCA, in which he assures me that the same broadcast is not a monstrosity as I maintained it was but, to use his own words "just colossal" (*sic*). Both of you accuse me of never having listened to *The Good Will Hour*.

Thinking that perhaps I had got my dials twisted and that those programs exploiting the misery of unfortunate victims of our civilization really belonged to "The Voice of Experience" or "Your Unseen Friend," I gritted my teeth and tuned in once more last Sunday night.

After listening carefully to the tale of the woman looking for a husband, the girl bereft of her boy friend, and the truck driver who took poison when he lost his job and despaired of finding another . . . And after listening carefully to the rapid, well-meaning and useless advice which you gave to each of them, I changed my mind about this program. It is worse by far than I had supposed. It is a colossal monstrosity.

Sincerely,  
GEORGE SCOTT

May 1937, THE FIGHT



## My Second War

Young Oscar steps out of a side door sleeper, minus step and porter, and finds himself in the year of our Lord, 1898, in a town in Texas. His clarinet lands him a job as bandmaster and then the Spanish-American War

By Oscar Ameringer

ILLUSTRATED BY WILLIAM SANDERSON

**T**HE OUTBREAK of the Spanish-American War found me, of all things, the director of a military band in a town in Texas. As extenuating circumstances, let me plead that I hit the particular town dead broke. After stepping out of a side door sleeper, minus step and porter, I was meandering up Main Street in the hope of locating something in the nature of bed, board, and smokes. I did. From the open door of a jewelry store emanated the wail of a tortured clarinet. Entering the place, I discovered the culprit in the form of a round, tow-headed Swede. He was, as I later discovered, an excellent citizen, a good provider, and a devout Lutheran, but he certainly couldn't play the clarinet. One of the troubles of the good man was a reed that was entirely too thin to permit the production of good tone.

"Come, friend," I finally introduced the artist, "let me have that instrument, and I'll show you how to play it." He complied, thereby furnishing additional testimony, if such were needed, that he was not a clarinet player, for, what master of that instrument would intrust the delicate bamboo sliver beneath the mouthpiece to the sacrilegious lower teeth of a total stranger! Next I asked him if he had any more reeds. He had—a box full of reeds.

I selected one and attached it to the mouthpiece. Then I turned the pages of the instruction book until I came to one of the most difficult exercises it contained.

### The "Professor" Lands a Job

There was method in that madness. I was in good practice. Moreover, I knew that particular exercise by heart. I could play it backward and forward, blindfolded and hands tied behind my back. It was the exercise my clarinet teacher had inflicted on me every time he suffered from "Katzenjammer" or had had a quarrel with his wife, which was often. Before I was through, the store and clarinet proprietor grabbed my arm and exclaimed excitedly, "Man alive, what are you doing in this town?"

"I'm prospecting for a suitable location," I replied. "You've found it," he almost shouted. "Watch the store until I come back." And with that he stormed out of doors leaving me in charge of clarinet and jewelry stock. A few minutes later the jeweler-clarinetist returned, accompanied by an equally excited gentleman. The two, it developed, were members of a six-man power clarinet section of a newly organized band in which my patron occupied the first chair. Negotiations followed.

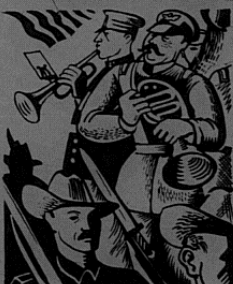
Thinking seriously of the next meal, I was persuaded to become the mentor of the aforesaid clarinet battery. The consideration was \$150 per week and man, making a total of \$900 per week. In addition, they accompanied me to the best boarding house in town and guaranteed the board of the "professor." Prosperity had turned the corner.

As it happened there was a band rehearsal that night. I was requested to direct the band. New brooms sweep well. After an hour or so a keen musical ear might have detected the tune the band was attacking. Would I accept the leadership of the band at an honorarium of twenty dollars a week? The band was awful. But so was the state of my finances. So while my ears voted "nay" my stomach voted "aye" and the eyes had it!

### An Unmilitary Military Band

It never became quite clear to me how the band had earned the prefix military. Its members were peaceful, law-abiding citizens who, apparently, had nothing further from their minds than sticking bayonets into total strangers. We wore military uniforms, of course, but who had supplied them—or why—was a mystery to me. Also there was a company of militia somehow

(Continued on page 26)





# The Drought Breaks

By Sylvia Townsend Warner

ILLUSTRATED BY MAXINE SEELBINDER

**R**AFELA PEREZ went a step or two into the street, pulling her shawl closer around her. A drizzling rain fell out of the winter sky, by midnight that rain might be snow. A cat came along, nosing in the gutters. It would not find much there, this was a poor street and the poor had no food to throw away.

In the rich quarter there was feasting and waste. The German soldiers, the Italian soldiers, were eating as they had not eaten for years. Last week a German lieutenant, tipsy, very affable, had said to her in his halting clumsy syllables, "Spain, fine country. Much eating, much wine. Pout!" And he had distended himself, and thumped his stomach, smiling candidly, showing his bright young teeth. "De nada," she had said—"It's nothing"—the conventional phrase with which one puts off a thanks or a commendation. For it did not do to give no answer at all, one must at all costs seem civil to these tall ones. And she had gone on scrubbing the floor of the café, wringing out the cloth stinking of chloride of lime.

Now the cat was licking up rain-water. It would not find anything else, drink water if one can fill the belly no other way. Curious to think at all about a cat, curious to be so attentive to a grey cat slinking through the grey dusk. Ah, but life was so empty, so hideously empty, one would think of anything now, of a cat, of a cobweb.

**T**WO days after the town was taken by the Nationalists her husband had been shot. They had not even troubled to find the gun in the chimney, the bullets padded in the mattress. His Trades Union card had been enough. One glance at it, and they were driving him out of the house, up the narrow street towards the church. A dozen other similar groups converged hither: a man, struggling, or walking in silence (Diego had walked demurely, without a word, without a glance back), and about him the soldiers and a Civil Guards, and, trailing after, a woman, two women, a woman with her children. There by the church the firing squad was waiting, trim and powerful. And so—and so—the men were lined up against the wall, and the word was given to fire.

The bloodstains were still on the church wall and the flies buzzing round

them, when the church was solemnly re-sanctified. New confessionals, new hangings, new pictures and images, arrived in furniture vans and were carried in. Then had come the procession, soldiers and choir-boys, the bishop under a canopy, priests and gentlefolk and more soldiers. They, the people of the quarter, must kneel on the cobbles while the procession went by. Inside the church everything was smart and fresh, there was a smell of incense and of flowers and of varnish from the new confessionals. Outside there was the stain of blood and the smell of blood. The religious people came clustering and buzzing back as fast as bluebottles, as though they, too, came wherever there was a smell of blood. And now, more than ever, it was impossible to escape them, impossible to say them nay, whether they came demanding alms or children.

If one's husband had been shot, then one's children must be taken also.

"Holy Church," said the Reverend Mother, her black robes seeming to fill the room, her eyebrows bristling. "Holy Church will not leave these innocents where they can be contaminated. You have three children, I think. See that they are ready by eight tomorrow morning."

**T**HE convent was far away, at the other end of the town, a heavy building with barred windows, a garden surrounded by a high wall topped with spikes. For many days, the mothers of the lost children haunted there, hanging about, watching the barred windows and the spiked wall; for though there was no chance of seeing the children one might perhaps hear a voice on the other side of the wall. But there were never any voices. Twice a day one could hear a clatter of small feet, marching, marching. And so, after a time, one lost hope, did not go so often, did not go at all.

Every week the nuns came round to collect the money. They knew to a peseta how much one earned. "Your children are well. They want no other mother than the Mother of God. But they cannot be kept for nothing. We ask you in the name of the Lord and His little ones." Then the hand would glide out of the sleeve and the downcast eyes would scan the pesetas.

From the loud-speaker further up the



*In Spain the battle rages . . . In a story which is more truth than fiction, Miss Warner tells of life in a rebel held town . . . German and Italian soldiers . . . Slaughter of workers . . . Rantings of Queipo de Llano . . . A ray of hope*

street came the accustomed sound of the hour. A drunken vaunting voice, Queipo de Llano's, saying that Madrid would fall in a couple of days, that Valencia had been bombed, that the Catalans would not fight, that everywhere the Reds were falling back, without food, without arms, without hope. Then would come the singing, and the shouts of *Arriba España!*

It was four months and twenty-one days since the children had been taken away, and now she was standing in the rain, looking at a cat—no, looking where the cat had been, for it had long ago sneaked on its way. The street was dark and silent, as though dead. Indeed, it was half-dead, depopulated. This neighbor dead, that neighbor in prison, that neighbor gone off. People would be there in the evening, and in the morning they would have disappeared, leaving no word, no trace.

The wireless brayed on presently there would be the national music, hum-strum of guitars, snap of castanets. In the café of the rich quarter the foreigners would lean back in their chairs, wag their heads, stir their haunches, eye the prostitutes trailing past, say to themselves, "We are in Spain." Later still, a noise not broadcast, there would be cries, hooting laughter, rattle of a volley. Every night, even now, they were shooting in the prisons.

**I**N THE Calle de Rosas no one stirred. Those who were left in the tall houses sat, cold and scattered, like the last leaves on a winter tree. The houses were so much colder, being half-empty; no steps on the stairs, no smells of cooking, never a laugh or a song, not even a quarrel to liven up the air.

She shook her head and sighed. Like an echo there came the noise of the wind awaking in the mountains. The voice on the wireless bragged on. Madrid had again been bombed, a sally of the Reds had been wiped out with great slaughter, five hundred prisoners had been taken on the Basque front, an ammunition dump had blown up. One did not listen, but yet one heard. One did not look at the placards, but yet one saw. One pulled one's shawl over one's ears, turned away one's eyes; yet through one's mind marched the newly-arrived battalions, one saw their grand equipment, one heard their strong marching and the

words of command shouted in foreign tongues. A scrap of newspaper, wrapped round a bit of salt fish or a handful of olives, jabbed at one's eyes with a threat or a sneer.

And yet Diego had said that it was good to know how to read, good to take an interest in the affairs of the country. Sometimes out of her stagnating cold misery a flash of rancor would explode like a marsh-gas. If Diego had been content to work and to eat, like other men!—then, though this had come, though there had been hunger and cold and terror, there would still have been husband and children, a clue to living; and the church wall would have been only what it had been, a wall much thicker than those of the flimsy tenements around it.

The wind was rising, desolate among the stone crags. *Arriba España!* chorused the voices on the wireless, a wolfish pack-howling. Overhead a window opened softly, a head peered out.

"Raíela! Is that you? What is it, what are you waiting for?"

"Nothing."

Without comment the head withdrew, the window was closed again. There was nothing to wait for. She must go in, chew her slow supper, lie down cold on the bed. The wind blew stronger, its voice among the mountain-trembled with intensity, it was like a wild singer. The wind throbbed, came closer with its throbbing voice.

—Ah! What was that?—that tending crash of sound, and utter-rattle, and another and another crash? What were these jarring wings over the city?

Windows opened, doors opened, the street was full of voices. Blind Adela was wailing. "It's them! Mother God, it's them! They're going to bomb us now!"

"No! It's us, it's us! They're ours!"

**S**HE tore off the dripping shawl, waved it upward in greeting, turning up her face, her heart, to the death falling from the dead, as though to a greeting from life.

All around were voices, voices hushed, broken, excited; gasps, cries caught back, questions and exclamations. It was like the noise of earth, thirsty with long drought, clucking with parched lips as it drinks the rain.

