AUGUST 21, 1934

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New Masses

Angelo Herndon, Fighter

By JOSEPH NORTH

Behind the Pogroms

By EMIL GLASS

Four Orations

By ISIDOR SCHNEIDER

new Masses

AUGUST 21, 1934

SILVER nationalization and the issuance of currency (silver certificates) against that metal, at the arbitrary official rate of $1.29 per ounce, is the first somewhat timid step toward so called "printing press" inflation. The commercial value of silver before the issuance of the Presidential order was 46c an ounce. Now the available stock has been nationalized at the rate of 50.01c per ounce. It is still quoted on the New York Stock Exchange at 49.75c an ounce, and it is sold in London at 21.625 d., or at today's rate of exchange at 45.6c an ounce. Each $1.29 of silver certificates will accordingly represent a tangible value of not over 50c, the other 79c representing nothing but the credit of the state, or fiat money. Out, say, of each $1,290,000 of new silver certificates, $790,000 will be "fiat" money, "printing press" money, or "greenbacks" pure and simple. The Silver Purchase Act of 1934 prescribes that silver be given a one-to-three ratio with gold in the monetary metal reserves of the country. The monetary gold stock now (August 10) amounts to 7,957 millions of dollars. On this basis, the needed silver reserves should reach over 2.5 billion dollars. The nationalization of silver will bring into the Treasury the available commercial stock of between 100 to 150 million ounces. This, added to the stocks already held (some $550 million dollars) by the Treasury will leave it one billion ounces of silver short in order to carry out the provisions of the Silver purchasing act. Under the Presidential order that will mean $1,290,000,000 in new silver certificates. Of this amount, only $500,000,000 will represent some tangible value (the silver), while the other $729,000,000 will be nothing else but "printing press" money, or "greenbacks."

BY THE LIGHT OF THE SILVERY MOON

IN a broader sense, the entire amount of authorized issues of silver certificates, estimated at $1,290,000,000, is inflation. It is highly improbable that the silver involved will be purchased by gold exports. It accordingly seems reasonably certain that the entire amount of new silver certificates will be added to the present stock of Treasury currency which, together with gold and Federal Reserve credit, make up the money base of the United States. Besides this primary inflation of the money base, it will lead to even more drastic secondary inflation. Most of this additional Treasury currency (new silver certificates) is bound to go into commercial bank reserves, and lay the basis for a secondary inflation in the form of expansion of bank credit, or bank currency (*i.e.*, deposits set for borrowers). This secondary inflation may reach the amount of $12,000,000,000, since each dollar of bank reserves makes possible the extension of at least ten dollars in credits, or deposits set up for borrowers, that is, in so called bank currency. Secondary inflation has been an important factor in the attempt of the capitalist class to transfer the burden of the crisis to the laboring classes, since the enactment of the Glass-Steagall Act in 1932. That act diluted the base of Federal Reserve credit by permitting the issue of Federal Reserve notes, or currency, not only against gold and commercial paper—the latter representing the tangible value of

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commodities—but also against government bonds that represent nothing but budget deficits.

SUBSEQUENT banking legislation of the New Deal, including the abandonment of the gold standard and the devaluation of the dollar, permitted the banks "to convert government securities [or for that sake anything else they may have to offer—*i.e.*, private bonds] —into available funds—[Federal Reserve notes]—whenever they are called upon by depositors for funds, they are not immediately in a position to supply." With the deepening of the crisis, the ruthless campaign of the ruling class to transfer the entire burden of the crisis upon the laboring classes, was greatly intensified. The limited and unstable improvement of business activity has been obtained by resorting to inflation—the desperate method of decaying capitalism. For, while inflation robs all the laboring classes and reduces their standard of living, it also destroys the mechanism of exchange and circulation of capital. Even before this last plunge into the field of direct "printing press" inflation, a point has been reached when the assets of the banking institutions "are steadily coming to represent nothing except government deficits—inability to pay" (H. Parker Willis, Financial Chronicle, July 14, 1934) or, in Marxian terminology, nothing but fictitious capital.

THE inevitable result is flight from the dollar, rising prices; the increase of retail prices already exceeds 25 percent. The eventual inevitable effects of this process of inflation is to cut the real wages of the workers below the subsistence level. It has almost an equally disastrous effect upon the conditions of the impoverished farmers who are compelled to send their children to the factories and to hire themselves out to work for the rich farmers in order to make ends meet. These poor farmers buy more than they sell, and their standard of living is cut by the rising prices practically to the same extent as that of the workers. Finally, inflation has the effect of accelerating the expropriation of the middle-class. Their savings deposited in banks, melt away in the thin air of depreciated paper money, while the real worth represented by the original savings is transferred to the lords of industry and finance. Inflation thus accelerates the concentration and centralization of wealth, and the pauperization of the laboring masses. But on the other hand, as already noted, inflation is bound to undermine the mechanism of exchange and circulation. It is also bound to increase the resistance of the workers, to accelerate their radicalization and to sharpen the class struggle.

CULTURE, bourgeois and proletarian, today, to a greater degree than ever before, reflects the swirling scene of political and economic relationships. In the arena of literature not infrequently the first skirmishes take place among the poets. The battle is afterward joined by the critics, by the other creative writers. In this issue THE NEW MASSES is glad to present to its readers the series of revolutionary poems by Isidor Schneider. The editors feel that the poetic forces latent in the revolutionary movement, already auguring startling achievement, must be stimulated to fullest expression. We therefore continue, through Robert Gessner, Obed Brooks, Stanley Burnshaw and Horace Gregory, the discussion begun by Professor Burgum in our July 3 issue, on the three English poets—Spender, Lewis, Auden —whose verse has caused considerable reverberations in England. The same issues confront us on this side of the Atlantic. In this discussion THE NEW MASSES takes vigorous issue with some of the statements and formulations contained in Horace Gregory's brief contribution.

HIS attacks on American Marxist critics, his assertion that they are "ignorant of English literature" and "careless in interpreting Marx," his ironical references to "much that passes for Marxian criticism in America," to "the shortsightedness of many American critics who have read Marx for the first time" seem a little unwarranted from a man who, for all his fine poetic and critical gifts, has never, to our knowledge, distinguished himself as a consistent student or interpreter of Marx. Gregory mentions no names. He makes no distinctions. Like all the bourgeois critics he lumps everybody in one pile, thus confusing himself and his readers. Surely Gregory knows—or he ought to know—that there are Marxists and "Marxists." V. F. Calverton, too, claims to be a Marxist, so does Edmund Wilson, so do a host of others. To the uninitiated ones even Gregory himself may appear a learned Marxist defending his doctrine against a horde of literary vandals, impostors and vulgarizers.

GREGORY'S valiant defense of the words "honor," "nobility" and "dignity" is praiseworthy and merits serious consideration. But his claim that these words "had fallen into disrepute in a cynical post-war generation" is incorrect. Had Gregory been a Marxist he would have been less sweeping, more conscious of *class distinctions*. Not everybody in the post-war generation was cynical. Writers like Michael Gold, Joseph Freeman, John Dos Passos, Joshua Kunitz and others who were close to the proletariat and the revolution never surrendered to cynicism and never sneered at such concepts as "honor," "dignity," "nobility." Unlike Gregory, however, they understood the class content of such terms. Gregory speaks of a "world that is resuming a moral attitude toward human relationships." Again no distinctions made: "a world." Do Hitler's and Mussolini's and Dollfuss' performances indicate "a world that is resuming a moral attitude toward human relationships?" Does the spread of anti-semitism? Do the colossal growths of armaments and war preparations? The only force in this world that expresses the "moral attitude toward human relationships" is the revolutionary proletariat; and a *Marxist* critic would have taken great pains to point it out. In view of such lack of any Marxist analysis, Gregory's barely concealed critical snobbishness and his worries about the American Marxist critics' "carelessness in interpreting Marx" are revealing. We of course are happy to have Horace Gregory as a fellow traveler of the revolutionary movement. We do not claim infallibility. We welcome criticism, especially the constructive criticism of a friend. But undeniably in Gregory's assaults we discern traces of those very ailments of people from the middle-class advancing toward the proletariat, which V. J. Jerome discusses in his letter to THE NEW MASSES in this issue.

FORCED to back down last spring because of the protest raised by militant rank and file teachers' organizations against the Ives Bill, the New York State Legislature waited until teachers went on their vacations. Last week at the special summer session, it shoved through the Bill, and Governor Lehman, who originally opposed it, discovered that his "objections" had been met, and quickly signed it. Now that teachers will be required to take a special oath to support the Constitution of

the United States and of New York State, the federal drive toward war and the city drive for economy may be considered officially launched. The present campaign of terror against intellectuals on the West Coast can now be continued on a legal basis. Teachers with liberal or radical views can be deprived of their jobs. If they openly oppose war, if they refuse to whip up the war spirit in their classes, if they expose Fascist moves like the Loyalty Oath, they can be accused of "disloyalty" and removed. So the instruments for "cleaning up" at home, and the propaganda machine for bringing war abroad are perfected.

BUT the more oppressive side of the Ives law is revealed when one looks at the condition of education in New York City. There are strong indications that State aid for the schools will not be voted at this session, which means the closing of some schools. There is every indication that the bankers will call for a third wage cut for next year. The tentative budget for the schools for next year continues the policy of economy at the expense of both children and teachers. It makes no provision for employing some of the fifteen thousand unemployed teachers, for reducing the overcrowded classes. Nor is there any provision made for alleviating the undernourishment and illness among workers' children. In fact, Miss Sylvia Ettinger has just been ousted as supervisor of the lunch room at Public School 36, Brooklyn, because she insisted on feeding starving children regardless of whether they had food tickets. Miss Ettinger was charged with inefficiency and insubordination. Under the Ives Bill, the more demagogic charge of "disloyalty" could be made. And those teachers who are rising to protest her dismissal under the leadership of the Associated Office and Professional Emergency Employes could easily be charged with being "unpatriotic." In other words, with the help of the Loyalty Oath, the bankers and their Boards of Education and Superintendents, will make more open efforts to crush the fight that teachers are threatening against educational retrenchment. They no doubt will aim at keeping teachers from organizing. Clearly, the ends to which the Loyalty Oath may be used are unlimited. If teachers fail to maintain a constant vigilance (as they failed to do during the summer), if they don't strengthen and build their militant rank and file organizations, if they fail to take up every Ettinger case and fight it vigorously, they will face open Fascist suppression.

THE flames of the white terror in California have scorched intellectuals as well as workers. The John Reed Club in the art colony at Carmel has learned that being an organization of writers and artists does not make it immune to the treatment accorded workers' mass organizations. Homes of club members are watched. Mail is tampered with. The owner of a local hall was threatened with boycott of his theatrical enterprises and personal violence if he permitted the John Reed Club to hold an advertised meeting at which Will Rogers' son was scheduled to speak on the R.O.T.C. and armaments. Langston Hughes, leading Negro writer, has been driven out of Carmel. Attempts have also been made to intimidate members of the Pen and Hammer in Palo Alto. In San Francisco, Tillie Lerner, talented young revolutionary writer, was arrested as a vagrant in an apartment where she was spending the evening with friends. The headquarters of the Artists and Writers Union in the same city has been searched by sleuths looking for explosives in sculpture sacks and hidden Communist meanings in paintings of nudes and still-lifes. The "investigation" of certain movie actors in Hollywood by the notorious red squad is another instance of the campaign of intimidation. Members of the California branches of the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners have also been threatened. Some of the intellectuals who faced their first baptism of fire in the California terror, became panicky and ran for cover. Many liberal intellectuals in the state went into hiding and refused even to sign protests. They must realize that unless they stick together precisely at this time and intensify their struggle, in cooperation with the working masses, for basic civil liberties, they are all likely to end up shoveling manure in concentration camps.

THOSE who still harbor the notion that only through the use of parliamentary methods will the working-class liberate itself are invited to examine the recently released program of the New York State Economic Council. Headed by former Attorney-General George W. Wickersham, William Breed and Mervin K. Hart, and claiming a membership of 50,000 employers, the Economic Council's program purposes the Fascist preservation of the power and profits of employers. This it seeks to achieve through the double device of withdrawing social and educational advantages from the working-class, and of destroying democratic rights through the mili-

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tant use of which the working-class has protected its interests. The Economic Council proposes: a 2 percent limit on real estate taxes; reconstruction of the system of "elaborate high school education for 36,000 pupils who can't use it"; no compulsory health or sickness insurance; no extension of New York's old-age security law; defeat of the child labor amendment. It would prohibit the closed shop in public work contracts; it demands court injunctions against the use of trade union funds for "illegal," *i.e.,* sympathetic strikes; it attacks the right of State employees to belong to political organizations. (Roosevelt and the Tammany gang and all capitalist class politicians are of course not included.) It would outlaw the general strike. Finally, it demands that the right of suffrage be withdrawn "from all persons receiving public unemployment relief." (The word "unemployment" relief is obviously included to protect the suffrage right of American bankers and industrialists who have been gorged with relief by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation.)

THE reason for barring the ballot to workers on relief, is the Council's expressed fear that

> if the millions now receiving relief should organize, as some have already done, and wield the power of organized voters, they could hamstring any effort to bring about economic recovery

of the capitalist class. In other words, when the capitalist class finds its existence or profit endangered through the working-class' use of democratic rights which it was forced to grant, it attempts to withdraw these rights.

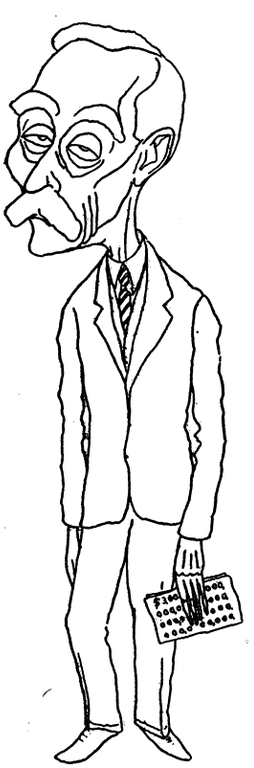
The Week's Papers

WEDNESDAY, August 8.—Speaker Rainey requests N.R.A. officials to grant petition of Eldred (Ill.) Crushed Stone Co. to permit it to pay workers 20 cents an hour instead of code minimum of 40 cents. . . . Police Captain Hynes, Los Angeles, tells Congressional Committee many movie stars contribute funds to the Communist Party. . . . Jersey City Stock Yards strike ends. . . . Secretary Roper says there is a shortage of five million habitable dwellings in country and many existing ones are "unlivable." Eighteen thousand knitgoods workers in New York go on strike. . . . Substitute C.W.A. planned for winter. . . . Three thousand nine hundred workers dropped from relief rolls in New York in first 10 days of August. . . . Farmers of drought areas plan mass demonstrations in state capitals Sept. 14. . . . General Motors reports best July sales since 1929.

Thursday—Under N.R.A., employes of General Motors Corporation had "hours shortened, their wages reduced," President A. P. Sloane, Jr., declares. . . . Roosevelt orders nationalization of silver, expansion of currency. . . . Thieves stole 1,027 guns from National Guard armories in past year and a half. . . . Senator Long maintains National Guard in New Orleans to continue his political "war" with rival. . . . New York State Senate passes Ives teachers' oath bill. A.A.A. announces it will try to fight profiteering in foods due to drought-caused food shortage possibility. . . . Minneapolis truck drivers still on strike.

Monday—Wall Street finds newly promulgated securities exchange rules quite satisfactory. . . . One hundred and thirty-seven railroads begin fight against making Railroad Pension Act effective. . . . General living cost will increase 6 percent next winter, food costs more, Secretary Wallace predicts. . . . Federal Labor Board enters Aluminum Company strike as "mediator." . . . Green says his figure of 10,000,000 unemployed is based on facts from throughout the nation. . . . Chiefs of War Department will conduct "war on paper." . . . Employers reject demands of New York knitgoods workers.

Friday—Gov. Lehman signs Ives bill. . . . Two thousand relief workers strike in Bridgeport, Conn., presenting demands to Socialist Mayor. . . . International Labor Defense reports 28 were killed in strikes and other labor demonstrations in first six months of 1934. . . . National Labor Relations Board hears Donovan, former N.R.A. employe, charge Gen. Johnson with firing him for union activities. . . . Lowest grain crop in 30 years predicted as result of drought and crop curtailment program. . . . Hull-Troyanovsky talks regarding Soviet debt question settlement continue.

