

NEW MASSES

OCTOBER 1931

15 CENTS



A
Short
Story
**OUR
COMRADE
MUNN** *by Whittaker
Chambers*

Also: SAMUEL ORNITZ · LOUIS LOZOWICK
LANGSTON HUGHES · WM. GROPPER · SPECTOR
MICHAEL GOLD · I. KLEIN · OTTO SOGLOW

Workers Art · Books · Cartoons

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SAM ORNITZ

BLEEDING BOWELS IN KENTUCKY

The principal coal mines of the Kentucky mountains are owned by Mellon, Morgan and Insull. These three and four other men own the industries of America. The capitalist press claims fifty-seven men own America. The other fifty are dummies.

The Kentucky coal mines are worked by eighteen thousand men and boys. They are a land-locked people. Their stock is pure Anglo-Saxon.

Up to last Spring they were considered beyond the touch of Communist contamination. They were considered safe in the isolation of their mountain, safe in the fastness of ignorance and superstition, safe for the seven who own America.

What made them so safe?

The capitalist union, the United Mine Workers of America, made them safe for the seven who own America.

The dawn-to-dusk day of work made them dull, sodden and spiritless. A weary man is a safe man. A man too tired to think or read is safe.

Religion made him safe. A man who works off all emotions in an hysterical Holy Roller prayer meeting is safe for the bosses.

Politicians who preach spread eagle Americanism made them safe for the bosses.

They were so safe that their wage was cut down to \$2.00 a day. And their wage was paid in scrip at that.

Payment in scrip means 42 cents on your dollar. Scrip is American style slavery. A wage of \$2.00 a day becomes 84 cents a day.

Scrip is slavery. You can cash scrip only in the company store. In the company store you pay 15 cents a pound for beans that cost 5 cents in a regular store. You pay 30 cents for 12 cent bacon. You pay 70 cents for 30 cent butter. Scrip is slavery.

Scrip slavery takes the rest of your wages for De Ducks. Deductions for coal whether you use it or not, deductions for medical and burial services, and deductions, and deductions! De Ducks get everything.

Yes, the eighteen thousand pure Anglo Saxon miners were safe last Spring. Then a lot of them began to bleed at the bowels. Their kids and women began to bleed at the bowels. Bleeding bowels is a hunger disease. The people of the mountains call it Flux.

Then others got Pellagra. Pellagra is another wasting disease. The people of the mountain call it Hookworm. It comes from a monotonous diet of corn foods.

Both diseases can be cured by a regular supply of simple foods; otherwise you waste away to a skeleton.

Many of the miners had paid in money to the capitalist United Mine Workers of America for as long as twenty years. Now all they had for their years and dues was bleeding bowels from hunger. They reckoned it was time this Union did something. They turned to Southern Delegate Turnblazer of the U.M.W.A.

The miners say Turnblazer told them they could call a strike and promised all kinds of support for it. But after the men went out the U.M.W.A. denounced the strike as "wildcat" and deserted the strikers.

A delegation of miners went to call on Turnblazer at this home in Tennessee. They found their delegate living in a swell house. Well, unionism was a good thing for somebody, they reckoned.

Mrs. Turnblazer answered. The delegation said they'd come after the \$300 raised for relief. Mrs. Turnblazer said Delegate Turnblazer would be away all day. They asked where their delegate was off to. Mrs. Turnblazer said he was off *playing golf* with important people.

The miners went home. They were no longer safe.

Meantime Morgan was in England getting the Labor Government to reduce wages and unemployment insurance. Mellon was in France arranging for the reduction of German workers' wages to pay the war bills. The International Wage Reduction Racket was working fast. Insull was busy in Chicago. He and Al Capone rule the Middle West between them. Insull holds the Power and Political Monopoly. Capone holds the Booze, Brothel and Labor Monopoly. Capone is the Secretary of Labor in the American Industrial Cabinet.

Insull has the power to crush Capone in five seconds but the Booze and Brothel Monopoly flourishes side by side with Insull's Power and Political Monopoly because Capone's expert machine-guns are needed in the country-wide pogrom on wages. Just watch them do their bloody work this winter to enforce the repeated wage cuts. There is only one capitalist insurance for dividends—pay the workers' wages to the stockholders as dividends.

The moment the pure and safe Harlan miners said that it was better to die fighting than to work starving, a Capone machine-gun general was dispatched from the land ruled by Capone and Insull. This expert in political economy set to work training the Sheriff's deputies and the companies' thugs in the art of machine-gun massacre. Then the Kentucky prisons were scoured for killers; these convicts were recruited for the war on the miners; they were released from their sentences and sworn in as deputy sheriffs. In this way the Boss terror was prepared against the starving workers and their families.



"More than two hundred of the strikers in the pen and thirty four up for murder; not so bad, eh?"

In spite of the concentration of thug terror, machine guns, dynamite, starvation and imprisonment—in spite of the fact that the boss class had all the advantages—the miners were able to draw on a new energy to sustain them. This energy was simple solidarity. This energy was simple mass consciousness.

But they were penniless and they were starving, and their situation was hopeless. Then came the International Labor Defense. It came in the shape of a frail girl weighing only 106 pounds for all her five feet, eight inches. She brought them word that the solidarity, the consciousness which they discovered for themselves was a world emotion; that she was bringing them legal aid against legal jobbery, and relief for their starving families. With the I.L.D. came the National Miners Union. Then the boss terror broke out in earnest but the workers flocked to the real workers' union. The barrage of terror was particularly laid down on Jessie London Wakefield, the twenty-three year old organizer for the International Labor Defense. They dynamited her car under her window. They arrested her on trumped up charges, and finally threw her into jail on a charge of "conspiring to wipe Sheriff Blair and Judge Jones from off the face of the earth and never to leave a trace of them."

For five weeks they fed Jessie London Wakefield cabbage and beans, and housed her with public prostitutes. That was Kentucky chivalry. They couldn't break her spirit or stop her work, and they finally threatened to lodge her in a jail twenty-seven miles from a railway, one which could be reached only by a mule path. This would be a safe quarantine against her workers' propaganda. Jessie Wakefield refused to quit despite the fact that she has a bad heart and other ailments, and that the cabbage and beans three times a day were a death diet for her. But her fellow prisoners, the miners in the jail, asked her to accept the State's offer of liberty in return for leaving the County, so that she could carry on the work for them outside the territory of the mines. It was only at their request that the I.L.D. organizer left prison.

There are thirty-four workers in the Harlan County jail on the trumped up charge of murder, for which there doesn't exist a grain of evidence. The frame up is deliberate, crude and vicious. Each one is charged with having individually shot Jim Daniels, the company thug and bully who used to run workers' wives and children off the roads in his automobile. These men will surely die in the electric chair if we fail them. The I.L.D. lawyers made vindictive Judge Jones get out of the case when they proved that his own wife was a mine operator. He retaliated by transferring the case to a hostile and distant county, making it almost finan-

cially impossible for the prisoners to transport their witnesses to the distant county seat and house and feed them during a protracted trial. The stage is set for another legal slaughter.

Public opinion must be aroused against this judicial massacre. Funds must be raised for their legal defense. We must continue feeding the starving miners and their families despite the fact that the company thugs are blowing up our soup kitchens.

We must keep the Harlan workers conscious of their energy, conscious of their power—the power that the British seamen demonstrated in their rebellion, the smashing answer to the international wage cut conspiracy, an answer that rocked the capitalistic structure to its rotting foundations.

Cover the Harlan Front! Harlan has indispensable lessons in tactic and technique. Harlan has already proved that the pure stock Anglo-Saxon-American worker is simply a worker of the world.

U. S. Steel, Bethlehem and General Motors have today made a new ten per cent wage slash at the bowels of a half-million workers. It is only the

beginning of the butchery.

As this goes to press Wall Street reports that the wage cuts made stocks jump up four to fourteen points! The war is on!

The Capone machine-gunners are being drilled for the next Big Stick-up—taking the workers' wages and giving these wages to the stockholders for dividends.

Stop the Big Stick-up!

Early in the Morning

*Early in the morning I went to the mountain to mow for fodder.
I could look down on the blue and boundless Pacific Ocean.
To the right lay Mikura island and beside it, Miyake.
Swamped with sweat I mowed the leaves of potato,
Sak, sak, sak . . .
The field had been moistened with dew in the daybreak
And the sickle cut well.
In the neighboring field Tsuneko, my cousin,
Swamped with sweat, mowed the leaves of potato,
The early wind which was bearing the tide
Reddened the face of my cousin.
Sak, sak, sak . . .*

*Tomorrow we would have to go down to the town to aid the strikers.
The day after tomorrow with all of the comrades in union
We will weed in the ricefields.
Today we must mow three days' portion of fodder.
Sak, sak, sak . . .
Beside me, Tsuneko, too.*

RYUJI NISHIZAWA

Translated from the Japanese by Masaki Ikeda
and Norman Macleod

Revolution

*Revolution is a huge peasant
ten million strong
carrying a scythe
and fraternizing with a giant called Labor.*

*Ho, comrade, your sickle is sharp!
Ho, comrade, your hammer is heavy!*

*Striding along, shoulder to shoulder,
shattering the old,
clearing the way for the new,
singing, Starvation is a no-trespass sign
we kick into the gutter!*

HENRY GEORGE WEISS



Bard
Phil Bard

"More than two hundred of the strikers in the pen and thirty four up for murder; not so bad, eh?"



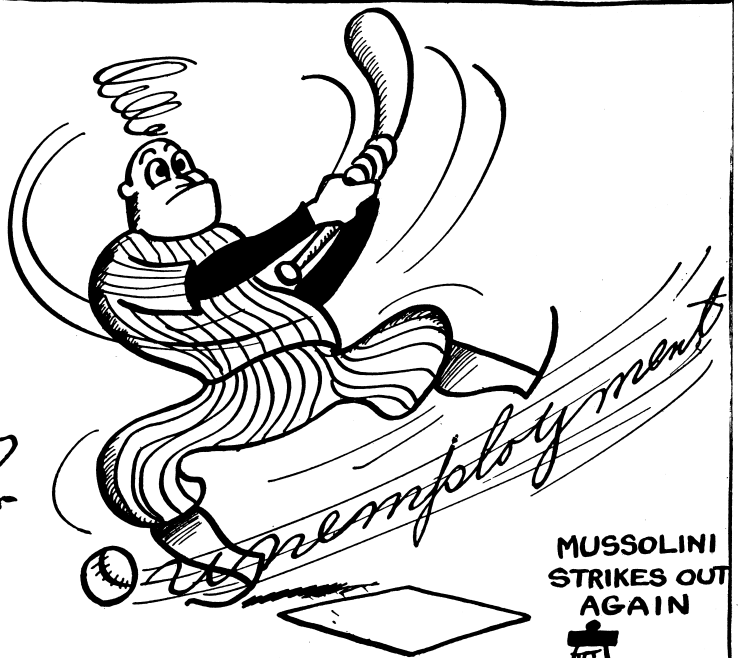
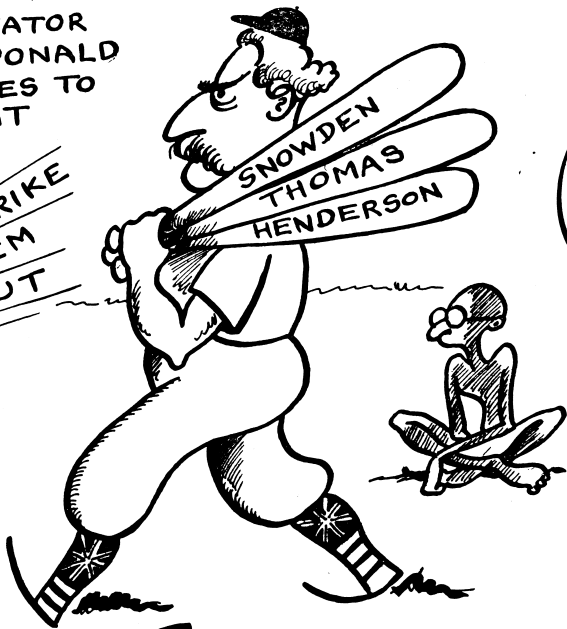
Phil Bard

"More than two hundred of the strikers in the pen and thirty four up for murder; not so bad, eh?"

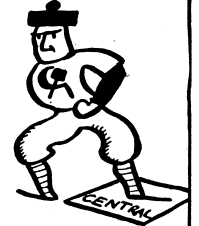
THE [REAL] WORLD SERIES

Dictator
Macdonald
comes to
bat

STRIKE
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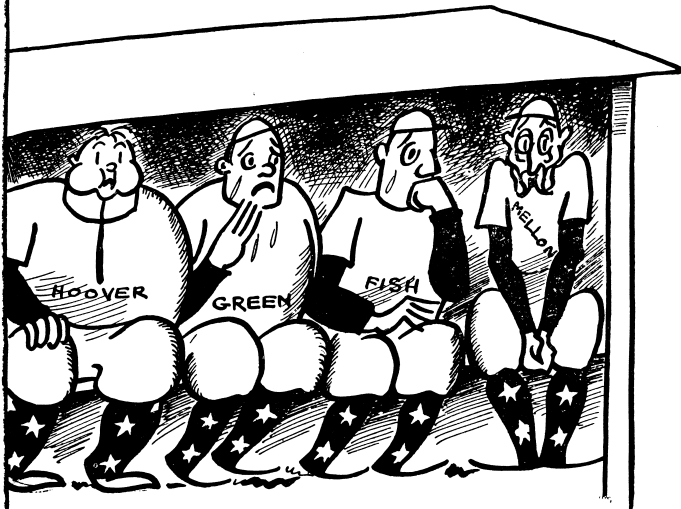
MUSSOLINI
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AGAIN



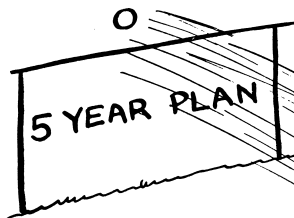
CHILI RED
HITS A HOT ONE
THRU SHORT



THE BASES
ARE LOADED
IN SPAIN



2 OUT - 2 STRIKES - 3 BALLS -
THE CRISIS



'RAY
RAY



BABE SOVIET
KNOCKS ONE
OVER THE
FENCE

MICHAEL GOLD

NOTES ON TWO SOVIET BOOKS

A Soviet critic, in a careful analysis of the *New Masses*, recently praised its general content and spirit, but said there was not a Marxist critic in the group. This is almost true. I pointed to the same serious shortcoming a few years ago, in the essay "America Needs a Critic." The critic has not appeared. America still lives in the provinces of modern thought. One trained, determined and gifted literary Marxist would become a national figure in two years. He would cut like a heated knife through the liberal timeservers and jellyfishes. Except for those rather dull enemies, the New Humanists, there is not another literary group in America with a world philosophy. Like Ibsen, we must fight a great Boog, a swamp, the middleclass fog, the liberal chaos and confusion.

Savages and the Camera—

It is generally known that savages run from the camera. They believe there is a deathly magic in the lensed box. American critics scatter in panic when a new Soviet book appears. They shiver with comical suspicion, whispering of red magic and propaganda. Not one is prepared to understand the modern logic of cameras. Ford lives in the present; William Z. Foster lives in his own time; but the literary world is medieval. It has not even settled the debate between Plato and Aristotle.

The New World—

What learned ignorance! What proud illiteracy! The savage smashes the camera; to explain it to him, one needs the language of physics. But he has no such language. One can establish no contact. He smashes the camera. Our critics have not advanced beyond the Stone Age and animism. Each book is a divine accident. There is no causality, no underlying principles and relationships. In each tree and stone and book dwells an individual soul, to be worshipped or feared. Carlyle believed that history was merely the shadow cast by great men. Our critics judge literature by that same primitive method.

American critics are honest or dishonest. Let us ignore the dishonest; they are a social phenomenon, but have no more literary significance than Al Capone. Of the honest men, let us ask again and again: Do you know history? Do you know what is happening in the world today? What caused the Russian Revolution? Why is Germany torn between Fascism and Communism? Who subsidized Mussolini? Why is all this important to literature? What caused the current depression? Why was Thornton Wilder so fashionable during the boom? What influence did the rise of the trusts in America have on the formation of Theodore Dreiser's style? What is culture? What is style? Show the relationship between Jeffersonian economics and the Emersonian transcendent-alism. And other fundamentals.

Biology explains the structure and function of animal life as an adaptation and conquest of environment. Polar Bears are not to be found in the tropics. There is nothing strange or unfamiliar in this to the lay person. Literary Marxism explains literature as a product of class conflicts, the class environment. But the bourgeois critics find this exceedingly strange. It is impossible to explain to them that the class bias forms the psychology of the individual writer, and that William Faulkner, for instance, or Robinson Jeffers, are as much symptomatic of the breakdown of bourgeois economics as the current depression. The critics still believe Polar Bears are to be found in Guatemala.

The Cure of Intellectuals—

The intellectual in the capitalist world has developed an individualistic philosophy because he has been an economic free-lance. He has not worked in factories or great production centres with other masses of men, but has been forced to play a lone hand. Each doctor, lawyer, engineer and author put out his individual shingle, and exploited society, lived by his own wits. The situation is changing. The Hollywood sweatshop factories are crowded with authors, and inventors and engineers are now hired by the thousands at \$40 a week; even medicine is being socialized. But the old individualist ideology lingers on.

It has strong roots in the past. It is fed by all the libraries

and philosophies of the past three centuries. It has proud names on its roll of heroes, Spinoza and Locke, Voltaire, Jefferson, Garibaldi, and James Joyce. Capitalism conquered feudalism, and produced this fruit. It was a great and necessary episode in the history of the race. The bourgeois French Revolution was necessary and beneficent. It created a new world. That world is now a stinking corpse which must be buried quickly before all the rivers and oceans of life are poisoned. The revolution that was symbolized in the ecstatic Shelley, now gibbers of death and decay in James Joyce! Another world-advance, with new ethics, new modes of production, new forms of life, is necessary at once, before the next capitalist war drowns us all in blood and poison. It has already begun, this Revolution, in Soviet Russia, where 160 million human beings are building Socialism, the future society.

And if this is not true, what then is true? Can capitalism go on? Will it never change? If it changes, to what will it change? Can capitalism survive another world-war? How long can the individualist intellectual maintain his freedom in the face of the trusts? How many more economic crises can capitalism weather? How long can the patient millions be trusted to starve? How long can a philosophy of individualism survive on the bread-line?

An Explanation of Dostoevsky—

That Dostoevsky was pathological is no explanation of his peculiar philosophy. Julius Caesar and Mohammed are reputed to have suffered from his psychic disease. Walt Whitman was a homosexual and a Jeffersonian democrat, but it is possible that the fascist Mussolini may be similarly sexed, (E. E. Cummings was the gay scientist who first propounded this astounding hypothesis, in his play, *HIM*.), and Mussolini is no democrat. The Freudian theory is as childish as phrenology in its analysis of social forces. There is pathology in all the political camps, there is pathology in the palaces and in the flophouses, in short, there are only human beings.

Dostoevsky was pathological, but of social and literary importance is the fact that he was a mystic Slav nationalist. His pathology had a social basis; it was produced by the death sentence passed on him by the Czar and the ten years he spent with thousands of others in Siberian prisons. His Pan-Slavism too, was not individual with him. It was the philosophy of a group of young Russian intellectuals who were as much appalled by western industrialism, and its logical heir, Socialism, as our own group of Southern writers who recently issued a joint manifesto.

Our young Southerners want to shut out industrialism, and return to the upperclass joys of ante-bellum feudalism. They are willing to make liberal concessions; they will give up chattel slavery. Dostoevsky's group wanted to keep Holy Russia unspotted by modernism, and their concession was to purify the Czarism and the Greek Church of their obvious corruption.

Dostoevsky's novels are nothing but the remarkable fictional preaching by a genius of the propaganda that the social revolution brings death to the old society, and that only a rejuvenated feudalism and Christianity can prevent that revolution. He libelled the Revolution with pathological venom in one novel, *The Possessed*, Dostoevsky saw in the Revolution the Anti-Christ. He was in conflict with the revolution all of his mature life. It is quite clear that he suffered all the agonies of the petty-bourgeois intellectual in every land who is confronted by the worker's revolution, and its new world-order. Dostoevsky's metaphysics were sublime in their intensity, but quite irrelevant to the main theme. Dostoevsky was a feudalist who could accept neither capitalism nor the proletarian revolution.

Dostoevsky Today—

If there were a Marxist critic in America, I think he would point out that Boris Pilnyak is interesting because he is torn by the same social neuroses that split the psyche of Dostoevsky.

Pilnyak, like Dostoevsky, is obsessed by a strange, bookish nostalgia for feudalism, (read T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound,) and like Dostoevsky, he is an intellectual who fears the socialization of



SOMEBODY IS GOING TO GET AN AWFUL SMACK FOR PUSHING!

William Gropper

the intellectual monopoly (read H. L. Mencken, Irving Babbitt).

Dostoevsky swathed in mysticism his real social fears and hopes; he sought supernatural sanctions for his feudalism, he called his egotism, "the soul." Pilnyak writes fifty years later; he finds esthetic and metaphysical sanctions; his egotism of an old-fashioned intellectual is given more modern disguises.

The Old American Hoopla—

The American edition of Boris Pilnyak's latest novel,* was presented recently with a great deal of publisher's hoopla. "New Russia hails him as its chosen interpreter, the present literary generation considers him its master, he is held in even greater popular esteem than such men as Tolstoy," runs the usual fevered blurb. One can ignore these familiar commercial lies, but one cannot forgive the mass of ignorant American critics who knew so little of modern Russian literature that they swallowed the hoopla with the gusto of a pesky catfish taking worm, hook and sinker.

Pilnyak does *not* represent Soviet Russia. There happens to be, in Russian opinion, at least a dozen writers greater than Pilnyak. He is *not* the leader of the young guard of literature, but is severely criticized by them, has been their chief target for several years, because so much of the old Russia lives in him.

But one doesn't need to know of the recent storms of criticism and controversy that have broken around Pilnyak in his homeland. A trained critic knowing something about the problems of American proletarian writing and the American labor movement would have been able to detect Pilnyak's serious failures in this novel. They are failures of an international interest, in this day of

international revolution. They illustrate the conflict the revolution sets up in the bourgeois intellectual mind.

Pilnyak, moved by the great crusade of construction and mass culture that attended the Five Year Plan, went forth with a high seriousness, honesty and passion to observe this crusade and to write about it. He chose, as a mighty symbol, some such project as the Dnieprostroy, the largest dam in the world. He studied the social and technical details of such a project with all the intensity of a bloodhound or eagle. He spent six months in mastering the special knowledge of the hydraulic engineer, we are told by Karl Radek.

It was to be a labor of devotion, such as most Soviet writers now contribute to the Revolution. Pilnyak was never more earnest in his life. The mass of technical detail in his book is enormous. It is as vivid and complete as the description of whaling in Melville's *Moby Dick*.

Pilnyak must have sat down to write the epic of rivers and dams in a heroic mood. He had been harshly criticized for his reactionary tendencies in former books, and now he would redeem himself. For fictional purposes, he invented a feat of hydraulic engineering amazing for its Utopian boldness and illusion of reality. The Revolution would build a monolith to divert the Oka river from its natural course, join it with the Moscow river, and drive back that river. Old provinces would be submerged; new ones would rise; climate, geology, nature would be fashioned to new ends by the strong collective hand of the workers' Revolution.