Democracy means not "I am as good as you are," but "You are as good as I am."  
—*Thomas Paine*

# Books

Ben Battle was a soldier bold,  
And used to war's alarms;  
But a cannon-ball shot off his legs,  
So he laid down his arms.  
—*Thomas Hood*

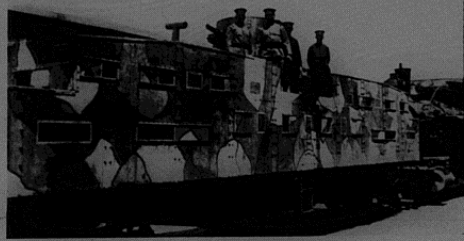
## Japan: Behind the Mask

JAPAN'S FEET OF CLAY, by *Freda Utley*; 392 pages; W. W. Norton & Company; \$3.75.

BEHIND bland smile of diplomat and shining sword of samurai lies a Japan few ever see, a land of starving peasants working the fields through outworn methods, primitive implements; a land where petty household industry clusters around few modern plants, like houses of feudal retainers around the mansion of the feudal lord; a land of less than two million factory workers, barren of natural resources, the sinews of modern industry.

Freda Utley, formerly of the London School of Economics, recently spent two years in Japan, investigated, looked far behind the cherry blossoms, produced the most analytical, penetrating study of modern Japan's economic and political life this reviewer has ever encountered. Blasted for all time the official legend of Japan's invincibility and economic might. Economist Utley believes that boycott by Great Britain and the United States could drive Japan out of China, bring crashing down Japan's unsteady economic structure—largely supported by export of silk to the United States, even more largely by agriculture, which plays in Japan a rôle of peculiar and vital importance. Miss Utley on the basic contradiction in Japanese agriculture: "The continuation of rent payments in kind, combined with heavy taxation by the State for an artificial fostering of urban industry and for armaments have prevented a capitalist organization of agriculture and the introduction of modern technique." The only modern, large-scale, efficient industry of the country is textile manufacture. Inefficient, unprofitable, therefore subsidized by the State, is most heavy industry. In no country has the State so directly intervened and aided in the creation and organization, artificially and from above, of the industrial fabric.

Few understand as Miss Utley the forces operating in Japan—workers, peasants, in a state of semi-serfdom, bitter and open struggles between powerful groups of the ruling classes, a financial oligarchy infinitesimal in numbers but controlling all economic life



Japanese armored train in Fengtai, China

for whose profit the people slave at home, the army conquers abroad. This score of millionaires and their agents rule behind the facade of a completely impotent parliament, speak through the mouth of a "divine" marionette, the Emperor, govern, as it suits them through army general or civilian statesman, furnish funds to Fascist and assassin. But these noble samurai find their path of flowers strewn with thorns, thorns to which they have given the name "dangerous thoughts." In spite of police and army their dreams are troubled, beset by spectres. And for such "dangerous thoughts," between 1928 and 1935, more than 50,000 men and women were arrested. What of the selfless patriotism, the samurai spirit, about which trumpet incessantly prostrate admirers of Japan's rulers? Miss Utley on official patriotism: "... Okura made his fortune by supplying tins filled with pebbles and sand to the Japanese troops during the Russo-Japanese War, and subsequently had a statue erected to him..."

Such the patriots, the heroes of Japanese imperialism. Such their fair rewards.

—E. P. GREENE

## In a Small Town

JORDANSTOWN, by *Josephine Johnson*; 259 pages; Simon and Schuster; \$2.00.

IN JOSEPHINE JOHNSON'S new novel, one character, Mrs. Philips, is made to say, "One side persons—that is to say, people like my-

self and Fred and our friends. . . . And on the other side the workers, the proletariat—this newspaper name you hear. They—Well, I can't describe it. I can't. It's a feeling, or a lack of feeling—I don't exactly know which. It's well, it's just that I can't think of Ann Lily thinking. That's it! That is the chasm! I can't think of Ann Lily thinking!"

In this soliloquy, Miss Johnson has expressed a fundamental truth in the attitude of the American small town. It is almost impossible for the American small-town middle class to think of the worker, even the domestic worker, as a person. Miss Johnson, herself, in a beautifully written book of the social forces in a small Southern town, does not convince the reader that she knows clearly what the people who ravage the garbage heap think. Certainly their language sounds strange to anyone who has talked to them.

Nevertheless, the very beauty of her prose makes the story a moving one. She tells of the struggle of a young man, disinherited from his class, who starts a newspaper that tells the truth about Jordanstown. The inevitable happens. The old friends turn against him, the workers turn toward him. He becomes a part of a workers' movement organizing a project to build a workers' hall where people may have freedom of speech. In the workers' march to the jail the police attack and the result is hail for some and even death. But in the end, the workers gather together stronger than ever, to

carry on the building of their hall to the tune of a Negro woman's song: "Walk high! walk far! Walk all to-geddah!—DIS is de Promis' Land." We leave the young editor starting to write his next editorial.

The book has a hopefulness about it which even its many defects do not dispel. The women characters breathe easier than the men. Miss Johnson knows Mrs. Philips better than any other character in the book. And just as true as Mrs. Philips' first remark is the sudden flash of insight that comes to her as she feels that a social change is coming. "This is all like the feeling Fred has after drinking too much coffee," she says, ". . . and he has this feeling of some disaster coming and is frightfully nervous. . . . Is this funny, nervous, fearful feeling the way Ann Lily feels all the time? Afraid of losing her job? afraid of the rent and the bills and everything and afraid right now?"

It is these flashes of insight that produce such books as *Jordanstown*. We venture to predict Miss Johnson's next book will be still closer to the worker. In any case, we offer thanks for this book.

—DOROTHY MCCONNELL

## Forty Years of America

FROM BRYAN TO STALIN, by *William Z. Foster*; 352 pages; International Publishers; \$2.50.

IN A BOOK of less than 400 pages is set forth the social history of the common people in the last four decades. Through the eyes of William Z. Foster, in this his autobiography, one moves through the various organized militant economic and political movements of which he was and is an integral part. It is doubtful whether the American labor movement has produced a more able and brilliant organizer than Mr. Foster and it is fortunate that he is also honest—not afraid to record the truth—thereby making it easier for us to catch a glimpse of forty years of the struggle in America for industrial democracy.

Mr. Foster is still in his fifties but in his lifetime he has often been the leader of many organized labor movements, so many movements that it is difficult to keep track of them. And

still these movements were natural, one growing out of the other, a perfect link in the life of America, where it was so difficult to build a "permanent" militant labor movement as long as the frontier or memories of the frontier were still with us and every man had hopes, sometimes justifiable, of becoming economically independent. In these movements man and woman were fighting for bread and decent hours and for liberty. In these "radical" movements in which Mr. Foster took a leading part we find the seed of the major movements in the world today. The C.I.O. and industrial unionism may be something new to the average uninitiated person, but that movement is part and parcel of American tradition of over thirty years. The organization of the steel workers is not something new under the sun, for it began in the nineties and Mr. Foster led the strike of 400,000 steel workers in 1919.

But one can find something new in the life of this labor leader, something which was so often lacking in the make-up of the average trade union leader in our own country. Shall we call it a hunger for knowledge? Born and reared in extreme poverty and in an extremely religious home—the home was Catholic—he soon struck rich intellectual pay dirt. He found *Lecky's History of European Morals*, Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Darwin's *Origin of Species* and Descartes' *Man, Spencer's Data of Sociology* and Marx's *Capital*. With this intellectual equipment the young worker, Bill Foster, went out into the world to build and battle for his ideas.

As rich as this book is, one puts it down with a great deal of dissatisfaction, knowing full well that the average reader, too much is left unsaid and too much is told in hieroglyphics. To tell the history of the American labor movement of the past forty years in three hundred and fifty pages is an impossible task. And to this reviewer, what was most unsatisfactory was the telling of Mr. Foster's rich childhood and background in two or three pages.

This good book deserves another; let the other come soon, and let it tell us of Mr. Foster's Fenian father and the stories of the Molly Maguires Mr. Foster heard as a child, and his life as the son of a worker in Massachusetts and in Pennsylvania fifty years ago. And then we will understand America better and the workers better.

—GILBERT DAY

## On the Bottom

RAINBOW FISH, by *Ralph Bates*; 242 pages; E. P. Dutton & Co.; \$2.00.

RAINBOW fish live in the depths of tropical waters the world over; we have them off the coast of Florida as well as in the

Greek archipelago, where Mr. Bates sets the scene for his new novel of submerged lives. For the lives of Robert Freeth, of Captain Skinner, Gianni Malatesta, James Whirter Legge, and Asher Weisenadock and the others, were submerged in more than the sense that they had all, individually, found their way into the sponge-fishing business.

For one thing, there was no longer any place for them in the society we know, euphemistically, as "polite." In one way or another they had become outcasts, and in sponge-fishing they found a common ground, a new sort of back-handed solidarity. It was a good occupation for an outcast. Freeth, who had been a child, from childhood, he experienced no moment of spiritual harmony, was early a rebel. He rebelled against the poverty of his environment, and he rebelled against the spiritual poverty that came as a result of that economic situation. He sought beauty, such as he could find, and when he escaped his home he joined a traveling theatrical company. But his new-found freedom did not last long; a woman in the company destroyed it effectively, when she discarded him, and when he struck, he did not mean to kill her.

Out of the hothouse intellectuality of Mayfair came James Legge, the poet. He possessed enough balance to despise his surroundings, but that balance was nearly destroyed when his sweetheart killed herself; and it was completely demolished when his wife died soon after marriage. Life had cut him loose, and that was how he met Freeth, and Captain Skinner (whose shipping company had used him as a scapegoat after a wreck at sea). Skinner made a business, thereafter, of wrecking ships deliberately. Weisenadock had merely wanted money, and tried to make it a bit too fast.

They were an ill-assorted crew. Skinner's bitterness; Freeth's hard-boiled exterior; Legge's exacerbated sensibilities; Weisenadock's professional superiority—this job-lot of men with their conflicting temperaments were united only in their desire to escape attention, and in the common origin of their social maladjustment. Fundamentally, they were decent men: Freeth had sought beauty, Legge poetry, Malatesta liberty (when he escaped from Mussolini's terror), Skinner the pride of doing a good job with his ships.

And they found adjustment (and their death) in a common effort to save a yacht from disaster on the reefs. These closing passages of Mr. Bates' new novel are magnificent in their heightened human sensibility and in the perfection of their technique. It is doubtful if a storm at sea has ever been rendered with such immediate physical effectiveness and with so effective an externalization of the human elements of team-work and solidarity involved.

This integration springs from Bates' realization of man's potentialities as a social animal, and it is significant that he ascribes these potentialities to men who have not been able to find a place in the organized society of our time. Just as it is significant that their creator has been demonstrating, in his personal life, the confidence he displays here in human decency and human possibility for social betterment. He is the leader of a company in the International Brigade defending Madrid from men who would deny that human decency and hamper the accomplishment of that human betterment.

—ALVAH C. BISSIE

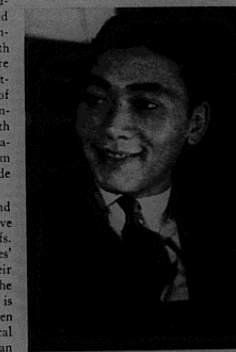
## Life of a Young Negro

LET ME LIVE, by *Angelo Herndon*; 409 pages; Random House; \$2.50.

EVERY year the book market is crowded with biographies and autobiographies of persons, who for some reason believe they have led notable lives or whom others believe have led such lives. Seldom is it that the lives recorded justify the energy of the writer, the expense of the publisher or the patience of the reader.