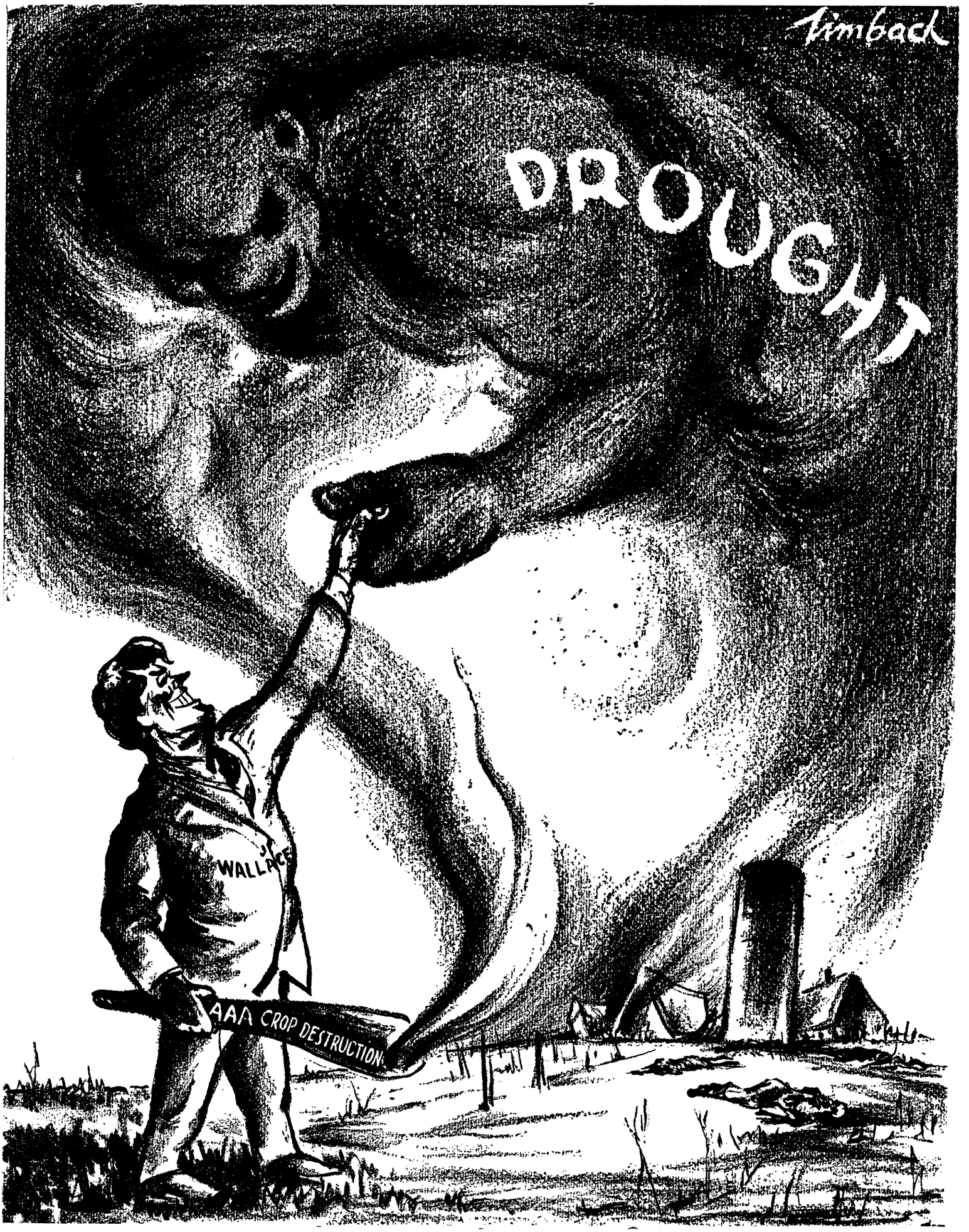


Mackey

Andrew Mellon, whose workers struck

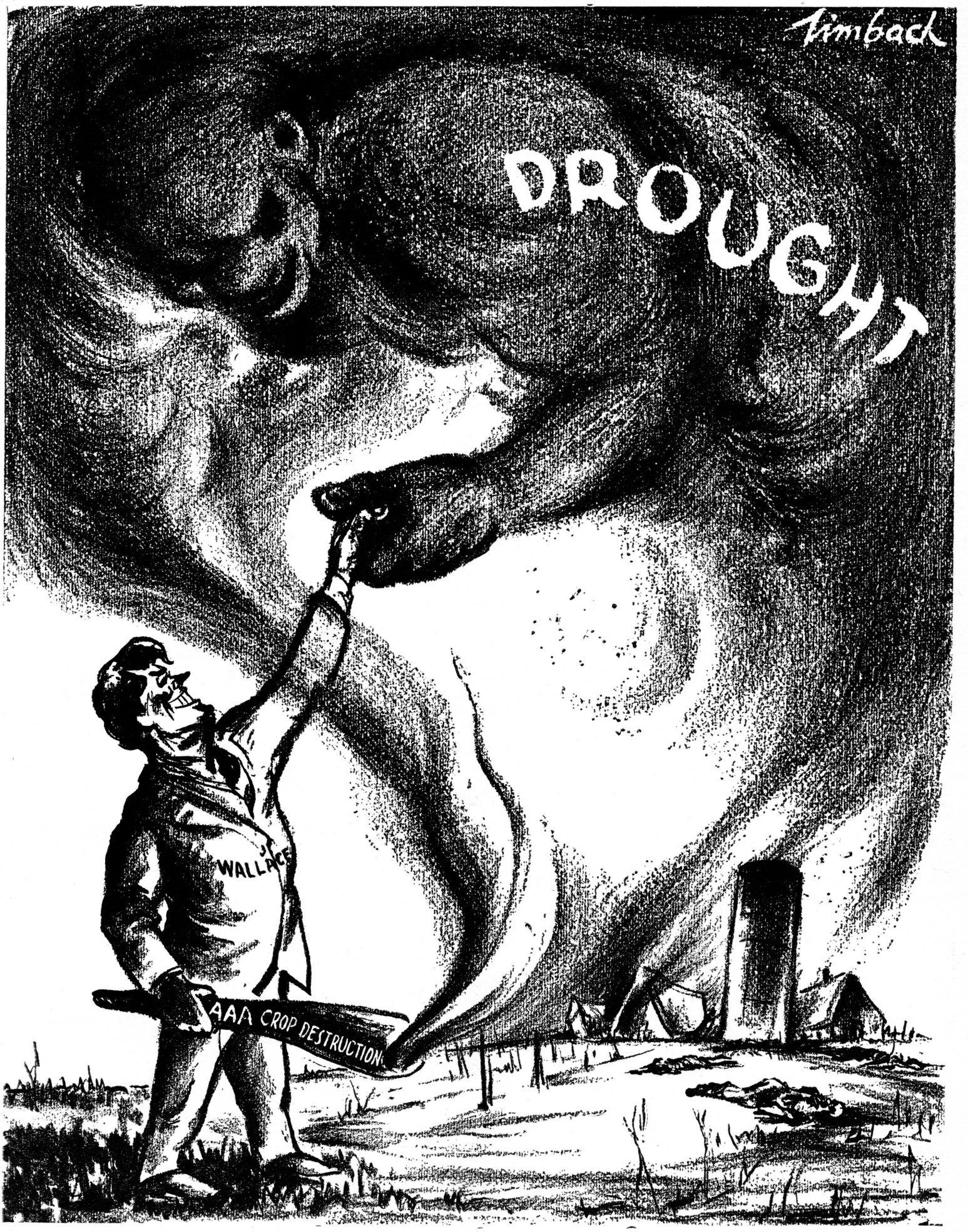
Saturday—Strike closes six plants of Aluminum Company of America. . . . Chamber of Commerce of the United States challenges Green's unemployment estimate of 10 millions as too high by three millions. . . . Gold shipments from France returned without unloading because exchange fluctuations make it more valuable there than here. . . . More than a score of workers jailed as vagrants during San Francisco drive against militant labor, end hunger strike, winning some of their demands. . . . "Military rule is better than mob rule" United States District Court says in denying Minneapolis employers petition for removal of National Guard and martial law. . . . Kohler strike is continuing. . . . One in every ten in New York City is on relief rolls, Director Corsi, of Emergency Home Relief Bureau, declares. . . . Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks launches campaign "to combat Communism." . . . Week-end rains slightly help some drought areas.

Sunday—Republic Steel Corporation renews agreement with Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers. . . . Billion-dollar government campaign for housing and "home renovation" to begin actively soon. . . . A.



Limbach

PALS



Limbach

PALS

game" from August 26 to Sept. 8 in fighting off mythical invader in writing. . . . Two Negro farm workers are lynched in Benton County, Miss. . . . Textile workers convention delegates introduce 50 resolutions calling for a general strike in industry. . . . B. B. Medlock, Greenville County, S. C., farmer shot and killed himself rather than carry out an order of A.A.A. officials to plow under three of the acres of cotton he had cultivated.

Tuesday—Bankers declare restrictions on loans from $1,000,000,000 housing campaign fund will make it "difficult" to carry it out. . . . Marshall E. S. Sampsell, first of utilities magnates tried in connection with Insull Utilities "empire" collapse, acquitted in Chicago. . . . Police charge knitgoods strikers' picket line in New York, wounding two, arresting 22. . . . Massena, N. Y., plant of Mellon-controlled Aluminum Company of America, announces it will no longer contribute "to town or village relief" because of strike. . . . Andrew W. Mellon reported to be paying $1,500,000 to Soviet Government for Raphael's painting, *Alba Madonna*.

Millikan: A Study in Rugged Stupidity

DR. ROBERT A. MILLIKAN, president of the California Institute of Technology, used to be one of the world's finest experimental physicists. He measured the charge on the electron and performed other notable scientific experiments. But some seven or eight years ago he gave up physics (for all practical purposes) for the more lucrative job of being the "scientific" apologist for the most reactionary practices of American capitalism. At the same time he became the best known of the spiritualizers of science. He found God in every equation, and religious significance in every physical manifestation. His bias for dragging God in at every opportunity became so strong that his latest reports on cosmic rays turned into real flights from reality. According to the expert testimony of Professor Arthur Compton and others, Dr. Millikan apparently "sees" phenomena which do not exist.

At the present time the capitalist class is more and more calling upon scientists to give their blessings to the new deal. For example, Dr. Karl Compton, president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology recently defended and explained Roosevelt's policies in terms of scientific method. Needless to say, he wrought much havoc upon his defenseless victim, scientific methodology.

Dr. Millikan as the personal representative of the California capitalists is even more reactionary. On August 7, the American press front-paged a radio address by Dr. Millikan in which he attacked the so-called welfare aspects of the new deal, and urged a return to good old rugged starvation.

If he were not being consciously used to propagate reactionary doctrines under the cloak of his scientific eminence, it would be difficult to take Dr. Millikan seriously. His economics and sociology are pitched on the level of a Tammany ward-heeler, and are expressed in the terms of the kindergarten kid's "Oath of Allegiance to the American Flag." Here is the dream that haunts Dr. Millikan when he is not making money on the Chautauqua circuit:

> The American dream is that this country may always remain a land of freedom and of opportunity for each individual to rise to just that position of power and influence to which his own character entitles him; a land in which the standard of living is just as high as is compatible with the total production of the country; a land that has so intelligent and informed an electorate that social changes, however far-reaching, can always be brought about and can only be brought about by constitutional ballot methods, never either by the violence of the mob or the despotic power of the man on horseback.

The hypocrisy of this statement is all the more enormous, because Dr. Millikan heads a California institution. He receives money from, and is a trusted agent of, the California capitalists who killed the San Francisco strikers in cold blood, and who unleashed, with the aid and approval of the Roosevelt regime, the worst wave of anti-Red hysteria since the post-war years of 1919 and 1920. Dr. Millikan speaks of "freedom" while Mooney rots in jail and when it is a "crime" to organize workers. He speaks of "A standard of living compatible with the total productivity of the country" when children toil in California for a few cents an hour. To Dr. Millikan's dream, there can be no reply. Such fluff would make even William Green blush. There is, however, a good deal to say about Dr. Millikan's "scientific analysis" of the present situation.

If he addressed the American Physical Society on some problem in physics, and resorted to the same method of falsification of facts, he would be read out of the society as an ignoramus and a charlatan.

In the first place, take his manipulation of facts. He tells us that it's just too bad that in 1929 the average per capita income in the United States was $657. He says that "you may talk until you are blue in the face . . . your talk cannot do a particle of good" to correct this fact. This makes it seem that nothing can be done about the redistribution of income, because the total income was too low. Instead of redistributing income, we must "teach people to use their small incomes so as to get more satisfaction out of them."

But the facts point to another conclusion. If in 1929, the workers had been able to force the government to redistribute the national income equally among all the gainfully employed, the latter would have received approximately $1,800 apiece as their share. How mal-distributed income is, due to the monopoly incomes of the capitalists, can be seen from the following situation. In 1931 (a crisis year) while wages were being slashed and there were approximately 9,000,000 unemployed, 51,305 persons received $2,168,100,000 as their share of the national income. If they had all been forced to take only $20,000 apiece, there would have been $1,142,000,000 available for the unemployed.

Such conscious manipulation of figures, if committed in Dr. Millikan's own field, would mark him as a charlatan. But since he is only lying to workers, this makes him an even greater "scientist."

Dr. Millikan considers the question of raising the living standards of the American people "a natural science

problem," whatever that may mean. He scoffs at the notion that labor produces wealth. He quotes with approval Pasteur's bromide that "What really leads the race forward are a few scientific discoveries and their applications." But the truth of the matter is that we do not have to wait for Dr. Millikan and other scientists and engineers to "create more wealth, thus raising the general level of human well being." The example of the Soviet Union has demonstrated that social problems can only be solved socially. No formula discovered by a chemist, no new machine, will solve the crisis *permanently*. The permanent solution will be achieved when the workers and farmers take over the means of production. Then with social economic planning as a basis, the present industrial plant, by better utilization and the elimination of obsolescent processes, could be made to double the national income of 1929 almost immediately.

Only under socialism will mankind realize Dr. Millikan's pious wish "that the time will come when through the increase in man's knowedge of nature and control over her processes, the level of the whole social landscape will be placed far above the sea of poverty." He knows only too well from his personal experience that this can never be attained under capitalism. Capitalism has become a brake upon technical progress. The technological revolution, which would serve as the material basis for a society that would provide plenty for all, waits on the proletarian revolution.

In the same spirit that animates the bourgeois press in lying about the Communist Party, Dr. Millikan repeats the time-worn lie (refuted daily by the New York Times' Moscow correspondents) that "in Russia, where a different system prevails, 5,000,000 people are reported to have starved to death last year."

And although famine is stalking through the A.A.A.- and drought-ridden Middle West, Dr. Millikan unblinkingly says "that we have had practically no starvation in America in this worst of all depressions." He should be reminded that the cumulative effects of malnutrition, among other effects of the crisis, has caused the death rate to rise over 5 percent in the first 6 months of this year as compared with 1933.

But then Dr. Millikan would probably hail the rise in the death rate as but another means of bringing us back to "normal." To him, crises are correctives for psychological ills. "If we cannot learn to control the emotional boom-psychology which produces inflation, we neither can, nor should, absolve the correction that nature has provided to bring us back to normal." The logic of Dr. Millikan's position will no doubt lead him to advocate war as the best path to normalcy. As one of the consulting scientists to the Roosevelt administration he is doing his best to see that the nation treads this road to profits and the normal.

At the conclusion of his address, Dr. Millikan attacks the philosophy of "Stateism"—that is, Communism. Boiling down his twaddle, we come to his conclusion that governments should "regulate" the nice capitalists. If through "the violence of the mob" (that is by revolution) the masses should kick out the ruling class, the American dream will not come true; America will not "remain a land of freedom and opportunity."

To bolster this crude defense of capitalism, Dr. Millikan resorts to Nazi arguments about not coddling the race. It seems that science (aided by Dr. Millikan) made man "stalwart and self-reliant." To push him back "into the soft bosom of the State" would not only degrade man, but ruin the efforts of science to get him standing on his own feet. Translate this, and it simply means—no help to the unemployed, the cutting down of social and hygienic services, and the stifling of any effort by the workers to achieve a living wage.

Dr. Millikan has not served his masters well. By exposing himself as the arch-apostle of rugged stupidity, he has given his racket away. It will be more difficult for him to continue to pose as the pure physicist who is called in to give mankind the benefit of his noble thought. He stands in all his intellectual nakedness as the defender of the reign of terror launched by Fleischacker and Company in California, as the enemy of any movement that works for a better order of society.

Roosevelt Houses the Worker

NOW that the "National Housing Act," as passed in June, is a much publicized part of the Roosevelt program, it is appropriate to evaluate it in its final form. In the first place its title is quite misleading. It is not a housing act at all. On the contrary, it is nicely calculated to restrict new construction, especially low rental housing and slum clearance. As THE NEW MASSES pointed out even before Congress bowed to the will of the President, this piece of social legislation is the result of the desperate determination of real estate and banking interests that their tottering financial structure shall not be further weakened by even the diluted and inadequate competition implied in the government housing program. That these interests were highly successful in their efforts and that the "National Housing Act" was written by them for their own benefit is illustrated by the following:

About a year ago the Roosevelt Administration set up a Housing Division of the P.W.A. in order to revive construction, help decrease unemployment and provide homes for the lower paid workers, through limited dividends housing projects. When this failed because it became obvious that such projects were charging ten to twelve dollars per room per month and were neither within the reach of workers or even beginning to clear slums (and incidentally would therefore offer subsidized competition to existing real estate interests), the Administration, with alleged impatience, formed the Public Works Emergency Housing Corporation. Apparently even some of the officials were taken in by this move because a veritable tidal wave of statistics was whipped up to prove that the nation suffered from a tremendous shortage of all kinds of housing, especially for the lower incomes, and that millions of existing homes were below even minimum standards. And P.W.A. Administrator Ickes and others hastened to proclaim that private enterprise had demonstrated its incapacity to provide low rental housing and that the government would have to step in and fill the urgent need. This position, of course, was ably and altruistically supported by the National Lum-

bermen's Association, the Common Brick Manufacturers' Association and the like.