A mighty symbol! Man had been the sport of nature, a passive lost mystic; now he was to masterfully organize Nature, as he had organized a new society; the Revolution would remake the oceans, mountains, plains, deserts, as it had remade the heart of man.

* *The Volga Falls to the Caspian Sea*, by Boris Pilnyak, Cosmopolitan \$2.50.



SOMEBODY IS GOING TO GET AN AWFUL SMACK FOR PUSHING!



SOMEBODY IS GOING TO GET AN AWFUL SMACK FOR PUSHING!

Mighty construction-poem, world-poem, of Revolutionary Russia!

Pilnyak set himself this task. The artistic conscience of Russian writers today is haunted by such epic necessities; the Soviet land is epic, the Soviet construction is epic.

Hollywood on the Volga—

Stalin has given a wise directive slogan to the workers for revolutionary culture: "it should be proletarian in content, national in form."

Boris Pilnyak is a Russian. He was a Russian schoolboy who read Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, not Henty and Mayne Reid. He was a Russian intellectual of the old dark tortured Czarist time. They had shot themselves in despair, they had talked, talked, been drunkards, eccentrics, sex maniacs, literary poseurs, metaphysicians, scoundrels, saints, terrorists and martyrs—because there was a Czar.

Pilnyak was formed by the old Russian bohemia, which read and lived Dostoevsky. And Dostoevsky junior went to Dneprostroy, and honestly and passionately tried to write a novel that would be a testament of the new epic world, the Soviet construction. Pilnyak failed. He could not make himself over.

His novel is a curious mongrel. Dneprostroy is there in some of its magnificence. The great dam that will change climate and history is there; it affected even Pilnyak. But similar great projects have been achieved in America; they might have had the same effect on him. The revolutionary significance of a Dneprostroy is not that it is huge, or that it is a triumph of mechanics and science.

Pilnyak missed the main point; the new human beings, the new social forces building the dam. Where are the nurseries, concert halls and classrooms that go with Soviet construction? Where is the new culture and the collective spirit? Where are the workers?

Dams and monoliths are built by sane, hard-working men or they are not built at all. Revolutions are led by such men or not at all. Pilnyak gives us a gallery of Dostoevsky madmen, and their women, mystic sadists, drunkards, god-seeking lechers, and the like. We are asked to believe that these hysteric freaks who talk about their souls for pages and pages are engineers, Bolsheviks, scientists.

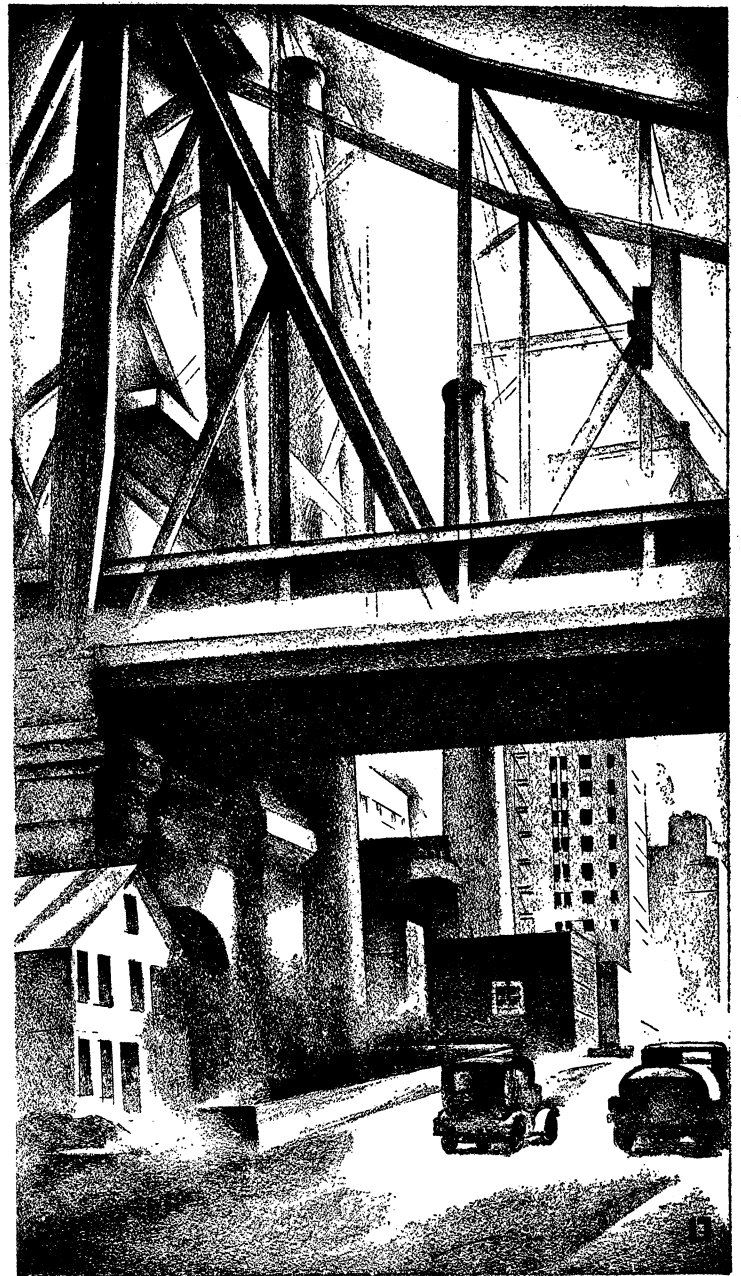
Pilnyak has taken this great construction, where thousands of men labor with steam-shovels, cranes, concrete mixers, turbines, pneumatic drills, building a dam, building new men and women. He has taken this enormous socialist deed, this collective poem in stone and steel, and made of it a backdrop to a pitiful little triangle love story; two engineers and a woman. It is Hollywood all over again.

Stale melodrama, speeches, metaphysics à la Dostoevsky though with a revolutionary disguise! Dostoevsky adapted by a Hollywood sensationalist to satisfy the Soviet hunger for epics!

"The knees of a woman may be more majestic than Mont Blanc," exclaims the lyric Pilnyak. Perhaps. "The palms of a woman's hand on a man's eyes may sometimes conceal the whole world." Possibly. But the knees and palms of women have little to do with the fact that Americans starve in breadlines, while Russians build Dneprostroy.

Pilnyak presents a false, ugly subjective picture of sex relations in Soviet Russia. The collective rape of women-workers and a crazy triangle of Dostoevsky engineers is all that he saw at Dneprostroy. Sex obsesses him—he views sex like a burned-out roue athirst for purity. He demands of the Revolution that it solve his sex problems, at once. He charges the Revolution with neglect of the sex relationship. We are familiar with this bourgeois obsession. We are familiar with this bourgeois impatience with Soviet Russia because it is not a utopia. The sex problem is being solved by the Revolution. But it is not being solved by Pilnyak's intellectuals who make long, lyrical, mystic speeches about purity, and honor, and women's knees more magnificent than Mont Blanc. The sex problem is being solved by humbler forces, by factories that pay women equal wages with men, by insurance for maternity, by sane marriage and divorce laws that set women free.

We are familiar with bourgeois utopians, leftists who are sure that the Revolution has failed, and therefore slander it. There is too much of this slander in Pilnyak's book. It is hidden under lyricism, as Dostoevsky's slander was hidden under mysticism. The man who can write, "we have had the social revolution, and the cultural revolution, now we must make the revolution of individual honor," is slandering the Revolution, the Revolution built on the blood, the honor, the daily heroism of millions of simple



UNDER THE BRIDGE

Louis Lozowick

people who have never read Dostoevsky, but who are determined to build a free, joyous, world of Socialism.

Karl Radek wrote of Pilnyak: "He is now at the crossroads between revolution and reaction. May he cast his vote soon." This new novel is a vote for the wrong road. The Marxist critic must condemn it, while understanding that Pilnyak's intentions have been worthy. But he has never got his head free of the old tortured Russian bohemia. He is an intellectual of the old world, trying to adapt himself to the new. One can sympathize with his psychic conflict, but not when it appears in a will-to-slander.

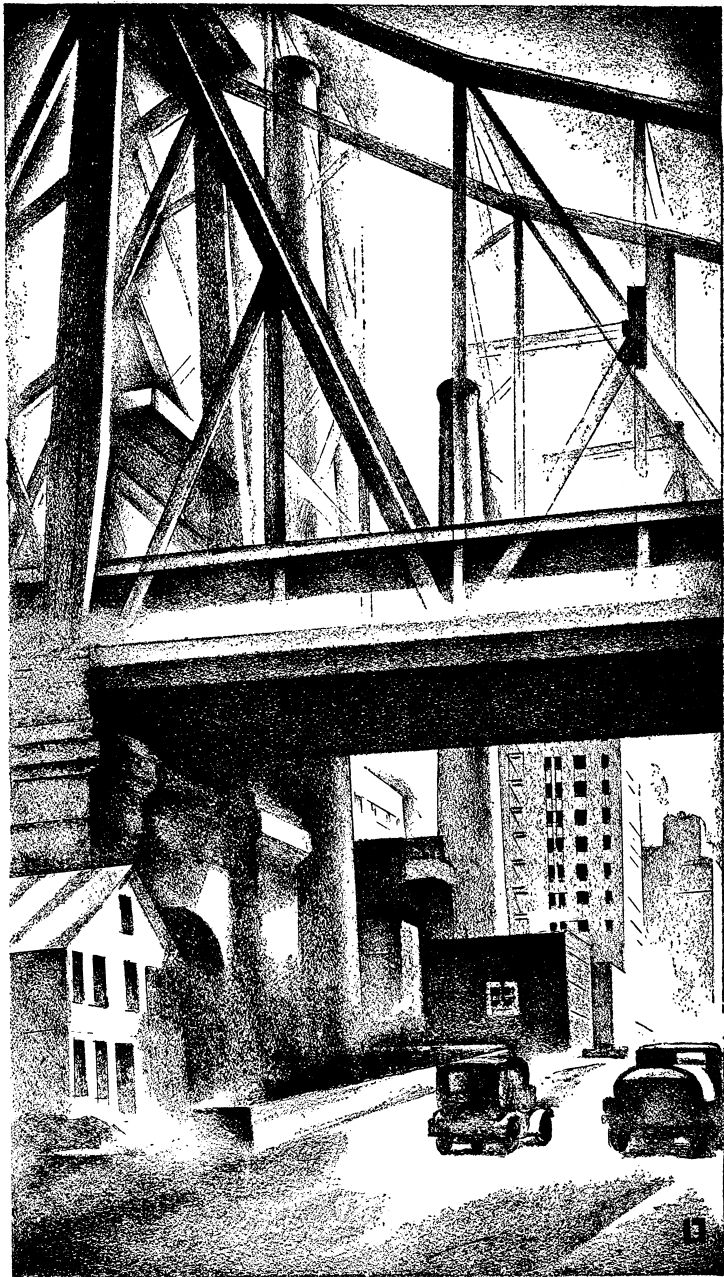
No, this novel is decidedly *not* "life under the Revolution," as the publishers would have us believe. It is Pilnyak under the Revolution.

A Contrast—

It was inevitable that Pilnyak would be printed in America, and America's critics would praise him. He confirms many of their dark suspicions about Soviet Russia, and he restores their cherished Dostoevskian concept of Russia which so many recent events have disturbed.

It was not so inevitable that *February*, by Tarasov Rodionov should have been printed here.* For this book of memoirs by a lieutenant in the Czarist army who went Bolshevik, is a miracle of revolutionary clarity and faith. It is one of those

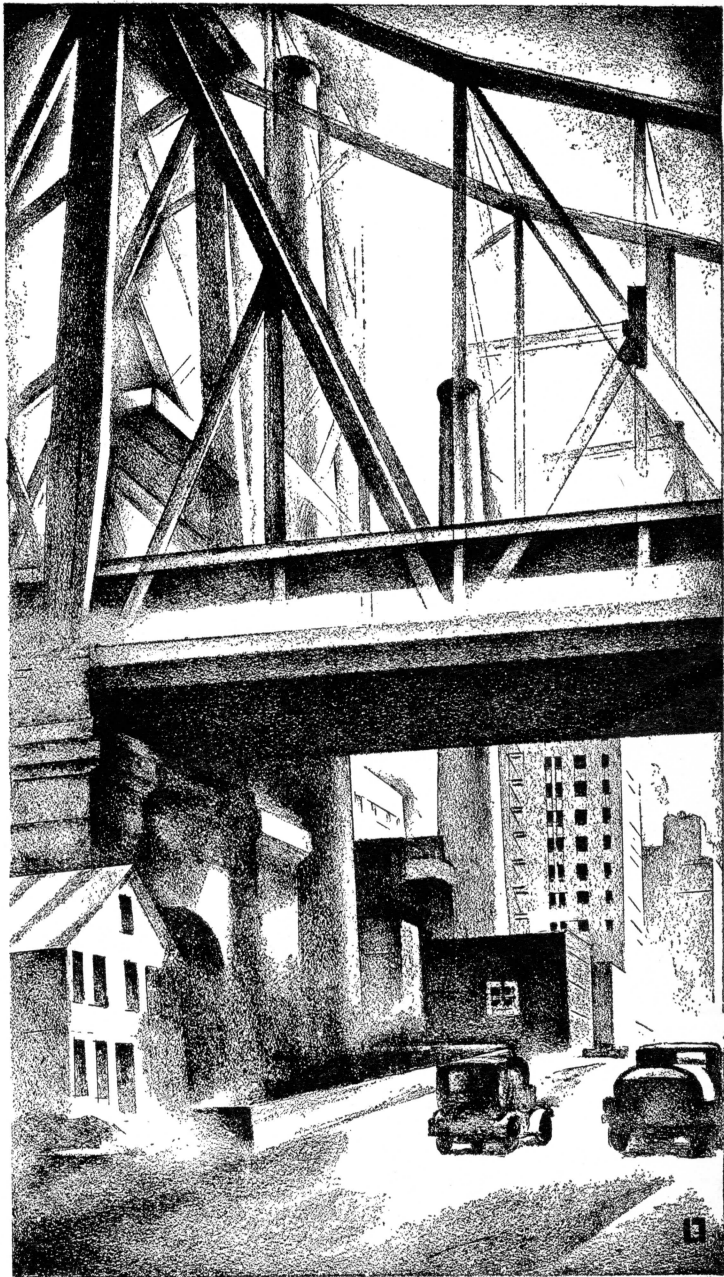
* *February*, 1917—by Aleksei Tarasov-Rodionov. Covici—Friede. \$3.75.



UNDER THE BRIDGE

LOUIS LOZOWICK 139

Louis Lozowick



UNDER THE BRIDGE

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Soviet books, like Panferov's *Brusski*, and Fadeyef's, *Nineteen*, which are flesh of Soviet Russia's flesh, bone of its bone, its deep, pure voice speaking the truth. Such books are usually labelled "propaganda" by our bourgeois critics, as they shy off like superstitious savages from a camera.

February is a record of one obscure intellectual's mental conflicts and physical actions during the Kerensky revolution. Rodionov led his machine-gun regiment into Petrograd and fought the Czarist police for the city. He describes the struggle that set in immediately between the Bolsheviks and the Menshevik-Socialist-Cadets. The Socialist-Liberals wanted to carry on the imperialist war. They also delayed and sabotaged the demands of the workers and peasants for land and the eight-hour day. Rodionov took his stand with the Bolsheviks, against War and for Socialism. He was confused at times. He tells about his confusions. He tells everything.

The period is the same as that covered by John Reed's book. This is as good a book as John Reed's, which means that it is one of the true classics.

Pilnyak conceives himself, like most intellectuals, to be a specialist in spirituality and human dignity. Rodionov makes no such claims. He was engaged in a fight, and he fought with sober courage and practicality for Socialism. But what emerges from his record of those bloody and confused days is not mere military adventure, action, victory and death, but the birth of a new man. The conscience of the working-class was born and tested in those bitter days. Lenin stood before the ranks and repeated again and again what no one was quite prepared to believe; that the historic hour had struck for world Socialism. It was difficult to believe this in ragged, hungry Petrograd. But the workers and soldiers listened and believed. Rodionov believed.

The way was hard. He was forced to break with most of his comrades and friends among the officers. He was persecuted, he was jeered at, he was arrested and went on a hunger strike. He had to uproot with a ruthless hand every bourgeois illusion still lingering in his mind. He cut himself off from his own class; the soldiers and workers at first distrusted him, and he was lonely. The ideological battle struck fiercer at his mind than the machine-gun bullets of the police at his body.

Rodionov hides nothing. He reveals his own waverings, his moments of despair. And this confession is the shadow that brings out more strongly the clear, pure profile of the Bolshevik intellectual who helped make a revolution.

The world has never seen a group of men like the Russian Bolsheviks of Rodionov's type. There was no Gandhist showmanship in them, the ancient and somewhat tawdry egotism of the saint who asserts his will-to-power by underhanded religious methods. Logic was the weapon used by the Bolsheviks. Scientific tactics based on the Marxist-Leninist analysis of society guided them through every emergency. They were not saints; they were generals, but what made them more precious to humanity than all the puffed-up saints of history was that they never deviated from their great object; they poured their blood and passion, freely to the uttermost limits of human endurance for the cause of Socialism, for the dictatorship of proletarian liberty, equality and fraternity.

Rodionov is a commander in the Red Army. He has been a military man for more than thirteen years. Yet he is not a military man; he is a Communist, a new man. How else can one explain, that in this military book, there is revealed a sensitivity as keen as that of a young idealistic boy's? How else can one explain the scholarly intellect, the humane universality, or the esthetic emotion that responds so freshly and poignantly to dawns and nights, crowds and individuals, meeting rooms and streets?

Rodionov is a great artist. It is, extraordinary, but this modest, heroic commander in the Red Army is a better writer than the professional Pilnyak. There are a hundred psychological vignettes in his book that are beyond the derivative Pilnyak. There is the rhythm and the logic of a great historic period. There is the pure narrative line. Finally, there is Communism, the new thing, the thing Pilnyak cannot grasp, with all his literary powers.

Pilnyak's conflict will beset those intellectuals who try to preserve their old privileged status of observer and critic. Rodionov's clarity and purity will be the portion of those who submerge themselves in the source of life and revolution—the masses. The cure for those sick individuals who cannot see a man, a tree, a dam, construction, a revolution, except through the eyes of



William Siegel

NEWS ITEM—Hamilton Fish denies the charges of the D. A. R. that he helped the Bolsheviks in a speech he made.

I'VE NEVER BEEN A BOLSHEVIST

*I've been a sad if soulful sinning person,
I've gazed upon the grape when it was red;
Often I've beaten wives and cast my curse on
An infant lying sleeping in its bed.
I've smoked, I've sworn,—It's easy to abuse me
There's not a crime my miserable soul has missed.
But the good Recording Angel will excuse me
For I've never, never been a Bolshevik.*

Chorus

*Hibernism and priapism and euphemism and aphorism,
These are the only isms that for me have had a lure —
Nepotism and helotism and aneurism and rheumatism. . .
But as to naughty bolshevism, I'm pure, pure, pure.*

*I fall for almost any real temptation.
I'd beg or steal or murder if it paid,
And it is my delight and recreation
To assault some weak old man or helpless maid.
But yet the priests will grant me absolution.
For I've not joined those anarchistic curs who hissed
And who sought to undermine our Constitution —
No, I've never, never been a bolshevist.*

Chorus

*Hibernism and priapism and optimism and pessimism,
These are the only isms that for me have had a lure —
Syllogism and mysticism and aneurism and rheumatism.
But as to naughty bolshevism, I'm pure, pure, pure.*

From the operetta "THE LAST REVOLUTION" by MANUEL GOMEZ and MICHAEL GOLD.

Dostoevsky, is—contact with the masses. The cure for those who are too selfcentered, individualistic, to be happy in the world of new ethics is—humble apprenticeship with the masses.

The individual must die, that he may live again on a higher psychic plane—this is the law of revolution.

The bourgeois intellectual is a specialized type. He has a special problem to solve when he confronts the social revolution. The workers have not this problem, the problem of Pilnyak and Rodionov. But the revolution needs the intellectuals, and the problem must be analyzed and met.

But why is it, that the American bourgeois critics are not even faintly aware of this problem? In Europe the bourgeois begins to understand that it exists. But here there is still the Boyg, the dismal swamp. And there are no Marxist critics to fight the swamp bravely each morning. American book reviewers write about literature.

Other American journalists report golf, tree sitting or heavy-weight prize fights. Hoopla! The county fair! The boxers and the success!



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JOSEPH FREEMAN

THE WELL-PAID ART OF LYING

Once, on a Spanish liner running from Vera Cruz to New York, I met two American engineers who had quit the silver mines of Pachuca. They were going back to the United States because there was no "future" for them in Mexico.

Leisure aboard a passenger ship is a wonderful thing—if you travel first or second class. You can not only bask in the beauties of sea, sun and sky, celebrated by the poets and advertised by the steamship companies, but you can enjoy the privileges of a billionaire without any of his worries. Unseen slaves in the hot engine room run the ship for you; cooks and waiters hand you excellent food; you can have a casual affair with a girl whom you will never see again, thus combining the maximum of pleasures with the minimum of responsibility; and, in any case, you can drink at the bar.

Sea, sun and sky bored the two American engineers. There were few women around, all of them Spanish, devout and strictly chaperoned. The engineers were somewhat annoyed; they looked for consolation at the bar, drinking whiskey and beer from early morning till early morning, and talking about Mexico.

It seems the Mexicans are a lousy lot. They are filthy, lecherous and treacherous. But the country is a paradise for Americans. There you have climate, women and tequilla. You are—for example—an American engineer; not a big shot, just one of the screws in the machine. They hand you fifty bucks a week, that's a hundred pesos, which is not bad considering that twenty pesos a week is a "high" wage for workers. Material and labor are cheap, so the company can afford to give you a little house rent-free with a servant thrown in free, too. For a couple of pesos a week you can get a young Indian girl to be good to you. All in all, a rather pleasant life. But the best part of it is that you are a member of a superior race. You may be a ham at your own profession and an illiterate outside of it, but the possession of an American passport automatically gives you the right to despise the most brilliant Mexican scientist or painter.

Havana was our last stop in Latin America. One of the engineers, holding up a beaker of bacardi, toasted the other:

"Well, Bill, here's to Latin America! We're leaving a place where we were kings for a place where there are 120,000,000 other slobbs like us."

This was an honest statement by a minor beneficiary of imperialism. He frankly liked Mexico because that semicolonial country supported him, relatively, like a lord; he hated to go home where he would once more become, relatively, a slave.

If this engineer were a writer he would come home not in sadness but in glory. Some strange superstition—left over, probably from the days when only priests were literate—gains for the most ignorant man of letters a more reverential bearing than the best informed engineer could hope for. Instead of working in the Pachuca silver mines for five years he could spend five months eating ham and eggs at Sanborn's, reading Redfield on Tepoztlan, and taking snapshots of handsome Tehuantepec women. Then he could settle for a brief period in a peaceful little village and knock out a book proclaiming his love for Mexico's color and violence, its crumbling cathedrals and churches, its magnificent inertia. He could write in an "intimate and sparkling" fashion about Indian life, governed not by the fascist National Revolutionary Party and American imperialism but by the "suns and seasons"; about peasants who are uninhibited (by anything except such trifles as poverty, misery, superstition, the church, the army, and the new landowners). He could invent a Mexico "without paupers

and without unemployment, with no old age menace and with a definite artistic purpose"—in short, the fake paradise of the eighteenth century "noble and happy savage," or a kind of glorified Croton-on-the-Hudson located in a perfect climate, containing a people whom you can patronize and enjoy as esthetic objects, in a land which you can visit as a tourist but fortunately do not have to inhabit as a native.