Let Me Live, by Angelo Herndon, is an exception to this rule. It is an exception because it tells of an exceptional, socially valuable life. It is more than an autobiography, it is a social document of first-rate importance. Future historians may have recourse to this book, not for the life of one black American, but in order to understand and evaluate the status of millions of Americans who have struggled similarly to maintain life.

While still in an underprivileged and damnable childhood, this little Negro fellow was forced to go into the coal fields to work at the tender age of thirteen. This happened to Herndon in America. It happens daily to thou-



Angelo Herndon, whose autobiography *Let Me Live* is published by Random House

sands of young Negro children, particularly in the Southern states.

How easily this beginning could have brutalized and robbed Herndon of every human quality! But far from this, it imbued him with a determination to strike out for emancipation. As bleak as the chances of doing this appeared, suddenly there came a light—the way out. Seizing this way of hope, he followed it faithfully and manfully. This despite the fact that the adoption of radical theory and practice in the South is dangerously dangerous. Obstacles and difficulties abounded. Danger was met with that spirit which can come only when a slave has had a glimpse of freedom, even though it be a remote one. Always he was conscious that it was not Angelo Herndon who was great and brave, but the son of a great and brave people supported by an army of fighters for peace and human liberty.

His arrest for the crime of distributing literature and organizing a demonstration of Negro and white unemployed in Atlanta, Georgia, and his subsequent sentence to the chain gang speak too eloquently of our justice and fair play for black folk.

It is the anti-Fascists in the prisons and concentration camps of the brown-shirted mad dog of Central Europe could talk to us; if they could write the stories of their imprisonment, how similar it would be to the beastly, sadistically inhuman treatment meted out to Herndon at Fulton Tower Prison, America's Moabit or Morro Castle.

Let Me Live brings an understanding and a realization of the lives and fate of the fourteen million Negro Americans in this country. It brings with remarkable simplicity and exactitude the particular sufferings of those who live in the South, the "Prison of Black Folk." It brings the story of the struggles against these sufferings on the part of one young black American—for he is still a young man in his early twenties. It brings more than that, because the story of his struggle is a poignant realization of the need for battling the reactionary and Fascist forces making for this condition.

Let Me Live is the cry of fourteen millions for life and happiness. Will we heed that cry?

—MAURICE GATES

## A Note

Once again we would like to call the attention of our readers to the simple fact that we are not in a position to review even one quarter of the books published on the subjects of war, Fascism and Democracy. Recent months have witnessed an increase in published books of interest to our readers and the job of covering all of these volumes in these two pages (once a month) is of course an impossible task. As we have stated before, we are only too glad to tell you something about the contents of any book published anywhere. Won't you please write to us! —Book Editors.

**W**ALL STREET has been reforming its battle lines against the American labor movement during recent weeks.

Having gained a second wind after the first panicky retreat before the successive C. I. O. victories in motors and steel, the Wall Street phalanx has been trying for a counter attack through a wave of synthetic hysteria under the slogan of "law enforcement."

As any reader of the daily press well knows, the advance guard of this counter attack has been the organized publishers, the boys who are blocking enactment of the Child Labor Law, the boys who backed Landon and Hearst by an 85 per cent margin in the last election, and even some of those who found it expedient to support the New Deal last fall. Behind the lines—and also represented by frequent blurs in the public prints—is the National Association of Manufacturers, whose prime reason for existence is to defend the open shop and to smash organized labor.

Assisting as light auxiliaries to the main action are such worthies as the group of disgruntled Boston bondholders, headed by ex-President Lowell of Harvard, who scream about "armed insurrection" (the sit-down), and the times-serving politicians like Senator Byrnes of South Carolina and Representative Dies of Texas who pose as friends of labor at election time, but who are now calling for legal suppression of labor's most effective strike technique—the sit-down.

All these maneuverings stem basically from the resolve of certain important groups, such as the du Ponts and the Mellons, to throttle labor's growing strength by fanning a public frenzy over a distorted version of alleged property rights. By pretending that a corporation's property rights are identical with those of a man in his own home, and that a factory worker fighting for elementary economic rights is no better than a housebreaker, these



*Second wind and the C.I.O. . . . The Street is divided . . . Big boys between two fires . . . Inflation*

interests hope to force enactment of legislation to hog-tie labor by compulsory incorporation of unions, compulsory arbitration and similar measures. This is the technique of Fascism.

When the New York *Times*, the National Association of Manufacturers, the *Wall Street Journal*, *Barron's Financial Weekly* and Alfred P. Sloan of General Motors cry out for "law enforcement," they are actually asking for the shooting, gassing and black-jacking of sit-down strikers. But when "law enforcement" is a question of abiding by the terms of the Wagner Labor Relations Act, the employers and their press shout loudly about "constitutional rights" and pay big money to high-priced corporation lawyers to help them break the law and get away with it.

*A House Divided*

**D**ESPITE this appearance of solidarity in the ranks of Wall Street capital, all is not as harmonious as surface indications suggest. The question of the proper tactics to employ against the labor movement does not meet with uniform response. A difference of opin-

ion exists as to whether the fight should be fought out now at the risk of costly prolonged strikes and unfavorable political repercussions, or whether more temporizing policies should be pursued, concessions granted (with the hope that they can be withdrawn at some future date) and a full crop of immediate profits harvested from the current boom.

The outstanding example of the latter technique remains the sudden decision of U. S. Steel (or, in other words, of J. P. Morgan & Co.) to extend the olive branch of partial recognition, plus wage increases, to the C.I.O. The Morgan-Steel combination is obviously no less antagonistic to labor than any other reactionary group in this country, and for years on end has been the very core of the open shop movement. But when it became apparent that the C.I.O. had sufficient strength to strike the Steel Corporation's plants, when the experience of the General Motors strike threw doubt on the willingness of governmental authorities to strong-arm the workers back to the machines, and when participation in the biggest profits boom since 1929 would be jeopardized by strike action, then the Morgan-Steel crowd found sudden justification in union recognition. There followed newspaper articles, inspired by "Morgan banking interests," unvening the virtuousness and liberality of steel leaders in treating with the labor enemy and their patriotism in coaxing labor leaders to "sound economic views," in the style of the English conservatives.

But the Morgan-Steel decision has not been popular with many of the other steel companies that are still wedded to the door-sid philosophy of labor policies. Bethlehem Steel (in which the Mellons have a voice), E. T. (Tear Gas) Weir's National Steel and Tom (Back-to-the-Farm) Girdler's Republic Steel have been champing at the bit at Big Steel's meandering from the pure and simple open shop reservation. In fact, there are rumors in the steel trade that this little difference

of opinion may lead to the disintegration of the Iron and Steel Institute.

*Inflation or Inflation?*

**A**NOTHER and more open split within big-business-banking opinion has developed over the crucial issue of how to avoid a runaway inflation. The reactionary Wall Street crowd has always had its misguided cure for inflation. Slash relief and all other government expenditures (except for armaments), hold wages down to a minimum, let prices and profits skyrocket and then: boom! bang! Another 1929!

Chairman Marriner S. Eccles of the Federal Reserve Board, as hard-bitten a capitalist as any of them, but possessing some newfangled ideas, proposes that the budget be balanced with money rates kept low by increased taxation. But labor, he warns, mustn't push too hard for higher wages lest the manufacturers be forced to put their prices up. As if prices aren't already mounting much faster than wages!

The banks, on the other hand, are caught between two fires. For the sake of their profits, they want money rates to go up, which would be the usual accompaniment of a big business boom. But if money rates go up, the market values of government securities go down (as they have been doing recently) and the banks are faced with serious losses on their unusually large holdings of government bonds.

Inflation could be stopped by raising wages and mass purchasing power generally, by restricting price increases and by stepping up sharply the tax on profits and large incomes. But even a feeble step in this direction, such as President Roosevelt's recent effort to discourage price increases of basic metals by restricting government purchases of durable goods, raises howls of protest from boom-hungry business men. With prices of most basic metals having risen from 30 to 80 per cent within the past year, big business economists such as Leonard P. Ayres decried the President's warning and called the price rise "an element which must happen before recovery is complete."

The George S. May Co., high powered industrial engineers, has the solution for industry's labor troubles right in its pocket. "Increased living cost will force you to pay higher wages to your employees during 1937," said a recent advertisement by this company, directed to manufacturers. But all is for the best; it can be done profitably. "May Methods permit the payment of wage increases because they not only eliminate waste in all departments, but also provide proper incentives to effect substantial increases in each worker's productive capacity."

"Any employer would gladly increase wages 10 per cent to 15 per cent if he can get his employees to produce 20 per cent to 30 per cent more work," commented Mr. May.



*The Ford motor works in Detroit, Mich.*



**Tain't So**  
By Langston Hughes

**O**LD MISS LUCY CANNON was a right nice white woman, Uncle Joe always said, except that she really did *not* like colored folks, not even after she came out West to California. She couldn't never get over certain little Southern ways she had, and long as she knewed my Uncle Joe, who hauled her ashes for her, she never would call him Mister—nor any other colored man Mister neither, for that matter, not even the minister of the Baptist Church who was a graduate of San Jose State. Miss Lucy Cannon just wouldn't call colored folks Mister nor Missus, no matter who they was, neither in Alabama nor in California.

She was always ailing around, too, sick with first one thing and then another. And ever so often she would have a tainting spell, like all good Southern white ladies. And look like the older she got, the more she would get sick and couldn't hardly get around—that is, until she went to a practitioner and got cured.

And that is one of the tinniest stores Uncle Joe ever told me, how old Miss Cannon got cured of her heart and hip in just one cure at the practitioner's.

Seems like for three years or more she could scarcely walk—even with a

came—had a terrible bad pain in her right leg from her knee up. And on her left side, her heart was always just about to give out. She was in a bad shape, that old Southern lady, to be so spry as she was, always giving teas and dinners and working her colored help to death.

Well, Uncle Joe Wallace says, one New Year's Day in Pasadena a friend of hers, a Northern lady who was kinder old and retired also, and had come out to California to spend her last days, too, and get rid of some parts of her big bank full of money—this old lady told Miss Cannon, says, "Darling, you just seem to suffer so all the time, and you said you've tried all the doctors, and all kinds of baths and medicines. Why don't you try my way of overcoming Error? Why don't you try Faith?"

"Faith, honey?" says old Miss Lucy Cannon, sipping her jasmine tea. "Yes, my dear," says the Northern white lady. "Faith! I have one of the best practitioners in the world."

"Who is he?" asked Miss Lucy Cannon.

"She's a woman, dear," said old Miss Northern White Lady. "And she heals by power. She lives in Hollywood."

"I will wait just ten minutes more," said Miss Lucy, glancing at her watch of platinum and pearls.

But before the ten minutes were up, (Continued on page 29)

pretre, bad, racked with pains and crippled to the use of a cane. When she got to the house she was seeking a large frame dwelling, newly painted, she saw a sign thereon, MISS PAULINE JONES.

"So, that's her name," thought Miss Lucy. "Pauline Jones, Miss Jones." King And Enter said a little card above the well. So Miss Lucy entered. But the first thing that set her back a bit was that nobody received her, so she just sat down to await Miss Jones, the practitioner who had she had heard, an enormous following in Hollywood. In fact, that's why she had come early so she wouldn't have to wait long. Now, it was only nine o'clock. The office was open—but empty. So Miss Lucy simply waited. Ten minutes passed. Fifteen. Twenty. Finally she became all nervous and flutters. Heart and limb! Pain, pain, pain! Not even a magazine to read. "Oh, me!" she said impatiently. "What is this? What is this? Why, I never!"