But while the building material lobbies and their housing experts were stressing the shortage of housing, their equally practical friends who owned real estate and mortgages knew that actually, in terms of the market, there was a surplus. The crisis was causing families to double up and vacancies averaged as high as 20 and 30 percent. Consequently any housing, in particular government housing, no matter how great the social need, would mean cut-throat competition for existing property. At this stage, however, the big guns of the Chambers of Commerce *et al.*, were in position and their barrage was being laid down. Under the fire and smoke, Roosevelt proceeded to abandon the Housing Program. The several approved projects were cancelled and even the half-dozen or so in construction were looked upon with suspicion and investigated. As a result, the chief of the Housing Division and a number of other officials were forced to resign under rather shady circumstances. With the original Housing Program safely out of the way, the new "National (anti) Housing Act" was placed on the "must-list" and squeezed through Congress in the last days of the session.

Several of the specific provisions of this bill have already been discussed in a previous issue of THE NEW MASSES. Essentially the measure provides that the government will guarantee, up to 20 percent, loans made by private business to "encourage modernization and repair of homes"; will insure mortgages; and will establish national mortgage associations to discount the insured securities. Since the home owner is expected to repay these loans at 5 or 6 percent interest, and since he must also pay one percent extra to cover the cost of the guarantee, and since in addition he must be a good risk, it can easily be seen which people, if any, will be able to take advantage of the Administration's beneficence. It is doubtful whether, in spite of the gigantic ballyhoo campaign which is contemplated and already partially under way, the government will be able to induce many home owners to assume additional indebtedness under these conditions. But even if the insurance fund of $200 million, set up under the N.H.A., is somehow completely called upon by the banks and building loan companies, the significant facts to remember are (1) that the result will not be clearing of slums and the construction of new workers' housing as promised, but primarily the guaranteeing of loans and mortgages, and (2) that the so-called "Housing Program" will not be a government activity (except, of course, that eventually the government will hold the bag) but will be undertaken by the very same "private initiative" which, we were told, failed so signally in the past.

Another feature of this bill is brought out in releases from Washington recently by James A. Moffett, the new Housing Administrator. Labor is expected to cooperate in this social program by patriotically granting a considerable reduction in its already miserable wage scales. Here then, are the final fruits of the Roosevelt Housing Program: private business, the banks and Chambers of Commerce will assume the duty of improving housing conditions at a substantial fee, and the worker will be forced to take another wage cut to help the swindle along.

HOMECOMING

(August 7, 1934)

EDWIN ROLFE

Atlanta sped him on his journey north
no send-off at the station
but in a million shacks
in Georgia Alabama Carolina
hearts beat more strongly for his freedom
—whites blacks
whispered: now he's safe
in safe arms for a moment
with brothers comrades. Speed the time
when prison, chain gang, landlord court
forever are left behind!

The train gained speed
red engine streaming north
left Fulton Tower, crossed Mason-Dixon line
pulsed power on the rails
leaped distance miles
soared to sudden freedom, roared
through cabin backyards, struggling gardens, saw
gleaming mansion towers in the distance rising
above the green horizon—said goodbye
and in Angelo Herndon's heart
certainty of strength, return to victory.

See hands raised in your honor, boy, fighter,
pioneer of our advance in perilous country:
heads massed in greeting as you pass
the nation's capital—city of William Penn—
Jersey towns still fresh with memory
for us of 1776;
ecstatic tears in eyes of old mothers
(no others weep but old men and women;
leave them to their joy—give them this relief).

Girl, boy—young comrades everywhere—
man, woman: this is a day for joy!
We knew him from his words
flame-flung in a southern court
until this day—this day we know
his presence at our side:
the smile of joy at nearness
to comrade, friend—and proletarian pride
that these hands, heads
(this great dauntless heart)
upraised, black and white
think, feel for him
are clenched for him
protect him with their might!

Angelo Herndon, Fighter

JOSEPH NORTH

ARMISTICE is never declared in the war between the classes: the battle rages incessantly, sometimes subdued, sometimes in full roar behind barricades, but it continues timelessly wherever there is boss and man. Revolutionary workingmen understand this. To confront the enemy in combat, to pit strength against the seemingly overwhelming strength of the enemy, it's all in the cards. They take this for granted and face the odds. "It'll all come out in the pay envelope" they say. It is when the class enemy makes captives of them, cages them inside four walls and behind bars that the fighting is hardest. Isolated from their comrades, the din of life and battle far away, the prisoners of the class war need every ounce of their proletarian strength to carry on.

The capitalist state rests not only on the bayonets of its militia: prisons support the authority of the Supreme Courts. Much of the history of the class struggle could be written on the walls of Schluesselberg Fortress, of the Bastille, in the pits of Peter and Paul, in the hell of Dachau, of Fort Leavenworth, on the stones of Devil's Island. Those who survive, whose will cannot be broken, who combat solitude and torture until they are freed by their fellows on the outside, emerge steeled, unbreakable. These are our Lenins, our Stalins, our Debs', our Dimitroffs. These are the nameless thousands of the revolution in China, in the Balkans, in Germany. These are our Angelo Herndons.

To tell the story of Herndon is no easy task. Continually his story becomes the story of the working-class. When Herndon finishes telling you his story you realize that in him are epitomized those qualities characteristic of the class to which the future belongs: in this son of the oppressed Negro people one finds typified the indomitableness, the courage, the selflessness of the proletariat. In him you see the undying confidence of the revolutionary in his own class.

Illustrating this best, perhaps, was Herndon's action upon hearing bail had been set—exorbitant bail, to be sure, cash bail of $15,000. Here he was, a penniless Negro youth locked up in Fulton Towers, Atlanta, where "you're as good as if the jailer locked your cell and threw the key in the nearest river." When Herndon—sentenced to 18-20 years on the chain-gang—packed up his belongings, a dozen books, a comb, a few shirts, his writing tablet, his pen, in the cheap suitcase, his fellow prisoners and the jailer regarded him with amusement. "What you think you're doing there, son?" one of the older prisoners asked.

"Packing," Herndon said. "I'll be leaving here any day now." The prisoner laughed. "Bail set ain't bail raised, son," he said. The jailer outside laughed. "Fifteen thousand dollars in dollars, boy," he said, "is about THE highest bail set in these parts." Angelo continued packing. Carefully he stowed Volume 2 of *Das Kapital* upon Volume 1, then the *Gotha Program,* Strachey's *The Coming Struggle for Power*—all works mailed to him

Selma Freeman

ANGELO HERNDON

by sympathizers throughout America. Books he had pored over, read and re-read in his 26 months of imprisonment.

"The working-class will raise it," he said. "I'll be going any day now." The others jeered. The sentence was 18-20 years.

In 25 days he went.

That is this story. The details are part of the epic of the American working-class: humdrum details, day to day happenings in the struggles of the working-class, but they are the details which make revolution; which change the face of the earth.

This man Herndon. Although just 21 you don't think of him as anything else but "man." His story to a certain point is the story of millions. There is this difference. He caught a glimpse of the future. This glimpse makes proletarian heroes.

Born in 1912 on the outskirts of Cincinnati, the son of a Negro miner. The struggle for bread was literal, real, every day in his life. It is a story told many times—but one cannot repeat it too often. Eight mouths to feed . . . the father dead of miner's pneumonia when Angelo was a few years old . . . the incessant struggle to eat, for shelter. At thirteen he left schooling, left home to "go hunt him a job."

At 13: The sons of the proletariat mature early. Already close to six feet in height, he loaded coal near Lexington, Ky. Forty-two cents for shoveling twenty-four hundred pounds of coal all day long onto a freight car. Twenty—four—hundred—pounds—and you get four dimes and two pennies. Nine months of this and the pay was slashed to thirty-one cents. The wage earner was dissatisfied. He needed more to send home to his family.

At 14: Like millions of the working-class he was free—to "seek him a master." Further on South where talk of high wages in Birmingham was heard. Haunting the employment offices for weeks until he heard the Goodyear Tire Company at Gadsden, Ala. offered $3.50 a day. Upon arrival he discovered the rumor was a hoax: it was $1.75 for "laboring." "They worked us day and night on the promise of overtime," he relates. Pay day finally came and simultaneously squadrons of police cars scurrying about the plant. When Herndon and his group of workers fell in line they were ordered to drop out. "Nothing coming to us," he said. "They told us our transportation, food and lodging ate up the pay." Fourteen year old Herndon (it might have been Andy Wright or any one of the Scottsboro boys, it might have been young Tom Mooney) pulled stakes and hiked back to Birmingham that night.

At 15: Already embittered, he read, read everything he could lay hands on. "I wanted to know," he says. He wrote away to correspondence schools for courses in high school subjects.

At 15: Work in the mines.

At 16: Work in the mines.

At 17: Work in the mines.

Then lay-off.

Work and search for work. The proletarian, expropriated and dispossessed, his misery redoubled by the enslavement of an enslaved people—jimcrowed, segregated, the threat of lynch law everywhere. In this Negro lad the same blood stirred that made a Denmark Vesey, a Nat Turner, a Toussaint L'Ouverture. But it was not yet touched by a glimpse of the future.

Hunting for work one day he passed a post on which a leaflet fluttered. He crammed it into his pocket. That night he unfolded the leaflet, spread it on the table under the lamplight.

"WOULD YOU RATHER FIGHT—OR STARVE?"

"The letters danced in front of my eyes," he says. "I thought that over and over. I

Selma Freeman

ANGELO HERNDON

Selma Freeman

ANGELO HERNDON

handed the leaflet to my companion. It's war —it's war—it's war—" I said to myself, "I might as well get into it now as any other time." *

At 18: The working-class boy was now a class conscious proletarian. More, he was already a professional revolutionary, a fellow worker of the Lenins, the Stalins, the Dimitroffs, the Thaelmanns. His development was rapid after the following experiences. "The very next day after I read the leaflet I went to the meeting of the Unemployed Councils. I joined up after the meeting. The next day I saw the class struggle clear. One hundred cops armed with rifles on guard while five hundred workers, black and white, at the call of the Unemployed Councils marched to the Community Chest to demand relief. When I saw the police I was a little shaky." Inside the assembled shysters and misleaders of both colors. The Negro editor of the Birmingham Report spoke: "White brothers and black brothers, don't be fooled by some foreigner from a thousand miles away that you know nothing about. The Negro has plenty of friends in the South. All he has to do when in need is to go to his Southern white friends. The white labor speaker has tried to get you to accept social equality. But we don't want social equality, nor do we need it." That was enough for Herndon. "When I left the meeting my blood was hot enough to cook."

His visit to Chicago as a delegate to the National Unemployment Convention in June of 1930 contributed considerably to his political education. Headed to the convention he carried handbills distributed by the white hooded K.K.K. that had marched the previous night. "Drive the Communists back to Russia and the North. Alabama is a good place for good Negroes but a bad place for bad Negroes."

Herndon is a "bad" Negro. The Southern governors variously term such as he "smart nigger" or "bad nigger," synonymously. At Chicago in the enlightened North, Herndon saw the police horsemen ride down on white and Negro workers. "Just like the South."

"When that night I read the accounts of the demonstration in the capitalist press I began to see the whole truth of what the speakers had been telling me in Birmingham. In fact the demonstration alone was a better education than I could have gotten otherwise in 30 years."

Upon his return from Chicago he was variously an organizer of the coal miners; an organizer of the sharecroppers. In the mine territory he was jailed for the first time. In the Black Belt he escaped by few minutes leeway a lynch mob that had been formed through the treachery of a well-to-do Negro minister who, pretending friendliness, telephoned the authorities in Selma.

Daily danger, and yet at nights, he studied the revolution, pored over the multitudinous literature of the class struggle, learning how better to understand the problems of revolution.

On August 3, 1931 Herndon was arrested in a round up a few days after some unknown had shot three white girls. This was the well-known Willie Peterson case. The authorities charged Peterson, a Negro, with the murder, claiming he talked "Communist talk" when he shot the women. The shooting happened in an exclusively white neighborhood. But the law of the South requires Negro blood as a sacrifice.

"While I was out visiting some miners, one of the notorious gun thugs that had arrested me once before, came to my room, broke in, and confiscated a batch of literature. One of the thugs hit me across the head for refusing to say 'No, sir' and 'Yes, sir.' They took me about 20 miles out of town. All the while I was being carried to the woods, some of the thugs would point to places where they had killed Negro workers.

"After we had gotten far into the woods the car stopped. One of the thugs asked me if I had my thinking cap on. I said, for what? He answered: 'You'll soon find out.' Then they said: 'We don't care anything about your Communist Party, but we want to know who shot Nell Williams and the other two girls.' I said I didn't know. They said: 'If you didn't do it, you know who did—and you are going to tell us, otherwise you won't leave here alive.' Two of them pulled their coats off, and slipped a rubber hose from their trousers. I was still handcuffed. Then they beat me across the head. One would beat me while the other rested. They beat me for half an hour but I did not talk. They said: 'You god-damn Reds aren't supposed to tell anything. But before you leave here, you are going to tell plenty.' I said: 'I have told you all I know and that is nothing.'

"Then they handcuffed my hands behind me, and started again. They beat me for almost another half-hour. One of them said: 'Let me go down in the woods and get mad. Then I will kill the son-of-a-bitch.' I told him he could turn blue if he wanted to. On the way back to jail, they asked me to point out some of the white comrades. I told them I wouldn't.

"That evening Nell Williams, who had 'identified' Willie Peterson by his hat, came to the jail to identify us. As we marched in line before her, she began to shake her head. We could see someone near her telling her to say 'Yes.' We were finally booked on a vagrancy charge. Three weeks passed before we were tried. In a few days I was out on bail. The comrades decided that I should go to Atlanta. For one week I stayed home for my head hurt badly from the blows I had received."

Atlanta opened another chapter in the life of this young revolutionary. It is the chapter now known to tens of thousands of workingmen throughout the country; how Angelo Herndon carried on work to win food for the starving Negro and white of that proud Georgian metropolis; how he was arrested for organizing meetings which called for the unity of white and Negroes in the common fight against starvation; how this was labeled "incitement to insurrection." After his arrest he was taken to the Atlanta police headquarters. "There"—Angelo tells the story—"one of the detectives shouted, 'You damned guys are nothing but a bunch of degraded bastards. You would drink the blood from your mothers just for the sake of agitating.' Meanwhile I was playing dumb-brute. One guard asked me where I lived. I told him I didn't know.

"The guard said: 'Let's take this bastard upstairs and give him the works. He thinks he's in the hands of the New York police. But he can't fool us.' They led me up a dark flight of stairs into a little dark room. There was a coffin and skulls were strewn around it. In the center was a chair made of steel. One of the men connected some wires to it.

"Someone said to me: 'Now if you don't talk, we are going to electrocute you.' I still refused to say anything. One of the men walked over and slapped me in the face. I told him he would have to kill me before I would get into that chair. Then another said: 'Take that black bastard back and lock him up.' I was placed in a filthy, lousy place called the 'state cell.' The first six months before I was tried I was forced to live in a cell with a dead man. . . ."

The rest of the story is well-known: the monstrous farce of a trial in which the prosecutor, the Rev. Mr. Solicitor Hudson—a minister of the gospel—demanded that the jury bring in a verdict with an automatic penalty of electrocution.

On the third day the trial ended with a verdict of "guilty," despite the brilliant defense of the Negro attorney Ben Davis, Jr., whose pleas endangered himself for he spoke openly and fearlessly in the white man's court; despite the impassioned declarations of Herndon who said:

> You can jail, you can kill Angelo Herndon. But you cannot kill the working class. A thousand Angelo Herndons will rise to take my place.

He showed himself, this youth of 19, another Dimitroff—flinging the truth into the faces of the authorities, who stood literally with the weapons of death in their hands—yet powerless to frighten this son of the proletariat.

Eighteen to twenty years! For organizing demonstrations in which Negro and white workers for the first time marched through Georgia.

Eighteen to twenty years—for demanding bread.

Here the story of the individual Angelo Herndon finally merges into the story of the

* I remember in reporting the Communist convention, Comrade X—— an outstanding Negro leader in the South, whose speech electrified the delegates—told me he came to the revolutionary movement similarly . . . the leaflet with its simple monosyllabic appeal. I recall the words that he says struck him with transcendent force: "Millions for war, and not one cent for the unemployed." This Comrade X——— now the leader of some 8,000 sharecroppers in the Black Belt, was brought into the revolutionary movement by Herndon.

working-class. The International Labor Defense, known and loved by thousands of class-war prisoners, carried on unceasing struggle to liberate Herndon. Their speakers told of him on street corners. Their magazine, the Labor Defender, wrote of him issue after issue. Their leaflets were distributed by the millions. The trade unions came to their help; the Communist Party called on all its supporters to plunge into this fight. The I.L.D. made immediate application for bail. Promptly denied. A writ of habeas corpus was filed, demanding bail. Likewise promptly denied. A new trial appeal was taken before the State Supreme Court. This court sustained the original verdict. The working-class redoubled its efforts. The International Labor Defense speakers spoke on twice as many street corners, to twice as many workers. The Communist Party called for the liberation of Herndon along with the Scottsboro boys, along with Thaelmann, in the Nazi dungeons.