Having written such a book, our engineer would be interviewed and photographed in the entire American press; the critics would shower him with praise; the tourists rushing off to Mexico to forget their boredom in Paris will devour his volume on the sun-deck.

A great change seems to have come over our writers. The literary reviews are saying that both poetry and fiction have reached their highest point of development; there is nothing more to be done in these fields; they are bankrupt. You would not think so from the flood of verse and fiction let loose every spring and fall by the publishers, but perhaps this is merely a case of inflation.

It is true, however, that the economic crisis has diverted interest from the arts to the so-called social sciences. To meet the demand of the literary markets those who used to write about their souls, their love affairs and their families have begun to write biography, economics and politics. But the esthetic bacillus is powerful; the habits of poetry and fiction prevail in the books of biography, economics and politics.

"Apropos of the falling snow," it may be remarked that leisure on a hacienda, like leisure aboard ship, is also a wonderful thing. It may also be remarked that a ship is one thing to a sailor, another to a firstclass passenger; just as a hacienda is one thing to a peon and quite another to a wellpaid American writer who enjoys it on a flying visit. Such a writer is, of course, "sincere"; i.e. his bourgeois limitations prevent him from seeing his bourgeois limitations. That is why, if he has any liberal illusions, he does not, perhaps, dream that nothing could be more pleasing to the imperialist powers than to romanticise the poverty, ignorance and superstition of the colonial and semicolonial peoples. If like Stuart Chase, William Spratling, Anita Brenner and a dozen others you will sing lyrical paeans of praise about the blue skies and the golden sunlight and the magic mountain and the fiestas and the pulque, and the paintings and keep your mouth shut about the white terror, the brutal exploitation of the "noble and happy" Indian, the systematic slaughter of the peasants robbed of their land, the predatory role of American capital which owns and runs Mexico—then yours is the world and everything that's in it, and what is more you'll be a successful writer, my son.

That is one way of conducting the literary racket, and here is another:

You are (let us say) an American lady of no great cultural achievements or pretensions. You were born in the U. S. A. and have lived here all your life. Your ancestors missed the Mayflower by five minutes but came over on the next boat. You know the English language fairly well; perhaps you even had pieces published in your highschool paper. Maybe you are goodlooking but that is no special distinction in this country and can get you into the literary racket only if you write verse or fiction. Despite your lifelong sojourn in the land of the free and the home of the brave, no magazine will publish your views on the economic crisis, the Smoot-Hawley tariff, unemployment, conditions in the coal region, or American foreign policy. These things are left to experts. But



Ref.

Anton Refregier

CLASS CONSCIOUS—BEWARE!



Ref.

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Anton Refregier
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do not despair, baby. You, too, may become an expert. Book passage to Moscow or marry an American engineer and go off to the Don Basin or the Urals. Spend a week, a month or a year—certainly no more than a year—in the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics.

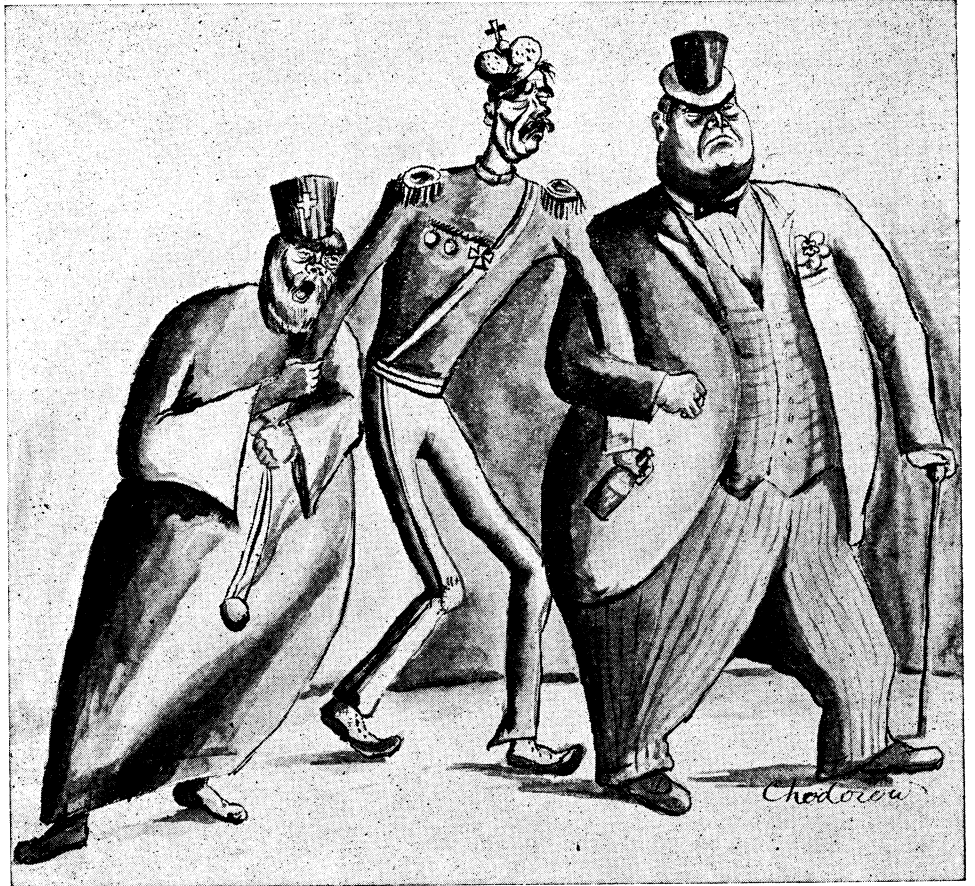
You do not have to learn the Russian language. You need not know anything about politics, economics, Russian history, the theories of Marx and Lenin, the meaning of the proletarian revolution. You do not even have to travel through Russia. Stick around your hotel, invite disgruntled whites and listen to their malicious and impotent gossip. Then come back to the U. S. A. and such is the miracle of the American tempo that overnight you will become an "expert" on Russia.

It is true that we already have millions of Russian "experts." Everybody who stays at the Grand Hotel for three days becomes an "expert." Some of these "experts" have extraordinary talents of second sight. For instance, Henry Wales, demon correspondent of the world's greatest newspaper, wrote a long piece about Magnitogorsk without even visiting the place, although, of course, he did not admit to being an absentee correspondent. You will find that girls who were never able to break into print on any subject in their home town papers are publishing articles in the metropolitan press on the GPU, Stalin, the Five Year Plan, the Soviet coal industry, forced labor, dumping, inflation, the collectivization of agriculture, the new Soviet factories, and a lot of other matters on which they became "experts" in three weeks, particularly the Russian soul which, as everybody knows, is "Asiatic."

By the way: if, on returning to these shores to practice your new profession of Russian "expert" you should hear a strange moaning and groaning, you will know it is Jack London turning in his grave on hearing his daughter explaining the Soviet Union to the sobsisters after ten weeks of profound study.

In your chosen profession you will find many coworkers but no competitors. Karl Kitchen, Alice Hughes, Joan London, and scores of similar scholars have by no means closed the field to you. It seems that in every field which involves the Soviet Union there are more jobs than workers; the editors are so hungry for Russian material (after a famine of ten years in which they would print nothing except nonsense and propaganda) that there is room not only for really skilled workers like Louis Fischer, Maurice Hindus and Anna Louise Strong, but even for unskilled workers like yourself. Take heart; step on it, kid; let your slogan be "to overtake and surpass" Eve Garrette Grady. However, do not suffer "dizziness from success." You need not go as far as Mrs. Grady, who wrote articles in *praise* of the Soviet Union for the *Moscow News* and articles *against* the Soviet Union for the *Saturday Evening Post*. It would not be advisable to try this double bookkeeping again. The editors of the *Moscow News* are probably more cautious now in choosing their correspondents; then again, you may be caught with the goods.

Better choose one line and stick to it, and the most profitable line is bunk. Lie about the Soviet Union as other writers lie about Mexico, only the other way around. It is very simple: Mexico—where imperialism and fascism oppress the people, where peasants are robbed of their lands, where masses of workers are unemployed; where misery, illiteracy and political murder prevail; where the church continues to poison the people, where the population is kept in feudal oppression and darkness—this Mexico is a heaven to which you look wistfully—and safely—from a skyscraper window in New York; but the Soviet Union—where the workers run the country, where planned socialist economy steadily improves the physical and spiritual lot of the masses of the population, where illiteracy and superstition and race hatred are disappearing, where the entire resources of the country are directed toward building a socialist civilization in which poverty, ignorance



Eugene Chodorow
THE GRAND DUKE CYRIL Vladimirovich—cousin of the late Czar, arrives for the conference of Russian Monarchists to be held in New York, early in October.

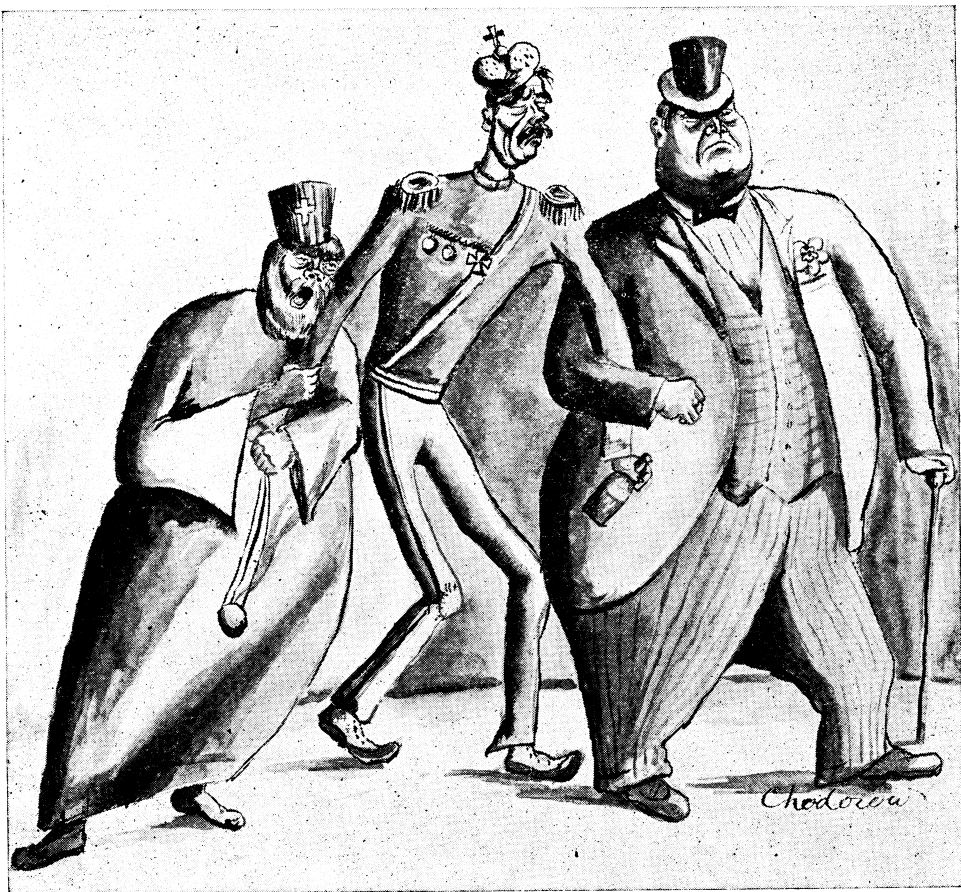
and violence will be only prehistoric memories—that is a hell which you must curse in the pages of the *Saturday Evening Post* at five cents a word.

In neither case need anything be said about the fraud and force which prevails in the U. S. A., about the misery and the struggles of the millions of unemployed, the desperate poverty of the farmers, the political demagogy and corruption of the three capitalist parties, the oppression and exploitation of the Negro masses, the crooked role of the church which stimulates the superstition of the people in the interests of capitalism.

An American in Moscow writes me as follows:

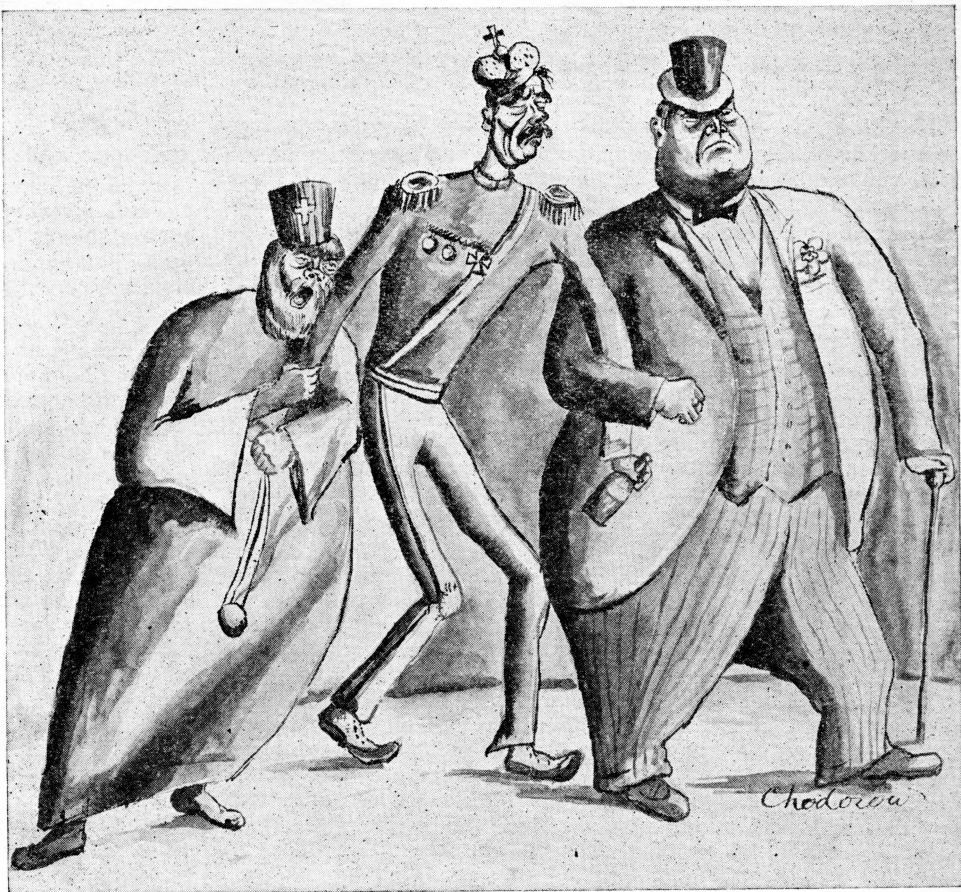
"The New York papers have arrived here with a long statement about Russia by Professor C. M., who was correspondent here for an American news agency. It made me sick. The whole thing is a tissue of lies. I felt like writing a piece showing him up but he isn't worth it. But this is typical of the American intelligentsia in whose ranks, I hope, nobody ever counted me. If Russian women are ugly because they do not eat right I suppose Mrs. C. M. starved all her life. And I prefer the warm temperament of a Russian girl, despite a few extra milimeters of hip width, to the icy beauties of New York. The Professor I see, claims he "hobnobbed with cabinet ministers" in Moscow. It's just a simple lie. One of many. He is just feathering his American nest with such stuff. Few intellectuals in America, unless they have proletarian antecedents, rise to the necessary level. It is difficult even in Russia for the Russian intellectual. Professor C. M. is typical of the men with pigmy minds who come here, see the circus but miss the elephant—the biggest feature of the affair. They do not understand; they merely hate."

One last piece of advice to the prospective overnight "expert" on the Soviet Union, of either sex: Be sure to raise a howl about the freedom of the press. Do not put it too bluntly, of course; do not say that the workers of the Soviet Union forbid irresponsible adventurers and ignorant liars to mislead the reading public; point out, rather, the blessings of a free press, such as the bourgeois press here, where one can spin fantastic tales about the glories of Mexico or the horrors of Russia freely, and, what is more to the point, profitably.



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PEOPLE WITHOUT SHOES

Haiti is a land of people without shoes—black people, whose bare feet tread the dusty roads to market in the early morning, or pat softly on the bare floors of hotels, serving foreign guests. These barefooted ones care for the rice and cane fields under the hot sun. They climb high mountains picking coffee beans, and wade through surf to fishing boats in the blue sea. All of the work that keeps Haiti alive, pays for the American Occupation, and enriches foreign traders—that vast and basic work—is done there by Negroes without shoes.

Yet shoes are things of great importance in Haiti. Everyone of any social or business position must wear them. To be seen in the streets barefooted marks one as low-caste person of no standing in the community. Coats, too, are of an importance equal to footwear. In a country where the climate would permit everybody to go naked with ease, officials, professional men, clerks, and teachers swelter in dignity with coats buttoned about their bellies on the hottest days.

Strange, bourgeois, and a little pathetic is this accent on clothes and shoes in an undeveloped land where the average wage is thirty cents a day, and where the sun blazes like fury. It is something carried over, perhaps, from the white masters who wore coats and shoes long ago, and then had force and power; or something remembered, maybe, as infinitely desirable—like leisure and rest and freedom. But articles of clothing for the black masses in Haiti are not cheap. Cloth is imported, as are most of the shoes. Taxes are high, jobs are scarce, wages are low, so the doubtful step upward to the dignity of leather between one's feet and the earth, and a coat between one's body and the sun, is a step not easily to be achieved in this island of the Caribbean.

Practically all business there is in the hands of white foreigners, so one must buy one's shoes from a Frenchman or a Syrian who pays as little money as possible back into Haitian hands. Imports and exports are in charge of foreigners, too, German often, or American, or Italian. Haiti has no foreign credit, no steamships, few commercial representatives abroad. And the government, Occupation controlled, puts a tax on almost everything. There are no factories of any consequence in the land, and what few there are are largely under non-Haitian control. Every ship brings loads of imported goods from the white countries. Even Haitian postage stamps are made abroad. The laws are dictated from Washington. American controllers count their money. And the military Occupation extracts fat salaries for its own civilian experts and officials.

What then, pray, have the dignified native citizens with shoes been doing all the while—those Haitians, mulattoes largely, who have dominated the politics of the country for decades, and who have drawn almost as sharp a class line between themselves and their shoeless black brothers as have the Americans with their imported color line dividing the Occupation from *all* Haitians? How have these super-class citizens of this once-Republic been occupying themselves? Living for years on under-paid peasant labor and lazy government jobs, is one answer. Writing flowery poetry in the manner of the French academicians, is another. Creating bloody civil wars and wasteful political-party revolutions, and making lovely speeches on holidays. Borrowing government money abroad to spend on themselves—and doing nothing for the people without shoes, building no schools, no factories, creating no advancements for the masses, no new agricultural developments, no opportunities—too busy feeding their own pride and their own acquisitiveness. The result: a country poor, ignorant, and hungry at the bottom, corrupt and greedy at the top—a wide open way for the equally greedy Yankees of the North to step in, with a corruption more powerful than Paris-cultured mulattoes had the gall to muster.

Haiti today: a fruit tree for Wall Street, a mango for the Occupation, coffee for foreign cups, and poverty for its own black workers and peasants. The recently elected Chamber of Deputies (the Haitian Senate) has just voted to increase its salaries to \$250.00 a month. The workers on the public roads receive 30c a day, and the members of the gendarmerie \$2.50 a week. A great difference in income. But then—the deputies must wear shoes. They have dignity to maintain. They govern.

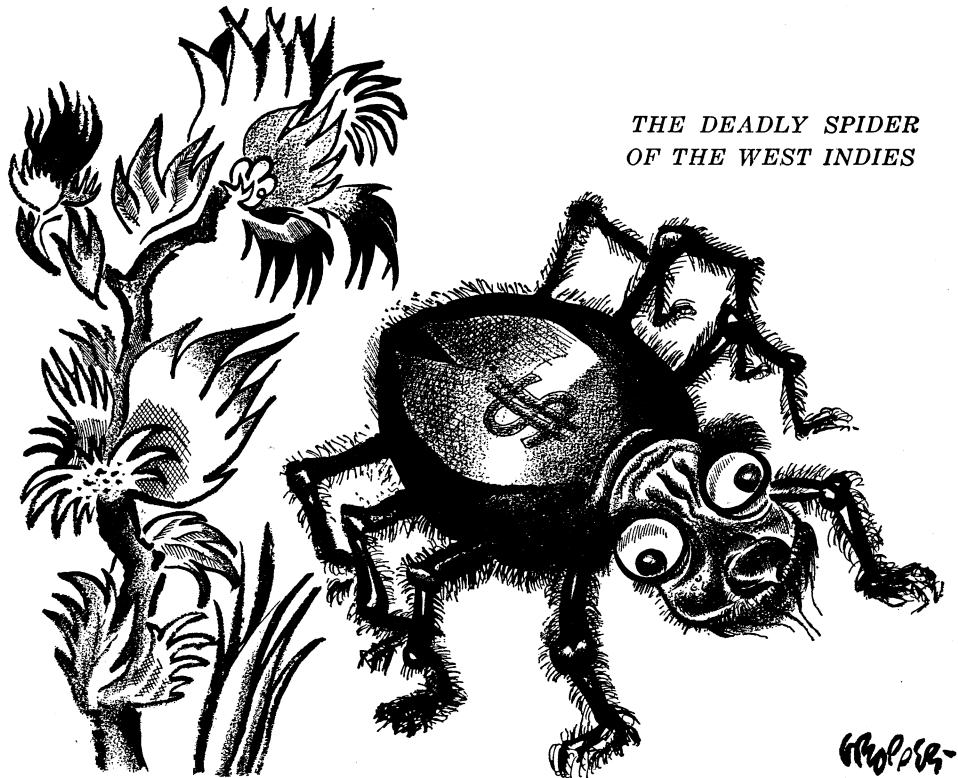
As to the Occupation, after fifteen years, about all for which one can give the Marines credit are a few decent hospitals and a rural health service. The roads of the country are still impassable, and schools continue to be lacking. The need for economic reform is greater than ever.

The people without shoes cannot read or write. Most of them have never seen a movie, have never seen a train. They live in thatched huts or rickety houses; rise with the sun; sleep with the dark. They wash their clothes in running streams with lathery weeds—too poor to buy soap. They move slowly, appear lazy because of generations of undernourishment and constant lack of incentive to ambition. On Saturdays they dance to the Congo drums; and on Sundays go to mass,—for they believe in the Saints and the Voodoo gods, all mixed. They grow old and die, and are buried the following day after an all-night wake where their friends drink, sing, and play games, like a party. The rulers of the land never miss them. More black infants are born to grow up and work. Foreign ships continue to come into Haitian harbors, dump goods, and sail away with the products of black labor—cocoa beans, coffee, sugar, dye-woods, fruits, and rice. The mulatto upper classes continue to send their children to Europe for an education. The American Occupation lives in the best houses. The officials of the National City Bank, New York, keep their heavy-jawed portraits in the offices of the Banque d'Haiti. And because black hands have touched the earth, gathered in the fruits, and loaded ships, somebody—across the class and color lines—many somebodies become richer and wiser, educate their children to read and write, to travel, to be ambitious, to be superior, to create armies, and to build banks. Somebody wears coats and shoes.