There was a sign on the wall that read, IT'S ALL MIND. "I will wait just ten minutes more," said Miss Lucy, glancing at her watch of platinum and pearls. But before the ten minutes were up,

(Continued on page 29)



# Iowa

Only eighty years ago Iowa was the far, far West and there were covered wagons and Indian raids. Today we have another story to tell

By Carroll Norling

ILLUSTRATED BY WILL BARNET

THIS IS an old land. It has been less than eighty years since there were Indian raids in northern Iowa, in the country around Spirit Lake. West of the Des Moines River and north of the main line of the Northwestern Railroad, Iowa was not really well settled until the eighties. If Iowa is old, it is old not by the measure of years but because, within the memory of living Iowans, the prairie land has run through cycles of change that in other countries have required the passage of centuries.

### "New Country"

The pioneers had a phrase for the regions to the west of them. They called them "new country." Indiana was "new country" to Ohio, and Illinois to Indiana. "I'm a goin' to pull up here and move into new country," a man would say to his neighbor. New country meant more than land unbroken by the plow. It meant freedom from debts and mortgages, lower taxes, more fish and game to augment the produce of the farm. More important than anything else, perhaps, it meant the chance to live for a few years longer among men of his own kind. The older settlements were filling up with bankers and lawyers and real estate speculators, hereditary enemies of the pioneer farmer. So the frontier moved westward across Indiana and Illinois and over the Mississippi into the valleys of the little slow-moving rivers of eastern Iowa. New Englanders came to settle the country about Grinnell. Dutch from Holland came to Pella, and Missourians pushed up over the border into the southern counties. In the thirty years following the Civil War northwestern Iowa was settled, largely by immigrants from Europe. There was a second migration of Hollanders, and today in Sioux County names like Van Oosterhaar and Van der Sluis are as common as Smith or Jones. Around Lemars, in Plymouth County, there was a colony of young upper class Englishmen, the members of which are said invariably to

have dressed for dinner after a hard day pitching hay in the fields. Polo was played in Plymouth County when it was still unknown on Long Island.

### Iowa's Past

By 1890 the settlement of Iowa was completed. In fact, in the decade between 1880 and 1890 population decreased everywhere in the eastern half of the state, except in the larger cities. The Iowa of that day may reappear from time to time, briefly, on the Hollywood movie lots; it lingers in the memories of old men and old women; but otherwise it has vanished as completely as the rural New England of Whittier or the plantation South of the novels of Stark Young. The little towns burned in the summer heat, while the streams dried up and the pastures turned brown. There were county-wide celebrations on Memorial Day and the Fourth of July, with members of the Grand Army of the Republic marching to the cemetery, and speech-making, with some local politician ripping out the vitals of the British lion. In winter Iowa was a shut-in land. Giant drifts blocked the roads. The most genuine traditions of Iowa are those of the great blizzards. There were "box socials" at country school-houses. The farm families wrapped themselves in furs and blankets and piled into the bottom of the wagon box for the two- or three-mile ride over the crackling snow, under the clear, cold sky. That was the Iowa that is gone.

Iowa is old, because it has buried its past.

### The New Bunker Hill

U. S. Route 20 is a long street. It starts somewhere near the Boston shanties and runs nearly across the continent to Yellowstone Park. Few Iowans have seen either end of it. Five miles east of Sioux City there is a long, winding hill, coming up from the valley of Big Whiskey Creek. Trucks have to slow down and go into low gear to make the grade. It was here



that in August, 1932, the first picket lines were formed in the farm strike, and the place became "Bunker Hill" to the revolting farmers of northwest Iowa.

To me there is something significant about their striking upon the name of Bunker Hill. It was as if the farmers were saying to themselves, "Well, after a hundred and fifty years it looks like we'll have to start all over again." Immediately, the farm strike was a protest against prices, below the cost of production, but essentially it was a desperate attempt to escape the consequences of years of ruinous agricultural policies. Rising land prices, with profit on the resale of land, had concealed from the owning farmer the actual meagerness of farm income. During the boom war years, 1917 to 1920, thousands of farmers who owned their land clear of debt mortgaged it to buy additional land, at inflated prices sometimes running up to almost five hundred dollars an acre. Other thousands of tenant farmers with a thousand dollars or so of savings would borrow another two thousand from a bank to make the first payment on a quarter section, assuming a first mortgage for the rest of the purchase price. The depression of 1921 pricked the bubble of farm prosperity. From 1921 to 1929 farming was carried on continuously at a loss; nevertheless most farmers by pinching and scraping managed to keep up interest payments and hold their land. By 1932, however, prices had descended to such ruinous lows—three dollars a hundred pounds for hogs, twenty-two cents a bushel for corn, eleven cents a bushel for oats—that even paying interest became an impossibility, and the insurance companies and farm loan banks began to take over the state. The farm strike was the farmer's answer to the attempt to drive him from his land. In fact, not even the farmer who owns his land clear nor the debt-free renting farmer can maintain a decent standard of living under the prices of 1931 and 1932, and many of the men on the picket lines were not threatened with immediate loss of their land. They were striking for the right to live on the standard of other Americans.

### The Farmer's Tradition

The striking farmers of 1932 and 1933 had to face the bitter and determined opposition of the dominant economic interests in the cities, as well as the hostility of the police and the courts. Live stock brokers and commission agents, grain and produce dealers, local plant managers for the big packing companies, bankers and newspaper editorial writers clamored for "action," pleaded for martial law, demanded that the governor "open up the roads." County sheriffs hastened to swear in scores of deputies to convoy the shipments of farmers who refused to join the strike. Fine legal technicalities

were not permitted to stand in the way of cracking down on the strikers. A few miles across the river in South Dakota there was an encounter in which shots were fired on both sides, and the driver of a scab milk truck was killed. For this crime a farmer living near Moxile, Iowa, Nile Cochran, was sentenced, after a kind of kangaroo court trial, to three years imprisonment, although Cochran had been armed with a shotgun, while the slain man had been killed by a rifle bullet.

It is unnecessary to attempt to explain all of the actions of groups of farm strikers, for example the stopping of trains, or the rough treatment given Judge Bradley at Lemars. Equally, however, it is unnecessary to waste much sympathy on that particular jurist, who had insulted farmers in the courtroom and had signed mortgage foreclosure papers in defiance of a moratorium law passed by the Iowa legislature. Farmers, as a class, have not had the industrial worker's schooling in the discipline of mass struggle. For that reason they are apt to move with startling rapidity, in a time of crisis, from passive acceptance of justice to armed rebellion. In doing so they follow an old American tradition, the tradition of Nathaniel Bacon's men, of Daniel Shays, and of the western Pennsylvania farmers of the Whiskey Rebellion.

The farm strike and the accompanying "penny sales" of mortgaged property undoubtedly played a part in drawing the attention of the country to the farm situation, and in paving the way for the farm legislation of the Roosevelt Administration. Of that legislation itself, it can only be said that the farmer accepted it as a stop-gap. The ideal of planned scarcity is repugnant to most farmers. Nevertheless they realize that to the many contradictions of present-day economy it may be necessary to add one more contradiction—that of production control—if the farmer is to survive while the rest of the system is left unchanged.

### Folklore

More than forty years ago there lived in northwest Iowa an old German road and bridge building contractor who was notorious over the countryside for his atheistic beliefs. During one exceptionally rainy summer he was building a bridge over the Little Sioux River, at Correctionville. One afternoon a rain-storm even heavier than usual came up, and the German and his men had to knock off work. Most of them sought refuge in the principal saloon of the near-by town. Old Braucher was leaning comfortably against the bar, a mug of his favorite lager in his fist, when an acquaintance came in and suggested to him that the rainy weather which was swallowing up the profits of his contract might be God's rebuke to

(Continued on page 30)



# AS TO WOMEN

After our rehearsal of last month, we appear now as a full-fledged column

THE other day there appeared in a New York paper an interview with an Italian woman on the growing opportunities for women under Fascism. On the same day there was another report of a meeting where an educator spoke before a large group of university women in New York on the shrinking opportunities for women in the United States. Last month we spoke in this column of the slogan introduced by the South American Fascists—"Opportunity for Women." And now, I read that Germany, the country which made "Women's Place is in the Home" almost synonymous with Fascism, has changed its slogans to urge women outside the home. One of them reads, "It is the duty of every girl to enlist for work."

I have always believed that the slogans of the enemy should be watched carefully—particularly when the slogans begin to change. It has been my experience that the enemy is particularly adept in finding slogans that do the trick. If one doesn't work, they try another. This shift in slogans for women is significant. Of course, in Germany there is more employment now, due to the great rearmament program and to the economic set-up. But that doesn't wholly explain the South American and the Italian shift.

In the United States there is a growing antagonism to women in industry. In one of the late issues of the official paper of the Carpenter's Union there is an entire article given over to the idea that women in industry are a nuisance and a most unnatural phenomenon, and should be sent back to where they belong. Maybe they are a nuisance. But the fact remains that American women want the chance to work because of the very good reason that they want the chance to live. And if the United States persists in making it hard for women to get jobs or to have the opportunities which they feel are their rights as citizens, they will welcome such Fascist propaganda for women with joy. And then what will happen to the Carpenter's Union?

OF COURSE I believe in progressive women remaining in organizations that

## The Negro Worker

(Continued from page 5)

discriminatory policies which have been responsible for the present condition of Negroes? If the answer is "No" to any of these questions, the program has failed that particular test.

Judged from the standpoint of these questions, the recovery program of our national government has badly failed the Negro working population in the hour of need. No amount of admiration for the personality of our popular President can conceal this fact, and no amount of political allegiance, or opposition, to the Democratic Party can alter the fact that under both the Hoover and the Roosevelt administrations, the condition of Negro workers has steadily sunk farther and farther below the standard maintained by the whites.

### Negroes on Relief

We think that the depression has been a terrible thing for the working class of America because at its height one-fifth of our employable workers were out of jobs and on relief. What then must we think of the condition of Negro workers, of whom two-fifths were in that condition? In 1935, according to official figures of FERA, 39.5 per cent of the urban Negro population were on relief, as compared with 14.6 per cent of the white urban population. In many Southern cities the colored population furnished most of the relief cases. For instance, in Atlanta, Negroes furnished 65.7 per cent of the city's relief cases although they were only 33.4 per cent of the population. In St. Louis Negroes were 41.5 per cent of the relief load while only 11.4 per cent of the city's population.

AFTER the plea for equal wages in industry which appeared here last month, Mrs. Anna Rubio writes: "I have a hard job. I have been twenty years producing an article which is more useful in time of peace than in time of war. If we have another war my product will be destroyed, my labor scrapped. I have no minimum hours. I frequently work 36 to 48 hours at a stretch. Before you become too involved in labor troubles I beg you to consider workers in my class. We are the mothers of young men of draft age. Will you let our sons be destroyed in another war, our lives of hard labor and care and pain be spent in vain? I make this plea for the mothers of the United States. . . . who only ask for peace."

This letter should be answered by every member in the American League and it can be answered immediately on May 10th—the day the American League has as its goal, Make Mother's Day a Peace Day. Parades, mass meetings and demonstrations are being planned throughout the country. Every American League local has its part to play—an effective answer to Mrs. Rubio's plea.

—DOROTHY MCCONNELL

back if they are lucky—and God alone knows how they have been able to keep body and soul together during these bitter years. No one can count them, for they are scattered in distant rural areas or hidden back in city alleys, but they are there by the thousands and tens of thousands—a tragic reminder that the sunshine of the Presidential smile has failed to radiate that far.