In the meanwhile, as Herndon wrote in the June issue of the Labor Defender: "Meantime I am still in the death house at Fulton Tower, where I have seen four prisoners go to the electric chair within the past two months. The slave masters are trying to kill me or drive me crazy from the strain of waiting in the death house."

But the working-class fought harder. And, after more than two years in prison, as protests mounted higher daily, the authorities set bail. "Fifteen thousand dollars." They thought that was a mockery. "In cash." They felt certain the cash could not be raised.

The Daily Worker, official organ of the Communist Party, printed Herndon's appeal, June 7, 1934. "Since the Georgia Supreme Court upheld my sentence of 18 to 20 years their jail tools have increased the pressure on me. I am deathly sick as a result of their murderous treatment accorded me during my two years of confinement. My only hope of ever being in the ranks is in your strength."

On August 3rd he would be turned over to the chain gang unless bail was raised. The Georgia state supreme court had upheld the 18-20 year verdict. The sentence was tantamount to death. For revolutionaries have little chance, once they are chained to the gang, to survive, even for a year or two, let alone two decades.

The race was against time. The appeal was made to the proletariat. Angelo had already packed his bag. His faith was unbreakable. But could the proletariat, in the fifth year of the capitalist breakdown, faced with the daily problem of food, of shelter, of clothes, make the sacrifices necessary? Herndon was sure they would. The leaders of the I.L.D., accustomed to battle against seemingly insuperable odds, speeded up their work.

The appeal was made in the official organ of the Communist Party. Reprinted in the various language papers of the proletariat, the Freiheit, Jewish daily Communist paper, the Uj Elore, Hungarian, the Eteenpain, Finnish, Der Arbeiter, German, Il Lavoratore, Italian, and soon the appeal went to tens of thousands of the working-class. THE NEW MASSES made its appeal to the middle-class allies of the proletariat.

In Fulton Towers Angelo Herndon sat, his bag packed, waiting.

The I.L.D. began to receive letters such as this:

From Edwin Johnson, Chicago: "I enclose $2 for Angelo Herndon bail. I am unemployed so I can't do very much but I hope it will help some, keep up the good work."

From Helen Willis, New York City: "Good people—thirty cents stamps. Best I can do. For Herndon bail."

The Daily Worker carried a daily appeal by leaders prominent in working-class life. William Z. Foster appealed, Earl Browder appealed, William L. Patterson, head of the I. L. D., himself stricken with serious illness due to overwork, appealed from his sick bed; but the proletariat was poverty-stricken. Five years of joblessness, of wage-cuts, and semi-starvation.

On July 23 only $538.60 was raised.

On July 27 only $5,000 was raised.

Letters such as this continued coming in. From all of America.

From Poughkeepsie, N. Y.: "In response to William Z. Foster's appeal in the Daily Worker, I am sending you one dollar for the defense of Angelo Herndon. You need not return the money when the bail is refunded. Apply it instead to the Scottsboro funds. With heartiest wishes for your success in both cases I extend you fraternal greetings—Samuel H. Jones."

Angelo paced back and forth in his cell. He opened his bag to take out a book and read and re-read.

On July 30 the total raised was $7,242.

The Daily Worker continued its appeals. THE NEW MASSES called for its readers to aid. Some of the liberal press carried letters asking for help. Members of the I.L.D. on street corners passed the hat around after meetings. "For Angelo Herndon's bail."

The letters kept coming in.

From Twin Falls, Idaho: "Inclosed please find $10 as a loan for bail for Angelo Herndon. It may be that this small amount may help save him from the capitalist torture."

From the Young Communist League branch at Roseland, Ill.: "Enclosed find money order for $7 toward the bail fund. This amount was collected through the efforts of our members with collection lists. Sorry the amount was not larger."

Yet on August 1, $4,614.60 was needed to free Herndon on bail. An August 4th he would be shackled to the chain gang. The jailers laughed at him. "Unpack that bag." Bob (R. M.) Holand, chief jailer jeered. He it was who had nicknamed Angelo "ham and eggs" because of the numerous telegrams he received from workers who, upon hearing Herndon was receiving mouldy, half-rotten food, demanded he be given "ham and eggs." Holand used to tear the Daily Worker into strips and then hand them through the bars to Herndon. Angelo would carefully lay the strips side by side on the floor and piece the newspaper together.

On August 2nd while the prisoners were taking their few minutes exercise in the corridor Holand saw a white prisoner, a lad of 20, talking to Herndon. Angelo had loaned him the pamphlet *Why Communism*. "Get away from there," Holand shouted at the white boy. "You ought to be ashamed to talk to a nigger."

But the pamphlet had done its work. "He's as good as you are and better," the white boy retorted. Only the threat of "solitary" forced him from the conversation.

In the meanwhile Angelo wrote scores of letters, waiting confidently, eagerly for the day of liberation. He replied to the workers from Gorki, U.S.S.R., who had written him, to the workers from far-off Vladivostok who said: "We extend comradely hand-clasp through the bars to you, our comrade Herndon," to the dozens of workers in the country who wrote Angelo regularly to cheer him, to let him know they had not forgotten him.

On August 3rd the total sent in to the International Labor Defense reached $16,324. The bail bond was topped by $1,324. On August 4th it had been oversubscribed by $3,429.35.

But the South has a technique of torture for Negroes unparalleled except perhaps in Nazi Germany. The jailers sneered. "Wait till you step outside Fulton Towers," they said, "you'll wish you had stayed inside here, you goddam black Red."

The I.L.D. was equal to the task. Prominent figures in New York, men such as Theodore Dreiser, telephoned to the Governor of Georgia, demanding safe-keeping of Herndon until he was out of the state. "We will hold you responsible," they told the Governor. The press was at hand as witnesses.

The talk of lynch mob was heard on the streets of Atlanta. But the pressure from the working-class, from the allies of the working-class, was too strong.

A detachment of detectives stood guard to see to it Angelo Herndon was not molested.

As he stepped from the prison, the barred door swinging behind him, Negro and white prisoners, despite threats of retaliation by the guards, rushed to the grated windows: "Good luck, Angelo," they shouted. "Don't come back here again." He waved to them. Chief Jailer Holand stood at the gate, the keys in his hand.

"Next time you come," he said in parting, "I hope you come to stay for good."

Angelo laughed. "I'll see what the working class has to say to that."

What happened in Pennsylvania station when Herndon arrived gave the reply to Jailer Holand. The working-class has retrieved a son.

Behind the Pogroms

EMIL GLASS

THERE are many unexplained circumstances about the recent Jewish massacres in Algeria, with over one hundred dead and two hundred wounded according to the Associated Press. Both the London Daily Herald and the London Times charge that Moslem attacks on the Jews had begun on Tuesday, July 31, and had been kept secret until they reached such proportions in the city of Constantine on Saturday, August 4, that they could no longer be concealed. Also, it is universally admitted now, even by members of the French cabinet, that a storm of anti-Jewish agitation has been raging for a long time, and the question naturally arises why the agents of French imperialism in Algeria have done nothing to prevent or counteract it. Another curious circumstance is the assertion of the local authorities that the bands of rising Arabs were incited and led by Europeans "disguised as Arabs." The administration at Constantine first attempted to lay the blame at the door of the Communists. Soon, however, it dawned upon it that the charge was too absurd to gain any credence. It then made a rapid *volte face* and began to denounce some mythical German Nazis. It is unexplained how the Germans who had never had any stake or interest in Algeria suddenly began to wield such influence there. Yet it is of course conceivable that the Nazis, following the example of the agents of other imperialist nations, have been stirring up trouble in the colonies of their most intransigeant imperialist enemy. Ever since the signing of the Versailles treaty this underhanded policy has been the established practice in all colonial countries, particularly in North Africa. But Nazi agitation could be effectual only because Nazi ideas found a hospitable soil in the petty-bourgeois strata of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples. Imperialist oppression and exploitation have generated a profound feeling of resentment which, aggravated by the crisis, has been assuming more and more violently nationalistic, fascistic forms. In an otherwise muddled report, Herbert L. Matthews states bluntly (N. Y. Times, August 10) that the situation in Algeria "is a combination of profound hatred of the French conquerors with the terrible economic misery of recent years." This is the atmosphere in which Nazi madness festers. The same hatred for the imperialist "conquerors" and the same "terrible economic misery" make for parallel situations in other colonial lands.

From Morocco to India, the Mohammedan colonial peoples have been drawing closer together in intensified, even if sporadic and often misdirected, onslaughts against the imperialist conquerors. Whenever Mohammedan liberties are menaced in one country, a wave of protests and demonstrations sweeps the other Mohammedan countries. Deceived and bludgeoned by British and French imperialism, the Moslem peoples, especially since the World War, have been manifesting an ever growing sense of solidarity. Only a few days before the Algerian events we read of a meeting of 5,000 Palestinian Arabs protesting the oppression of their racial brothers in French Morocco, which is adjacent to Algeria. The rising solidarity of the colonial masses was countered by a display of solidarity of the servants of English and French imperialism: The English police broke up the meeting and beat and arrested many of the participants.

But what have the Jews to do with all this? They are not the "conquerors" nor are they responsible for the "terrible economic misery" caused by the crisis. Why then this outburst of anti-Semitism in all the Moslem countries? In Palestine Arab-Jewish relations are tense; any moment a new pogrom may break out. Something similar is now developing in Turkey. A despatch from Salonica (August 10) informs us that

> The Jewish population of Istanbul, Couscodjuk, Haskeuy, Balat, Orthakeuy and many other Turkish cities are in a state of panic owing to the continued anti-Semitic agitation against the Jews now going on in Turkey, reports received here today stated.
>
> Numerous Jewish families in the Turkish cities have received threatening letters saying that all Jews must leave Turkey soon or they will be massacred in cold blood.
>
> So great is the state of alarm of the Turkish Jews that many are making hurried preparations to migrate wherever possible.
>
> Turkish Thrace was the scene of violent anti-Jewish pogroms early in July. Brutal massacres took place at Adrianople, Irklisse, and other Jewish centers in Thrace. Thousands of Jewish refugees abandoned their homes and possessions and fled to Istanbul, terror-stricken, and refused to return despite the assurances of the Turkish government.

Even in remote Afghanistan, the government, under the thumb of English imperialism, has been adopting in rapid succession one anti-Semitic measure after another, including heavy special taxes on Jews, withdrawal of citizenship rights, and a threat to confiscate all Jewish property if any Jew committed a crime.

While in each country there are present a number of specific local causes, the basic causes of the present anti-Semitic wave are everywhere the same. First in importance is the determination of the imperialist powers—often in cooperation with the native rulers—to divide the populations and thus to keep them in permanent subjection. This policy is especially fruitful in a period of great economic stress. As commercial opportunities and the chances for employment diminish, jealousy, friction, conflict—evils inherent in capitalist economy—occur with ever increasing frequency. For the ruling power, the presence of a substantial minority at such a time is a godsend; and this applies not only to colonial and semi-colonial countries.

Although the situation in Algeria is more immediately shocking, more immediately sanguine, the protracted, silent—and sometimes not so silent—pogroms against Jews in other capitalist lands — Germany, Turkey, Jugoslavia, Roumania, Poland—are all demonstrations of the same principle. With incredible cynicism capitalist demagogues are shifting responsibility for their ineptitude in solving the elementary problems of feeding, sheltering, and clothing populations whose destinies they are presumed to guide to the innocent shoulders of those who because of their numerical disadvantages are unable effectively to strike back. More and more the Jew is becoming the universal scapegoat for the crisis. The persecution of the Jews in Hitler Germany is too well known to need recounting. The situation in Pilsudski Poland is not much better. According to Boris Smolar, chief European correspondent for the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, a list of all the Polish laws calculated to undermine the Jewish status, to snatch legally all possible means of livelihood from the Jews, if made known, "would shock the world." "The economic destruction of the Jewish population of Poland is . . . carried out by the Polish government with conscious ruthlessness" and without any consideration for the three million Jewish citizens (10 percent of the total population).

There are now in Poland a million unemployed Jews without any source of income. There are a million Jewish beggars, and their number is rapidly swelling. The government provides no relief to unemployed Jews.

The day when the Algerian news appeared in the paper, a report from Poland in the Jewish Daily Bulletin stated:

> Polish Jews are once more being attacked on the streets of Polish cities by anti-Semitic hooligans. Last night hooligans attacked Jews on the streets of Lodz, severely injuring twelve.
>
> A Polish court today sentenced five Jews to serve eight-month jail sentences for having accused police chief Svenzani, in charge of a district near Wilno, of being drunk and urging Christians to murder Jews, shouting, "The Jews must leave for Palestine."
>
> More than 1,000 Jewish bakers were thrown out of work today when 100 Jewish bakeries in provincial centers closed down as the result of an order issued by the Polish government that all bakeries must instal mechanical equipment. While the order does not go into effect until the end of 1936, Jewish bakeries were affected at once, since the government refused to grant them credits to modernize their plants.

And a despatch from Warsaw, dated August 9, states:

Renewed attacks against the Jews in Lodz and in Warsaw today have aroused the gloomiest forebodings among Polish Jewry. Feeling is gaining ground that serious days are ahead for Polish Jews, particularly in view of the passive attitude adopted by the Pilsudski regime toward the hooliganism of the anti-Semites.

In Warsaw, just as in Lodz, Jews were attacked on the streets by bands of anti-Semitic hooligans. It is feared that unless the government takes immediate and energetic steps to suppress anti-Jewish attacks, the hooligans will be encouraged to resume attacks against the Jews on a wide scale.

We could go on citing such reports from almost every country in Europe. As the crisis progresses, anti-Semitism, promulgated by various fascist groups, is speedily gathering strength also in this country. Behind the screen of racial or religious or social myths are clearly discernible the basic economic motives of modern anti-Semitism.

Regardless of the immediate provocation supplied by the drunken Jewish soldier, the Jewish massacres in Algeria were fundamentally economic in origin. The million or so Jews in Algeria constitute one-sixth of the total population. In a land predominantly agricultural, the Jews, because of numerous historical reasons, are engaged mainly in trades and in crafts. By and large, and judged by the exceedingly low standards of the country, they are economically somewhat better off than the mounting number of landless Berbers and the impoverished and now unemployed Arabian and Moorish masses of agricultural and industrial workers. Together with their economic superiority, the Jews in Algeria have been enjoying for some time a number of political advantages. Whereas most of the Moslems, especially the nomad Berbers, are not full-fledged citizens (most of them are either unable or unwilling to meet the rigid requirements of French citizenship), the Algerian Jews were all collectively nationalized in 1871 by decree. In the eyes of the Arabs, therefore, the Jews have become identified with the bitterly detested French conquerors. In the past the French often utilized the native Jews in their exploitation of the Arabs. However, the latter, that is the vast majority of the Algerian population, are now in a mood of revolt. They must be placated; and the Jews are sacrificed in order to divert attention from the real power—imperialist France. The lack of candor in releasing the news, the readiness to blame everyone but themselves, the fantastic "disguised-as-Arabs" story—these are all just one more proof of French imperialist culpability.

Another exceedingly important factor contributing to the growth of Moslem anti-Semitism, is, no doubt, the aggressive, criminally chauvinistic, and tenaciously anti-labor policy of the Jewish bourgeoisie in Palestine. In the mind of the Arabs, the Zionists are the tools of British imperialism, the British conquerors. Unquestionably the sparks of the ever-present fire which burns in Palestine and which is so criminally fanned by the agents of British imperialism, through the Zionists, have also been carried over from Palestine to other Arabian countries, including Algeria.

An article giving the other side of the Jewish question—the situation of the Jews in the U.S.S.R.—will appear next week. It is by Joshua Kunitz, whose series on Soviet literature will be resumed thereafter. — THE EDITORS.

Heil Hynes!

MICHAEL QUIN

ONE of the outstanding characteristics of bourgeois society is the opportunity it affords the most brutal morons to rise to prominence. Sadists, plug-uglies, degenerates, liars and sneak-thieves may all, within the channels of capitalist society, develop their mental deficiencies or perversions into successful careers. Indeed, with the deepening of the crisis of capitalism, it has become more and more necessary for the ruling industrial owners to call all manner of fanatics and morons into their service in an effort to defend their position from the protests of organized labor. Mark how in Germany a man of the most chaotic ignorance, a sadist and a sexual pervert, Adolf Hitler, was subsidized and raised to power in a last effort to forestall the revolution. Observe how all manner of gun-men, thugs and hooligans, deprived of their livelihood by the repeal of prohibition and, before that, by the shrinkage of the liquor market resulting from the crisis, have been absorbed into the service of the industrial owners as factory police and strike-breakers. The most brutal products of a corrupt social order, men whose minds have been beaten into narrow moulds of prejudice and cynicism — the warped and twisted human wreckage of Capitalism—are mobilized into a belligerent, brainless force to beat down the workers with fascist violence.