On Sunday evening in the Champs de Mars, before the Capital at Port au Prince, the palace band plays immortally out-worn music while genteel people stroll round and round the brilliance of the lighted bandstand. Lovely brown and yellow girls in cool dresses, and dark men in white suits, pass and repass.

I asked a friend of mine, my first night there. "Where are all the people without shoes? I don't see any."

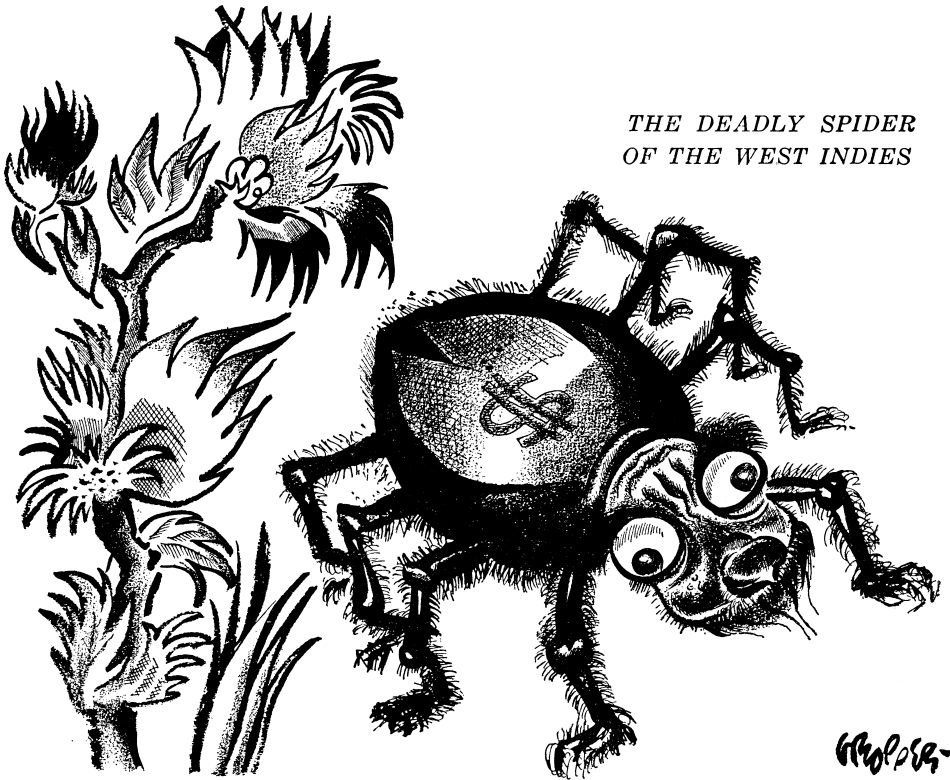
"They can't walk here," he said, "The police would drive them away."



THE DEADLY SPIDER
OF THE WEST INDIES

William Gropper

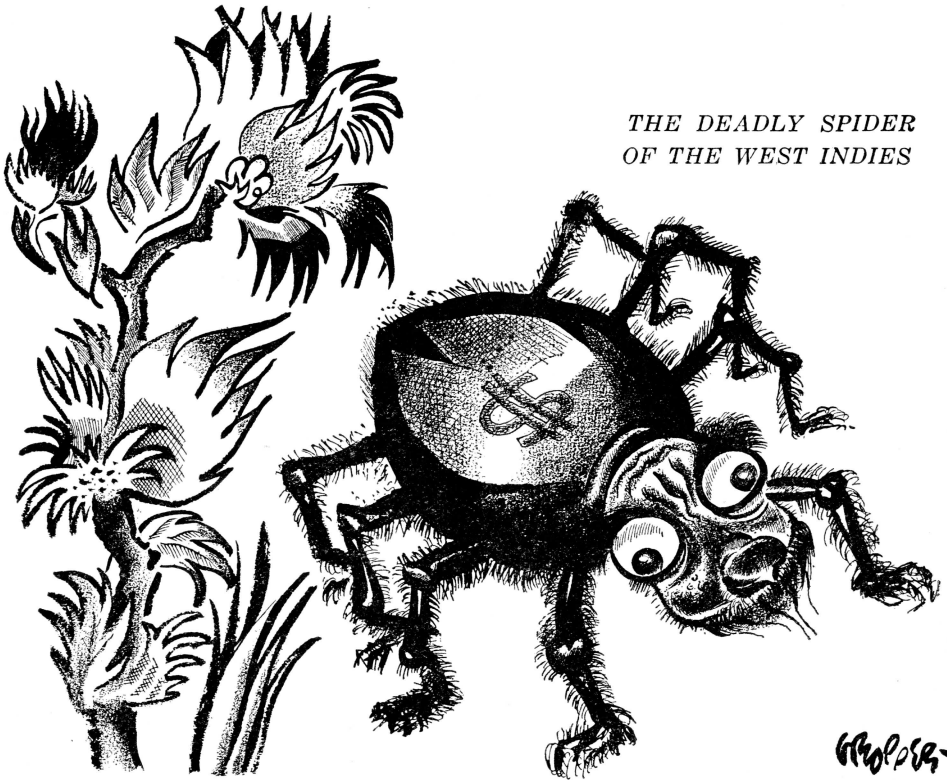
*THE DEADLY SPIDER
OF THE WEST INDIES*



Gropper

William Gropper

THE DEADLY SPIDER
OF THE WEST INDIES



Groppe

William Gropper

WHITTAKER CHAMBERS**OUR COMRADE MUNN** A Story

Our Comrade Munn may not have been a "big man," and that may be the final judgement of the entire Party on his record, too. He was really too shy and unassuming, and so never reached that position in the leadership which our locality and the entire district demanded, and which we all thought him capable of. If anything, he avoided leadership, as he did all personal prominence, always passing the credit for successes which he planned, and partly executed himself, to those who helped him, and always bearing more than his share of blame.

"Little dogs have big barks," he used to say in his way. Which is probably a wrong attitude in our Party, since we are not interested in modesty, but in accomplishment, and if any comrade thinks he has done something, he ought to speak up and say so, so that he can be used again.

But I believe Comrade Munn had a much better, a real reason, and knew it, though this same modesty kept him from mentioning it. He said once to me, "There's too much skipping around. Of course, the Party is weak in forces, but no sooner does a comrade win the confidence of the local comrades, or what's harder, the local workers, and starts local organization and campaigns, than the district gets wind of him. He's too good for where he is, so they decide to put him in more important work. And they send him somewhere else, and he starts all over again. And then they put him in still more important work. It's like the turkey on the tree. You shake the tree and the turkey is there. You shake the tree again and the turkey is still there. And you shake the tree again and the turkey is gone. I want to dig in and finish one job."

That's just how he used to talk, and when I write these things, I seem to be able to hear his voice as he said them, and I see that it's going to be hard to write about Comrade Munn. We always knew he had shortcomings, but we liked him anyway, and when he was dead, we found out how much more we thought of him, more than just liking him, more than admiring him, much more. We found out we depended on him.

And if it's bad for comrades to depend on a leading comrade what else is leadership? And that, in my opinion, is why our section is recognized today as almost a model to our Party, and why the district could study its methods of getting into the shops, at the last plenum.

And when you take into account the size of Comrade Munn's funeral, which was a real mass funeral, and consider that a number of workers threw down their tools and walked out of the shops against the bosses' orders, to march in the procession,—then I say, that's a demonstration!

And I say, too, it proves Comrade Munn was at least on the right track. We didn't always think so.

It sounds impossible now and bad, but it may help comrades elsewhere—there was a time when we were very suspicious of Comrade Munn. I remember the first meeting he attended. We used to meet in a small loft. It was dirty, cold and the light was very poor. Once in a while we would have a dance there, and the red crepe paper festoons were never taken down till the next dance, but got faded and dusty unless they fell down in the meantime.

I saw the comrade, sitting to one side, the moment I came in. He seemed to be a tall man, with a long white face and heavy brown hair. I was a little late and the chairman was speaking, but Comrade Hammer, who was sitting in front, jumped up and took me into a corner. "Who is that?" he wanted to know in a worried voice. How should I know who it was? But I thought from the way he spoke it must be a Department of Justice agent.

Our branch was in a city of twenty-five thousand, with five big shoe factories, two textile mills, a gun factory, and a lot of light industry. A city of, at least, ten thousand workers and their families, mostly Americans.

Our branch was in existence for four years at this time. We had twenty-seven comrades, and used to be pointed out for the large proportion of workers we had, "proletarian elements" as they were called. Four of them were carpenters, two plasterers,

two were plumbers, one was a laborer, and one a cutter in a shoe factory. But only one of these comrades, a Norwegian carpenter, spoke English well. Of the others, three were Russians, two Jewish, three Italians, and one a Finn. I never saw one of them talking to an American worker before Comrade Munn came. One of the Jewish comrades, Celensky, the shoe cutter, was always studying English in private, but nobody knew that then, and he spoke very badly.

But the secretary of our branch was an American. His name was Comrade Archie Pollard, and as he could write more clearly and express himself better than most of the comrades, he was made secretary. His father was a lawyer for one of the shoe companies, but Comrade Archie used to say he would never "go into bourgeois business," though he continued to live at his father's house, and never had a job. The last I heard of him he was writing for a shoe trade journal. He got the position by posing as an expert on Reds, and he is still an "expert."

The leading comrades of our branch were both Jewish, one named Hammer, kept a small candy and newspaper store, the other, Finestone, had a dry-goods store. Behind their backs some of the comrades used to call them Finestone, Hammer & Co., but they knew how to run our section. Pollard used to go to their houses, and another American comrade, a woman whose name was Cartwright. She wrote a sonnet on Sacco and Vanzetti, beginning, "How like the Nazarene's their Calvary," which Comrade Munn called, "Puke," when someone showed it to him once. Altogether they had what you might call a "social set."

But we never increased our membership after we reached twentyseven, and the largest number of comrades we ever got to a meeting was twenty. That was to re-elect Pollard after Comrade Celensky had called him a bourgeois, in a meeting. Generally, there were ten or so.

What I have said about Finestone and Hammer does not prove that I am an anti-Semite. The movement in this country was certainly kept alive in places at one time by the devotion of sincere Jewish comrades. I will now turn to them, for one such was Comrade Celensky.

He was a short, thin, irritable, little man, who never missed a meeting, apparently in order to attack Finestone, Hammer and Pollard. Whenever Pollard had finished reading the district letter, Celensky would demand the floor, leap up and offer a resolution to accept it, especially those parts demanding definite action, "before Finestone, Hammer & Co. have a chance to kill it." He was the only one that called them Finestone, Hammer & Co. to their faces.

Finally, it settled into a farce, in which either Comrade Finestone or Comrade Hammer took to seconding Comrade Celensky's motion, and then filling the committees with their own friends. But those committees seldom functioned, and there were always a thousand good reasons why. When they did, however, as in the Sacco and Vanzetti campaign, the leading comrades took full credit in reporting to the district.

Comrade Celensky was generally called a "leftist". So when it was discovered that the stranger at the meeting was an American named Munn, a shoe worker like Celensky, the comrades were still more suspicious, and it looked as if Comrade Celensky was the only person who would endorse his card, and he would not be admitted. Especially when Hammer said, with a smile, "What do you want? To have two Celensky's? One isn't enough?"

The stranger just sat there while everybody shouted about him, and Celensky shouted loudest while the sweat ran down his face. "But he's a worker anyway, isn't he, Comrade Hammer?" I shouted myself, "and this is a working class Party, isn't it?" I was in the back of the loft, and I saw the stranger turn his whole body, and without moving a muscle of his face, look at me. Hammer's remark made me so mad that I endorsed the card.

And that is how I came to help bring Comrade Munn into our Party. At that time I wasn't any better, though maybe no worse, than the others, for the trouble with an atmosphere like that in our branch is that it is contagious, all the comrades finally get the same disease, and every new one is either stifled, or disgusted

before he ever gets in; in any case, made useless.

At first it looked as if that had happened to Comrade Munn. For two months he never said a word, never even voted.

Then he asked for the floor one night. Hammer stopped whispering to Pollard long enough to give it to him, and Finestone was smiling. Everybody wanted to hear what the big, shambling man, who was still a stranger to the comrades, had to tell us. And Comrade Celensky broke into a sweat, as usual when he is excited, as if he were making a speech himself.

"Comrades," Comrade Munn hesitated and smiled over their heads while he slowly rubbed his chin, below one corner of his mouth, with his long little finger. "Comrades, I'm a working man myself. And when I came into this Party, it was because I thought it was a workingman's Party. You know, if not all working people, anyway people who wanted to agitate and organize workingmen. Now, of course, I may be wrong, but in two months that I've been watching, I haven't seen anybody organize as much as a dog yet!" And his voice from being quiet, suddenly became very harsh. "But I've heard a lot of talk."

"Comrades, there's going to be a walkout in my department Monday. I see you comrades knew all about it—from the blank looks on your faces!" Everybody felt a kind of guilt we had never felt before: how should we know about every walkout, and yet it seemed wrong.

"I want you comrades to choose a committee of three to advise the strikers. I nominate myself to head the committee, and Comrade Celensky, also a shoe worker, and . . ."

"Celensky is a Jew," Finestone objected, "and most of the shoeworkers are gentiles!"

"What difference does that make? They want to be led, they won't ask much if he's a Jew or not if they're satisfied with how he's leading them. If you knew more about workingmen, you'd know they divide Jews into good Jews and bad Jews according as they're for or against you. Besides, it's one way to overcome race prejudice in practice. So I ask for Comrade Celensky, and . . ."

"Then I nominate Hammer," shouted Finestone. They had long ago dropped the Comrade "among friends," even for official business.

"I think Comrade Hammer is the worst possible choice for the committee," said Munn. He spoke directly to the comrades. "Comrades, Comrade Hammer is not a workingman. I don't think

he understands workingmen. I don't believe our committee could work well together if he was on it. The success of the strike will depend partly on the smooth running of our committee. And on the success of the strike depends the bringing nearer to our Party of all those contacts in the factory that Comrade Celensky and I have made. That is a big thing for our Party. Instead of Hammer, I nominate and wish the comrades would choose—*him*." He did not know my name.

"Him! He's an intellectual!" screamed Finestone.

"Will you call him unreliable?" asked Munn.

"Unreliable? An intellectual?"

"Would you call *him* unreliable?"

Finestone hesitated.

"Then I wish the comrades would put him on the committee. It's time he had strike experience."

Perhaps nothing ever surprised Finestone, Hammer & Co. in all their lives as much as that ballot in which they were the only three votes against us. Of course, next time they were prepared. But I did not set out to tell the story of the long fight before they were stopped from hampering Party work.

Though that fight was bitter, it was the external fights by which our Comrade taught us to build our Party while we were in the very act of fighting. "Like this Greek wrestler, Antaeus," he said, "Hercules killed him by holding him up in thin air, off the earth, just like Finestone & Co. have been killing our section by holding it away from the factory workers—up in the air."

"You've got to make a new contact every day, no matter where," he told a group of comrades another time. And he told me afterwards, "If I haven't made one, I go to the coffee-pot at night. You're always sure to find somebody there."

He was forever hammering away at new contacts. Two months after the strike he brought eleven workers into the section. "Don't get over-optimistic," he warned us. "We're simply reaping the crop that Comrade Celensky and I have been watering for months before this. The work of bringing in real men from the factory proletariat is the slowest, most heart-breaking business—as a rule. Of course, in time of strike it goes much faster."

It was part of his drive for contacts "with the factory proletariat" that made him insist that "we must have our own press, right here, for our own use." Finestone & Co. laughed loud and began to call him Comrade "Money."

"We've got all we can do subscribing to the Party press."

"Yes, we ought to discuss the situation here in regards to the Party press sometime," said Comrade Munn, and by then that had the sound of a threat. "But what we need now is a weekly mimeographed sheet, edited by three different comrades every week, so that everybody will learn how, and distributed by the Pioneers. That will give them something to do at last. The paper will be our local organizer. It will contain local news about the shops, worker correspondence, instructions for organization, the Party's line on local events. The first distribution at any shop will be free. From then on, a cent a copy. The act of buying links the worker to the movement. It establishes that here's something he's willing to pay for. That's worth a hundred free distributions. And where one buys, others will."

"But first we have to buy a mimeograph ourselves. It will cost money, Finestone says, and he is beginning to call me 'Comrade Money'. Behind my back, of course, so as not to hurt my feelings. Comrade Finestone's natural instinct is right: it will mean a sacrifice. But whether you've been in the Party all your life, or since the last meeting, you know that everything is accomplished in the revolutionary movement by sacrifice, nothing without it. You boycott something, you go without something, you strike while you're hungry. All sacrifice. But such sacrifice is training, it has nothing to do with Christian sacrifice, which is to glorify the ego. Our sacrifices are training of our class for the war when we, the weaker, have to overthrow the stronger class. Necessary training. Where we're so soft we have forgotten, or don't know how to sacrifice, it is necessary to learn. Comrades, I ask you to raise the money for a mimeograph."

Later, we voted the machine.

That mimeograph was the wedge with which our local Party split open the doors of the bosses' factories. In the early days, when Finestone and Hammer were still hampering such work, I have seen Comrade Munn himself selling our mimeograph papers in the snow, at a factory gate where the Pioneers had been arrested. That he was not blacklisted was because he was one of the best workers in his line. And he was always harping on the theme that Communist workers must win the regard of their shop mates by being the best in the shop.

He was criticized by Finestone for distributing papers in per-



Walter Quirt

SEARCHING STRIKING MINERS—PENNSYLVANIA



Walter Quirt

SEARCHING STRIKING MINERS—PENNSYLVANIA



Walter Quirt

SEARCHING STRIKING MINERS—PENNSYLVANIA



THE AMERICAN LEGION GOES INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Gilbert Rocke

son, and though Finestone was looking for a talking point, there was some truth in his charges. It was a kind of rank and file-ism on Comrade Munn's part, and if he had not similarly exposed himself later, he might never have been killed.

Comrade Munn answered the attack by saying that there were occasions when a leading comrade has to expose himself for the sake of setting an example, something, he added, which Finestone would not know much about. And he began that discussion of our work with the Party press that he had threatened.

"The circulation of the Party papers", he said, "is one of the simplest and most effective ways of drawing rank and file comrades into active work. The circulation of the press in this section ought to be so well organized, (because it is a very simple matter that Pioneers could handle if necessary), that every week a different group of comrades could circulate our papers without a hitch. We are not always going to be a legal Party. We cannot always depend upon the United States post-office to deliver our papers for us. Circulation by comrades ought to be one of the most important and efficient means of organizing our underground apparatus. And hand in hand with circulation by comrades, goes the getting of new subscriptions. It is one of the best methods for developing Communist responsibility. We do each of these things separately, or we don't do them at all. But they all dovetail, they are all part of one process, and when one lags they all lag. That explains why we fail to pull ourselves out of a slump on such work—because we pay attention now to one, now to another, and never to the interlocking parts of the whole process."

We began, not all at once, but little by little, to put in practice the circulation of our Party press by our comrades, which is now so successful throughout our section, that comrades have long forgotten that it ever was anything else, and take such work as a matter of course. Of course, there are very severe penalties for failure to get the papers to our readers.

The correctness of Comrade Munn's position about the press was verified two years later, during the big shoe strike, when the post-office, police and newsdealers did everything to suppress our papers.

Five factories went out, and after two months the strikers showed no signs of weakening, though it was winter. "Relief is the backbone of any strike," Comrade Munn had said at the beginning, and he was still insisting on relief at the time he was killed. He had another variation, though,—that "the factory proletariat is the backbone of our Party," and it is only in relation to his effort to draw in that stratum that his work can really be understood.

Inevitably, as the strike struggle deepened, it began to attract

the sympathies and interest of larger and larger numbers of workers, not only those who were on strike, for we had begun to have contracts in all the shops.

Meanwhile the shoe bosses began to utilize every means in their power to re-open the mills.

They bet on the religious issue as one of their best cards. Day after day for two months, the entire mill owners' press of our city wept and gnashed its teeth at the "Red atheists" and the "atheistic Reds." While the editorials warned, and the cartoons showed the horrors of irreligion in leading children into crime, prostitution, drug addiction, etc.

Of course, this was not an accidental issue. Many of the workers were Irish, Italian or Polish. And, furthermore, the largest shareholder in the Atlas Mills, and member of the city council, F. X. Queeley, was the brother of Father Patrick Queeley, one of the best known Irish priests.

He was a man of medium height, stocky and strong, with the build of a bull and a bulldog jaw, and a long straight mouth with lips so thin that he seemed to be sucking them in. "He won't stop at anything, watch out," Comrade Munn warned us.

Using the pulpit as a rostrum he was constantly calling on the workers to submit, reminding them, via the parable of Mary and Martha, that "the Marthas of this world are not the less dignified, the less noble, the less free because it is their privilege to serve." And then he would attack the idleness of the rich, drawing a comparison in favor of the life of the poor, but happy, which has been the method in his church for several thousand years.

Father Maccara, a thin, olive-faced Italian priest, with a mouth that was always smiling, ably seconded the Irish father.

By the end of three months his brother's affairs looked so dark that Father Queeley entered the arena in person. It was a cold, dark morning, and the pickets in the long lines were keeping up their spirits with "Solidarity," and the coffee which our relief handed out to every man and woman. Police were all over.

Comrade Munn was leading one line, Celensky another. Suddenly Father Queeley strode up with a police captain for escort.

"I command all Christians to leave this line," said the priest.

The men did not move.

"I command all Christians to leave this line," Father Queeley repeated.

There was some huddled consultation, and three women and an embarrassed man stepped out.

"Will the rest of you crucify Him again?" asked the Father.

More men broke the line.

"These people are fighting for their bread," Comrade Munn shouted loud enough to be heard all over the street. "You are trying to stop them because your brother, F. X. Queeley, owns this mill. The only God you serve is Money!"

The Father's jaw set like a prize fighter's.

"That man," pointing to Celensky, "is a Christ-killer! A Jew! And as for that man," pointing to Comrade Munn, "if God were not merciful, He would strike him dead where he stands for leading you into violence and sin."

It was critical. The whole long line was wavering. One of the women had begun to weep. Comrade Munn's face was pale.

He took out his watch. "I repeat," he said, "you want to break this strike because your brother owns this mill. You talk about God! Well, many of these men and women also worship God. You say He is merciful. If He is, and I am as bad as you say, He ought to strike me dead where I stand!" He held up his watch. "In fact, I give God just ten minutes to strike me dead and prove you're right. In the meantime the picketing will go on. Lead yourselves and don't be afraid."

They began hesitantly to march again. But the eyes of everybody remained fixed on the tall body of Comrade Munn, standing in one spot on the street, with his watch in his hand, daring God to strike him dead—and timing Him!



THE AMERICAN LEGION GOES INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Gilbert Rocke



THE AMERICAN LEGION GOES INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Gilbert Rockefeller

"Ten minutes is up," he called at last after the line had shuffled back and forth several times. "I'm still alive Father Queeley."

The Father's face was white and distorted with rage as he whispered a word to the captain of police, who blew his whistle. It began the bloodiest charge to date, but Comrade Munn had saved the strike that day.

"It's an old trick," he told us afterwards, "every atheist soapboxer knows it. But don't think they'll stop there. I wonder what they'll do next, probably arrest us all again." And anybody who thinks Father Queeley was through reckons without the bosses or the clergy.