### What Happened Under NRA

A similar negative answer must be returned to the second question: "Has recovery administered equally to Negroes and whites?" The first test came with NRA, when codes were established to set minimum wages. Immediately a howl went up from the employers of the South who saw the rock-bottom source of their exploiting tactics threatened. They fought bitterly against the principle of an equal wage for whites and Negroes, even on a minimum basis.

The government was firm at first, and then retreated bit by bit. "Exemptions" from the code were granted to "learners," and in many jobs all Negroes were immediately classed as learners, even those who had been employed for years. Next, exemptions were granted, on grounds of regional inequalities, to certain industries, such as the sawmill industry in Alabama and Georgia. Peculiarly enough, Negroes were in the overwhelming majority on these jobs. Then, when the turpentine industry furnished a problem, the NRA authorities (Hugh Johnson speaking), found that the turpentine industry was agricultural, and therefore exempt from an industrial code.

### Farms Offer No Opportunities

So the system was in no way upset and Negro labor in mills and camps continued to get wages that varied from sixty cents a 12-hour day in rural Georgia to seventy-five cents a day in rural Louisiana and Mississippi. Sometimes they got less than that, for it was only last fall that A. Philip Randolph and an A.F. of L. committee reported to the A.F. of L. convention on a turpentine camp only forty miles from the convention hall, where Negro workers labored in peonage, unable to leave the camp because of armed guards that surrounded them night and day. And it was only last fall that Marshall Peacher of Arkansas was convicted of having kept five Negro laborers as slaves on his plantation, standing guard over them during the day and locking them up at night—just as any slaveholder did before the Civil War. These cases can be duplicated all over the South, and there has been no attempt by the Federal government to put a stop to them. One Jonesboro, Arkansas, conviction should not make us forget that there are hundreds of offenders who are never brought to trial, much less convicted.

### Plight of Urban Workers

But, as I have said, when they get these conditions are no better. Moreover, the more who migrate into the cities, the worse for those already there, for the newcomers compete desperately for jobs with those who hold them. Thus, in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, Negro and white tobacco workers earn a wage of eight or ten dollars a week, and this is steadily being threatened by newcomers from the farms of South Carolina, to whom even eight dollars a week represents untold wealth,

since many of them have never held that much money in their hands at one time in their whole lives. Domestic workers in many cities, such as Atlanta, Birmingham, Richmond and Vicksburg, are glad to work for wages that vary from five to two dollars a week—sometimes for eighty hours a week.

The WPA had a chance to improve these conditions, for if WPA established a decent rate, then employers would be forced to match it in order to get labor. PWA tried it in Georgia by giving Negro labor thirty cents an hour, but this policy was quickly abandoned when employers rose in rage against this attempt to upset their own wage rate for Negro labor of ten and fifteen cents an hour. The government was reasonable and the PWA rate was cut. Therefore, when President Roosevelt himself, established the rates for WPA, he was careful to zone the country into districts with varying rates. While he paid WPA unskilled labor in the North, principally white, a rate of \$56 a month, he assigned to those states where the majority of Negroes live, an unskilled rate of \$19 a month. Of course, it was then an easy matter for local authorities to classify practically all Negroes as "unskilled workers."

Not only in the South were Negroes consigned to the rank of unskilled workers. Complaints have rolled in to Washington from all parts of the country, made by skilled Negro craftsmen who have been told bluntly by local supervisors that they must register as laborers or expect to receive no work from WPA. And even then WPA jobs are hard to get except in a few of the more liberal communities. A committee of Negro citizens in Little Rock, Arkansas, recently sent a protest to Harry L. Hopkins at Washington pointing out that although Negroes composed nearly one-third the town's population, and over half of the unemployed, only 38 colored women had

been able to find jobs on a sewing project that employed nearly 500 white women.

### Trade Unions and the Negro

Of course Negroes have fought steadily against this sort of discrimination, and for the most part without help. Social welfare organizations of their own race, a few progressive political groups, and one or two Negro advisors in the federal departments at Washington have been their only source of support. If the trade union movement were to take an effective part in the situation, most of the outrageous and flagrant discrimination could be stopped overnight—to the mutual advantage of Negroes and whites. Unfortunately, however, the trade union movement in America has never shown that much intelligence under A.F. of L. leadership. The stupid discrimination which William Green and the executive Council have allowed unions to practice against Negroes has effectively shut Negro workers out of a large number of unions and has discouraged them from joining many others. Now the A.F. of L. has extended that stupidity to include indifference to the plight of America's unemployed, Negro and white. If it had been left to the A.F. of L. the unemployed of America would still be unorganized today. Fortunately, advanced leadership, among the unemployed themselves, was wise enough to see the need for united action of the economically dispossessed in all parts of the country; the Unemployed Councils and the Workers' Alliance now stand as stalwarts defending the right of men and women to work—and eat.

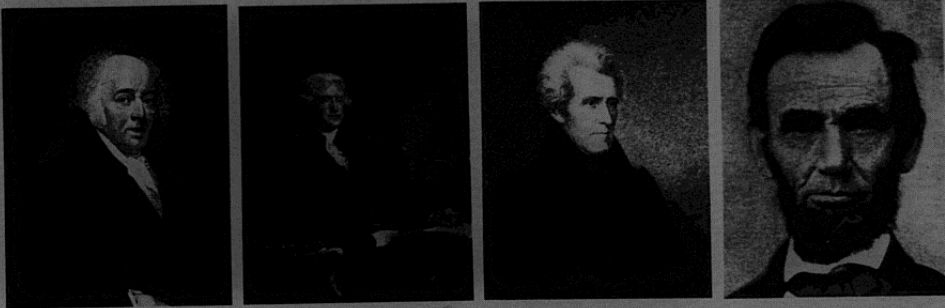
The rise of the C.I.O. on the trade union horizon has been another bright sign to Negroes. One hundred thousand Negroes labor in mines, and belong to the U.M.W.A. Ninety thousand others toil in steel mills, and are steadily marching into the ranks of the Steel Workers' Union. Thousands in rubber and auto plants find, for the first time, a union organization that offers them equal membership with no strings attached. And they are responding, for Negroes participated in the Flint and Detroit sit-down strikes. Negroes led a strike of cigar employees in Newark—New Jersey's first, and successful, sit-down in defiance of Governor Hoffman's bloodthirsty threats.

### Employment and Social Security

In spite of these promising signs, however, the plight of black workers still remains desperate. Unemployed Negro women were recently assigned to work in overalls on city streets of Birmingham by WPA authorities. Every public employment office in the country reports that it is from two to three times as hard for Negroes to find employment in private industry as it is for whites. Domestic service still remains the principal field of work for a Negro woman, no matter how talented or how industrious.

Social security legislation, so far as Negroes are concerned, is a ghastly mockery. If any group in the country needs such protection, it is the colored group. Yet the Social Security Act is framed so as to exclude arbitrarily 65 per cent of the race's workers from unemployment insurance, while old age annuities are left to the tender conscience of the Bourbon South—that section which for years has stolen from Negroes the educational funds similarly entrusted by the federal government.

Here are the plain facts for us to scan in the pitiless light of a post-Presidential election year. Over one-half of the Negro working population of the country is either unemployed and in need of relief, or is working under such conditions that a relief budget would be an improvement. Legislation framed by Congress has failed to change these conditions. Presidential policies have been opposed to upsetting



Four of our Presidents under whose administrations changes were made in the U. S. Supreme Court. Left to Right: John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson and Abraham Lincoln

local prejudices and traditions behind these conditions. The Republican Party, while in power and while campaigning for return to power, has never once made any suggestion or promise calculated to improve even these disastrous conditions.

It is no wonder that Negroes, for the first time in their history as Americans, are seriously considering and deeply approving the programs of those groups that strive to alter the cut-throat competitive system of our country. It has been proven to many of them that when a system breeds racial discrimination, and when discrimination profits those who govern that system, there is slight chance of eliminating discrimination without eliminating the profits that come from it. (The spectre of Fascism haunts the Negro.) When we watch a hole for a long time and see rats, and nothing but rats come out of it, then we can be sure it is a rat hole. There is then nothing to do but stop that hole up if we wish to rid ourselves of the rats.

### My Second War

(Continued from page 15)

connected with the undefined regiment for which our band played. The members of the company, however, gave no inkling of homicidal proclivities. Most of them were sons of the best families,—clerks, bookkeepers and counter-jumpers, decent, gentle, soft-spoken men one and all. Even the privates, of which there were a few, gave the impression that the murder implements on their shoulders bore naught else but the divine injunction, "Thou shalt not kill."

The company also sported a number of honorary officers, recruits from the gentler sex, who looked perfectly stunning in their natty blue officers' coats, gold braided caps and white flannel skirts. In fact, they were so charming that they almost revived in me my youthful aspirations for the life of a soldier.

For the most part, the exploits of company and band were of a social nature. When the company went on dress parade we played the marches. When it held a dance we played the dances. And once, when the Ladies' Auxiliary of the company gave the very light opera "Chimes of Normandy," we furnished the accompaniment in a manner which had the composer been present, might have caused him to shake his head, wondering where and when he had heard something almost like that before.

### War Fever

All in all, it was the most peaceful, tranquil and enjoyable soldiering I had ever witnessed—when, like a bolt from the blue sky came the outbreak of the Spanish-American War.

Joe Wheeler, one of the minor heroes

of the Confederacy, was appointed commander-in-chief of the now happily reunited boys in blue and grey. Teddy Roosevelt was recruiting his Rough Riders. The Maine was sunk in Havana harbor. Lieutenant Hobson, of the Merrimac, bottled up the Spanish fleet in Santiago Harbor and Hearst was selling bloody murder. Excitement grew from day to day. Temperature rose from warm to hot, from there to fever heat and the boiling point.

Our company drilled every evening. From "Dixie" we progressed to "Star Spangled Banner"—until then barred from Sunny Dixie. And if the turmoil had lasted much longer we might have progressed to the point of playing "Marching Through Georgia" in the very heart of Dixie. And, finally, when the company marched off to the bloody slaughter, we played "The Girl We Left Behind"—and remained to console the girl.

However, it was not the fault of the band members that they remained behind—after all those weeks and months of heroic tooting. Like other people, they had been so thoroughly fed up on Spanish atrocities, beautiful doñas languishing in Cuban dungeons dank and dark, the deeds of Butcher Weyler in the line of arson, rape, mayhem and homicide, that they were ready to exterminate Spanish mackerels themselves. Whatever deeds of glory were left undone by those bandmen, blame it on me. Whatever lives I saved from Spanish bullets and embalmed beef, may the recording angel debit to my credit.

### A Fervent Plea Is Rejected

"Boys," I said, "For all I know, these atrocity tales may all be true. In fact, they ought to be true, provided antiquity lends force and veracity, for they have been told in every war since Samson slew three Philistines with the jawbone of an ass. But, even so, Cuba is far away. It's a fearfully hot country. There are no ice houses, refrigerating plants and breweries in Cuba. If you go there they will make you sleep on the hard ground with no other cover than the dome of heaven. You will be lousy wherever a louse can get a toehold, or finds a hair to hang on. They will make you march miles and miles when it's 120 in the shade, and the shade over in the next country. They will feed you on hard-tack that entered the last stage of petrification when Lee surrendered at Appomattox, and corned beef Mrs. Noah put up for the voyage to Mt. Ararat. If you get sick or wounded, medical apprentices will fill you full of calomel, explore your innards with posthole diggers and remove your extremities with buck

saws; and if you die, the buzzards will get you.