One of the most promising candidates for Fascist leadership in America today is "captain" William F. Hynes of the Los Angeles "Red Squad." His exploits against the workers of Southern California have brought him into national prominence. He is consulted by no less figures than Hamilton Fish and William Green. His advice is sought by industrial owners throughout the State and he plays a leading part in every fascist development.

In the latest Imperial Valley lettuce strike, during which the American Legion took the law into its own hands, acting as a vigilante force to impose the arbitrary will of the growers upon the struggling workers, and during which twenty-five motorcycle police of the State Highway Patrol were supplied by the late Governor Rolph to support the interests of the growers, Hynes was busy on the scene, having come all the way down from Los Angeles with E. Raymond Cato, head of the State Motorcycle Corps. When A. L. Wirin obtained a temporary restraining order from the Federal Court to prevent the valley police from arresting him or interfering with a meeting to be held under the auspices of the American Civil Liberties Union, the American Legion kidnaped him, beat him, tortured him, robbed him and left him wandering barefoot miles out in the desert. Hynes' connection with this incident can only be inferred through his presence in the valley and his long and close cooperation with the American Legion. In large raids and in the breaking up of mass demonstrations, Hynes' "Red Squad," in practically every instance, is supported by large numbers of Legionnaires. A further connection between Hynes and the valley incident is the fact that only a few months before this, lawyer Wirin obtained a judgment against him for appropriating $75.00 out of an arrested worker's purse.

This is only one example of the many instances in which Hynes has cooperated in the suppression of working class struggles throughout the State.

It has been said that within the realm of bourgeois opportunity "even a fly-speck can aspire to become a manure heap." The career of "Red" Hynes bears up this proverb. He began his work some eight or ten years ago in the lowest capacity known to human performance. It can be said that in both character and social position he was on the absolute bottom and had nowhere to go but up. He was a stool-pigeon, which, on the scale of human values, is just one notch lower than a pimp or a peeping-Tom. Exactly how long he served in this capacity is not known; probably for several years. In a recent affidavit, sworn by him on January 27, 1934, he claims to have been a member of the Communist Party for one year. He is also known to have been an informer in the ranks of the I.W.W.

As for early biographical material, almost nothing is known of him prior to this time. His origin is a closely and successfully guarded mystery. Even the most respectable newspaper interviewers have been unable to elicit any information as to his early life. We

must content ourselves with the knowledge that men do not wear patches over good eyes, and await what may be uncovered by time.

In reality, he is not a captain and his squad is not officially called a "Red Squad." The correct term is Intelligence Squad. His employment at the head of this paradoxically named band began six or seven years ago. In early days he operated directly out of the Chamber of Commerce, but in recent times has been transferred to the regular police headquarters. His squad normally consists of about seven or eight men and an indeterminate number of stool-pigeons who are constantly being uncovered in working-class organizations. This small force is supported by uniformed police from the regular force and by Legionnaires in all breaking up of demonstrations, raids, attacks on picket lines, etc. During a recent raid on the T.U.U.L. headquarters, he even summoned the fire department to his assistance. The local government is always ready to place any facility at his disposal to further his violences against the organized workers and the unemployed.

He is constantly blowing up his own daring and achievements with an exaggeration and opportunism worthy of the most prominent politicians. A long series of false statements issued to the press, which were first printed in large headlines and later refuted by small notices buried in back pages, have put him in bad favor with many newspaper men who, nevertheless, dutifully continue to play up every "red" scare item he submits to them.

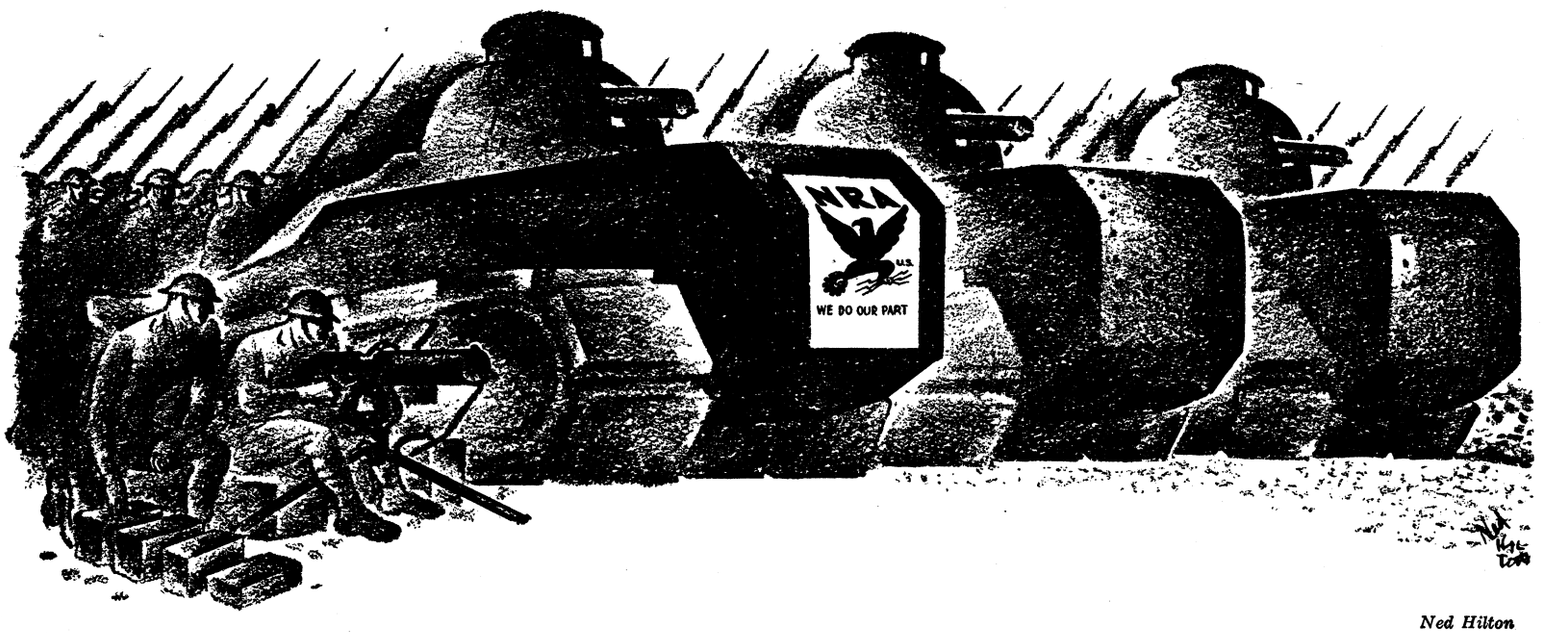
On one occasion Hynes and his "squad," assisted by the American Legion, smashed into a chop suey party given by a Japanese club in the John Reed Club headquarters in Hollywood. The gathering, including women and children, was violently dispersed with threats and bullying. The chairman of the entertainment was arrested and subsequently beaten. A number of concrete frescoes, examples of proletarian art on display in the building, were permanently wrecked, in spite of the fact that this is a particularly substantial form of art that required strenuous efforts with hammers and heavy instruments in the smashing. Everything in the place that could be broken was broken. Doors were pulled off hinges and wiring ripped out. All this without there being anything in the least illegal about the party or the properties. An obsolete old gun incapable of discharging a cartridge, which had been rented from a costuming company as a stage prop for the theatrical part of the program was appropriated by Hynes, who reported that he had raided an arsenal. The next day every newspaper in town carried the headline: RED SQUAD SEIZES ARSENAL. Later, for protesting this vandalism before the City Council, Leo Gallagher was seized by the "Red Squad," taken to a private room and severely beaten.

But the affair of the chop suey party, although a particularly good example of his abilities as a liar and a hooligan, by no means reaches the scale of his more serious brutalities. A worker recently died as a direct result of injuries received during a beating at the hands of Hynes and his squad. Let us briefly review his "activities" during a period of eleven months, January 1, 1932 to November 26, 1932. During this period Hynes and his "squad" prevented 19 meetings from being held, raided and broke up 29 workers' meetings in halls and six meetings in private homes, raided and looted 17 offices and headquarters of organizations, searched 7 homes without warrants and arrested 148 workers on Suspicion of Criminal Syndicalism, of which not one single case was brought to court. In addition to this, 124 workers were arrested on miscellaneous charges such as vagrancy, blocking traffic, loitering, etc. In all of these cases, the real cause for the arrests was participation in working class organization, which is no crime, and the charges for which they were booked were sheerly a matter of convenience. Of all these arrests, only 26 convictions were obtained. During this same period, 43 workers were beaten at meetings and 37 more were beaten in jail. And this means "beaten" in no mild sense of the word. There were also numerous other violences against workers attributed to "unknown mobs," in which there is very little doubt that Hynes played his part. It must be remembered that this only covers a typical eleven-month period of his activities.

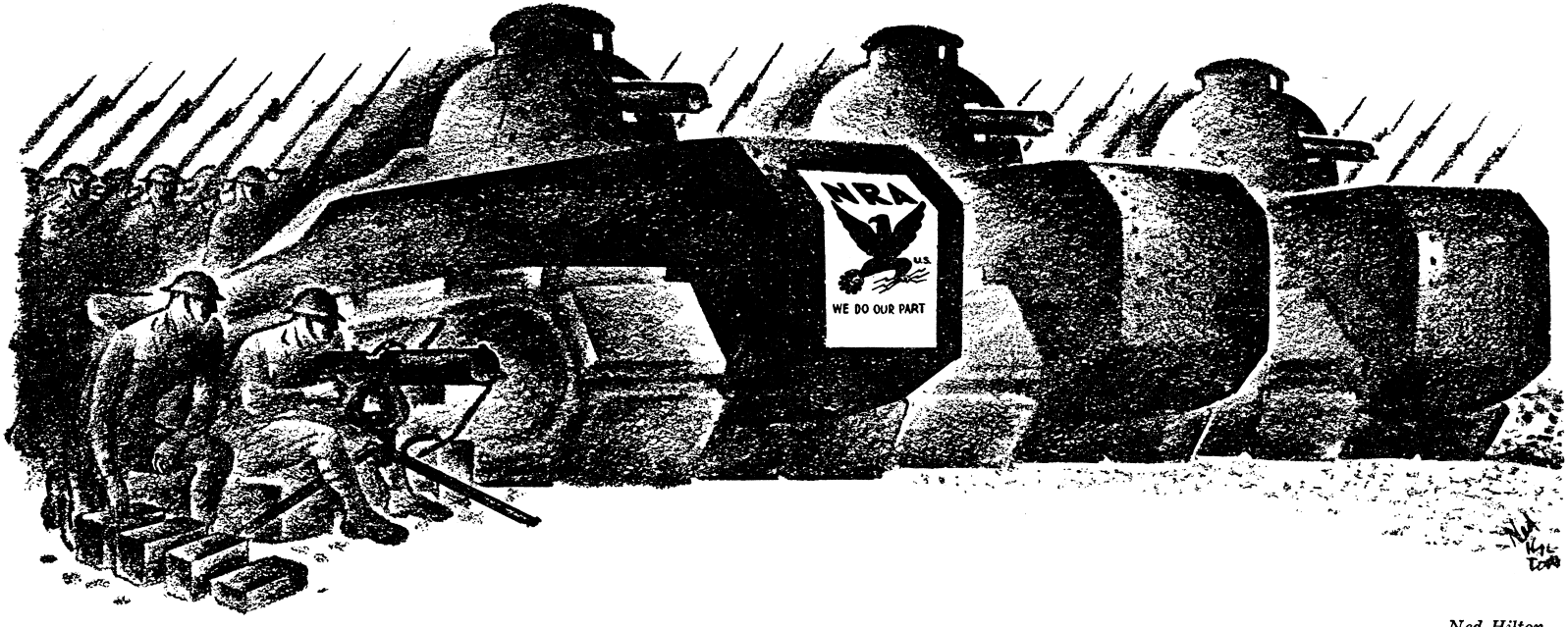
Wherever there is a strike, wherever there are picket lines or meetings where workers are being addressed by workers, Hynes and his "Red Squad" are sure to be on hand, for all these things come under his definition of "red," or better still, are included in the instructions of his bosses in the Chamber of Commerce.

With a blackjack in one hand and a gas bomb in the other, with a Legionnaire on his right side and a vigilante on his left, with the Chamber of Commerce in back of him and the blue eagle over his head, "captain" William F. Hynes is the dawn of Fascism on the workers' horizon in California. The blood of workers has stained his hands. The will of the owners is his only law. The Better America Federation has blessed him. The Daughters of the American Revolution smile benignly upon him. He is a mad dog turned loose on the American workers by the snobs and parasites of a decaying system. The workers of California meet him with a wall of bare knuckles. The blackjacks of his "Red Squad" beat belligerently at the strength of millions. They catch his bombs in bare hands and hurl them back. They sing in the face of his terror and grow stronger daily in the strength of their needs. But the struggle is only beginning.

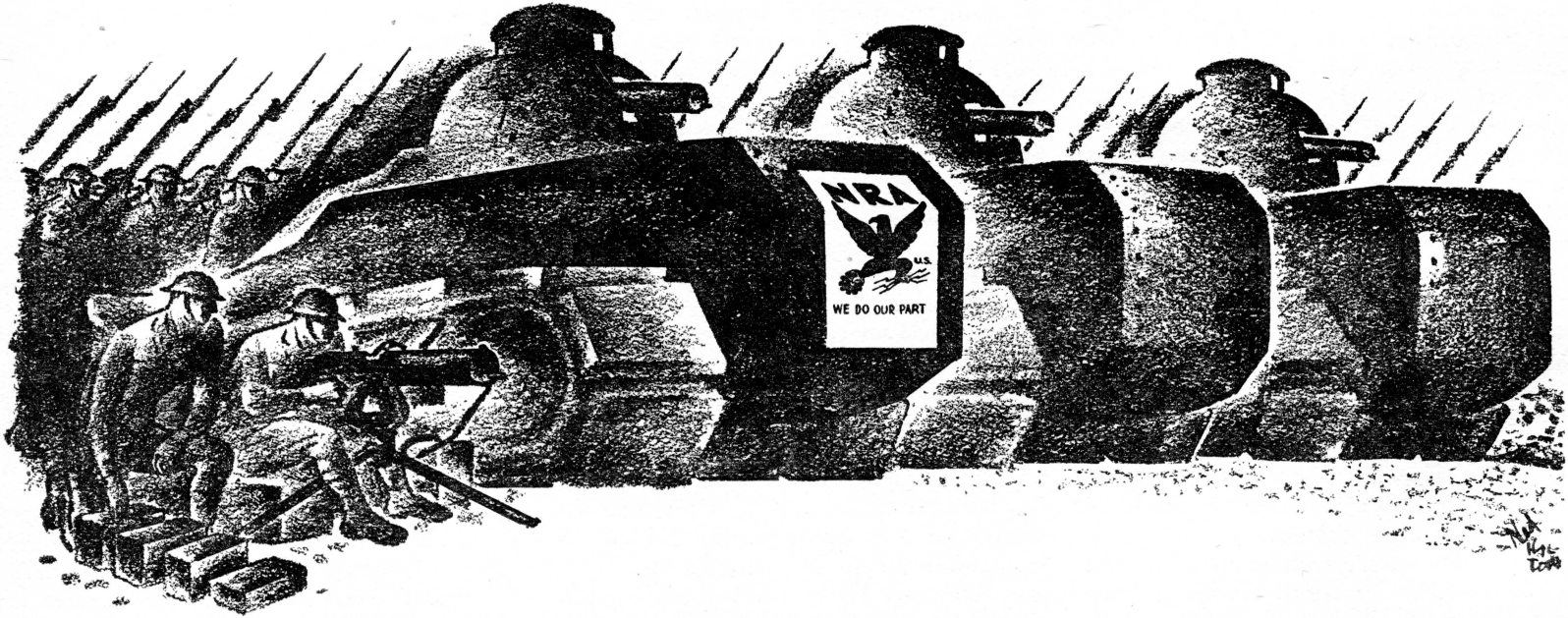
The workers will ride him down as surely as the tide of history sweeps every stick before it. In the needs of the workers lies the greatness of the future and no thug in the world can beat them down—not Hitler, not Mussolini, nor Chiang Kai-shek, nor, least of all, (if we may class a peanut with cocoanuts) Hynes.



Ned Hilton



Ned Hilton



Ned Hilton

Four Orations

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER

The King to the Priest

Don't bow, and I'll not kiss His sour as sacred
tablet. You've grown so fat the crease would slice you.
And I would rather have, since kings must get it somewhere,
my loyal subjects' spittle on my shoe
than on my mouth. Agreed? Count it the first
of your transactions then, and forecast to the others
I've come to make a match. The bride and groom,
if we can wed in terms, have had their night,—
the first, the last, and many warmed between,—
some centuries ago. You understand?—
I want a match between our ancestors,
which you, or chaperon of spirits, must arrange,
a small exchange between us, a pinch of royal
for a drop Divine. I want a little of
the extravagant blood *our* Kinsman spills abroad
whereof you priests have served as funnels
in love more of the undervessel than
the upper. I'll be frank,—It's curious how
we hypocrites all turn to frankness in the end—
authority's a slippery thing to hold.
My sword may pin it down, but when the sword
must fence a rival's why the pin is out.