Queeley was on hand again the next day, and again he ordered all Christians to leave the line. For a long time no one stirred, but at the first sign of wavering, Comrade Munn took out his watch. Again he stood with it open. Again all eyes were fixed on him, but his own eyes kept wandering around the street as if he were looking for what else they had up their sleeves: he couldn't believe they were going through with this same comedy again. He was right.

Suddenly there were three thin *pings*, and Comrade Munn's tall body fell, like a gate-post going over, in a heap on the paving. The thugs had come to the aid of God. The women shrieked and men groaned. Everybody was frightened and started to run.

Celensky was the first to come to his senses. "He's shot," he kept shouting in his sick English. "Shot Shot! Shot! Not God! Shot!" But he failed to make them understand. Everything was confusion.

"Tell them, tell them," he begged me. He forced Munn's watch into my hand. I held it up where everybody could see.

"A gunman shot Munn! Gunmen," I cried. "If it wasn't, let God strike me dead, too!"

It helped rally the Communist workers, those new comrades whom Munn had brought into the section in the last year. They formed a group to cover the confusion of the line and started to shout "Solidarity" as the police charge swept down.

It was with great difficulty that I got into the hospital to see Comrade Munn. Celensky they would not let through at all. Our Comrade was dying, and I sat beside him for three hours while he suffered with the racking pain in his stomach where one of the bullets had hit. At first he did not seem to know me, but toward the end, I saw his eyes fixed on me, and on his face was that same humorous smile I saw the first time he addressed our Communist branch.

He wanted to speak, but the thick words came with difficulty. I bent my head to his mouth.

"Celensky," I made out.

"Yes, yes," I said, "Celensky!"

"Celensky," he repeated as if he couldn't think of the rest, "Celensky—must learn . . ."

"Celensky must learn what?" I said.

"English."

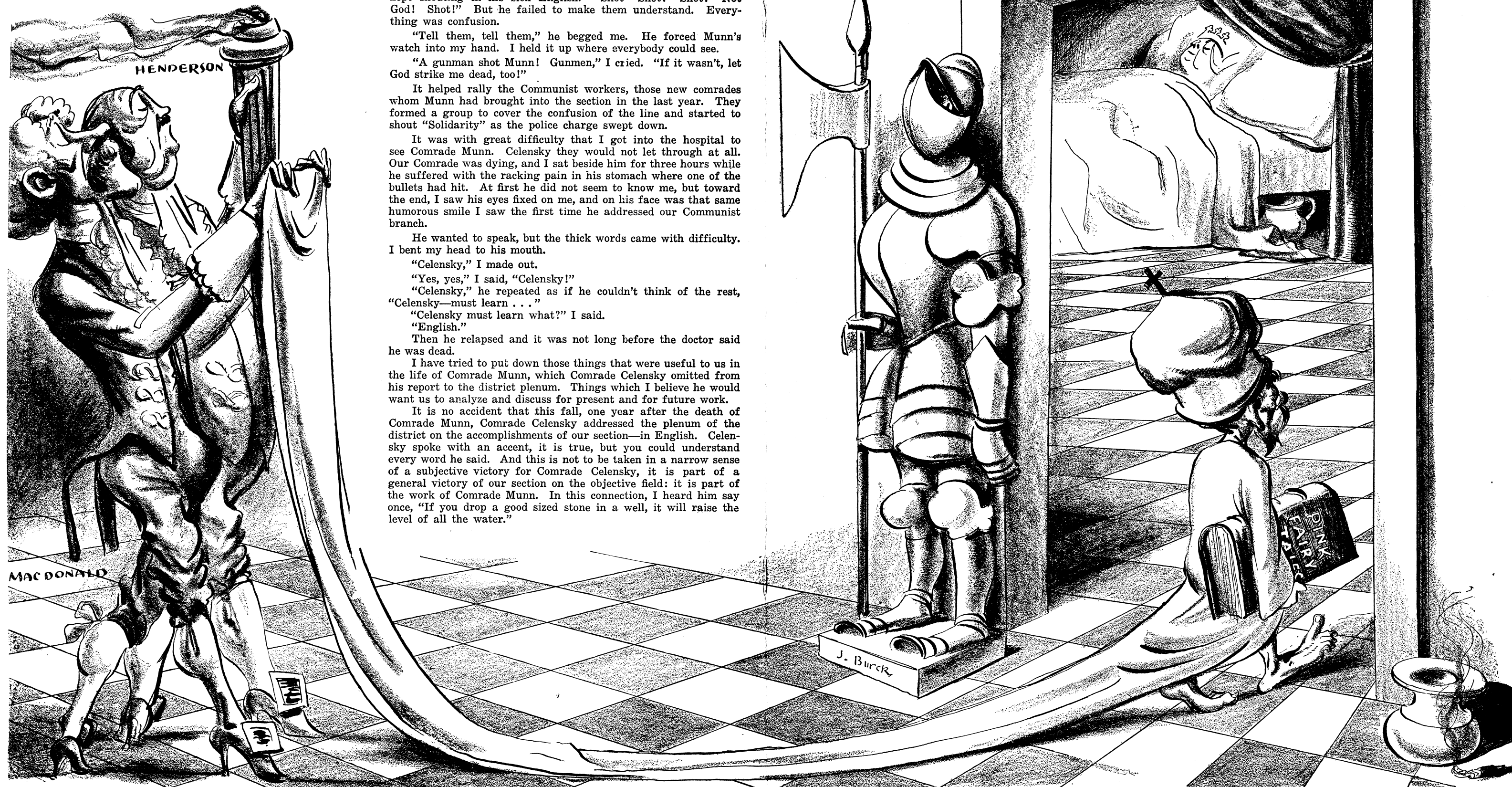
Then he relapsed and it was not long before the doctor said he was dead.

I have tried to put down those things that were useful to us in the life of Comrade Munn, which Comrade Celensky omitted from his report to the district plenum. Things which I believe he would want us to analyze and discuss for present and for future work.

It is no accident that this fall, one year after the death of Comrade Munn, Comrade Celensky addressed the plenum of the district on the accomplishments of our section—in English. Celensky spoke with an accent, it is true, but you could understand every word he said. And this is not to be taken in a narrow sense of a subjective victory for Comrade Celensky, it is part of a general victory of our section on the objective field: it is part of the work of Comrade Munn. In this connection, I heard him say once, "If you drop a good sized stone in a well, it will raise the level of all the water."

The "Socialists" Light the Way

Jacob Burck



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The Father's face was white and distorted with rage as he whispered a word to the captain of police, who blew his whistle. It began the bloodiest charge to date, but Comrade Munn had saved the strike that day.

"It's an old trick," he told us afterwards, "every atheist soapboxer knows it. But don't think they'll stop there. I wonder what they'll do next, probably arrest us all again." And anybody who thinks Father Queeley was through reckons without the bosses or the clergy.

Queeley was on hand again the next day, and again he ordered all Christians to leave the line. For a long time no one stirred, but at the first sign of wavering, Comrade Munn took out his watch. Again he stood with it open. Again all eyes were fixed on him, but his own eyes kept wandering around the street as if he were looking for what else they had up their sleeves: he couldn't believe they were going through with this same comedy again. He was right.

Suddenly there were three thin pings, and Comrade Munn's tall body fell, like a gate-post going over, in a heap on the paving. The thugs had come to the aid of God. The women shrieked and men groaned. Everybody was frightened and started to run.

Celensky was the first to come to his senses. "He's shot," he kept shouting in his sick English. "Shot Shot! Shot! Not God! Shot!" But he failed to make them understand. Everything was confusion.

"Tell them, tell them," he begged me. He forced Munn's watch into my hand. I held it up where everybody could see.

"A gunman shot Munn! Gunmen," I cried. "If it wasn't, let God strike me dead, too!"

It helped rally the Communist workers, those new comrades whom Munn had brought into the section in the last year. They formed a group to cover the confusion of the line and started to shout "Solidarity" as the police charge swept down.

It was with great difficulty that I got into the hospital to see Comrade Munn. Celensky they would not let through at all. Our Comrade was dying, and I sat beside him for three hours while he suffered with the racking pain in his stomach where one of the bullets had hit. At first he did not seem to know me, but toward the end, I saw his eyes fixed on me, and on his face was that same humorous smile I saw the first time he addressed our Communist branch.

He wanted to speak, but the thick words came with difficulty. I bent my head to his mouth.

"Celensky," I made out.

"Yes, yes," I said, "Celensky!"

"Celensky," he repeated as if he couldn't think of the rest, "Celensky—must learn . . ."

"Celensky must learn what?" I said.

"English."

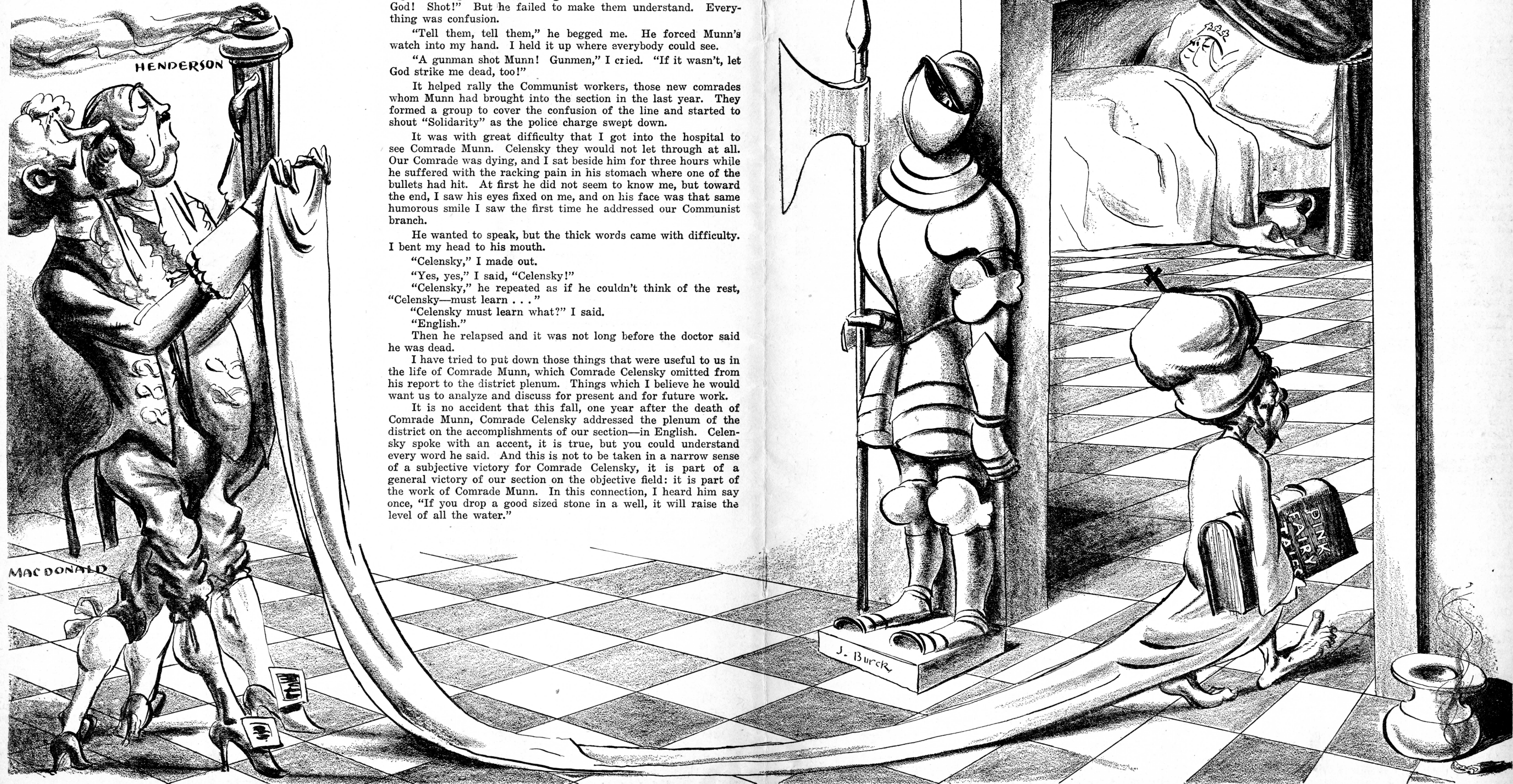
Then he relapsed and it was not long before the doctor said he was dead.

I have tried to put down those things that were useful to us in the life of Comrade Munn, which Comrade Celensky omitted from his report to the district plenum. Things which I believe he would want us to analyze and discuss for present and for future work.

It is no accident that this fall, one year after the death of Comrade Munn, Comrade Celensky addressed the plenum of the district on the accomplishments of our section—in English. Celensky spoke with an accent, it is true, but you could understand every word he said. And this is not to be taken in a narrow sense of a subjective victory for Comrade Celensky, it is part of a general victory of our section on the objective field: it is part of the work of Comrade Munn. In this connection, I heard him say once, "If you drop a good sized stone in a well, it will raise the level of all the water."

The "Socialists" Light the Way

Jacob Burck



NORMAN MACLEOD

AGITATED ALABAMA

"Theah was a scatterin of shots over in the hollows. We thought maybe it was a lynchin, but the niggahs we ast didn't seem to know nothin.

"They said 'nossuh, boss, we didn't heah nothin.'

"We went over theah and, shuah enough, some black faced bastard was dangling fum the limb of a tree, heavy as hell with bullets. I don't reckon he was more'n sixteen.

"In Foh Deposit we learned all about it. This niggah had tried to rape a fohteen yeah old white girl. Said he didn't know much how to do and didn't touch her. But he meant to, all right. Don't you all forget that. Those black sonsabitches are all itching foh white flesh. This one got whut was comin to him."

Liberal opinion in Fort Deposit was represented by one white woman. She told me that she *did* think lynchin may have been too strong for a niggah that age but that "if one of these *communeists* ever come thu heah, lynchin would be too good foh him."

All over Alabama there is a rumor of a Negro uprising. Even some of the Negroes have heard about it. One black mammy approached the woman for whom she worked. She said to her, "We colohed people don't have to work for you white folks no moah. I'm quittin."

These Negro cooks are paid on an average of two dollars a week, with which they support their husbands and their innumerable black pickaninnies. However, they do not have as many children, now, thanks to an efficacious remedy concocted from cotton roots. One black man told me, "We' ah going to split this fall on crops. We aint gonna starve, nossuh."

Every northern white man is arrested and searched for literature in every town through which he passes in Alabama. The shopkeepers are hysterical. Everyone is tense, worried. The only stores that prosper in these hard times are those which deal in firearms. The whites are stocking up the arsenal—no black man has enough money to. And the newspapers are a black spread of arrested Negroes, of suspected Negroes, of lynchings.

On my way back from Bessemer I picked up two ukulele songsters who were on their way to "Ham" to sing over the radio. Pimpily faced youths, smart alecky.

"The Communists causing much trouble down your way?" I asked him.

"Wellsuh, I'll tell you how it is. Out fum Bessemer the niggahs was meetin five hunnerd strong every night a while back. Theah was a private detective out theah who thought it didn't look like no revival meetin he never saw. That boy wasn't afraid of nuthin. He went out theah to inquiah into it and some black bastard thows a flashlight into his face. No niggah can do that around heah and get away with it. The detective just let him have it. He killed five niggahs before anybody could tuhn roun. He wasn't neveh tried neither. He told me he could tell some of those *Communeists* had been thu by the way those niggahs was actin."

The other songster was with his buddy all the way.

"Why", he said, "this is a white man's country. Any niggah bump me on the street and we knocks him down. That's the way me and my buddy does. We knocks em down. So would anyone else who had any principles. Anybody who was a gentleman."

Cities of Hungry Men—

Lynching and race hatred always follow closely upon the heels of hard times. The employers play off the whites against the blacks to ensure no solidarity of front among the working masses.

But it is a different story with the steelworkers, with the ore and coal miners, with the cotton slaves and the beet workers.

"We got to get together and organize the niggahs and whites into one strong general union," a steelworker told me at the Fairfield Steel Works. "Then theah won't be no mo open shops," he said, "and some of these Tennessee Coal and Iron Police will get what the Harlan miners gave them tin hats in Kentucky. You write me when you want to know anything. I aint afraid of the infohmers or losing my job if I works with a union."

All over Alabama there are thousands and thousands of unemployed. The freight trains are loaded. The cities are filled

with hungry men. The ore miners are working one day a week for ten hours. The steel works are using a few men two days a week. The TCI has reduced day labor from three dollars and ten cents to two and ten. The system in all the steel works and coal mines is the same old lousey graft. Jim Crowism, company houses, company script, company commissaries, company wages, open shop, company police, company everything. The workers are ready for a radical union to enter the field. They are finished with the A. F. of L. In the steel mills and coal mines the A. F. of L. has soured. They say that Van Bittner sold them out in the 1920 strike. One United Mine Worker told me that if he ever saw an A. F. of L. organizer he'd put him on the spot. He wants a new union, he said.

But if the steel workers and ore miners are in a hell of a way, the coal miners are desperate. The coal mines are owned by small companies and they can't stand the big capitalist competition. The coal miners are out of a job *for good*. If they had unemployment insurance in Alabama, the coal miners would have to be compensated for the rest of their lives. Many of these miners entered the coal fields and went to work at twelve, thirteen and fourteen years of age. Most of them have worked from forty to sixty years in the mines under the worst conditions imaginable. The coal rooms are thirty inches high, twenty-two feet wide and one hundred and fifty feet deep. The gondolas are twenty-four inches high. If they load the cars too high, they can't push them out to the entry. Only the main line is run by electricity. The rest of it is done by the miners themselves. They worked ten hours to sixteen hours a day in a terribly cramped position, pushed their own cars to the entry, and averaged about twelve dollars for two weeks pay. As in other coal mines up north, they paid for fuses, for lights, for caps, for every imaginable supply. They had no checkweighman. They had no fire inspection. They were paid thirty-five cents a ton for the same coal which, when they bought it back during the winter, cost them six dollars.

During all the years they worked for the coal operators, it was rarely that they saw a coin of real money. The miners call it, "doogeleloo" instead of "clacker." They tell the story of the fervent miner who offered some script for the church collection. The preacher said that God did not accept offerings at twenty-percent discount.

The coal police are called "shack rousters." They are polished off occasionally by the miners. "We have to teach them manners," the miners say.

But now that these miners have slaved their lives away, they are cast off by the operators to learn a new trade, to make a new living.

Sitting on a Powder Keg—

At Seloca a Cumberland Presbyterian minister with the help of a Baptist preacher is attempting to aid five hundred miners to learn a new trade. He is teaching them to farm, at a time when cotton is selling for five cents a pound, at a time when cotton pickers are paid twenty-five cents a hundred pounds (meaning a salary of fifty cents a day), at a time when beet workers are paid the munificent sum of fifteen cents an hour. He is teaching them to be able starve in a different and more diversified capacity. And yet he is feeding five hundred which is more than other charity organizations are doing. The Red Cross distributes seed to starving families.

"We cain't eat seed," one widow with six children told me. "We want somethin to eat," they say.

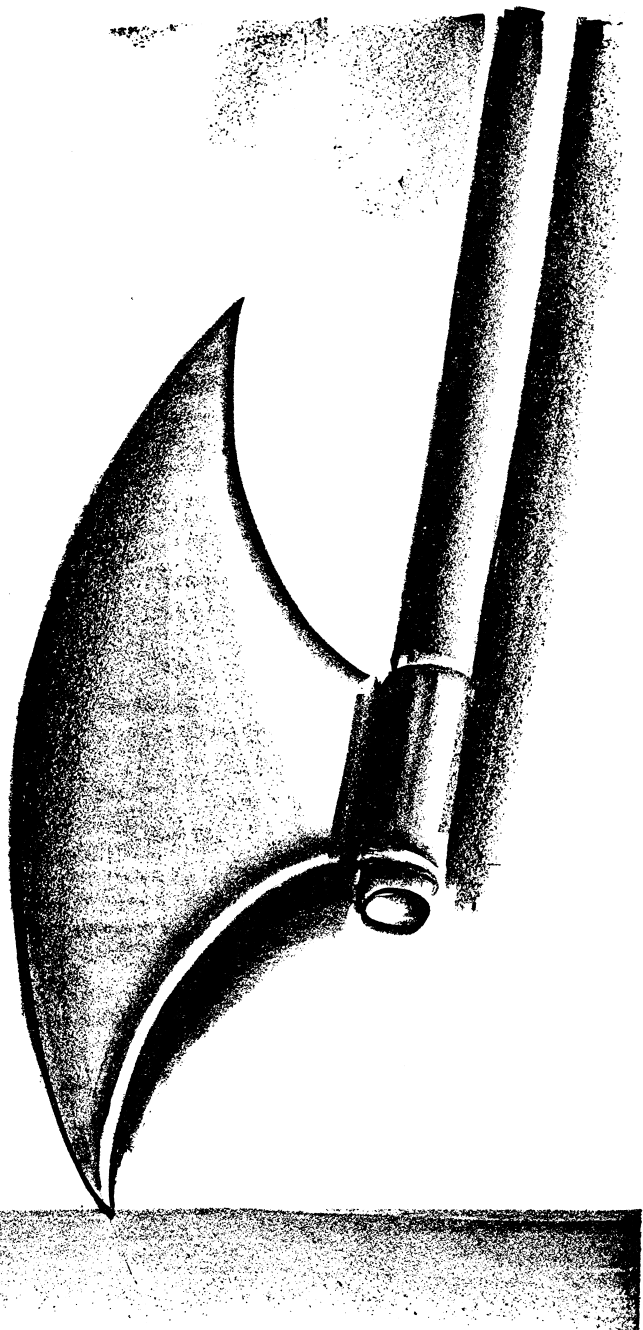
At Seloca, blessing is asked before the noonday, one-meal-a-day, spread. The papers of Birmingham were quite proud of the religious significance of this fact.

A miner laughed about it. "We most of us belongs to the Big Church," he said (meaning no church at all.) "We'ah gointa eat if we have to take it," he said.

All over the Warrior section the miners are starving. Their clothes consist of rags, shoes with no soles, dirt for covering.

"In the end of the fifteenth century, and thruout the sixteenth, there were enacted all over western Europe cruel laws against vagrancy. The ancestors of the present working class were punished for becoming vagabonds and paupers, although the condition of vagabondage and pauperism had been forced on them . . . there were whipping and imprisonment for the sturdy vagabonds. They were to be tied to the cart-tail and whipped until the blood streamed from their bodies. . . . In case of a second arrest for vagrancy the whipping was to be repeated and half of the offenders ears to be sliced off. A person convicted of a third offense was to be executed . . ." Karl Marx, in Capital.

Today, not unlike in the middle ages, millions of unemployed are forced into vagabondage and pauperism. Those who are foreign born, secretary of Labor Doak has deported to the land of Mussolini, Chang Kai-shek or to other fascist countries where a quicker death awaits them.



Hugo Gellert

Some of the miners are eating at Seloca, but at Kimberley, Pritchard, Beltona, Warrior and elsewhere, they—get seed from the Red Cross.

We are informed by the *Birmingham Age-Herald*, May 7, 1931, that John Temple Graves, II, who is "the South's Greatest Editorial Writer" is very concerned about the situation of the miners. Says Mr. Graves II with an ear for melody and humanity beating within his soul as a preface to an editorial:—

*"Shall I be wafted to the skies
On flowery beds of ease,
While others fight to win the prize
And sail through bloody seas?"*

In the meanwhile, the U. S. Government has sent out a Depart-

ment of Labor man to make another investigation. He is reported as saying that the community at Seloca under the direction of the Presbyterian minister had done splendidly to get by on such little capital as \$3,000. He suggested, it is rumored, that something should be done to cure pellagra.