"What on earth do you want to go to Cuba for? Here you are—solid, substantial citizens with businesses to take care of, wives to love, children to cherish. You sleep on box mattresses, you eat three square meals per in the bosom of your families. When you feel hot and sticky, you go under the shower. When you feel hot and thirsty you send to the corner drug store for a glass of lemonade or you go over to Bill's saloon and treat yourself to a brace of foaming schooners. If anybody has got to fight those greasers, then lay your clerk, errand boy and hoe hands on the altar of your fatherland. They are raring to fight and have nothing else to fight for anyhow. So let's content ourselves playing 'The Girl I Left Behind Me' when the boys embark for foreign shores, and practice 'Home Again' in anticipation of their return."

However, I was a voice crying in the wilderness, for when war comes through the front door, reason flies out through every window. The boys voted thirty to one to go, and instructed the one to offer the services of our band to the Governor of the state.

### To Fight and Not to Blow

Well, I did. I wrote a twelve-page letter to His Excellency, telling him all about the personnel of the band, the kind of lives they led, the nice things they enjoyed, the responsible positions they occupied, the properties and enterprises depending on their managerial ability and added that in spite of all that they were still willing to tout for Flag and Country provided he could assure them that their accustomed standard of living would not be disturbed by the warlike doings in Cuba. Then I sat down and waited.

Three days later I received a wire from the Commander of the armed forces of Texas saying:

SIR, WE WANT MEN TO FIGHT AND NOT TO BLOW.  
CUTHBERTSON

When I read the telegram to the assembled band men they went up in the air and swore they wouldn't fight Spain now if the Governor went down on his knees and begged them to. However, they gradually cooled off and by the time the veterans returned from Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippine Islands and other parts, they had cooled off sufficiently to render "Home Again" in better tone and with more feeling than I had ever thought them capable of.

And that's how come that when Teddy rode up San Juan Hill and down again I was among the missing; and how I escaped my part of the responsibility for paying Spain twenty million dollars for the Philippine Islands.

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## SPAIN IN ARMS 1937

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HENRY HOLT & CO. NEW YORK

May 1937, THE FIGHT

# Building the League

A United Movement in Common Resistance to War and Fascism

By Paul Reid

NEW ENGLAND—We are very happy to report that a resident organizer is now actively at work in this region. Mrs. Marion Pollard Burrows of Cambridge, Massachusetts, took up this very important job in February. After spending some weeks in Greater Boston, Mrs. Burrows is scheduled to give assistance in the Fall River-New Bedford area, western Massachusetts and Connecticut during the coming weeks. A New England organizational conference is being considered for the latter part of May. The results of the new organizer's work are already appearing. A new Branch, new members and new orders for literature are coming in to the National Office. A western Massachusetts Peace Conference, held at Springfield on February 14th, was addressed by Hary F. Ward and was attended by delegates from sixteen organizations. Action was taken against compulsory military training and the Sheppard-Hill Bill, and a Peace Council was established for continuation work on these and other issues. Oliver Larkin, chairman of the New England committee of the League, led the conference.

MIDDLE WEST—Waukegan, Illinois, was the scene of a very effective civil rights conference at the height of labor's struggle for its democratic rights in the Fansteel strike. Under the leadership of Ralph M. Comper and Pat-

rick Mulholland, our organizers in the Mid-West, labor, progressive and religious organizations rallied on very short notice and sent their delegates to this scene. Among the conference speakers were Mr. Art Holmes, former alderman of Waukegan; Mrs. Bessie Garrison of the Emergency Brigade of Flint; Frank Palmer of the *People's Press* and Mr. Fagan of Lodge No. 66 of the Fansteel plant. Resolutions were adopted opposing the Illinois anti-injunction and criminal syndicalism laws, calling for state and federal laws to disarm the corporations, and urging defeat of the Industrial Mobilization Plan in Congress.

The Chicago League presented a Peace and Democracy Bazaar early in March and attracted many people to this affair. On Easter Sunday Professor Jerome Davis addressed a League mass meeting of over 1,100 people, speaking on the subject, "Education and Fascism in America and Abroad." The Spanish issue has received considerable support from the League in Chicago through public meetings and collection of funds. The Youth Section was especially helpful in arranging meetings for the Spanish Youth Delegation which recently visited the city. In cooperation with other community groups, the League has taken a strong hand in organizing a Chicago civil rights committee to oppose the anti-democratic actions of the police and the courts of the city, especially in relation to labor unions.



Commemorating the 20th anniversary of the U. S. entrance into the World War with a dinner in honor of Senator Nye, arranged by the N. Y. division of the American League Against War and Fascism. Left: National Chairman, American League, Harry F. Ward. Right: U. S. Senator Gerald P. Nye

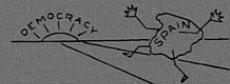
THE FIGHT, May 1937



as an attempt at Nazi propaganda. The Cincinnati League has been carrying on an aggressive campaign against proposed neutrality legislation and the Sheppard-Hill Bill. Petitions and resolutions have been circulated in the community and a number of protests sent to Ohio Congressmen.



NEW YORK—In February the Albany Branch heard Leroy Ervin, chairman of the Youth Council, discuss "Neutrality—Real or Sham," while Paul Reid addressed the March meeting of the Branch and discussed the Sheppard-Hill Bill and the Industrial Mobilization Plan. Buffalo League members gave their active support to a meeting addressed by Lawrence Simpson, American seaman recently imprisoned in Nazi Germany. Three ministers and a rabbi discussed the truth about war and Fascism at the April Branch meeting of the League. Kingston centered the attention of the community on the Spanish situation recently by bringing Professor J. Moreno Calle to the city for an address on "The Meaning and the Trend of the Spanish Civil War." Roger Baldwin of the National Bureau of the League spoke at a dinner of the Rochester Branch and pointed out the need for blocking war and Fascism by effective local organization in every community. The Branch is increasing in size and has plans under way for a mass meeting in the near future.



behalf of Spanish Democracy. Pontiac, Michigan, sent strong resolutions on neutrality, the Sheppard-Hill Bill and the La Follette Committee investigations to the Washington Legislative Conference of the League.

Toledo has reorganized its executive committee and is embarking on an intensive drive for new members. The coalition of Fascist forces in this city serves both as an inspiration and a challenge to effective anti-Fascist activity on a wide basis. Cleveland has also been busy with reorganization work under the direction of R. Norman McKibben, representing the National Office. The League took a very prominent part in the fight for the democratic rights of General Motors strikers and gave strong support to labor through mass meetings and a conference. Recently the City-Wide Industrial Council of the Y.W.C.A. affiliated with the League. Plans for a peace parade on Mother's Day and a dinner to Harry F. Ward on May 7th are now demanding attention. The League recently joined in the community protest against the exchange of German and American high school students

Gerald P. Nye on April 6th, the twentieth anniversary of America's entrance into the World War. Over 900 people attended this affair and heard Senator Nye outline a six-point program of preparedness for peace. Harry F. Ward, national chairman of the League, gave an incisive and challenging analysis of the economic situation and made a stirring call for action of the people in stopping war and halting the advance of Fascism. Clarence Hathaway, member of the League's national bureau, summed up the meeting with brief and pointed remarks. Guests of honor included Oswald Garrison Villard, the Rev. William Lloyd Innes, and Mrs. Ruth Logan Roberts of the Y.W.C.A. National Board. Miss Margaret Forsyth of Teachers College served as chairman. This affair was the first under the direction of Mr. Philip W. Russ, new Finance Secretary of the League.



PENNSYLVANIA — Philadelphia has recently organized three new Branches, one of them in the local union of the International Ladies Garment Workers. New memberships are pouring into the National Office each week and this city bids fair to win the membership campaign drive. Campaigns against pending neutrality legislation and the Sheppard-Hill Bill have brought action from a number of citizens on these issues. A huge mass meeting in protest of anti-Semitic organizations and activities in the city is set for April 16th. Representative John T. Bernard of Minnesota; Henry Hart, journalist and author; Rabbi Louis Wexley and Paul Reid will address this assembly.

Pittsburgh, under the leadership of Mrs. Leah Turets—new executive secretary—is challenging the country with its aggressive membership campaign. Divided into teams, the membership is making an effective campaign to enroll hundreds of new members in the League. This is coupled with an extensive sale of *THE FIGHT* and other League literature both in the city and in surrounding communities. Last month over 400 copies of our magazine were sold in steel meetings alone. The workers of this region are rapidly becoming acquainted with the pressing issues of the day through this excellent circulation work of our Pittsburgh people. Recent speakers at League meetings have been Dr. J. H. Lin, Chinese teacher; Harry F. Ward, and Ethel Saniel who recently returned from France. Pittsburgh has extended an invitation to the National Bureau for the League to hold its 4th National Congress in that city.

NEW JERSEY—Englewood Leaguers were so determined that their community should see *It Can't Happen Here* that they arranged for one afternoon and two evening performances of this anti-Fascist play. The whole northern part of the country was covered with advertisements and over 2,000 people saw the play. The League program and a large quantity of literature was distributed through the audiences and the League placed itself on the map in this area by its effective work. Perth Amboy will soon present the same play—in conjunction with the Federal Theater Projects as Englewood did. The significance of this presentation in Perth Amboy is that it will take place in the high school building, formerly refused the League for a mass meeting. Plainfield recently had Mrs. Julia Church Kolar, of New York City, for its speaker at one meeting and Mr. Lester Granger, of the National Urban League, at another. Newark held a mass meeting on "Labor's Fight for Democracy" on March 31st, with Mr. Strachan of the United Mine Workers of America as the main speaker. S. R. Solomonick, of the trade union department of the New York City League; Mr. Abraham Iserman, of the New Jersey Civil Liberties Union, and the Rev. Hamilton H. Garner also spoke.

CALIFORNIA — San Francisco Leaguers have established themselves in a very strategic position by renting a building and designating it as the Peace Center. Local and state offices are located in this setting. Los Angeles held a Southern California Conference the first week-end of April and brought together over 250 delegates from 39 organizations representing 55,000 people. Chief attention was centered on the Sheppard-Hill Bill and local Fascist activities. Six round-tables, among them a very impressive Youth session, occupied the conference.

BALTIMORE—Leave it to Baltimore to bring the attention of the citizens of that city to anti-Fascist issues. Remembering their demonstration last year against the Nazi cruiser, the Emden, they organized a street meeting near the Italian consulate on April 3rd, and made a strong protest against Italian aid to the Spanish Fascists. In the midst of the meeting they were visited by six uniformed Black Shirts wearing the insignia of the American Fascists Incorporated. These defenders of Mussolini's ruthless tactics observed the meeting and took pictures of it, then marched back to their headquarters. A campaign is being organized to forbid the appearance of uniformed Fascists on the streets of Baltimore, and this drive is being linked with the demand for the removal of Italian forces from Spanish soil. Sam Swerdloff, National Office organizer, is helping to develop this campaign.



By James Lerner

## Youth Notes

WHILE in Spain last fall I visited Antonio Munoz, a member of the World Youth Committee to which we are affiliated. Munoz, Young Republican leader and secretary of the Youth Front, was in the hospital after having been wounded at the front. He was paralyzed from the waist down and had been unable to attend the World Youth Congress to which he had been elected a delegate. Antonio's mother sat at the edge of the bed, full of pride for her son's activity and prominence and torn with anguish for his sufferings. A few days ago we received word that Munoz had succumbed to his injuries. The moving from besieged Madrid to a quieter city had proved too much for him.



Now a brigade of Young Republicans bears the name of Munoz and victories are won in his name.

A few days after we learned of this terrible happening, our Spanish youth delegation received orders to return home. Commander Luis Simarro and his compatriots were full of joy at being called to the front lines. After three and a half months of touring America they return to help erect a tomb over Fascism.