Nor Force enthroned's like iron magnetized
—a call and challenge to all outer force.
As long as royalty is merely strong,
a fool may stronger feel and so more royal,
and Fate may think the joke worth ending so.
And since to keep our majesties in gilt
we scrape our subjects raw, with taxes, I
and you; someday the scrape may make them itch,
and if they itch at once and in the same
direction as some cunning rebel might
instruct them, then no throne could keep its king,
nor any king his bones, one to the other.
Therefore I seek another hold to fix
authority in my lineage—a root in God.
Thereafter defeat can never wholly end us.
If I am killed the tree has dropped a bough
but from the immortal root our fortunes branch anew.
Besides, who'd come as rebels to the king
would wander awed away, were God supposed
to keep an earthly residence in his veins
which, if they bleed, would scatter Heaven to earth.

Summon the tribe tonight. Have all the drums
in play and speed the drummers till we see their hands
swollen and streaming on the skins; then slit
a bull upon the altar; let them see
the swift knife leap the throat, the blood brim,
and the big body wither and fall. We need
a sacrifice to ornament the death
that nears so many of my warriors.
And give them lights on all four quarters,
your heaps let be reminders of volcanoes,
burn high, till in the lavish flame we see
their feasting eyeballs steam. Throw on
hot spice and incense, which you priests
can rein like bridles gored in each man's nose.
And then trot out your briskest girls, the slender ones
your impotence has kept in grace. Let them
shut up the men in heat and palpitant flesh
until they pant to yield their life strength in one lurch.
You know the tricks. I want them all tonight
and not a feather missing nor a stick unlit
and when the girls are still, you will appear,
your corpulence in robes enshrined, an ark,
and in your holiest voice you'll speak; you'll say,
"Behold, oh pity me. I am possessed.
The Kinsman, He is in me. Oh I burst.
The God's voice crowding, tears my throat.
He says, 'Hallowed is thy King. Hallowed His name.
Hallowed his feet on all their paths, his hands
in all their deeds. Thy King is of my blood.
His ancestors are from my loins. As to
a favorite son I give him all fulfillments,
victory, riches, sons. And who serves him
serves Me and earns a couch in Paradise.' "

This is your task. You hesitate? Hear me:
you have a son who in his luxury
and pride reflects you well. Give him a year
to fatten and he'll fill your robes. He's not
the squeamish sort and were he hurried
by deposition to his heritage
he'd not hold back. Why should I not approve
his reverent haste to serve his God,
and when occasion offers flood or drought
and in their terror people want new priests,
why not be gracious and content them. Now,
you understand? Moreover, we're at war.
The enemy, when they raid can only find
the poor man's hut to burn and cows to seize.
But if I move my guards a distance from your gates
how will the enemy rejoice to find your cattle
fed so plump, your women kept so sleek,
your chests so full. Were they my Kinsman's too
I'd guard them better.

Ah, we are agreed,
and our fond ancestors can marry.
Give me your hand, plump priest. I'm pleased
to have so shrewd a rascal for my kinsman.

The Priest to the People

Men, can you swim? My Kinsman on the hills
is dipping out the cisterns of the sky.
A lake at each dip gushes in his palm
and four full rivers through his fingers run.
If soon He grows not weary of this play,
your creek that was a stony mile away
will smooth the mile to you, and rinse your house,
then out to serve your cattle in their stalls.
Even now the soil is but an impure water
and as we walk one foot bespews the other.
Some fields are washed so bare the earth no more
than stains the rock. The drowned grass dies to black.
And you, if my mad Kinsman splashes on,

will, though you stir not, go to sea this week
and on your roof's very deck, steer from your orchard
as from reefs.

Why he so loves this sloven sport,
rubs cloud on cloud to wring each other out,
reeks rain on rain till it must seem, now must
the quenched sun blacken in the sky and never we
see spread again the shore of dawn and ocean
of the noon, but, like the nightworms, light ourselves
with blushes and with pallors—

why? who knows?
Gods have their reasons; if no other, then
a brag of His omnipotence to men.
I cannot tell. Another time He'll be as thick
in dust as now in water and 'twill be as hard
to hail him in as now to hail him off.

I'll parley with him but you must know my risk.
My father, you recall, died of a cough
that was the flapping of his wounded throat,
split when he set him to outshout a storm,
and wizards, more than one, the sacrifice
kindled by the lightning bolt, themselves have been.
To speak to Him I'll have to shiver in slime
a night or several, have demons for my hosts
and dodge the lightnings. I must ask rewards
weighed to these risks. You know that who runs danger
is so quicked in sense, surfeit becomes his norm.
Yet some complain I eat too full, too deep.
I drink and stir myself too much in women.
That may be, but he whose heart must stretch a span
in fear may be excused a stretching gut.

Some others grant me that but, but and but—
the lands I have and herds and wives are more
than even my tumorous senses can impact;
my lands and herds too many to sustain.
Even my big household where, more wives than I
can prosper, are barren and call me their drought.
The outward look of my condition would seem
sufficiently to witness for them, but
this they forget. I cannot charm my kinsman
with flatteries alone; he wants his pay,
his land for shrines, his cattle and his women.
For what I seem to own I am his steward
and punctual are the reckonings I must make.
I dare not come to him without an offering.
Give him, this time, a virgin and two cows.
For myself I ask an ox and land enough
to pasture his increase and mine. Grant this
and soon I'll furnish you the sun; I'll shed
the rivers back between their banks. If not?—
well then, perhaps you'll yoke the fish to plough
the land you grudge Him. And the cattle you withhold
He'll eat with vultures, and the maid denied Him
will keep her maidenhood forever, unless
it comes to pass that corpse can ravish corpse;
and so, my sons, I leave you to your choice.

Merchant to King and Priest

I like not subtle parcels webbed with cords and seals.
When we preamble and still wrap on words
Merchants hear thieves. That's why we want words written.
In contracts we can ring them each like coins.
Shall I be gravely frank like ministers?
or prank frank like His Insolence your Fool?
or fact frank as I'd choose, so that we know
our business to a cent?—both what each gives
and what each gets.

Excuse me if I seem
thus to usurp equality. My lords,
I dust my knees and kiss as many hems;
but—in business, well—you'd not go hunting crowned?—
in business too, is rank an overdress.

Once more I'm asked to furnish sums for war
though, as you know, the East war's still unpaid.
Forgive me, lords, I did not mean to irk you.
It's true I got some fields and villages
and sole purvey of wine and other goods
but still there's something due which I'll let pass.

You want another country, and his holiness
another see. Why not? Ambition has no age,
grows faster old than young. My blessings lords!
But this new war is not an easy one.
You have not counted on their strongest captain,
their money lord whom I know dearly well
buys knights like horses and, like oxen, men.
There's armour in his stores enough to plate
the drovers, even, in hard steel and turn
the soldiers' whores to amazons. His wealth
can march his country, load and unload towns,
buy up a season, take nations into hire.
Alas, your merchant's not as strong as he.
But bishop, sanctify my wealth as Moses said,
and you, great King, enlaw it, and I'll be
our enemy merchant's master since, in land
and men, we've more to harvest riches from.

For trade's a husbandry. My soil is men.
I shake loan money over them, as seed,
and it grows back into my hand increased,
though there are wastes where malcontents and thieves
withhold or snatch it. Religion and the law
must guard this harvest for their eatings there.

Compare our fat fields with the Scythian moors.

Here earth's high bellied always; cattle big
Summer spends not, unused; the sun's twelve hours
are brood hours over the hatching fields; the rain
is binned in ditches for the stabled earth.

But there the people vagrants are, at home.
They eat wild crops; like birds, hunt open-mouthed.
When winter comes they have no grain or meat.
They then raid villages, to eat or die;
Since farmers, armed, are perilous game to beard.
They choose sharp sword death to dull dying, starved.
And so they pant across their empty land,
though when the multiplying farmers reach it
a hundred will be plump where one was gaunt.

What do the raiders win when they're in luck?
They lose it in their wasting frenzy soon.
They're like the lunging lover who became
o'erwhelming arrow, fire and avalanche
and on the bridal bed widowered himself.
They make a bonfire of the town for light.
At feast, a year is eaten in a week.

Soon they return to scrape the ask for morsels.
Then they'd like to resurrect dead farmers!

The wiser raiders learn to come like kings
Call farmers "Oh my people" and them use
as human herds and hives; the loot, foregone,
returns to them a thousandfold in taxes,
and they have easy living all their reign.

Our wealth's a crop. A confiscation is
A Scythian raid. Refuse us usury
you sterilize our seed, and sear the plant;
and I, who plow the people, make them work,
idle myself, will watch them idle,
see them grow poor; see them forget their skills;
see them grow rebel and ragged—Scythians
in our midst!

Meanwhile our money, drained away,
our enemy enriches. He grows stronger
with mercenaries our folly buys him.

You see, my lords, you need man-husbandry,
and gold's the bloom upon the nation's cheek.
So, as your majesty is sacred, and
your holiness is sovereign, and both rich,
Sharing each season's crop of interest,
So also stand level with you as your ally.
Half-buried in obeisance, it does little.

If this be understood and put in law
I'll have the people whirling in the fields
and fainting in the workshops heaping goods
whose sale abroad will bring us wealth undreamed
to buy arms and men and power undreamed
and swell the state to empire—
you, a Czar,
and he, a Pope, and I
monopolist!

Worker to Merchant, King, Priest

You boys are through!

We're grown up. Mr. Reverend Skyhigh. Quit talking through your mothergoose. Now we ain't laying down to sleep. Now we're getting up. We're up. Inside your churches we're ripping out the millenium machinery—better apparatus than anything on the World's Fair Midway—the carved dummies, the holy howl, the skywish-piedish. We're airing out the god smell that blows in with the organ farts. What we're doing is death on ghosts. We're putting in schools, libraries, laboratories, meeting halls, something to help start a heaven for the living. We ain't aiming to get to heaven kneeling, the way you got us trained for soldiering and wage slavery. We're standing up and looking level over the workers' earth for the heaven we got in mind, where nobody takes dope, your kind or any other. Once you had us worried about who sits at the right and left of God. Well, you start worrying about it now. We sit with comrades and there's no room for you at our table. Get ready for your glory seat now, because that's where you're going, going, gone—for selling us the biggest gold brick on record, for hopping us up, how many thousand years, for doing the dirtiest job of whoring known on earth, your sell-out to capitalism and clapping up the whole human race.

Hey, handsome, you in the twelve uniforms and the rotograph smile. You too, Mr. King-ex-President. Look up, your Royal Lieness. Can't you look a sucker in the face again? Fooled us a long time, didn't you. You had a lot of good acts. Me-and-God, Boss-of-the-World, Never-Got-Licked—but the best one was your Big-Daddy act. And how we fell for it! Beat the Immaculate Conception a million to one. Our Little Father! We never knew just what relative you were, Pop on his Saturday night Drunk or our Prodigal son—from the bills we got. Dear little Stepfather: maybe it hurt you more than it hurt us when you sent out your beloved sons to be brained and knifed, and shot and blown up and poison-gassed, what for? To wet down with blood the financier's hot money? To kidnap a provinceful of other workers to add to your cannon fodder? We're on to you—you're mean and sly. You can't manage your own rackets anymore, and now you're doing special deputy work for the Capitalists. Little Father, your sons disown you. And we're giving you notice in hot lead.

You, Mr. Cut-A-Million! You're slickest of the bunch. You went each of them one better. They grabbed what we had but you got it and then put us through the squeezing press and got some more. You fooled us better than the priest. He made passes at the sky and when it rained he claimed the crops. But you made passes over paper and you got the air waves in the sky and everything under the earth and everything that crossed the earth and everything on the earth. And you beat the King-Emps. They got us out against the neighbors to grab something we could see; but you flung us through the air, slid us under the oceans and over oceans to get killed, and all we knew about it was a long word camouflaging a lot of words on shippers' cargo bills. It was neat the way you edged them out, the priests and the kings, and put 'em to work for you. You took over their deeds to us. You knew all the world's wealth came from the world's work, and we do it and it belongs to us. Who owns us owns everything. But now we know it too. We own ourselves and we own everything. You're out. Don't try to tell us we need you, that without you industry would stop.

You pulled that gag on us twenty-five hundred years ago in Rome with that fable for phonies about the head and the hands having a fight. We're the head and we're the hands. Get that straight. We don't need your kind. You've jammed up the works. When Kahn croaked did anything stop? Did the surf curl back from his private beach; did elevators stop shooting up and down the shafts in the big buildings he had the paper ownership of? Did the railroad bonds in his safe deposit vaults stop a single train on a track anywhere on earth? Did even one grandopera diva give one soprano sob and stop to remember the night he moseyed under her shoulder straps to test her breath control—and handed her the contract? Kreuger couldn't take the rap and blew out the big brain. Did one less match light one less cigarette? Did one of his power plants stop its current to one customer? Sam Insull too couldn't take the rap. He ran. The big shots are yellow and soft. They squash like ripe tomatoes. We stand up to cops and deputies. We stand solid against clubs and bayonets, rifles and gas guns. But Sam Insull, the big shot, beat it when he saw an apologizing process server. And when Sam Insull ran away did the juice dry out of the wires? Did the gas stop coming out of the pipes? Did the cars stop in the tracks and the phones go dead and the radios go mum? Hell no. But when we step out of the powerhouses, out of the gas wells and the mines, when we hop off the motormen's stools, then everything stops, stops dead. Nothing on earth can go on without the workers. And now we know it. And that's your finish, Mr. Cut-A-Million!

French Writers Fight Fascism

SAMUEL PUTNAM

SOMETHING has happened in France. It happened on the Sixth of February last. The Sixth of February has already become a historic date, of the sort that the French are fond of naming streets after. It is to be doubted if any street will be named after the Sixth of February, 1934—not until the workers come into power. This is one date which the French, middle classes and up, would like to forget. It does not quite fit in with the "glorious" 1789 tradition. But the workers have not forgotten. Neither have the intellectuals who saw what happened in the Place de la Concorde (Oh irony of names!) on the date in question. The truth is, as a result of that bloody event, France has irretrievably lost her self-respecting middle-class intellectuals. The process which began with the affaire Dreyfus has been completed.

A month or so ago, another event occurred, an event of a different sort but a direct consequence of the preceding one. Its significance, it would seem, has not been generally or properly grasped. Here it is:

A RALLYING-CALL TO THE WORKERS

"Thoroughly united in spirit, as a result of having witnessed the Fascist riots in Paris, to which the popular classes alone put up an effective resistance, we would make known to all the workers, our comrades, our resolve to struggle with them, in order to save from a Fascist dictatorship what the people have won in the way of rights and public liberties. We are ready for any sacrifice to prevent France's being subjected to a reign of oppression and martial misery.

"We condemn the disgraceful corruption which has been revealed by recent public scandals. We shall struggle against corruption; we shall likewise struggle against deception. We shall not permit corruptors or the corrupted to take shelter in the cloak of virtue. On the other hand, we will not permit that wrath which has been aroused by the money scandals to be diverted by the banks, the trusts and the cannon-merchants and turned against the republic, — that true republic which is the working class, thinking, suffering, struggling for its emancipation. We will not permit the financial oligarchy, as in Germany, to exploit the discontent of the financially ruined multitude.

"Comrades, under guise of a national revolution, they are preparing to inflict upon us a new Middle Ages. But we—we are not bent upon preserving the world of things as they are, we are bent upon transforming the world, upon freeing the state from the rule of finance capital—and all this in closest association with the workers.

"Our first act has been to form a vigilance committee, which hereby places itself at the disposition of the workers' organizations.

"Let those who subscribe to our ideas make themselves known."

Who were the signers of this "Rallying-call"? They were none other than the foremost writers of France today. Among the outstanding names, we may note: Alain, Julien Benda, André Breton, Jean Cassou, Léon-Paul Fargue, Ramon Fernandez, André Gide, Jean Giono, Jean Guéhenno, Jean-Richard Bloch, Roger Martin du Gard, Romain Rolland, Charles Vildrac, René Daumal, Eli Faure, René Lalou, André Spire, etc., etc.

What, then, is the significance of this occurrence? Need it be pointed out? For the first time in history, the intellectuals of a capitalist nation as a body have cast in their lot with the workers, have recognized the dominant and saving mission of the working class. (Marx was not so far wrong, after all, in his sneered-at "messianic view" of the proletariat!)

The French intellectual, in other words, is assuming his proud and fitting place in the revolutionary class-struggle. He is in a position to serve his brother worker; his eyes and ears, when rightly attuned, are able to act as a sort of sensory apparatus; he accordingly proceeds to organize a committee for "vigilance and information"——

"In guarding against the threats of Fascism (our committee) means to work to dissipate those confusions from which Fascism profits, by instructing the masses whom Fascism would seduce, the petty and the middle bourgeoisie, the farmers, the unemployed, and the young. With a view to action of this sort, it proposes to publish, especially, a weekly bulletin and various pamphlets, scientific in character, touching on the reality of the Fascist peril in France, the social pretensions of Fascism, the actual plight of the middle classes in Fascist countries, and the relation of Fascism to corruption."