In the meantime everyone worries. "If it wasn't for those damn *Communeists*," a judge in Birmingham told me.

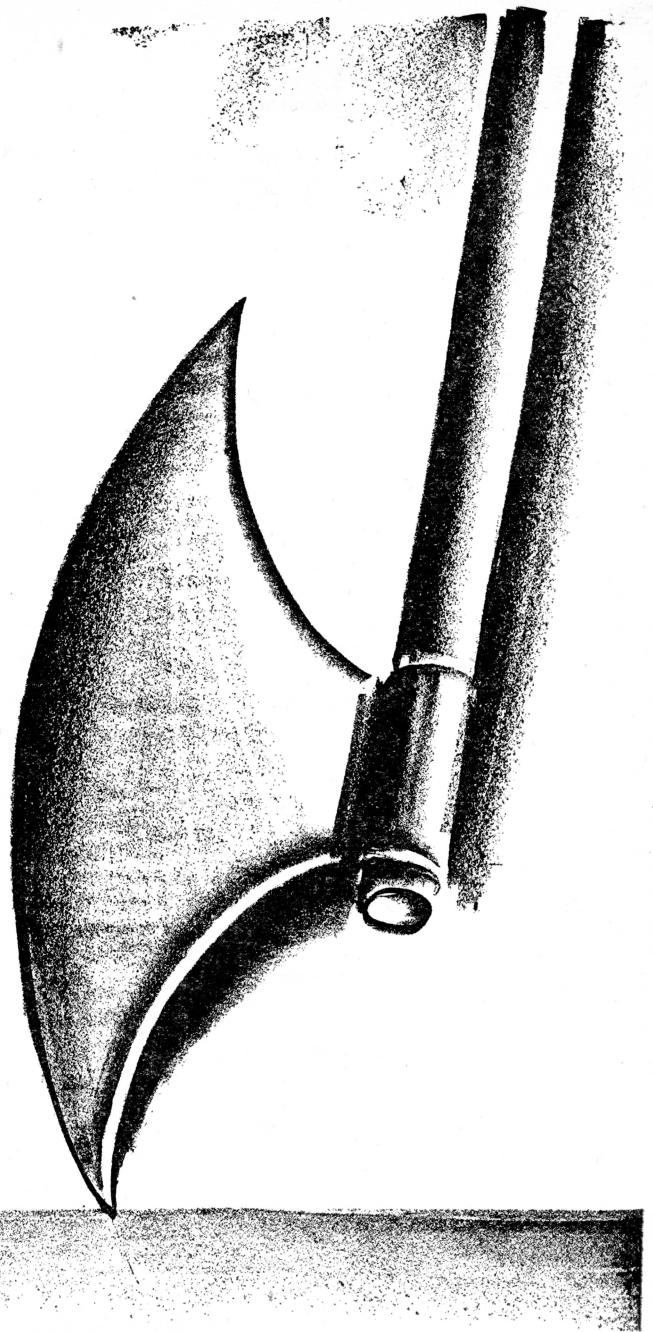
The South faces starvation, misery, race wars and unorganized class revolt.

"If it wasn't for those damn *Communeists*!"

Alabama is a dangerous place to live in. Palm Beachers should plan to route by sea.

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JOSHUA KUNITZ

ONE HUNDRED PERCENT ADYGEA*

We are strolling through the fields of Stary Bjegakhai, Kerashev and I.

"I wonder what you in America think of Adygea and its progress. You must have read in your papers that Adygea was the first national territory in the Soviet Union to have completed collectivization, to have eliminated the kulak as a class, and to have achieved one hundred per cent literacy," says Kerashev, the young Circassian journalist who had recently returned from the Moscow University to edit the Circassian newspaper in Krasnodar.

I am ashamed to confess that I had never heard of Adygea before. Very gently I impart to him the sad truth.

"That's nothing," he hastens to assure me; "until recently very few Russians had heard of Adygea. All they knew was of the beautiful, brave, predatory Circassians as depicted in the romantic poems of Pushkin and Lermontov."

"But there must have been some truth in what those fellows had written."

"Not much, I guess; they had written similar things of the gypsies, and the Chechenty, and the Jews. Exotic subjects," he smiles ironically. "But even if it was partly true then, it doesn't hold true now. Decades of perpetual war against Russian imperialist aggression followed by eighty years of veritable slavery have wrought havoc with our people. Our herds had been slaughtered, our fields made desolate, our people decimated. After the conquest, the majority had been forced to migrate to Turkey. Of these, thousands perished on the way. Before the October Revolution our people was definitely on the decline, degenerating. Child mortality here was frightful. Look at the women, the girls you meet here in the *aul*, they are certainly far from being the proud beauties extolled in Pushkin's and Lermontov's poems. Most of them are sickly; many are pock-marked. And the men, with a few exceptions, are not much better. Hunger, humiliation, ignorance were our lot for eighty years. Exploited and oppressed, robbed of all hope, we developed an aversion for work. And then we were called lazy, shiftless, horse-thieves, only four, five years ago. At the beginning of the reconstruction period, 80% of our working population had neither horses nor implements to work the fields. Only 5.4% were literate. Our women were even worse off than the men. Among them there were only 1.5% literate. Deprived of all rights, not permitted by our *adat* (Mussulman custom) to take an active part in life, our woman was kept as the lowest menial and was fed on the bones and crumbs left after the older men in the family had had their fill. A Circassian woman was not allowed to walk through the street unless she was accompanied by her man; she was not even allowed to cross the threshold of the mosque."

Kerashev tells of the suffering of his people in a rather matter-of-fact tone—reserve, self-control is the most esteemed virtue among the Adygeans—yet under this cover of casualness one feels a smouldering fire. Moreover, Kerashev is not only a Circassian, he is also and above all a Communist. Throughout his long explanations, the class principle is always and carefully pointed out. He speaks with great bitterness of the mullahs, the effendi, the kulaks, the old princes, the noblemen, and the predatory, corrupt Czarist officials. It was they who prospered under Czarism, it was they who were allowed to study, to occupy governmental positions, to exploit the toiling population. It was they, together with the White Czarist generals, who in 1905 and immediately after the October Revolution, swung the ignorant, misguided Circassian population into the embrace of counter-revolution.

"Well, let bygones be bygones," I venture to interrupt him. "Let's talk of the present, of what's doing now . . ."

"What's doing now?" brightens up my companion—"Look, this is what's doing now . . ." He points to the black, recently torn ground, motley with colored dresses glittering in the sun, alive with bustling women. While about fifty of them are busy watering the bashfully peeping cabbage sprouts, others are engaged

ed in filling their cans, and exchanging pleasantries with the young drivers who are bringing the barrels of water from the Kuban river.

"Kolkhozi, brigades, comrade! Working! And don't forget that this is a Mussulman holiday—*Kurban*." Turning to an old woman on the field: "Hey, little grandmother, how is it that you work on a holiday?"

"If I won't work, who'll work for me," grumbles the old woman; and I can't make out whether she is really angry or whether she makes believe.

We are approached by a middle aged, vigorous looking, but pock-marked woman, whom Kerashev introduces as the vice-chairman of the Kolkhoz council. She is followed by a bashfully smiling young woman who is introduced as the brigadier.

"How is it that you are working on a holiday?" Kerashev now asks them.

"The Kolkhoz (farm collective) administration had sent out 180 people to the fields, and practically every one came," remarked the older one.

"This couldn't have happened last year," breaks in the brigadier, "but now we have introduced piece-work, we pay by the *trudo-den*, and people hate like the devil to lose money, holiday or no holiday . . ."

It is note-worthy that the women in the field pay but scant attention to us; they are too busy working. On the other hand, the fact that there are no men is a little surprising. The women assure me, however, that the men are utilized on other work, more fit for men.

"Well, are you happy in the Kolkhoz? Is it better than before?"

The women laugh . . . To them this question seems absurd.

"Why shouldn't we be happy? It's only in the Kolkhoz that we have come to see the difference, that we have begun to feel independent. Now when a woman works, she knows what she has earned. A nursery? Not yet. But we are organizing it. We have already received the cribs. Yes, there is a woman's department, and it certainly does a great deal in educating the women, in getting them interested in general political and international problems. We'll soon have electricity here. Certainly, we have a school, and, but for a few old people, there are no more illiterates in our Kolkhoz."

And although I have become used to seeing many wonderful things in the Soviet Union, these women leave me aghast. Considering the degradation of the Mussulman women in the not distant past, this is nothing less than a miracle. These recently emancipated women know all about the seasonal plan of the Kolkhoz, understand why in their particular region the orientation has been changed from grain to vegetables, are versed in the ways of calculating a *trudo-den*.

We wander off to the fields on the other side of the village and find the rest of our brigade in the midst of a lively crowd of swarthy Circassian peasants.

"An impromptu meeting," explains Kerashev.

Carl Grünberg* amuses the crowd by reading to them some of the lies about the Soviet Union appearing in the Social-Fascist press. What provokes the greatest merriment is the lie about the terrible position of the Soviet women. They look into the German paper curiously, almost incredulously. The twisted little German letters look so innocent, so harmless, yet what deadly poison they contain! Each peasant stares at the paper, touches it, and passes it on to his neighbor.

"Just think, what shameless lies! And do your Germans believe it?"

Grünberg tells of the situation in Germany, of the class alignments there, of the growing revolutionary movement.

The peasants listen intently. Then one of them, a shock brigadier and a candidate for membership in the Communist Party, steps forward:

* Carl Grünberg, author of *Flaming Ruhr*, together with Voillont Couturier, one of the editors of *Humanite*, Maderas a Hungarian writer, and Joshua Kunitz, writer of this article, were the four who composed the first International brigade of writers, sent out as literary shock troops thruout Soviet Russia.

* An autonomous territory in Northern Caucasus.

"We were born here and we have lived here all our lives. And, comrades, let me tell you, during the Czar's regime we not only did not have any visitors from abroad, but even our own officials never gave a care as to how we lived and how we struggled. We therefore don't know how sufficiently to express our gratitude . . . As to the lies our enemies tell about us, we laugh at them . . . Should we show our appreciation by demonstrating our work before you, you have seen it. We work together, in one close family—we are Kolkhozniki. And if the harvest is bad here, the next Kolkhoz may be better off, and help us out. It was not so in the past. Should we show our appreciation by inviting you to join us in our work, you have no time. Your work, comrades, is to tell the world of our great difficulties and our still greater triumphs. To tell your peasants that the only way to work is to work collectively. We thank you for your visit; and we hope to see you again. In the name of the brigade I invite you to our May First celebration. Thank you . . ."

Building Socialism—

"This is all new, two years ago there wasn't one building here," says the chauffeur dryly, pointing to a long row of high buildings, somewhat reminiscent of the upper Bronx. "These are the homes of workers employed in that factory—there behind the hedge."

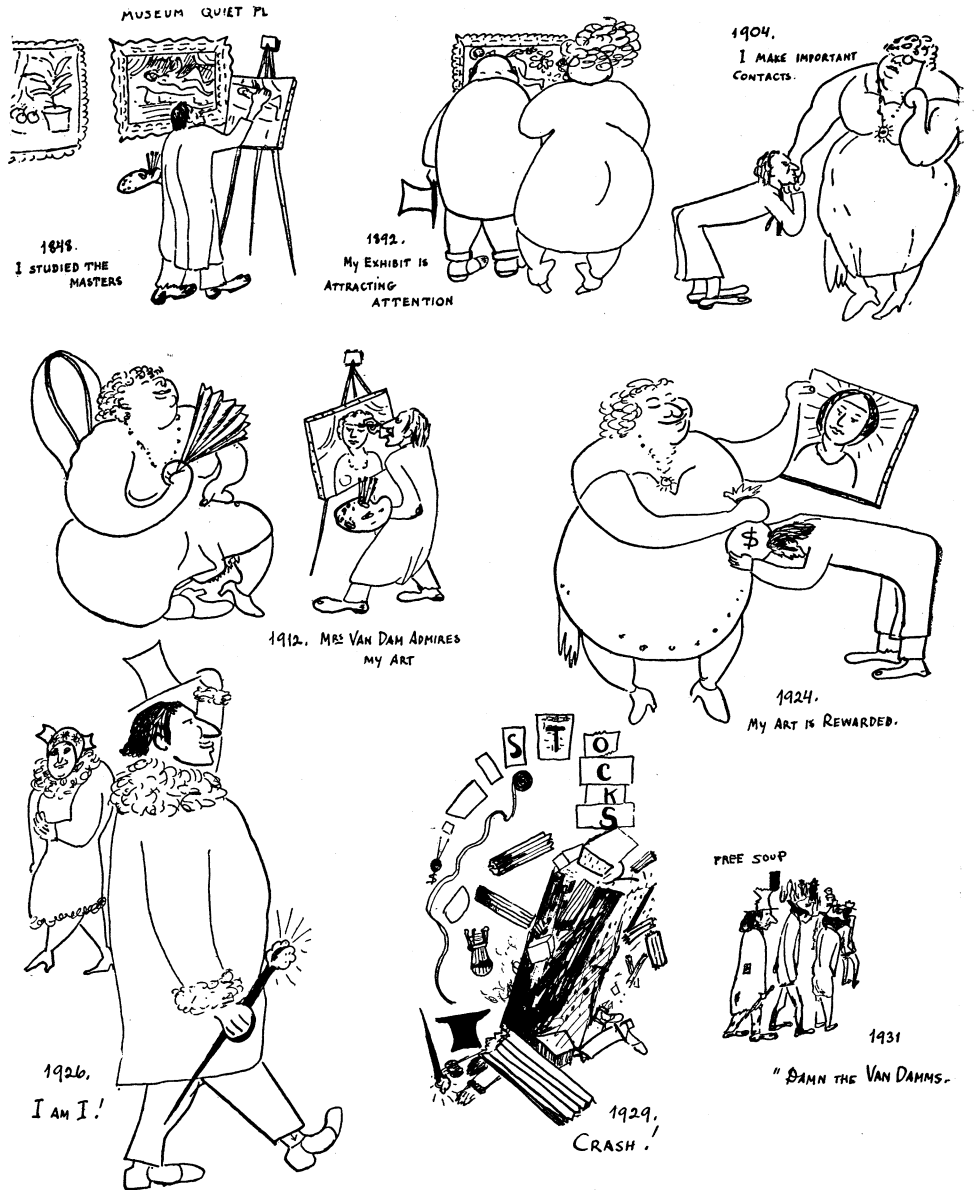
This remark is almost a stereotype in the Soviet Union. I've heard it so often, that it has almost ceased to register. While on our way to the Circassian village Takhta-Mukai, I have seen in Krasnodar and the surrounding country an enormous new electrical station, a new canning factory of All Union importance, a series of new buildings intended for an agricultural institute, an extensive, beautifully constructed, canal for draining the swamps (constructed in 1930-1931), a number of new artesian wells, and numerous new homes, homes, homes. But I scarcely pay any attention to all this—new structures are taken for granted here. I have also become immune to figures. I jot them down mechanically-material!

Take the following: In 1927-1928 Adygea has put into her industries 221,000 rubles, in 1928-1929—847,000, in 1929-1930—2,649,000, in 1930-1931 the investment rises to 13,620,000 rubles. When you come to think of it, this represents a tremendous rate of growth. But I am not touched. I have seen greater miracles here! Still, for a comprehensive picture of what is going on in the Soviet Union figures are essential. I, therefore, beg my readers to forgive me, if I offer them some of the more telling figures I have collected here in conversation with various responsible government and Party workers, industrial and agricultural managers, teachers, etc.

Next to the absence of the "lonely ploughman" and the countless boundaries between tiny plots of land, the greatest transformation in the Adygean landscape is the practical disappearance of once boundless swamps. Mathematically, the changes are expressed thus: In 1927, there were in Adygea only 255 peasant households united in collectives; in 1928—600; in the summer of 1930—16,248; in the fall of 1930—20,853, i.e. 96% of all the peasant households in Adygea. Moreover, instead of the 53,000 hectares of land cultivated before collectivization Adygea now has a sown area of 176,642 hectares. Instead of the 2,500 hectares of vegetable gardens in 1930, it now has 6,323 hectares. It is placing greater emphasis on industrial crops. It is solving its cattle problem. It has organized 17 dairy farms with 15,000 cows. By the end of the year it plans to increase the number to 25,000. Adygea is organizing ten hog raising farms. It already has 2,400 hogs.

The same holds true of chicken raising. In 1930 there were in Adygea only 650 chickens in collective possession. By the end of this year there will be 35,500 leghorns and other good breeds. And mind you, the privately owned chickens are not being collectivized. I must not forget tobacco. In 1930 Adygea spent 400,000

The Sad Story of a Portrait Painter



Louis Ribak

rubles on the tobacco plantations. This year it is spending 487,000 rubles more. In the spring of 1930 there was only one Machine and Tractor Station here, now there are four such. The enormous swamps, breeders of malaria and death have been drained, have become a veritable gold mine. Numerous vegetable gardens and three vast state farms have been organized.

Of course, the struggle was long and bitter. The kulaks, the mullahs, the effendi knew full well that complete collectivization spelled disaster, that it meant the overthrow of their economic and political authority. Small wonder they carried on a furious campaign, taking immediate advantage of each mistake, each failure on our part. They spread all kinds of horrible rumours. There was the story of the "Seven-mile quilt." According to the story, collectivization involved collective ownership of wives. Hundreds of men and women would sleep together under one vast "seven-mile quilt." Another story, which was being spread during the Chinese trouble, was that the children of Kolkhozniks will be "canned and sent as food for the Chinese." No falsehood was too broad for the enraged kulaks. Yet, in spite of their desperate resistance, Adygea has achieved complete collectivization, has "liquidated the kulak as a class!"

This does not at all mean that everything now runs smoothly here. In the words of the secretary of the Party nucleus of Stary Bjegakhai:

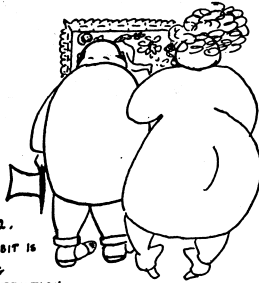
"Remnants of the class enemy have found cover under the wings of some of the Kolkhozi, and there they continue their work of disorganization and sabotage. They now try to destroy the weaker kolkhozi from within, to discredit the whole idea. But we

The Sad Story of a Portrait Painter

MUSEUM QUIET PL



1918.
I STUDIED THE
MASTERS



1922.
MY EXHIBIT IS
ATTRACTING
ATTENTION

1904.
I MAKE IMPORTANT
CONTACTS.



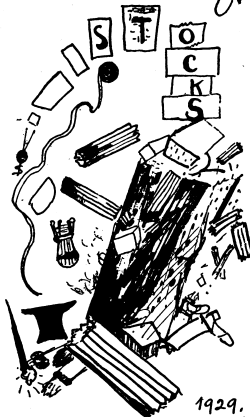
1912. MRS VAN DAM ADMIRES
MY ART



1924.
MY ART IS REWARDED.



1926.
I AM I!



1929.
CRASH!

PARE SOUP



1931

"DAMN THE VAN DAMMS."

are on guard. Still the basic task has been accomplished. Our job now is to expose the impostors, and to throw them out of the Kolkhoz. Of course, the fact that we were the first among the national minorities to achieve complete collectivization is not wholly attributable to our superior generalship or greater efficiency. It happens that we, Circassians, had always had a primitive form of communal ownership of land. Accordingly the transition to collective ownership, collective cultivation and the distribution of products on the basis of each one's individual work was not as painful here as it was in places where the land had been in individual hands."

And it must be born in mind that complete collectivization implies more than a mere change in the form of ownership. It ultimately entails a basic cultural revolution, and a complete change in the human psyche. Armies of managers, bookkeepers, agriculturists, tractorists, machinists, etc. must be trained by the Kolkhozi. This requires knowledge, this requires study. Small wonder, one sees many schools, elementary and secondary, through the length and breadth of Adygea. The Circassian is freeing himself from his age-long ignorance. According to eye witnesses, last year, during the long winter evenings, the Adygean villages were aglow with the many lights shining from the *saklias* (cottages) where illiteracy was being liquidated, where middle-aged and even old Circassian men and women were reading the first primer in their own language and in latinized letters.

Figures again: In 1920, only 6% of the Adygean working population (Russian and Circassian together) were literate. Between 1924 and 1929 literacy rose to 24% (7,900 men and 2,100 women). In 1929-1930 it jumped to 42%. In 1931 Adygea has come close to the complete elimination of illiteracy!

Regular cultural armies were sent out to fight on the literacy front. There was not a student in Adygea who was not drawn into this work. The state spent only 54,000 rubles in a half a year, i.e. it spent about two rubles twenty four kopeks to teach an illiterate person to read and write!

There is not an important party worker in Krasnodar who does not spend most of the time in the village either on the collectivization front or on the cultural front or, most often, on both. "The life of every party worker here, even the most obscure, would make as beautiful and inspiring an epic as any written throughout man's struggle upward. It's a pity most of us are too busy working to jot down even a slight portion of our experience for the benefit of the generations yet to come," once said to me one of the busiest Circassian communists in Krasnodar.

A pity, indeed.

Once More in Stary Bjegakhai—

The speeches are over. Now the most important part of the celebration takes place. The national territorial Circassian troops, especially brought here for the occasion, are being administered the oath. This is followed by the national sport known as *Djigitovka*, which requires excellent horsemanship and skillful use of the sword. Then come popular dances with songs, in which both men and women, chiefly from among the young, participate.

What is most significant about this First of May celebration, is that it is being observed in the village. The First of May is an international, proletarian holiday, and the fact that the peasants of Adygea, only recently under the sway of the mullahs and the effendi, celebrate this day of proletarian solidarity and ignore their own *Kurban* is certainly proof of the effectiveness of the Soviet methods of education and propaganda.

Late in the afternoon, tired and hungry, our brigade is invited by one of the kolkhozniki, formerly a middle peasant, to dinner.

We are received in the *kunatskaia*, a special room in which the Circassians entertain their guests. Everything here is immaculate; the walls are whitewashed and ornamented with beautiful rush mats. The host officiates. He is an elderly Circassian-tall, graceful, reserved and dignified, with drooping long iron-grey moustaches. He stands in the room and instructs the young men who wait on us. First, a huge platter of very savory roast lamb and a heap of delicious wholewheat bread are served. The meat is eaten without forks, such is the custom here. The host does not sit down, nor do the neighbors. There are no women in the room. They are in the part of the house where the food is prepared. It is not customary for the women folk to join strangers in the *kunatskaia*. The young men glide back and forth, help us to tea, and a peculiar local pastry, and quietly urge us to eat and drink and feel at home.

During our meal a very characteristic episode takes place.



Mitchel Siporin

THE FATHER, THE SONS, AND THE HOLY GUNS

We had come to this *aul* (village) Stary Bjegakhai accompanied by Ibrahim Tsey, a middle-aged native writer and journalist, and a young Circassian *comsomoletz* (Communist Youth member). While all the members of our brigade including Ibrahim Tsey sat down to eat, the *comsomoletz* remained standing by the wall. When we urged him to join us, he politely refused. The more persistent we became, the more firmly he declined to sit at our table.