While in Spain, our American delegation interviewed Carillo, secretary of the United Socialist Youth League. We asked him what were the most important things we could do on returning home. He answered: "First, help us defeat international Fascism. Second, work to unify your own youth movement so that you may escape what we are going through here."

THAT is of course what we are trying to do. We have a good deal to be proud of. The student Peace Strike, the Peace Ballot now going on are products of such unification and cooperation.

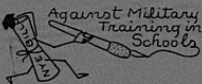
Right now a good deal of action is necessary on the CCC camps. Congressman Citron has introduced a bill to make the camps permanent institu-

tions. Answering a letter from Morris Schapper, editor of the *Champion of Youth*, Mr. Citron indicated that his bill would leave control of the camps permanently in the hands of the War Department. That some immediate change in the control is necessary is shown by a recent occurrence. *Happy Days*, authorized publication of the camps, ran an editorial about the *Champion of Youth* in which it stated: "We'd like to meet the editors of this sheet in a dark alley some night. We think we still have enough World War physical prowess left to change the white streak down a couple of black backs to the yellow they should be." The magazine had printed letters and articles deploring some of the militaristic tendencies in the camps.

These vigilante remarks have evoked protests from Commissioner of Education Studebaker, Representatives and Senators.—On the other hand, it has already influenced some military heads of camps to bar the magazine.

REPRESENTATIVE BERNARD has introduced a bill which would replace the military men by civil service employees. Copies of the bill may be obtained from us. It is something we have been waiting for.

AT the American League dinner in New York, Senator Gerald P. Nye declared that one of the most important steps in preserving peace is the demilitarizing of our school system. We want to remind our readers that the Nye-Kvale Bill to abolish compulsory military training is under consideration by the Senate Military Affairs Committee. Members of the committee should be urged to pass favorably on the measure. You may write directly to Senator Sheppard, the chairman, or to Representative Hill, chairman of the same committee in the House of Representatives. If you want to know whether your Representative is on this committee write to the National Office. Pressure on your own Representative always means more.



## Tain't So

(Continued from page 21)

another woman entered the front door and sat down. To Miss Lucy's horror, she was a colored woman. In fact, a big black colored woman.

Said Miss Lucy to herself, "I'll never in the world get used to the North. Now here's a great—my friend says great—practitioner, treating darkies! Why, down in Alabama, a Negro patient wouldn't dare come in here and sit down with white people like this!"

But woman-like, (and having still five minutes to wait) Miss Lucy couldn't keep her mouth shut that long. She just had to talk, albeit to a Negro, so she began on her favorite subject—herself.

"I certainly feel bad this morning," she said to the colored woman, condescending to open the conversation.

"Tain't so," answered the Negro placidly, which sort of took Miss Lucy back a bit.

She lifted her chin. "Indeed it is so," said she indignantly. "My heart is just about to give out."

"Tain't so a-tall," commented the black woman.

"Why!" gasped Miss Lucy, "Such impudence! I tell you *it is so!* I could hardly get down here this morning."

"Tain't so," said the other calmly. "Besides my heart," went on Miss Lucy, "my right hip pains me till I can hardly sit here."

"I say tain't so," "I tell you it is so," screamed Miss Lucy. "Where is the practitioner? I won't sit here and suffer this! I can't. It'll kill me!"

"Tain't so," said the large black woman serenely, whereupon Miss Lucy rose. "Her pale face flushed a rosy red.

"Where is the practitioner?" she cried, looking around the room.

Said the colored woman, "Right here."

"What?" gasped Miss Lucy. "You're the—why—you?"

"I's the practitioner," said the colored woman. "Is Miss Jones."

"Why, I never heard of the like," gasped Miss Lucy. "A colored practitioner! . . . Why, you must be lying!"

"Tain't so," calmly said the fat black lady.

"Well, I shan't stay another minute," said Miss Lucy.

"Ten Dollars, then," said the colored woman. "You done had your treatment, anyhow."

"Ten Dollars! . . . That's entirely too much!"

"I say tain't so."

Thereupon, Miss Lucy opened her pocketbook, threw down a ten dollar bill on the table, took a deep breath, and bounced out. She went three

blocks up Sunset Boulevard before she realized that she had forgotten her cane. She was walking like the wind and conversing with herself.

"Tain't so," she muttered. "Tain't so! I tell her I'm sick and she says, 'Tain't so!'"

On she went at a rapid gait, stepping like a young girl—so mad she had forgotten all about her infirmities, when suddenly she cried, "Lord, have mercy, my cane! For the first time in three years, I'm without a cane!"

Then she realized that her heart was giving her no trouble at all. Neither was her leg. Her temper mellowed. The sunshine was sweet and warm.

"Darkies do have some funny kind of supernatural conjuring powers, I reckon," she said smiling to herself. "But the impudence of 'em! Soon's they get up North—calling herself Miss Pauline Jones! The ideal! Putting on airs and charging me ten dollars for a handful of Tain't So's! Huh!" said Miss Lucy Cannon as she stopped to wait for the Vine Street traffic to pass. "Huh!"

## Faggot and Rope

(Continued from page 11)

And as long as the colored group exploited it will require mob terror, racial discrimination, and economic oppression to keep it in the exploited class. This in any form, is lynching.

## Struggle for Democracy

Our leadership must also come to the ultimate conclusion that the Negro's fate, in America, is bound up with the world-wide fight against Fascism.

As long as Hitler, Mussolini, and the imperialists of England, France and other countries enjoy the advantage of incomes from highly exploited groups, American exploiting groups must meet that competition by maintaining similar groups within this Democracy. It needs only simple analysis to realize that colored Americans will be among those the American Fascists will find it easiest to exploit.

In my humble judgment, the fight against lynching in America must take the form of a fight against the system blocking the road to real Democracy. We must courageously search out and recognize the enemy, be he black or white, and figuratively shoot to kill.

And to begin, we must strike a line straight across the old Booker T. Washington formula of "one as the hand and separate as the fingers," in the solution of the race problem. In like manner we must turn a deaf ear to those theorists, like Dr. W. E. D. DuBois, who say that we can yank ourselves out of the quagmire by an isolated racial economy.

We must get rid of the separate schools, public and private, and join

with those forces fighting for the elevation of the working masses.

As long as there is a separate school system pumping the virus of racial discrimination into the nation's population, we can never hope to eradicate lynchings. We cannot expect boys and girls taught in separate schools to grow up with an ideology of racial equality.

And finally, we must join *now* in support of an anti-lynching bill—a federal bill that will give some guarantee to the millions of colored people in the United States.

## Armament Madness

(Continued from page 7)

been intensely Welsh, in feeling and language. The Welsh resented these "English" armaments in their beautiful country, spoiling their landscape and disturbing their quiet peaceful Welsh life. So they protested by letter, over the radio, and in the press—but all to no avail. They sent a delegation to London representing 1,500 Welsh societies with a membership of more than half a million. They were ignored.

Other regions had succeeded in changing the War Office's plans by pointing out that refugees for swans, lucks and fish were being disturbed, but the Welsh could make no impression on the brass hats. Having exhausted every peaceful and constitutional means of protest, the leaders of the Welsh decided to resort to direct action. Three leading Welshmen, a minister, a teacher, and a Welsh nationalist leader, all of them highly respected men, deliberately set fire to the airframe and destroyed it. Then they surrendered themselves to the government and pleaded guilty. A Welsh jury refused to convict them. A London jury found them guilty, but their sentence was suspended. Welsh nationalism is now sweeping Wales like a prairie fire and will continue to plague the London government.

## Fantastic, But Perhaps True

A similar fantastic tale is told by Lord Ponsonby, well-known British peace leader. Not long ago, in the outskirts of London, the famous Crystal Palace was swept by a devastating fire and ordered to be wrecked. This well-known landmark was constructed entirely of steel and glass and has always been considered fire-proof—so much so, in fact, that it was for long the scene of extensive fireworks displays. Lord Ponsonby wondered about this curious fire in a fire-proof building, in which no lives were lost, and which occurred when the wind was favorable. Then one day an architect-aviator friend of his told him with a knowing smile that the Germans had issued orders that under no circumstances should the Crystal Palace ever be bombed, because it was the best landmark for aviators in their attack on

"Nothing is more barbarous than a class is decline."

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London. Was it, Lord Ponsonby wonders, a case of official arson?  
 Where will this mad arms race lead to? It seems certain that it cannot continue for long. Something will have to crack somewhere. Either the poorer nations will experience an economic collapse or some country will, in sheer desperation, provoke war. The situation is exceedingly dangerous.

**The Present Crisis**

It is very easy to review the past years and to point out the disastrous errors which were made by all countries in precipitating the present crisis. More important, however, is the present, and a sane program of action. Dark and threatening though the outlook is, war is not inevitable. The service which all peace-loving Americans can render their country and the world today is to prevent the war hysteria from taking hold over here. Do not permit American participation in the naval race! Prevent the War Department from writing its universal conscription bill for war into our laws! Insist on real neutrality legislation which will stop the drift into war before it gets started! Finally, make Democracy an efficient working instrument for social justice and international peace, so that neither the war-mongers nor the Fascists can get hold in this country!

**Iowa**

(Continued from page 23)

him for his atheism. Braucher replied to the effect that he had plenty of money already, that he on days when he could not work he could always drink beer, "and so maybe I get the best of God after all, *nicht wahr?*" After an hour or so the rain stopped, and Braucher and his men left the saloon to go back to work, but they found that the river had risen rapidly during their absence, and had swept away Braucher's entire outfit—plogs, scrapers, lumber, tool houses, and some thirty teams of mules.

The story of the undoing of the blasphemous Braucher became a favorite of evangelical preachers in small town churches all over northwest Iowa. No matter how smart you are, you can't get the best of God. *No Sir!*

**Five Hundred Little Hearsts**

Iowa, happily, has no Hearst newspapers. It is probable, too, that the phenomenal growth in circulation of the Des Moines Register has caused that other organ of reaction, the Chicago Tribune, to have far less influence in the state than it had ten years ago. Of the Register itself, it can be said that it is far better than any Chicago newspaper, but it is not up to the standard of a paper like the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. The Register deserves credit as one of the few American newspapers

that are not afraid to be international in outlook at a time when internationalism is unpopular. There is no chauvinism on its editorial page. The Sioux City Tribune is liberal on most issues, but is extremely sectional in its point of view. It is strongly pro-New Deal. The Cedar Rapids Gazette is reactionary but well written. It is strongly flavored by the personality and beliefs of its owner, Mr. Verne Marshall, who is something of a lone wolf in both journalism and politics.

Outside a few of the larger cities, however, Iowa newspapers sink to a level about as low as can be found anywhere in the world except Hitler's Third Reich, or the Fascist homeland of Mussolini. To read the editorial page of the Jefferson Bee, or the Creston News-Advertiser, or the Council Bluffs Nonpareil is to leave the twentieth century and fly backward through time into the Dark Ages. I almost once won a Pulitzer prize. Mr. Chase, the editor of the Atlantic News-Telegraph, included in the whole, however, probably no more reactionary than the New York Herald-Tribune. That is flaming liberalism as compared to the kind of journals I am talking about. They are published by the kind of men who think that Herbert Hoover and Ogden Mills are probably secret radicals, since they hold college degrees.

For years former Senator Smith Brookhart was the *bête noire* of these small-town Hearsts and McCormicks. Their latest bogeyman is John L. Lewis. During the recent strike of General Motors employees they filled their papers with shrill cries for the armed extermination of the automobile workers. A few of them suggested the execution of Mr. Lewis and Mr. Homer Martin, after appropriate sadistic torture. When the American Hitler appears on the scene, Iowa journalism will be ready to furnish the Goebbels.