So, now, the line is clearly drawn. It is the workers and intellectuals against the bankers, the bureaucrats, the tyrants of steel and iron and railways and oil, the hired butchers, the cannon-makers, the deniers of human rights and human dignity, the enslavers of mankind and the would-be exterminators of themselves and of the human race.

All this, it may be repeated, has happened since the Sixth of February, and could not well have happened before then; although the Stavisky affair, by bringing things to a shocking head, had prepared the way, had sown the immediate seed which was to flower so sanguinarily in the Place de la Concorde.

It all began, of course, long before the Stavisky affair. Any one who has lived in France over a period of years, as the present writer has done, could have seen the storm-cloud approaching the bursting point from January, 1933, on—from the fall of the Herriot cabinet, followed by the rapid passing of its Boncour successor and the coming of Daladier. France's absolute parliamentary paralysis (the *"chambre introuvable"*) was but too evident, and even more evident was the desire and, from the beginning, the clearly manifested purpose of the Fascist elements to take advantage of the state of affairs. This reporter has preserved the newspaper clippings of the period; and it is interesting, looking back over them, to note the concerted hue and cry for a "strong" government, a government that would be able to "do something." Tardieu, General Weygand and their cohorts were obviously bent upon importing (Hitler was not yet in) the Mussolini tactics.

Then came the Stavisky exposures, and France is reeling yet; she is still dizzy from the effect. One has to understand French psychology, and European psychology in general as contrasted with the American, to be able to appreciate the full effect. In America we have long since ceased to be disturbed by revelations of graft; we leave that for the newspaper headlines and the view-with-alarm editorial-writer. Whereas in France, in Europe as a whole, the case was supposed to be different, and intellectuals as well as others were inclined to feel that such manifestations were essentially American in character. The Stavisky case was the eye-opener, a gigantic one; intellectuals, the unsuspecting smaller bourgeoisie and those elements of labor which were not Marxianly oriented, all for the moment were overcome by it. It is, purely and simply, the Stavisky affair which goes to account for the 200,000 copies sold to date of Céline's *Journey to the End of the Night.* It's a rotten world, my lads, Céline told 'em, and his fellow countrymen were ready to believe him, M. Stavisky being there to prove it. M. Duhamel might hesitate now before he tossed off another *Scènes de la vie future.* No, France will no more succeed in living down the Stavisky affair than she has been able to live down the Dreyfuss affair. The Stavisky, indeed, is the last straw.

All this will go to explain those allusions to "corruption"; and the possible ends to which such revelations may be put by the Fascist masters, in the "Rallying-call" quoted above.

Well, the Sixth of February has come and gone; and Louis Aragon, no longer frittering away his time over the "Surrealist object," has put it all into an enduring proletarian-revolutionary poem, his *"Février."* After describing, with his usual admixture of slang and sym-

bolism, the various sections of the population which "go trailing the tricolored flag," he throws out this warning:

Hey
better watch where
you're trailing your tricolored flag

and ends with the cry:

The Soviets-Everywhere-the-Soviets-Everywhere
The Soviets-Everywhere

In the mud with the tricolored flag.

This is the same Aragon who came near going to jail a year or two ago, for less provocation, on account of his *The Red Front.* Surely, something is happening in France.

One thing that is happening is that intellectuals are "going Red," almost overnight. One need not think here of a case such as Gide's. His is a case apart, and would require an essay in itself. Gide had gone Red before the Sixth of February. His friendly critic, Fernandez, is a good deal more pertinent example. Fernandez, the humanist philosopher, who had more than suspected Gide's knowledge of theoretic Marxism, but who himself has learned much outside the philosophy texts since last February. What he has learned, rather confusedly, is found in his second *Open Letter to André Gide*: One thing is, that "absence from the camp of the proletariat means being present in the camp of its enemies." Another is: "The intellectual needs the working class to know himself completely. And since the worker needs the intellectual to see himself, there exists between the two a rigorous reciprocal relation." Finally, he has found that "There is . . . nothing behind the big words of the Right but the desperation of shrinking purses and falling revenues." His conviction is "Marx saw only too clearly." And his decision: "I choose the empty pocketbooks."

This is made a bit clearer in a subsequent statement (entitled *"Commentaire"*) which Fernandez has just published. It begins with the startling and revelatory confession: "I came near being a Fascist!" The author goes on to tell us that the only thing which prevented his going Rightward—for "I am one of those who believed in the possibility of a Rightist ideology, a Rightist ethic"—was the mere fact that he did not chance to be away from Paris during the days of February 6 to 12. Fascism, he goes on to point out, is "a clever trap set for well-intentioned bourgeois intellectuals, sufficiently disinterested but inert, as is the case with all those who derive profit from an established form of society." There was, further, the intellectual's "professional fondness for theorizing, which tends to make one highly susceptible to original 'solutions'." All in all, Fascism is "the art of quieting the social unrest of intellectuals, by leading them to engage in a revolution which will neither alter their habits nor sacrifice their interests."

Another thing Fernandez discovered was where the bourgeois' real interests lie. He had had the execrable taste to speak of pocketbooks, when everybody knew that it was not a matter of pocketbooks, but of ideas and ideals, of high and noble principles. French society was shocked. The Catholic and Fascistic Mauriac was shocked. Thierry Maulnier, representing the young royalists, grew almost vulgar in his indignation. A hostess and life-long family friend cancelled a dinner invitation with the remark: "I cannot receive in my house one who has a pistol trained on me and mine." Etc. But when all was said, M. Fernandez was a "foreigner" and thereby incapable of grasping French ideals. He really ought to be put out of the country, along with other "undesirable elements." It all taught the erstwhile humanist something, however; it showed him that "the bourgeois class, financed by capitalism, intends to preserve its full powers and, what is more, to consolidate those powers with regard to the working class."

Fernandez' evolution is a fascinating one to follow. It is at once pronounced and more or less typical. It is typical not alone of the French intellectual, but of the middle class intellectual the world over. That individual is like the national guardsman, called upon to fire into the workers' ranks, who, weapon on his shoulder, strides over to the other side.

Something is happening in France. And in the world.

A Letter from America

To The New Masses:

THE farmer who owns the cow stands off at a little distance with the rope held tightly in his hand. The cow was a good milker before the drought came on, before the hot wind went through the fields like a blow torch, burning off the hay and leaving the fields yellow and barren. There is no udder to her any more. The teats are small and the bag is shriveled from the lack of milk to keep it firm. The farmer knows that in another week the skin will be drawn taut over the ribs. After that the belly will swell up and the cow will drop dead in the field. So now he stands in a gravel pit with the rope held tightly in his hands.

It takes time to build up a good herd. It takes years. The farmer knows that he will never do it again. Once he had a hundred and sixty acres of free land which he called his own. He sold his crops and built up that good herd. He can never do this again. He has no crops to sell. His land is no longer his own. He is a tenant farmer standing by his last cow in a gravel pit.

She is a good cow and the farmer may possibly get fifteen dollars for her if the government appraiser is friendly. But she is a mortgaged cow and the money will go right over to the lien holder. So the farmer will be left with no cow and with no money. Perhaps if the government would give him the money for feed instead of for slaughter there would be a different story to tell. But the Government won't do this because it says there is too much cattle in the United States, too much meat, too much milk and too many farmers. So the farmer has brought his last cow to the gravel pit because there's no point in letting it swell up and drop dead in the field.

The government "sharpshooter" with the white shirt and the wrist watch steps up quickly and aims his rifle at the death point between the eyes. The leg joints buckle, the body caves in, the air rushes out through the nostrils and the heavy body hits the ground like a bag of meal slapped hard on a board. Then the report of the rifle is heard. The cow keels over on one side and kicks a couple of times with her hind legs. The man with the long knife and the blood spattered over his overalls runs up and removes the rope. Then he drives the knife deep into the front part and slashes the length of the neck. The blood gushes out and turns yellowish in the gravel. The flies swarm and bite the flesh.

This is what is happening in Peever, in Clair City, in Wilmot; in Roberts County in Day County, in Grant. In South and North Dakota, in all the drouth areas. Four thousand head a day in South Dakota alone.

This is the summer of nineteen hundred and thirty-four. This is how the Government of the United States is rehabilitating the farmer.

Albert Maltz.

Roberts County, S. D.

Westbound At Night

An overland limited
Chalks a streak of gold
Across the blackboard of night.
Sleepers groan under the impact of flying steel,
Life trembles in the wake of dust and wind.
Prosperity lounges in pullman coaches,
Eats roast turkey in dining cars, and schemes
Ways and means of robbing farmers
Out of next year's grain crops—
While American jobless
Ride the decks, the rods of coaches
And nurse a great hunger with dreams
Of wheat cakes and coffee steaming
On the counter of a coffee-an' joint
Somewhere in Omaha, Denver, Colorado Springs.

Jim Waters.

Correspondence

Dialectical Materialism

To The New Masses:

The August 7 issue of your magazine contained a letter from Comrade M. Vetch, taking exception to your favorable announcement of the publication of V. Adoratsky's *Dialectical Materialism.* (International Publishers.)

Comrade Vetch felt that your announcement had misguided your readers by characterizing the booklet as a brilliant introduction to the subject it treated; the work, according to Vetch, was quite a disappointing product; in his "attempts to educate recalcitrant intellectuals" it had caused him so much difficulty that he "had hoped for some thorough and incisive review in your periodical."

It need hardly be said that it is not the purpose of this letter to take issue with Comrade Vetch for having seen fit to criticize Comrade Adoratsky on a matter that appeared to him valid. It is an axiom of Marxism, as Marx himself declared, that to leave error unrefuted is to encourage intellectual immorality. But, by the same token, to "refute" that which is no error is to contribute error where there was none and thereby to impugn one's own critical qualifications. The more so, when that "refutation" is conducted in a captious and insolent manner, *a fortiori* against the Director of the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute, a veteran revolutionist and an outstanding Marxist-Leninist theoretician, who, although not sacrosanct, merits at the hands of a Communist polemist a modicum of provisional confidence warranting at least a careful study of the question at issue before he rushes into print with the "assault."

"Adoratsky is not only not brilliant; he is sometimes quite unclear and confusing." Comrade Vetch adduces the following instance to support this assertion:

> On pages 28 and 29, for example, he tries to define the very difficult concept of the "unity of opposites." As the prime instance of this he takes the famous Zeno paradox about the arrow in motion, and holds this up as a dialectic paradox! Actually, as has been indicated by formal logicians, Zeno's paradox depends merely upon verbal confusion. It surely cannot be taken as an example of unity of opposites. Adoratsky should have taken heed of his own caveat, that "the application of the dialectical method does not mean arbitrarily combining all and every contradictory assertion".

Let us examine the grounds of Vetch's criticism. The so-called paradox of the arrow which Adoratsky cites is one of the celebrated arguments advanced by Zeno, the controversialist of the Eleatic school, to deny the reality of motion. *The flying arrow is at rest.* Movement, argued Zeno, implies transition over successive points in space. The arrow is therefore at any given moment at a given point in its path; hence it is always at rest. Thus, to speak of the arrow in motion is to imply that the arrow is simultaneously at a certain point and is not at that point. In other words, motion involves contradiction. Since for the Eleatics, Being is the All-One, the True, the Immutable, the non-contradictory, there can be neither origin nor becoming, neither extension nor discontinuity. Space itself is non-existent, Zeno's master, Parmenides, had reasoned: for, to exist is to be identical with being; when an object (*i. e.,* being) is moved in space (*i. e.,* being), it is moved in itself and, hence, is at rest. And since outside of space there can be no movement motion is unreal. Proceeding from the Eleatic principle of the indivisible Absolute, Zeno rejected motion; but he was the first to see in it the element of contradictions. Hegel called Zeno, for that reason "the initiator of dialectics." The formal logicians have regarded Zeno's dialectic argument as "verbal confusion." Marxist-Leninist dialectics, in rejecting Zeno's dogmatic denial of motion, salvage the dialectic principle which he found inherent in motion —the unity of the continuous and the discrete.

Hegel, who held that "only insofar as anything has within itself a contradiction, does it move," declared Zeno's dialectics to be "the immanent dialectics of the object," which, however, Zeno considered to be merely in the mind of the subject.

The postulation of movement on contradiction is likewise stated by Engels:

> Movement itself is a contradiction; indeed, even simple mechanical locomotion can take place only through the fact that a body is at one and the same moment simultaneously at one place and at another place, at one and the same place and not at that place.

Lenin, in his marginal comments to Hegel's *Lectures on the History of Philosophy,* has the following to say in connection with Hegel's discussion of Zeno:

> Motion is the unity of continuity (of time and space) and discontinuity (of time and space). Motion is a contradiction, a unity of contradictions. . . .

To Hegel's statement: "Motion means, however, to be and simultaneously not to be at this place; this is the continuity of space and time, and it is this which makes motion possible", Lenin comments marginally: "N. B. Correct."

Finally, Lenin states:

> It did not at all occur to Zeno to deny motion as a "sense-certainty," it is merely a question of "its (movement's) truth."

By this Lenin means that Zeno admitted the concept of motion in the realm of phenomena, but denied that this was a true realm. Marginally to this, Lenin comments:

> The question is not whether there is motion, but how it shall be given expression in the logic of concepts.

Lenin realizes that Zeno, by his metaphysical Eleatic *a priori* of immutable Being, is hampered from recognizing the objective truth of the dialectics that he himself conceived as native to motion.

But for Vetch, as for the formal logicians whom he calls upon for support against Adoratsky (against Hegel, Engels, Lenin, and, as we shall see—Marx), Zeno's argument is bereft of anything except "verbal confusion."

Involved here is not merely the destiny of a missile long fallen into "innocuous desuetude," but the laws of motion in all nature and society. Whoever fails to recognize the unity of opposites in the dialectic contradiction involved in the flight of the arrow, cannot grasp that unity in the laws of motion involved in the nature of a commodity; cannot comprehend it in the economic laws of motion of capitalist society, the demonstration of which Marx set himself as his major task in undertaking the writing of *Capital;* hence, cannot grasp the dialectic unity of the opposites, productive forces and production relations, in the capitalist mode of production.

To find, therefore, Comrade Vetch setting himself arrogantly in judgment over Comrade Adoratsky is, to cite a phrase from his letter, "not a little disturbing." It is disturbing because, both in the anti-dialectic implications to which the "criticism" gives rise and in the tone of the letter, we are confronted with the phenomenon of alien class influences struggling to penetrate our ranks. It is but one of countless such instances of petty-bourgeois presumption to "give the line" to the Party of the working class. This is not always, necessarily, a conscious effort; it cannot be said that it is such in the case of Comrade Vetch; but it is part of the age-old petty-bourgeois lack of faith in the capacity of the proletariat to lead in the struggle for its own liberation and in its capacity to give forth from its ranks the political leader, the vanguard Party—a lack of faith which is motivated by the unceasing urge of the petty bourgeoisie to subordinate the working-class interests to its own.

That the working class wins to its side elements from other classes, elements that, having come to see the historic revolutionary task of the proletariat, honestly identify themselves with the forces of revolution and place at the disposal of the movement their cultural equipment, transformed, however, by the revolutionary outlook, is one of the manifestations of the dialectics of the class struggle. This trend is particularly to be noted in the general crisis of capitalism, with the constantly narrowing economic base of the professional groups and with the manifest bankruptcy of bourgeois culture. In identifying their interests and outlook with those of the revolutionary movement, the men and women of culture won over to the side of the proletariat, do not, as is often erroneously thought, throw their learning upon the scrap heap in breaking with the past. Their negation of the class content of their cultural acquisition is not just an effacement, a "sacrifice" to the cause (the proletariat needs their vitalization, not their immolation); it is, on the contrary, the transformation of a decadent acquiescence to reaction into a progressive, a revolutionary force.

Yet the coming of such elements to the working class is not unattended by serious dangers. The petty-bourgeois prejudices tend, to a greater or less degree, to linger with these elements, who, especially in the early phase of their attachment to the movement, are prone to regard all too uncritically the intellectual equipment which they acquired in alien class academies, and to apply it mechanistically, without dialectically transforming it, to their practice in the revolutionary movement. They realize insufficiently that their social composition, their status of intelligenzia, tends to make many of them unconscious carriers of the propaganda of pseudo-Marxist ideologues. (It is not altogether accidental to the present issue that Kautsky, the Brandlerites, and the Trotskyites indulge in constant disparagements of Comrade Adoratsky; or that the denial of the unity of opposites in the flight of the arrow coincides with the denial of dialectics in nature on the part of certain social-fascist "theoreticians"). Alertness to this danger is not always present in the movement. Its absence was particularly to be marked in the readiness of The New Masses to yield its columns, without so much as an editorial comment, to such a letter as that submitted by Vetch.

It behooves these elements—and it is the imperative duty of the revolutionary movement to assist them in this—to reeducate themselves upon the principles of Marxism-Leninism: which means, not in books alone (although eminently among these should be listed Adoratsky's *Dialectical Materialism*), but in the thick of the militant class struggle, shoulder to shoulder with the class-conscious workers, and thus to prepare themselves for participation in the militant offensive of Marxist-Leninist theory and practice against the bourgeoisie and its agents.

V. J. Jerome.

Books

Cashing in on Martyrdom

RACHMANINOFF'S RECOLLECTIONS, told to Oskar von Riesemann. The Macmillan Co. $3.50.