"You see," whispered to me one of the Circassians, "the young fellow's father is Tsey's *kunak*, adopted brother; and it would be irreverent for the young man to sit at the same table with his uncle."

"That's nonsense. He ought to be shamed of himself, he is a *comsomoletz*, isn't he? And Ibrahim is a perfectly emancipated, cultured man."

"Perhaps, perhaps," was the evasive reply.

When I later expressed to the *comsomoletz* my disappointment at his adherence to old tradition, his reply was, to say the least, amazing.

"As I understand it, tradition is the basis of culture. In our cultural revolution we do not indiscriminately fling aside everything that is old. If a thing is beautiful, if it is not anti-social, why not retain it? And to me there is a certain touching beauty about some of our Circassian customs—hospitality, loyalty, self-control, modesty, and—and reverence for the old."

"Perhaps, perhaps . . ." I, in my turn, said evasively.

The other episode was as follows: Innocently, I take it, Grünberg waxed rather eloquent about the delicacy of the work and the beauty of the design of one of the rush mats on the walls. Immediately, the host walked over to the wall, removed the mat, rolled it up, and offered it to Grünberg. Embarrassed, Carl refused to accept the gift. The host looked sincerely hurt.

"You better take it," advised Tsey in a whisper, "it's the

NEW MASSES



Mitchel Siporin

THE FATHER, THE SONS, AND THE HOLY GUNS

NEW MASSES



Mitchel Siporin

THE FATHER, THE SON, AND THE HOLY GUNS

proper thing to do. If a visitor praises anything that belongs to the host, the rules of Circassian hospitality demand that the latter give it to his guest. Not to accept means to offend."

The meal lasts a long while. The dishes, the ornaments, the people themselves, their language—everything seem new, strange, exotic. The conversation turns to the native music. At our request Anzarokov, one of the Circassians present agrees to sing a few songs. Anzarokov shuts his eyes, rests his chin on his hand, and sways gently back and forth. Quiet. Anzarokov is getting tuned up. After a minute or two, the song begins. A strange, weird chant it is. The sounds are throaty, choking, and at first rather disturbing to the Western ear. Anzarokov is supported by the others. These broken voices of the Circassian peasants—do they sing or do they cry? It seems that the entire sad history of this once beautiful people is poured into this long, long moan. Yet at times one is caught on gusts of triumph and exultation. Anzarokov chants of the great battle between the Circassians and the Russians fought about one hundred years ago at the point where the Laba falls into the Kuban. Many Circassian tribes had taken part in it, many Circassian heroes perished, but the victory was theirs. A whole division of Don cossacks was completely wiped out.

The song ends. Anzarokov slowly opens his eyes. His face is pale, absolutely immobile, tense.

"I should imagine that your folk songs and legends contain a great deal of hatred for the Czar's regime."

"Surprisingly little," answers Tsey. "Our people never realized, it seems, that it was the Czar's regime and the imperialists' greed that were responsible for our suffering. We hated the cossacks, the Russian soldiers—these we saw—and them we fought. They were our immediate foes. The real villain, the instigator, the organizer, we for the most part failed to see."

"And mark you," corroborated the host, "the cossacks have similar songs directed against us. It was the Czar's policy to stimulate hatred among the various peoples in the Caucasus, and thus to rule. That was the trick."

The meal is drawing to an end. Suddenly, the host rises, draws from his pockets a few booklets, and holding them up in the air, begins to speak. The peasant's posture, his beautifully modulated voice, his fine gestures, are so impressive, that for a moment one is startled.

"He has the bearing of an English Lord," remarks one of my comrades in German.

"No, of a true son of the soil," corrects him Ibrahim Tsey.

"Dear comrades," says our host. "You have visited us unexpectedly, and we could not receive you, our dear guests, in the proper way. We would be happy to see our friends with us for more than a few hours. Indeed, I hesitate to designate the time we should have liked to have you stay with us. But since you are called away by urgent affairs, we accept the inevitable. I salute you as representatives of International Solidarity. The fact that you have visited us convinces us once more that the ideas of the Communist Party and the Soviet government are of world significance, and that we the kolkhozniki of Adygea are engaged in something that is tremendous in its implications. Were I to maintain that we are doing it painlessly, easily, my words might be justly doubted. Difficulties there are, but we are proud to overcome them, and now we are particularly proud, since in your arrival we see proof that our effort to construct socialism meets with the support of the toilers of the whole world.

"We have overheard some of you say longingly that you would like to remain here and work with us. Though we should be very happy to have you here, we know it is impossible. You have other and more important work to do. Still, to us the mere fact that you have expressed a desire to join our Kolkhoz is a great historical event. We therefore elect you to honorary membership. Giving you your membership books, we assure you that whenever we call our roll, we shall begin with your names first, and we shall say that we have commandeered you to the European and American countries to carry on the great fight. Remember, comrades, Red, collectivized Adygea expects you to struggle for the emancipation of your national minorities."

We thank our host, and slowly file out of the *kunatskai*.

As our cars pull out of the yard, we can still see the host and his neighbors bowing.

"Come to see us again, don't forget us."

Two Documents—

It's hot. I'm tired. Too many impressions. The comrades have not come back yet. I undress, get into bed, and, looking through the materials on Northern Caucasus, come across Push-

2nd Avenue Sweat

*the train rears high over all this muck
of rusted iron and garbage dumps,
flowers and garlic, and windows choked
with faces bereft of color or hope . . .*

*the traffic roars, and stutters and drones;
the swish-puff of a power pump,
and sewer stinks; the unctuous voice
of a radio preacher: O come unto Jesus,
for he will save!*

*oliveoil, fruits, and the mouldy cheese
in markets where milling thousands sweat;
kids chatter like perky parakeets
as they dart around pushcarts and murderous wheels . . .*

*O come unto Jesus!
the brass-knuckled sun beats on our heads—
oh anywhere, anywhere out of the slums . . .
(for he will save,)*

*on exclusive beaches,
where preachers and pimps
and their delicately nurtured mistresses
gaze on a wide expanse of sea
(it's a small world, after all)
the gracious sun beams on the sands
like the gentle jesus,
like jesus indeed*

*(for he will save,)
and they lisp of love,
of mysticism jesus and tea
(with lemon in it)
and they swim
in serene blue waters . . .*

*but 2nd avenue is seething in sweat,
infants wail in close cribs of disease,
and girls like petulant blossoms wilt
in the hot, rank factories.*

*the train rears high over all this muck:
(a small word explodes from a truckdriver's lips)
but on exclusive beaches they lisp:
it's a small world after all.*

*O come unto Jesus!
it's 20% cooler.*

HERMAN SPECTOR.

kin's *Journey to Erzerum*, dated 1829-1836. This ought to be restful. Pushkin's crystalline prose has always been a delight to me.

As I peruse the account of his journey, my eye is struck by the following passage:

"The Circassians hate us. We have pushed them out of the free pastures; their *auls* are demolished; entire tribes have been wiped out. Hour by hour they retire further into the mountains whence they make their raids. The friendship of the peaceful Circassians cannot be relied on: they are always ready to help their obstreperous fellow tribesmen. The spirit of their wild chivalry has declined considerably . . . There is almost no way of suppressing them,—not until they, like the Crimean Tartars, are disarmed. But this is difficult to accomplish . . . Murder with them is nothing but a simple movement of the body . . . What can we do with such a people? There is, however, the hope that with our seizure of the Eastern coasts of the Black Sea, we, by cutting the trade between the Circassians and the Turks, will force the former to get closer to us. The influence of luxury may help us subdue them: the samovar would be an excellent innovation here. There is still another method, more forceful, more moral, and more in accordance with our enlightened age: the spread of the Bible . . ."

This is followed by an eloquent plea against religious tolerance, and is concluded by the words:

"The Caucasus awaits our Christian missionaries."

Guns, samovars, and bibles—this is how one of the foremost men of his generation proposed to solve the national minority question.*

My musing is suddenly interrupted by a timid knock on the door. Absent-mindedly, not realizing that there may be strangers outside, I shout, "Come in!" The door opens and a group of men

* Pushkin wrote this apology for Russian Imperialism much later than his early romantic poems. After the December, 1825, uprising, Pushkin had learned his lesson. He became more circumspect, and not infrequently a bit hypocritical. Still it, is quite possible that Pushkin (an aristocrat attached to the Czar's Court) was really sincere in his advocacy of samovars and bibles.—J.K.

and women file into the room. They stare at me in embarrassment, while I attempt to get under the blanket. The women start back for the door. I assure them that everything is allright, and invite them to sit down. They decline then, to my utter amazement one heavy set Armenian steps solemnly forward and glancing occasionally at a stiff piece of paper covered with signatures and rubber stamps, pronounces the following oration:

"In the name of the 26,000 workers representing various national minorities, united in one central national minority club in the city of Krasnodar, we greet you and ask that you convey our warm, brotherly greetings to the proletariat of your country.

"The correct national policy of the Communist Party and the Soviet Union offers us unlimited opportunities to develop our own proletarian culture in our various native languages, to participate on an equal basis with the rest of the workers of the Union in the affairs of the country, in the building of socialism, *industrializing the country*, creating state and collective farms, educating the working class of the national minorities in the spirit of internationalism.

"Today we have in Krasnodar three workers' clubs, and various schools of lower and upper grades for the various nationalities. Besides this, every year more and more of our students are sent to higher institutions of learning. We have our own literatures in the native tongues, as well as our own periodicals and journals. We are training our own cadres of scientists and through special clubs and courses new cadres of skilled workers for the socialist industries of our Union.—

"While during the Czar's regime we were oppressed and backward, did not have schools in our native languages, were not admitted to the Russian schools attended by the children of the bourgeoisie, were deprived of all land rights, were not permitted to work in factories, and were in a state of poverty, today we have over one hundred delegates in the city Soviet and a subsidiary Council of Nationalities for the purpose of serving the national minority groups culturally and otherwise, in their native tongues.

"Overcoming our difficulties, struggling against our class enemy—the nepmen, the kulaks, the wreckers—actively participating in the realization of the Five Year Plan in four years (in some of the branches of industries in three or even in two and a half years), we, together with the rest of the laboring masses of our country, will firmly repulse our class enemies, who are plotting war against the Soviet Union, the fatherland of the world proletariat.

"We are convinced that in case of an attack on the Soviet Union, the proletariat of the Western Countries, under the leadership of the Communist parties, will turn its arms against its native bourgeoisie, seize power in its own hands, and free itself of the capitalist yoke."

On concluding his speech, the delegate presents me with the document, which is signed by the representatives of the Armenian, Turko-Persian, Greek, German, Kalmyk, Polish, Tartar, Georgian, Hungarian, Assyrian, Bulgarian, Lithuanian, and Jewish sections of the Naumen Club of Krasnodar.

A strange coincidence that this document should be presented right after I had finished reading Pushkin's disquisition on the Circassian. One hundred years, and what momentous changes!

The czars and their lackeys are gone and forgotten. Out of the debris of the collapsed Romanoff empire has risen a vigorous, mighty, young giant—the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, free, prosperous, progressive. The free peoples of the Soviet Union, held together by fraternal bonds, are forging new collective forces of life, are creating their own cultures—"national in form, proletarian in substance."

Among these peoples, the Adygeans, despite their small numbers, are gradually occupying one of the foremost places.

Several decades ago Marx wrote of the Circassians:

"The brave Circassians have brought down several serious defeats upon the Russians. Nations of the world, learn from the Circassians what people who are determined to be free are capable of!"

And now that the free Adygeans have achieved almost complete collectivization, now that they have eliminated illiteracy, now that they are rapidly building up their own industries, their own schools, and museums, and libraries, and theatres, and national troops—their own socialist society, we can once more quote Marx:

"Nations of the world! Learn from Adygea what people who are determined to be free are capable of."

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BOOKS

Reviewed by Harry Gannes, Gordon Alexander, Anna Rochester, Esther Lowell

Washington Merry-Go-Round, Anonymous. Horace Liveright. \$3.00
The Mirrors of 1932, Anonymous. Brewer, Warren & Putnam. \$2.50.

The New York *Times* let out an indignant howl against *Washington Merry-Go-Round*, without revealing why. Certainly the review of this book by Arthur Krock, which is so careful as to correct several misspellings of names, should have found a line or two to answer the charges against the New York *Times* Washington press bureau, as a soft-soaping agency for the Hoover-Morgan government.

Victor Oulahan, chief-of-staff of the Washington scribblers for the New York *Times* is shown to be one of the worst sycophants of the Hoover administration, that is, of Yankee imperialism. The abundant proof of this given in the book by the anonymous author is added to voluminously every day. The recent German Young Plan crisis gives some good illustrations. On the day the London reparations conference closed, a complete failure (so acknowledged by Wall Street, see the *Annalist*, also a *Times* publication), Oulahan's dispatch from Washington, in an attempt to put a Pollyanna interpretation on the event, resorted to such sickening presidential-bootlicking that the *Times* shoved the main story of the day from its \$25,000-a-year correspondent on page 10. He did his work it seems, too well.

Presidential elections are coming on and the whole tribe of petty-bourgeois scribblers who were the first to hail Wilson, and then to hail the war he was to keep us out of; who later went into ecstasies over the "Great Engineer," now discover life does not go in the same way, and that their heroes of finance and industry cannot stop the collapse of the best of all possible systems. Their flopping about from savior to savior, however, does not prevent them from writing some biting, critical devastating stuff as they give their latest hero a farewell kick. Piecemeal they even indict the whole system, and do a fairly good job of it.

Washington Merry-Go-Round was undoubtedly written by a newspaper man (Walter Winchell says four or five). The author doesn't dare use his name because he himself undoubtedly has written some pretty nauseous praise of Hoover—and may do it again. The author of *Mirrors of 1932* admits he has.

On the whole *Washington Merry-Go-Round* is witty, brilliantly written, crammed with devastating incidents in the life of the bourgeois politicians. It shows their connections with the Morgans, Mellons, Rockefellers are more than theoretical. To prove that he really understands present day economic and political problems the writer arrives at the unusual conclusion that society is divided into two great classes, the proletariat and the rich exploiters. He adds, in order to give a purpose to his work, that the dumb eggs who rule over the proletariat, if they were as brilliant as Mussolini or Hitler, could do it better through fascist means. The liberalism of the Edmund Wilson type ("take Communism from the Communists") is gaining adherents.

The book starts off with racy society gossip, a tabloid trick to push sales. However, the chapters on Hoover, Curtis, Mellon, Stimson, Morrow and the Press, are unequalled either in the current magazine jobs or in any other recent book. There are three books, published recently, that come to the conclusion that Hoover stopped posing as an engineer on the job right after he helped rob some valuable mine

lands from the Chinese government back in 1900. Since then he discovered a new racket. He became a "promoter." That is, he directed the flow of foreign investments in the colonies (mainly British), directed them into his own pocket through fake mining stocks and other swindling deals.

As a liar, Hoover has no equal. As an exploiter of labor, and a strike-breaker, Hoover's policy in China was to chain coolies to a stake and burn them into submission. As a grafter Hoover could teach that veteran Jimmy Walker a few things. While Walker responds to graft charges by offering to match his private life, Hoover roared like a plugged lion when it was discovered he instructed the post office to draw up a contract for air mail handling on which only one company could bid—that is, the one in which Herbert Hoover, Jr. was an officer.

The chapter on Mellon is a treatise on graft by the billions. The private life of Andrew Mellon reveals how he had his wife slugged, and then ordered state laws passed to accommodate his divorce suit. The facility with which he can move legislatures, law courts and the police force to show his wife who is boss in the house, shows how much greater his power is when it comes to controlling the state machinery against striking miners or steel workers.

The book is so heavily packed with such incidents that it is difficult to classify the general run of them, except that the main idea is to show we need real leaders and no parliamentary monkey houses to handle rebelling proletarians these days. One more incident should be mentioned here though, which was intended by the author to show his disgust with the ignorance of Congressmen, but which really shows something deeper—namely, if we only had men who knew what fascism is and could use it properly, we petty-bourgeois might come into our own. The story has to do with the formation of the Ham Fish red-baiting committee. Representative Bertram Snell of New York, chairman of the powerful Rules Committee of the House of Representatives, is questioned about it, and the following conversation ensues:

"Is this resolution broad enough to include Fascism?" Representative Hudleston of Alabama demanded of him.

"Include what?" asked Snell.

"I don't know what it is," Snell admitted, "but I guess this covers it, if it is something wrong. I better not discuss it at this time."

Mirrors of 1932 would be all right if *Washington Merry-Go-Round* hadn't been written. The latter book has all the merit and more. The chapter on Cal Coolidge, the dozing, snoozing office boy of Andy Mellon, is a good piece of work, but not worth buying another book for.

HARRY GANNES

The Business Racket

Graft in Business, by John T. Flynn. Vanguard Press. \$3.00.

Now and then there is a major scandal in the economic and political life of capitalist America which is played up in the press and used by politicians of the opposing party as ammunition in the next campaign to "turn the rascals out" and elect another set of grafters. But everyone knows that capitalist politics is shot thru with graft and corruption. The underworld in intricately inter-related with the upperworld. Just now the Seabury investigation has focused attention upon the grafteridden administration of the City of New York. Seabury has shown that our dear District Attor-



MISS AMERICA

G. T. Limbach



MISS AMERICA

G. T. Limbach



MISS AMERICA

G. T. Limbach



THE ROUND UP

M. Soderstrom

gent in the prosecution of racketeers," and that he "has brought the administration of the criminal law into disrepute," thus "giving racketeers the assurance that their nefarious activities will not be interfered with by the police and the courts." Yet Seabury does not recommend the dismissal of this "highly respected jurist of unimpeachable reputation."

The reading of the Seabury report to Governor Roosevelt in this case, and of the daily newspaper reports of Seabury's activities, and of the Wickersham Crime Commission's bulky report, all strengthen one's opinion that the sentimental liberal's hope for reform, the socialist party's advocacy of honesty and efficiency in government, is at best, futile,—an illusion. Capitalist government is always and everywhere essentially dishonest and inefficient even from the viewpoint of the capitalist himself. In the government of any city or state in the union, a searching investigation would reveal the same kind of graft and criminal connections of politicians and racketeers, that exist in New York.

This is old stuff, but here is a book that proves, not only that politics is synonymous with graft, but that the whole business structure is so thoroughly ridden with graft that Tammany Hall seems innocent in comparison.

The author is a well-known writer on business topics. He was the managing editor of the old *New York Globe*, and he wrote *Investment Trusts Gone Wrong*. He is no revolutionist, but a firm believer in the capitalist system. But he gives the revolutionist plenty of ammunition for an attack upon capitalism.

Flynn says that the corrupt practices of the heads of the Bank of America which led to the downfall of that institution are practices which characterize the tendency in bank management everywhere. The illegal acts for which the officials of the Bank of America were tried in court, he states, were not the acts which brought about the bankruptcy of the bank at all. The acts which were responsible for the destruction of that institution are those which now characterize bank management, and those acts are not against the law.

In other words, the capitalist system is thoroughly rotten with crime and corruption. Mr. Flynn warns that the capitalist system will be destroyed by its own weaknesses if these are not remedied. He does not write of other, more fundamental weaknesses of this system, such as the constantly recurring depressions inherent in the exploitation of labor and resources for surplus profits, weaknesses which cannot be abolished without destroying the entire system itself. But he does prove the contention of revolutionists that capitalism is in its final decadent stages, thoroughly rotten with crime, corruption, racketeering, inefficiency, waste of human life and natural resources, worn out and due for the dump.

GORDON ALEXANDER

Socialism Gone Morgan

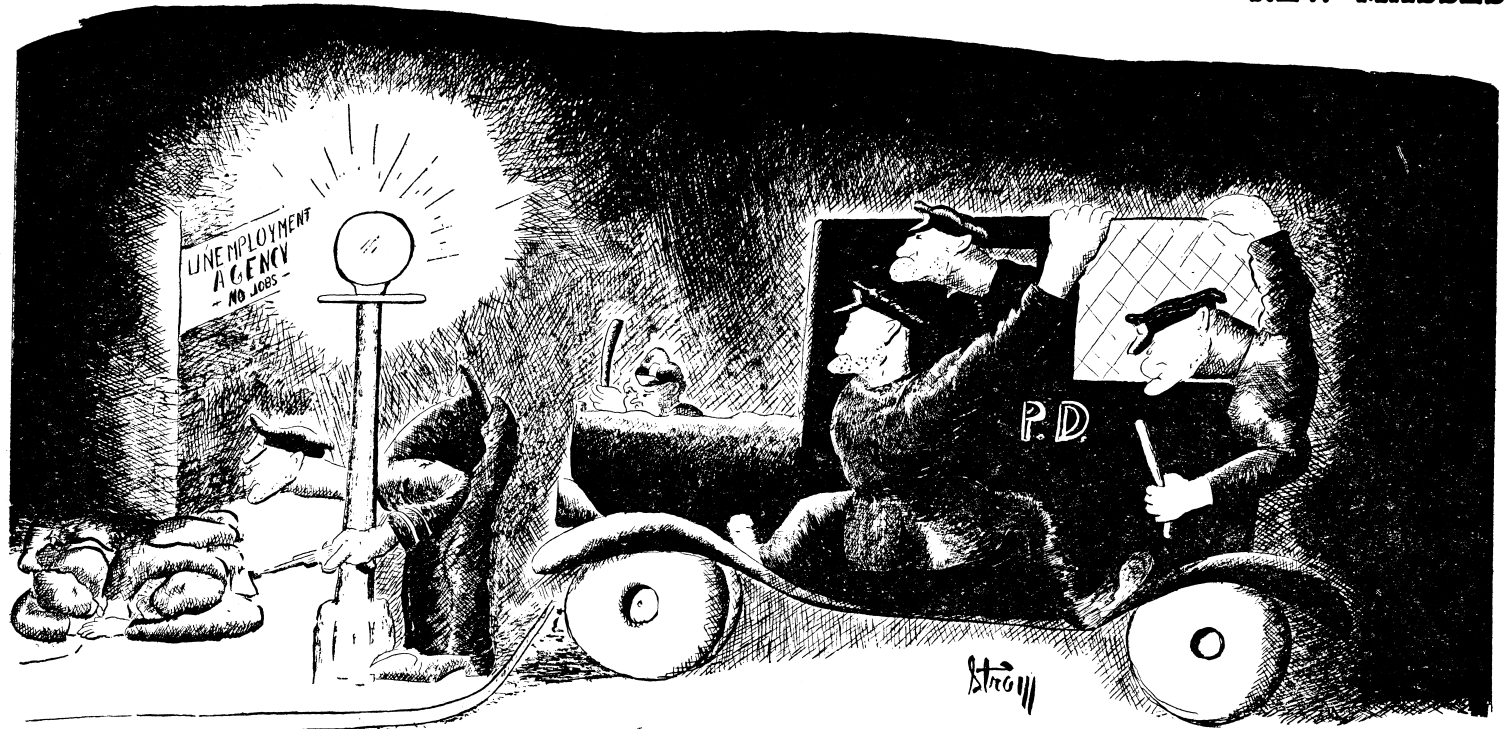
Concentration of Control in American Industry, by Harry W. Laidler. Crowell. \$3.75.

Here is the edifying spectacle of a volume entitled *Concentration of Control in American Industry*, written by a leading "socialist" and published by a company whose directors include a partner of the House of Morgan. Why not? For the author argues that "the trust and combine movement is preparing the way for socialization" and this is to be politely arranged by the mythical "public" with everything bought and paid for to the capitalist class.