**Progressives and the University**

There are of course a few progressive papers published in the small towns. I think of the Moulville Mail, for one. Doubtless there are many others, but the general tone is that of a bitter and vindictive crusade against enlightenment and progress.

The University of Iowa at Iowa City has always seemed a little remote from the general life of the state. Its very location, in a country of wooded hills, appears to stand as a symbol of separation from the prairie. In the past the University of Iowa has not been as progressive as the University of Wisconsin has at times been, but it has never been as definitely reactionary as the University of Illinois or Ohio State University. During recent years the University has become a center of the conservative literary movement sometimes called New Humanism. It is one of the few large universities that have

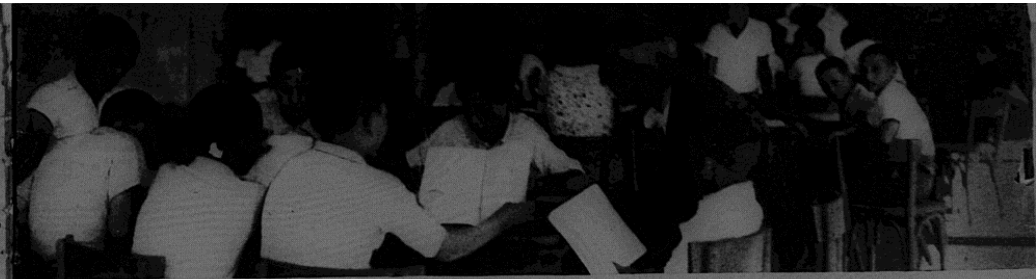
never had a student strike against war. The University has for a long time been relatively free from race discrimination. Last December the University of Iowa became, so far as I know, the first institution ever to elect a Negro to captain its football team. The man elected was Homer Harris, a pre-medical student from Seattle, Washington, and a rank-and-file member of the Longshoremen's Union. Harris was one of the best ends in the country last fall, and deserved the honor on the basis of his playing ability. It is said, however, that an additional reason for his selection was resentment over stories that another Negro, Oze Simmons, who had starred on the Iowa team for three years, had been subjected to discrimination by coaches and other players. If this is true, the members of the Iowa team certainly used an effective method of striking back at such tales.

**Which Road?**

Iowa today seems to be indifferent to many of the questions that divide the modern world. Nevertheless the day of decision will come. Iowa has her little Fascist dictators, aping to the limit of their capacity their masters in other lands. In January a group of men, women, and children who came to the Crawford County courthouse at Denison to protest low relief standards were attacked with tear gas by deputy sheriffs. There is a deep substratum of reactionary belief in Iowa as in other states of the Middle West. In a recent poll on Spain conducted by the Institute of Public Opinion the central western states showed a higher percentage of sympathizers with the Fascist rebels than did any other section of the country. (The newspapers are greatly responsible for misinforming their readers on the Spanish situation.) The Middle West is opposed to war, but is at the same time devoted to the ideal of national isolation, and is opposed to international cooperation. There is a minority which sees the reality of the world struggle between the forces of Fascist reaction and those of Democracy. It is the job of that minority to become a majority.

**In 1938 and 1940**

The people of Minnesota have shown the way. Iowa has a Farmer-Labor party, but so far it has been a rather pale copy of the people's organization which governs Minnesota. In last year's elections the party adopted a progressive platform calling for the maintenance of adequate relief standards, old age and unemployment insurance, upholding the right of collective bargaining, and opposing teacher's loyalty oath laws, compulsory flag salute laws, and the use of the militia in industrial and farm disputes. The progressive people of Iowa learned a lesson from the 1936 campaign. I do not believe they will forget it in 1938 and 1940.



What was once a medieval and illiterate country. The children of Loyalist militiamen in a modern schoolroom

**On the Spanish Front**

WITH the coming of Spring, the democratic forces in Spain have achieved notable victories on practically every front. The people's army, like every new popular army, had everything on its side except guns and the intricate knowledge of military science. Now, like Washington's ragged army, the Spanish Loyalist forces have trained themselves into that shape which makes them more than formidable opponents to Franco's Italian and German army. In evaluating these early Spring victories, one must not forget that the Loyalist gains were not achieved solely by gun and plane. The spirit of Democracy alive in the hearts of many Italians and Germans, contributed considerably to these victories. We remember those German bombs dropped over the Loyalist lines which failed to explode. When opened, these bombs contained only sawdust and pencilled notes reading: "We are anti-Fascists. Long live Democracy!" Nor must one forget the hundreds upon hundreds of Italian soldiers who refused to fight.

These victories of the Spanish Democracy are, of course, good cause for rejoicing amongst all liberty loving people. For after all is said, the common people of that country snatched with great sacrifice from under the boots of Mussolini and Hitler, the traditional flag of liberty and Democracy, and are waving it high, almost single-handed. But this rejoicing should not blind us to the fact that the Spanish people are a long way from final victory. These early Spring victories should not cover up the shame that we, as Americans, should feel because we have done so little to help the Spanish people in their struggle for their young Republic. And, we must not forget that our failure to assist the Loyalists was actually giving aid to Mussolini and Hitler—enemies of our own democratic Republic.

What can we and must we do now? First, we must fight against a "neutrality" which is in fact helping the Fascists and Nazis. We must never forget that the Loyalist forces are the regular recognized government in Washington. And as the regular recognized government they have a right to purchase here, during a military uprising. We cannot permit any shipments or loans to Franco (nor to Mussolini and Hitler, who are assisting Franco), not only because that would be helping the enemies of a regular recognized government, faced by a military uprising engineered by

an army oligarchy and two foreign powers, but because that would be helping the enemies of Democracy. Second, we must give medical aid, milk, clothing and food to the bleeding and needy defenders of Spain. Third, we must build an organized united people's movement here—a movement against war and Fascism, and under no circumstances can we permit religious, political or racial differences to divide that movement. The Spanish people can win. And the Spanish people will win in their struggle for democratic rights and liberty, if we stand shoulder to shoulder with them in one impregnable line against the will of Mussolini and Hitler.—J.P.

**National Defense Policy**

WHO IS to determine our national defense policy in regard to the armed forces and preparations for war? This basic question is involved in the proposed Sheppard-Hill Bill, legislative offspring of the Industrial Mobilization Plan. Purporting to take the profits out of war, the Bill actually seeks to create an effective war machine. For years the national policy of the American people has been more or less dictated by the generals and admirals and submitted to by an unsuspecting Congress. Every new battleship, each addition of men to the armed forces, has meant the dominance of military over civilian forces in determining our national policy. But the civilians pay the bills—every cent of the billion-a-year budget for the Army and Navy. When military men and American Legion representatives are deferred to in Congressional committees, and their testimony welcomed as "refreshing" compared to that of peace organizations, we begin to suspect a military mind-set on the part of our legislators. When the Navy Department starts out to develop naval forces "to a maximum in battle strength," we wonder who ordered such procedure and the purpose of such preparations.

The policy of this country in regard to national defense is the concern of the whole of the American people. It is their right to determine that policy. Defeat of the Sheppard-Hill Bill and scrapping of the Industrial Mobilization Plan are of immediate importance in clearing the way for the exercise of that right by the American people. Such legislation could only be justified by a specific emergency

of war. Formation of a civilian commission to define national defense is required in order to curtail the power usurped by Army and Navy officials.—P.M.R.

**The Peace Ballot**

ONE of the most effective pieces of anti-war activity was the Peace Poll taken in Britain about two years ago. The answers of the ten million participants became a mighty roar in the ears of those double-dealing Sirs and Lords who steer the British lion through the world. The roar became particularly disturbing when Sir Samuel Hoare wrote his attempted sell-out of Ethiopia with Laval of France—Sir Samuel, as you may recollect, was deprived of his calling for a while.

The British Poll considered that country's relation to efforts at international cooperation for peace. In the United States today, we are going through a vital discussion of the neutrality issue. There is little agreement even among the peace groups, but, as the results of the Nye Munitions Hearings are digested and applied in relation to the Fascist wreckers of peace, we may expect a greater belief in "international cooperation" as against so-called "neutrality."

Among young people, particularly in the colleges, there has been intense discussion of such matters as: "Shall we refuse to support the United States government in any war it may conduct," "Do we need a big military machine for defense," "Should we stop war by isolating ourselves or isolating the war makers." It is fairly easy to develop a peace movement based on vague self-protective instincts. But to turn this movement into constructive channels with a program aimed at actually getting a peaceful world is much more difficult.

The United States Committee of the World Youth Congress (Geneva, 1936) has undertaken as its first activity a Peace Ballot. It will start on April 5th and run until May 20th. It aims at learning what American youth is thinking and how these thoughts may best be used in spurring the entire peace movement. Quite a large group of youth organizations are already participating in this peace vote. It is hoped that this poll will be a real barometer. Further support is welcome and necessary.—J.L.



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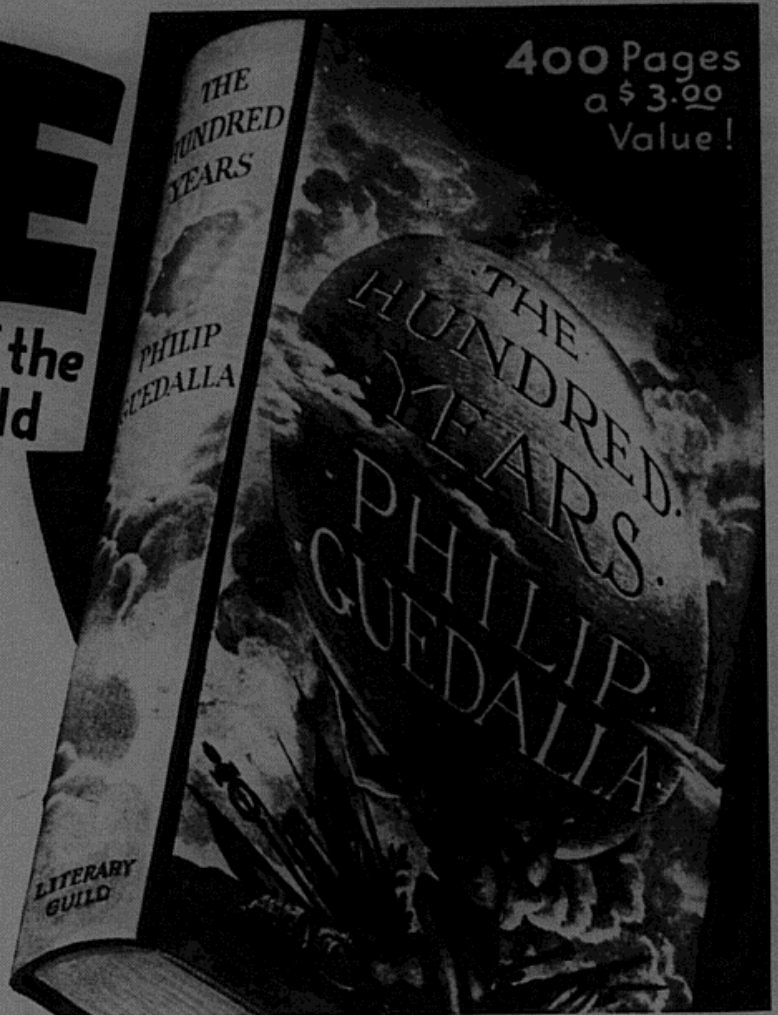
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