Laidler sees a little trouble ahead even about this, somebody has "to give battle for the rights of man when those rights conflict with the entrenched 'rights' of private property." But class war and revolution and proletarian dictatorship? Perish the thought! They are not even mentioned. He is worried because, he says, "one of the grave dangers of present-day concentration lies in the fear on the part of all classes of our population of offending those at the helm of the giant industries." (He does not speak of the miners and textile workers and their families on the picket lines, standing up against blacklist, police clubs, and machine guns. They don't fit into his middle-class picture.)

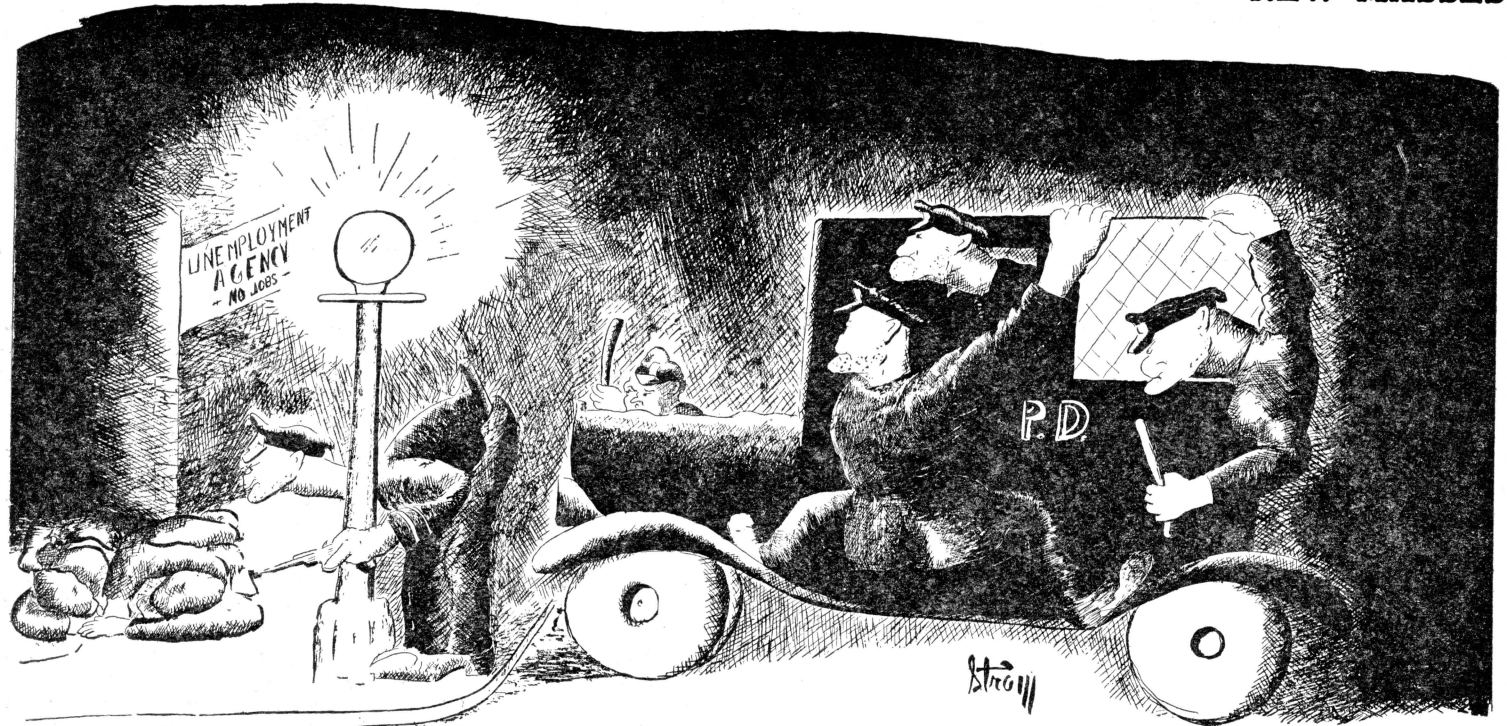
He does give two pages to labor relations,—tucked away in the closing chapter, with a list of abuses: spies, "ruthless discharge", mass unemployment, and Henry Ford's "disregard of human values." And he says, "Unfortunately" the "great consolidations . . . are practically unanimous in their objection to trade unionism", with, of course, the two shining exceptions, the B. & O. and Hart, Schaffner and Marx. That is all. No reference to the seething unrest of the workers and their awakening revolutionary consciousness.

Only such matters as high prices, excessive profits to insiders, big banks controlling credit, and the crowding out of stockholders from voting power in what he calls "our" industries raise little ripples on the chilly calm of his academic analysis. Even the case for a properly compensated socialization of basic industries is stated without enthusiasm. It is followed by brief statements of the case for government regulation and the case for capitalist do-as-you-please. "The contest is one between the advocates of these and other schools of thought." But this bitter and basic struggle between the capitalists, liberals, and "Socialists" on the one side and, on the other side, the Communist movement which Laidler is too delicate to mention by name, he puts as if it were a leisurely debate: "To which school will go the final verdict time alone



THE ROUND UP

M. Soderstrom



THE ROUND UP

M. Soderstrom

will tell . . . This is not a book of prophecy . . . It is primarily a book of facts . . . and if it furnishes a basis in fact for future constructive action, its mission will have been fulfilled."

The facts, as far as they go, are useful and conveniently assembled. Most of the big corporations are mentioned, usually with some statement as to their assets, profits and relation to the total output or capacity of the given industrial group. Brief summaries are included on the anti-trust laws and Supreme Court decisions, the efforts at regulation of utilities, and the testimony at the "money trust" hearings of twenty years ago.

But the real subject of the book is only faintly sketched. One corner of the picture takes clear shape in the chapter on "our" public utilities which are shown group by group as dominated by Morgan, Mellon, Chase National Bank, or Insull. The fact that these financial groups and a few others hold a strategic position in several industries is stated, but Laidler does not attempt to give any new details on the interrelations among companies and industries.

For the facts it does give, the book will be useful from Wall Street to Union Square. But politically it can do a great deal of harm. It fails to interpret the exploitation of workers by employers. Quite illogically for the Socialist Party theory that concentration of capital serves to prepare for socialization of industry, the book presents a petty bourgeois criticism of big capital.

In every way it badly blurs the class lineup and as a net result serves the capitalist class.

ANNA ROCHESTER

A BOOK FOR WORKERS

Labor Fact Book, prepared by Labor Research Association. Published by International Publishers. Cloth, \$2.00. Paper, 85c.

Facts are tools and ammunition.

With facts we can build or demolish theories, plan tactics. With facts we can fire into the enemies' argumentative forts and win new recruits to our cause.

Facts are working material for scientists and revolutionists. In the U. S. S. R., by careful attention to facts, the workers are building a new social order which will show the world a different and equitable way of living. In the United States, by the studied disregard of certain facts, the favored few who own the most hope to perpetuate their blind oligarchy.

American workers who want to know these facts can now find them easily in the admirable small compendium entitled *Labor Fact Book*, prepared by the Labor Research Association.

Here are the essential facts about this great nation, the United States: how many of us are industrial workers, how many of the farms; how much we earn, how we sweat to earn it; how much the grabbers in control of the country take, how they struggle with foreign grabbers for the resources and markets of "backward" countries like Brazil and China, how they steer countries into imperialist wars.

Here, too, are facts about unemployment, about speedup and the amazingly increased productivity of workers, about strikes and unions—the programs of the new militant unions affiliated with the Trade Union Unity League.

It's surprising now many facts are squeezed in: a veritable vestpocket history of American labor with much data on the present situation.

The biggest lack is the comparative deficiency of facts on technical change in industry. On page 89, under Output per Worker, are some facts on this subject. But the emphasis throughout the section on industrial workers is that *speedup* mainly is responsible for the great increase in productivity and unemployment since the war. Speedup certainly is a big factor, but changes in industrial technique, complete revision of many manufacturing processes to almost complete mechanization, are even more important.

Technological change will continue. Human speedup cannot be extended beyond certain physical limits. But science is working all the time to reduce and eliminate the human hand's work. A world run by workers for themselves surely would want to free human hands from as much routine labor as possible.

While I think more emphasis could be placed on this phase of the *Labor Fact Book*, the book as a whole, I repeat, is an admirable job. It is well worth the price, if you have it. But by all, or *any* means, read it.

ESTHER LOWELL

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WORKERS' ART

A monthly department for reports and discussion of Workers' Cultural Activities.

BOSTON — Solidarity Players

Last winter the Boston W. I. R. organizer called together a group of proletarians for the purpose of forming a dramatic section. After one meeting the section started to work immediately. One comrade offered to write a play on unemployment. The following meeting he brought a rough draft of his play, based on a bread line in New York. From this rough sketch rehearsals were started. So high was the enthusiasm of the group that it started to work on a play yet unfinished. But the play was too complicated for a beginning, it required too many characters. As a result, progress was slow, and it didn't take long before the comrades' enthusiasm began to shrivel. Here the group learned its first lesson in proletarian dramaturgy: that proletarian playwrights must never forget the limits set by our lack of equipment and facilities. They must also remember that our organizations cannot spend too much money on dramatics. In learning this fundamental lesson the group paid a price. It fell into the slough of discouragement, and slowly disintegrated. But the W. I. R. organizer and several of the comrades did not give up.

In March the work of reorganization was begun. With new blood and firmer purpose the group came together again. Much wiser now, we decided to start on something short, simple, and suitable for a proletarian audience. The Communist Party asked that we present a play at the May First celebration. The invitation accepted, two comrades offered to write sketches. We had over a month and a half to establish ourselves organizationally, and to hold rehearsals. And on May first the Solidarity Players produced three pieces: a march, an agitprop play, and a pantomime. For a first performance by an inexperienced group the plays were well-done. The audience probably had its first introduction to the new dramatic forms of the proletariat, and it accepted the Solidarity Players with enthusiasm.

May Day put us on the map, and ever since we have been going well. Although the summer came on there was no abatement in the work, but rather an intensification of activity. Call after call came in for our services. The movement in Boston and vicinity recognized in the Solidarity Players a valuable ally in the class-struggle.

The center of activity in the summer was in Camp Nitgedaget, Franklin, Mass. The Solidarity Players performed there practically every other Sunday. Nitgedaget audiences saw the following plays: *Link Arms*, *Gandhi*, *Ham Fish and Eggs*, and *The Spark*. In the city other pieces were added: *Boss Teaches Class*, and *Fantasy In Red*. Everyone of these pieces have been written by members of the Solidarity Players with the help of the group as a whole. One interesting phase of our work is that we haven't played anything yet which was not written in our own group. However we intend to divert from this policy as soon as possible.

The Solidarity Players collaborate with the Workers' Laboratory Theatre in New York, and there is a continual interchange of suggestions and ideas between us. A few weeks ago a few organizational changes were made which may prove of value to new groups. In order to function properly we elected the following officers: organizer, recording and corresponding secretary, financial secretary. These with the director make up the executive committee. In addition to this we elected a script manager, property manager, and make-up manager. None of these positions are individual affairs, but every member of the group is required to participate in the varied activities.



A Hindu woman showing Gandhi a blood-dipped cloth woven by her son who was killed by the British. A scene from the play *Gandhi*, written and produced by the Solidarity Players of Boston.

There is still a lot of room for improvement in our group. We need new forces. Especially do we feel the lack of Negro comrades. Any Boston comrades who are interested are invited to our meetings which are held every Monday and Wednesday evening in New International Hall, Roxbury.

Boston, Mass.

SAMUEL A. PEVZNER

PHILADELPHIA — John Reed Club

The John Reed Club of Philadelphia sends revolutionary greetings to all workers groups thru *New Masses!* I write that line with immense pleasure for at last we have our club. On the 18th we met to elect officers, etc. On the 19th we were already active! Naturally, we are jubilant, and we want to bring the good news to the Workers' Art section of *New Masses*.

We have 49 members—a sign of the need for the Club in this non-radicalized town. We meet 1st and 3rd Fridays of the month for business and membership. On the 2nd and 4th Sundays we will have program nights. Right now we are meeting at the Little Chop House at 1206 Walnut St. We use the basement as a clubroom, which is open to members from morning until late at night.

At the Sept. 18 meeting we elected the following officers: Executive secretary: Conrad Komorowski. Recording secretary: Vincent N. Hall. Treasurer: Robert T. Reznikov. Press Committee: M. F. Boyd, chairman. Membership Committee: Conrad Komorowski, chairman. Social Activities: Vincent Hall, chairman. We also organized the following activities groups: artists', writers, speakers', dramatic, music, cinema and photography. The next day the artists' group was busy at work on posters and placards for the Unemployed Councils' march on the Lloyd Committee (city charity). We elected a delegation to accompany the Councils and bear our banners. Club delegates were also present at the Organization Committee meeting of the Workers' Cultural Federation of Philadelphia, (now being organized). In fact, a clubmember did all the preliminary work up until the 19th. At our meeting we sold *New Masses* and *Young Pioneer*... Harry Alan Potamkin, International Secretary of the N. Y. John Reed Club, spoke to us informally.

We held our first Program Night on Sept. 27, at which F. Boyd, a lifelong friend and companion of John Reed's, spoke on John Reed. We are supplying several organizations in Philadelphia with help—for example: we have sent an expert on stagesettings, a comrade familiar



MRS. VIOLA MONTGOMERY—mother of one of the Scottsboro boys.—Photo by the Chicago Workers Film & Photo League.



A Hindu woman showing Gandhi a blood-dipped cloth woven by her son who was killed by the British. A scene from the play Gandhi, written and produced by the Solidarity Players of Boston.

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Boston, Mass.

SAMUEL A. PEVZNER



MRS. VIOLA MONTGOMERY—mother of one of the Scottsboro boys.—Photo by the Chicago Workers Film & Photo League.

Meyerhold's work, to a dramatic organization in town. We will also cooperate with the World Cinema League in the showing of foreign films which would otherwise never get to Philadelphia. We have lots of plans. Meanwhile, for an organization only a couple weeks old we feel we have done fairly well.

We want to be in touch with all workers groups and with all phases of workers cultural activities. All communications can be sent to

CONRAD KOMOROWSKI, Executive Sec'y.

4675 Adams Avenue,
Philadelphia, Pa.

CHICAGO — John Reed Club

The John Reed Club of Chicago, is arranging thru its plastics fraction for exhibitions in three forms in the coming season. The first exhibit is to be an open all Chicago exhibit which will begin October 31st in conjunction with the John Reed Club Ball. The second to be a Chicago John Reed Club International Exhibit sometime in January. The third to take on the form of travelling exhibits to be circulated in various workers' centers.

Altho the first exhibit is an open mid west show it is of the greatest advantage that a sizable section be devoted to American left plastics, with unattached sympathetic artists to contribute works.

The fraction has lately been activized to contribute to our revolutionary press. Special measures have been taken to send contributions to the *New Masses*, *Daily Worker* and *Young Pioneer*. Every member of the fraction is to be a contributor to the revolutionary press at least once a month.

Classes for adults and also classes for children, arranged cooperatively with the Young Pioneers, are to be started in the near future.

For all information: exhibit blanks, circulars, etc., correspond with secretary of Plastic Fraction; or send works before October 28th, to *John Reed Club—Plastics Fraction*, 3226 S. Lake Park Avenue, Chicago. Help us make this first exhibit the largest display of left wing art in the midwest.

JOHN REED CLUB—CHICAGO
Plastics Fraction,

M. SIPORIN, Secretary.

Chicago Blue Blouse

Comrades of *New Masses*: The Chicago Blue Blouse Theatre, now with three functioning groups in the field, was organized about 10 months ago. It began as a simple Workers Theatre, intending the production of full length plays. Since there were other groups in the field doing this, and there was need of an agitational theatrical group presenting one-act plays, skits, recitations, etc. in an informal manner at meetings, demonstrations and all working class affairs, we soon changed to this purpose.

We are working closely with the John Reed Club. They have furnished us with directors, material, etc.

We have presented mass chants, pantomimes, recitations, a one-act play *Doctor Medicine*, the first act of *The Belt*, etc.

This winter, having the benefit of a season's work to guide us, we want to expand. Our plans call for more members. We appeal thru *New Masses* to all Chicago workers: come and join us. It doesn't matter if you had no previous theatrical experience.

To other groups we appeal for exchange of experience, plays, etc. Address: *Blue Blouse Dramatic Studio*, Helen Kirshman, secretary, 3644 W. 15 St., Chicago, Illinois.

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New Masses Clubs have already been formed in other cities. If you are interested in forming one in your city—write today to address above.

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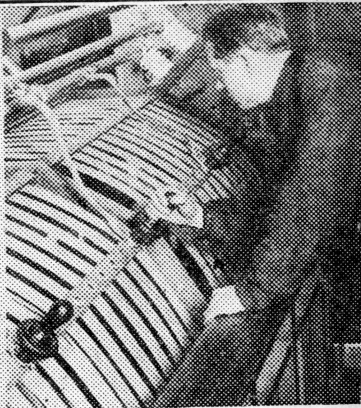
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Workers Anti-Religious League

The Workers' Anti-Religious League, a workingclass anti-religious organization, the first of its kind to be formed in the United States, has been organized in New York City. It is affiliated with the Workers' Cultural Federation.

The need for such an organization has long been apparent, but the present crisis has brought into sharpened relief the anti-workingclass role of the church. Among the primary functions of the Workers' Anti-Religious League will be to expose and fight the anti-workingclass activity of the churches during strikes, their aid to the ruling class in keeping the Negro masses in subjection and their participation in the imperialist campaigns against the Soviet Union. The role of the missionaries as representatives of the imperialist governments, as well as the attempts of the churches and their auxiliaries like the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.M.H.A. to bribe the workingclass with hypocritical gestures of charity will also be exposed and combatted by the League.

The draft program of the League includes the following immediate activities and plans:

1. The launching of a campaign against bible-teaching in the New York schools.
2. The exposure of the aid that the churches are rendering to the white ruling class in the legal lynching of the 9 Scottsboro boys.
3. The formation of trained speakers' corps.
4. The formation of a research department for the League's speakers and writers.
5. The issuing of a bi-weekly bulletin, later to be enlarged into a monthly magazine.
6. The establishment of anti-religious Sunday schools for children.
7. The holding of a Sunday afternoon forum for each branch, dates, places and subjects soon to be announced.
8. The formation of a department to work among foreign language-speaking workers.
9. The formation of a Negro Department.
10. A program of work among the workingclass youth, in clubs, societies, high schools and colleges, as well as in the factories.

An interesting feature of the League's work will be the introduction into its agitational work of cultural features, dramatics, films, songs, etc.

The Workers' Anti-Religious League is being established on a New York City-wide basis at first, but it is planned to build a nation-wide organization as soon as it is practicable. The branches in New York

have already been formed, one in Harlem with temporary meeting quarters at 110 W. 116 St., and the other in lower Manhattan with temporary meeting quarters at 108 E. 14 St.

A meeting of both branches took place on Sept. 28. A general membership meeting will be held at 108 E. 14 St. on Monday, Oct. 5 at 8 p.m. All workers and interested sympathizers are strongly urged to attend. Communications should be sent to the general headquarters of the League at 63 W. 15 St., New York.

Workers Music League

The Workers Music League has just been formed in New York City—the first workers music publishing organization.

The League begins its activities with the publication of the song *Commintern* by Hans Eisler, foremost proletarian composer of Germany. The English text is by V. J. Jerome. This song has been tremendously popular abroad, 300,000 copies have been printed in the USSR alone. It is a simple song, easily learned and will sell for 10 cents a copy, and at special rates to groups. A feature of the song as published here, will be the inclusion of instructions on how to teach it.

Other songs, by American proletarian composers will follow. Address all communications to

THE WORKERS MUSIC LEAGUE
63 West 15 St., New York, N. Y.

Whittaker Chambers—at work on a novel, has also just completed a one-act play on a miners strike, to be one of the features of a coming issue of *New Masses*.

William Gropper—has illustrated a book or two in between his many activities, as staff artist on the N. Y. *Freiheit*, the *New Masses*, etc.

Herman Spector—is still looking for a job. Meanwhile his first book of verse *Sweet Like Salvation* has just come off the press.

Anton Refregier—brings back to New York a series of paintings from his summer work at Provincetown, Mass., to be shown at the John Reed Club and other New York galleries.

Jacob Burck—in addition to his duties as staff artist on the *Daily Worker*, is contributing editor to *New Masses*.

Norman Macleod—after a few months in Alabama, is now travelling thru other sections of the South.

Hugo Gellert—for the third successive issue, contributes from his book of drawings and text based on *Capital* by Karl Marx.

Louis Ribak—is also back in New York with a group of paintings done in Provincetown, Mass. during this summer.

Walter Quirt—continues as one of the active members of the artists group of the N. Y. John Reed Club. Staff artist on *Labor Unity*.



Photo by Maurice Seymour
Mitchel Siporin—now living in Chicago, Ill., was born on the East Side of New York in 1910. Went to school in Chicago and Detroit, attended Crane College, Chicago. Scholarship student at the Art Institute of Chicago. Worked as laundry driver, commercial artist and scenic designer and painter. Designed *Whirl of Machines* and *Diamonds* for the New York Artef Theatre. At present, like everyone else, looking for a job . . .

In This Issue

Three New Artists—make their first appearance in this number of *New Masses*: *Eugene Chodorow*, member of the New York John Reed Club; *M. Soderstrom*, marine worker-artist, active member of the Marine Workers Industrial Union; and *Gilbert Roocke*, 19 year old Negro worker-artist of Chicago, member of the John Reed Club of that city. More work by these three young artists will be seen in future issues.

Sam Ornitz—author of *Haunch, Paunch and Jowl*, has been working on dialogue and scenarios in Hollywood. Now in New York, at work on another book.

Phil Bard—back from a workers camp where he was art director for the summer, will be seen in more of his satirical drawings in coming issues.

Joshua Kunitz—has just returned from a 14 months stay in the Soviet Union. At work on a book on the national minorities of the Soviet Union and lecturing meanwhile.

Louis Lozowick—after four months in the Soviet Union, will contribute a few drawings he made there for the next issue of *New Masses*; also undertaking again his work as art editor of *New Masses*.

Langston Hughes—contributing editor to *New Masses* has also associated himself with the newly organized N. Y. Suitcase Theatre. His one-act play *Scottsboro, Limited* will appear in the coming issue.

Otto Soglow—is in even gayer mood now, with his book *Pretty Pictures*, among the successful fall publications.

W A N T E D

The John Reed Club is in need of some furniture with which to equip the gallery at its new headquarters. If some friend of the movement has a lounge, sofa, club chair, floor linoleum, etc., which he contemplates disposing of and which he would be willing to contribute to the Club, will he please communicate with The Secretary, John Reed Club, 63 W. 15 St. New York City.



Photo by Maurice Seymour
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Articles, Stories & Cartoons

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who made a six weeks aeroplane tour to this mountainous country with a literary "Shock Brigade." The article by *Joshua Kunitz*—with a page of drawings from life by *Louis Lozowick*.

Other articles on SCIENCE IN SOVIET RUSSIA by Hyman Rosen—LITERATURE IN SOVIET RUSSIA by Leon Dennen—reviews of BOOKS ON SOVIET RUSSIA—and CARTOONS.

A Short Story by John Dos Passos

and more good news to our readers for the next issue

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