THIS work should occupy a high place among the constantly increasing number of books by so-called Russian "refugees," who, as they "flee" to the open arms and sympathy of nations who have traditionally welcomed the "oppressed" of other lands, pause long enough in their loud lamentations to cash in on the role of martyrdom they have assumed.

Oskar von Riesemann, who has recorded these recollections, drawing his material from conversations with Rachmaninoff and one other source which should receive our consideration and of which I shall speak later, seems to have an unusual preparation for his task. He had lived in Moscow from 1899 to 1917, during the larger part of Rachmaninoff's Russian musical career; later residing in Germany when the composer was in Dresden; in Paris simultaneously with him; and, "as a refugee from Soviet Russia," a guest of Rachmaninoff, and "now his close neighbor on the borders of the Lake of Lucerne, in Switzerland." Having had a musical education, he has sufficient knowledge of music to venture judgments which should receive serious consideration.

In spite of Riesemann's background of first-hand knowledge, this work is an amazing and exasperating statement of half-truths, out-and-out lies, failure to carry stated facts to their logical conclusions, and misrepresentations, all designed to build up a glowing, romanticized picture of old Russia, "a vanished world, this widely hated, widely admired empire of the Czars, a target of scorn to one, an object of love to another; abused by the envious,—Who remembers this Russia? Who is able to conjure up from a store of personal memories the magic spell of a world so rich in treasures of culture," etc., etc. The glorious picture is continued—and it is only fair to allow the recorder of Rachmaninoff's story to speak for himself, and permit the reader to deduce his own conclusions. We get a more detailed view of St. Petersburg and Moscow: "glittering St. Petersburg, with its Court, the wealthiest and most splendid of all times, its theatres (which have made more than one theatrical manager in Europe pale with envy), its diplomats from all over the word, the nobles of the high bureaucracy, the General Staff and the Guards, resplendent in their purple and gold, and Moscow, with its snug retreats for aging aristocrats and great gentlemen, and, last but not least, its millionaire merchants—." The other side of the story is not touched upon—but why should it be? The picture that is given here is the world in which Rachmaninoff was born and raised, and he seems to have been completely unaware of the poverty and misery of the vast millions which made possible this enchanted, luxurious world for the few; nor evidently did he care. No wonder then that he failed to sympathize with or understand in any degree the meaning of the Russian Revolution when it came!

The romantic glow with which the "vanished Russia" is surrounded gives the author a splendid setting for his interminable lamentations. These wails start with historical changes which antedate the upheaval of 1917. Speaking of the change in the economic status of the Rachmaninoff family, descended from nobility and accustomed to living in affluence throughout many generations, Riesemann moans: "The abolition of serfdom alone had placed them in a precarious pecuniary position, *for it deprived them of unpaid labor.*" We learn that "this was not to the taste of the proverbially lavish Russian nature."

It is to be expected that the insufferable snobbishness which permeates both Riesemann's and Rachmaninoff's attitude towards the larger affairs of humanity, should also affect the attitude of the *Recollections* toward music. The *Composer* (always with a capital C) is something apart from his fellowman—quite above them—sacrosanct. There are far too many examples of this throughout the book to quote in detail and at length, but the climax of this attitude is reached during the revolution of 1917. I must permit Rachmaninoff's own words to convey the story of the period, to show how apart from reality, how unconcerned, how unaware the *Composer* was in this tremendous hour, residing in his ivory tower away from the distressing affairs of mankind:

> The outbreak of the Bolshevist upheaval still found me in my old flat in Moscow. I had started to rewrite my First Concerto for pianoforte, and was so engrossed in my work that *I did not notice what went on around me.* Consequently, life during the anarchistic upheaval, which turned the existence of a non-proletarian into hell on earth, was comparatively easy for me. I sat at the writing table or the piano all day without troubling about the rattle of machine guns and rifle shots. In the evenings, however, I was reminded of my duties as a bourgeois and had to take my turn with the other flat-owners in conscientiously guarding the house and joining in the meetings of the house "committee," which had been formed immediately after the Bolshevist upheaval. Together with the "house boy" and other persons of equal rank, I discussed questions of importance to our existence. You may believe me, the memories of that time are anything but agreeable. Many optimists looked upon the Bolshevists' seizure of the reins as an unpleasant but short-lived interlude of the "Great Revolution," and hoped that each new day would, at last, bring them the promised heaven on earth. I am not one of those people who blind themselves to reality and indulge in vague Utopian illusions.
>
> As soon as I had made a closer study of the men who handled the fate of our people and the whole country, I saw with terrible clearness that here was the beginning of the end—an end full of horrors the occurrence of which was merely a matter of time. The anarchy around me, the brutal uprooting of all the foundations of art, the senseless destruction of all means for its encouragement, left no hope for a normal life in Russia.

Even in the introduction to the book, Riesemann — inadvertently, of course — makes a statement, the significance of which can not be overestimated. The material of the book he credits to his conversations with Rachmaninoff. But he states:

> In writing this biography, I often made the annoying discovery that dates of events, especially of first performances and of the beginning and completion of compositions, were remembered neither by myself nor Rachmaninoff. A mere coincidence came to our rescue. A small pamphlet entitled *S. W. Rachmaninoff, by V. Belayev,* published in Soviet Russia in 1923, by some chance, fell into the composers hands. This little book has one interesting feature in that it contains an accurate index of Rachmaninoff's works, with all the dates of their beginning and completion, which had been marked on each manuscript. From this one may conclude that some Soviet agency has made a thorough search in Rachmaninoff's house, found the collection of manuscripts which, on his departure from Russia, he left behind. . . . "

No attempt is made to give credit to the Soviet authorities, who found time and funds, and had interest in publishing this record of the work of a leading Russian composer, especially one who has never missed an opportunity to malign the Soviet government! These were the "anarchists," who, in Rachmaninoff's words, were responsible for the "brutal uprooting of all the fundamentals of art, the senseless destruction of all means for its encouragement." His very words belie the facts, and yet Riesemann is so blinded, in his prejudice, that he is unable to see the implication and full import of this statement and multifarious similar assertions which it is impossible to quote here.

Even when "escaping" from Russia, he did so with his family on a "Bolshevist visa"; was not maltreated; his effects not even being searched — at which he laments bitterly not having taken away more money — no one would have known! "At the frontiers the Bolshevists behaved even 'very nicely,' as the Composer expressed it. And these "Bolshevists" were those he stigmatizes as "revolutionary birds of prey," "a government of murderers, criminals and professional executioners," etc., etc.

Great credit is given throughout the volume to notable musical achievements, in old Russia, including the improvement accomplished in the organization of the conservatories under such distinguished musicians as Ippolitov-Ivanov, Gliére, and others; the great excellence of such operas as those of the

Bolshoi and Stanislavsky Theatres in Moscow. In this connection, giving credit to the I.R.M.S., he states "This statement applies only to pre-Soviet times." The truth is that where there were five opera houses in all Czarist Russia, there are now more than 25, and the highest standards in the musical world are to be found, as is evidenced by the word of such a notable, disinterested observer as Leopold Stokowski. I myself have witnessed amazing productions in the opera houses mentioned as belonging exclusively to old Russia, and which are now in the very height of their glory; not for the few, but for the masses. In addition, the same musicians, including those mentioned (Ippolitov-Ivanov, Gliére, and a host of others contemporary with them), who were prominent in Czarist Russia, and have remained to work in building culture for the masses of Soviet Russia, are commented upon only in relation to the "vanished world," their more notable achievements under the Soviets being deliberately and maliciously ignored.

The book is filled with interesting anecdotes and trivia concerning the life and accomplishments of a leading modern Russian composer, one who was always recognized as an arch-conservative and reactionary, who was only once accused of an "outrageous modernism," which he did his best to live down. He actively opposed the St. Petersburg group of moderns, including such men as Moussorgsky, Borodin, Rimsky-Korsakov, etc., opposing the growth of an indigenous Russian culture in favor of one more in sympathy with the German and French schools.

The story of his distinguished career as a pianist in many countries is well told, as well as his activities as a conductor in Russia. The record of his accomplishments as a composer is complete and sympathetic, though at all times fulsome.

The book has some glaring inaccuracies in addition to typographical errors. We learn to our astonishment that Paderewski became "President of Poland," and that the famous prelude of Rachmaninoff is in the key of C *"flat"* minor. Would that it were! In that case it would not receive such frequent performance. ASHLEY PETTIS.

Europe Under Smoked Glass

EUROPE BETWEEN WARS? by Hamilton Fish Armstrong. The Macmillan Co. $1.25.

Upon the title page of *Europe Between Wars?* Hamilton Fish Armstrong has caused to be printed the words of R. L. Stevenson—that febrile manipulator of literary shadows—"The obscure epoch is today." And when one reads the text which follows, one is impressed with the probability that the author regards this remark as having something of the force of a maxim. It becomes apparent that Mr. Armstrong, who edits the periodical Foreign Affairs, not only believes that we see the current international situation through a glass darkly, but that in effect he has pledged himself not to admit the existence of any critique which might disturb this unclarity of view.

The author acted with entire logic when he inserted a question mark in his title. After his survey of the European situation he is not sure of anything important in any of the possible developments he suggests, nor is he able to trace any positive general trend. This net achievement in uncertainty is far from hard to understand. One knows the answer long before one reaches the last of Mr. Armstrong's 115 too many pages. The countries on the author's international chessboard comprise an assortment of largely minor and synthetic factors which, with the aid of an idle mind, may be made to form dozens of designs, any of them about as logical as any other. As for the major factors in the current internal and international struggles, they are either ignored or are arbitrarily reduced in potential so that they may be checkmated in the interest of a general judicial confusion.

Mr. Armstrong's book was not completed yesterday; but it was completed the day before—the Venice conference between the two chief fascist dictators had already taken place. Yet Mr. Armstrong seriously suggests that Hitler "might be glad to sing back . . . into the role of revolutionary leader of the German masses." And we are told, further, that in the Nazi party "the radicals run vertically from the top to the bottom" and that it is decidedly a toss-up whether (Goebbels is quoted to support the view) a Nazi revolution of the masses or a move toward reaction may eventually come out of the present state of affairs.

In the mind of Mr. Armstrong strange entities oppose each other in a simulated and utterly phony dialectic. "The individualistic spirit is deep-rooted in France," and may be maintained in a flourishing condition if the Deputies will reform itself, but will it? The alternative is dictatorship, another entity in itself, and the opposite, apparently, of the individualistic spirit. But dictatorship sterilizes culture and the critical temperament. See what it has done in the Soviet Union, where "By 1924, creative impulses of every kind were suspect." How then is the world to be redeemed? By "dynamic democracy . . . dynamic in the economic as well as in the traditional political realm."

In short, the invocation of another wispy phantasm. The birth of another phosphorescent fetus, amid bat cries and cadaverous clacking, out of a long-exhausted charnel womb. It is a sure though minor proof of the mental twilight which encompasses capitalism that the midwives in such deliveries do not lack for fees. MURRAY GODWIN.

The Wilson Myth

WOODROW WILSON, THE CARICATURE, THE MYTH AND THE MAN. By Edith Gittings Reid. Oxford University Press, New York. $3.50.

Written by a member of the idolatrous circle of friends who surrounded Wilson and fed his insatiable ego, this biography tends to perpetuate the preposterous Wilson myth, although it purportedly attempts to reveal the man. It adds nothing to our knowledge of Wilson, except for some anecdotes consisting mainly of those pious, ponderously-uttered platitudes that he loved so well to roll off his tongue. The author lovingly follows this "greatest man ever known in American history," as she refers to him, in his determined pursuit of the manifest destiny which he believed to be his by God-ordained right. Wilson once more is portrayed as the invincible idealist: his primary concern was for the *"decent* common people"; that consummate politician, Col. House, maneuvered him into the presidency because he perceived that Wilson "wasn't thinking of himself, but of his country"; Wilson's imperialist adventure in Mexico was executed for Mexico's own good; Wilson plunged America into the war—right after being elected on his solemn pledge to keep her out of it—simply because Germany was threatening the democratic ideal, the first tenet of which was "freedom of the seas," etc. The well-bred loyalty of his friends, many of whom he coldly threw overboard when they could no longer serve his ends, is amusingly illustrated by the remark of one who had just been double crossed by him: "This is the kind of thing his enemies say the President does. You and I know that he does not." And Mrs. Reid concurs. In a significant anecdote, a British Conservative asks one of the President's close friends if Wilson is really a "radical." He is forthwith invited to see for himself, and at tea the next day, the President, who is on the eve of "saving the world for democracy," remarks to him: "Why do you let the Irish go on as they are doing? [It is 1916, the year of the great Irish rebellion.] I would send an army over to stop it all if I were king." The Conservative leaves, firmly convinced that Wilson "is the greatest man I ever saw." Incidentally, the revolutionary student of Rooseveltian demagogy can profit much by a close study of Wilson's presidential career, from which Roosevelt lifted many of his New Deal tactics.

Brief Review

APPOINTMENT IN SAMARRA, by John O'Hara. Harcourt, Brace and Co. $2.50.

Mr. O'Hara, the author of this first novel, writes for the New Yorker and is a hell of a tough guy. He never minces words. When he describes the upper crust of Gibbsville, you get a complete picture of its drinking, sex, and business life. And he describes the underworld of the small city with almost as much skill. He reports like Sinclair Lewis and has more guts than Hemingway. His book is going to be a best seller. But at the core of every hard-boiled novel, no matter how good, is a thick lump of sentimentality, and it crops up here too. Julian English, the hero, is a young Babbitt and a sensual drunkard, but when he commits suicide (pretty juvenile, isn't it, Mr. O'Hara?) after his own wilful-

ness and aimless sensuality heap troubles on his head, the whole town—underworld and all—mourns the loss of a swell guy. Artists in New Yorker uniform. Bring on your wise-cracking, dipsomaniac, love-making, life-weary heroes. But for art's sake, make him "sympathetic" (easy enough when you're describing yourself), and don't ever include a character as ordinary as a monogamous Polish miner. It really is a pity that such brutal and honest reporting of the mores of a small city upper class should screen nothing more than self-pity. *Appointment in Samarra* is gripping, no doubt, but griping might describe it just as well.

A COOL MILLION, by Nathaniel West. Covici, Friede. $2.

Impressed by the posthumous fame of Horst Wessel, the author of *Miss Lonelyhearts* has written the story of Lemuel Pitkin, a poor country boy of the finest Horatio Alger type who goes to the big city to make his fortune. Here he is robbed, beaten by the police, jailed, bereft of all his teeth, an eye, and then a leg, scalped, and maltreated in many other ingenious fashions. Finally, having fallen to the level of a half-witted stooge in a vaudeville act, he is shot by a representative of the two forces which are working hand in hand to undermine American individualism, Jewish International Finance and Bolshevism. He thereby becomes the first martyr of the American National Revolution. Mr. West's satire is amusing, often penetrating, and he makes his attitude quite clear. This is fortunate, for had he written of Lemuel Pitkin with a more subtle malice, our unprejudiced, "anti-fascist" bourgeois critics would probably have united in acclaiming this as a great expression of the American soul. We shudder when we think how easy it would have been for Mr. West to have founded, then and there, a Lemuel Pitkin Day.

AN UPTON SINCLAIR ANTHOLOGY, compiled by I. O. Evans. Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

This anthology, originally edited for sale in England, is divided into two parts, "The Pure Artist" and "The Socialist," despite the fact that the editor quotes Sinclair's dictum, "All art is propaganda." A good many other things seem queer about it, especially the inclusion—under the heading of "The Pure Artist"—of fifteen pages from *Mental Radio.* The anthology does serve to call attention to a few of the less familiar of Sinclair's writings, notably his article, "Our Bourgeois Literature," but in general it emphasizes his eccentric individualism. Though there are some good extracts from *The Jungle,* there is really not enough to indicate the power of his best novels, and the solid impact of his better pamphlets is not even suggested. It is a pity that, with his weaknesses so fully represented, justice could not have been done to some of those of Sinclair's virtues best exhibited in many of his earlier works.

CHARACTER BAD. The Story of a Conscientious Objector. As told in the letters of Harold Studley Gray. Edited by Kenneth I. Brown. Harper and Brothers. $2.

Harold Gray, son of a prominent wealthy family, left Harvard in 1915 to work among German prisoners in England with the Y. M. C. A. When America entered the war, he returned to the United States, was drafted, and sentenced to life imprisonment when he refused to be impressed into military service. His intense, even fanatical, religious convictions and his observations of the effect of war upon the German prisoners and the English soldiers he met caused him to take the stand he did. In his letters home, which make up this book, Gray repeatedly states that he did not want to obstruct the draft laws or to cause the government any embarrassment in its conduct of the war. He merely wanted to salve his own conscience. Most of the religious conscientious objectors took this position. The "politicals" on the other hand opposed the war because of its imperialist nature and wanted to stop it. One may doubt the effectiveness of Gray's stand, but one cannot doubt his personal courage. In prison he often took his stand in hunger strikes along with the politicals. It was thought by many prior to the war that freedom of conscience would be recognized by the American government even in war times. These were speedily disillusioned when they saw even the most innocent of Christians roughly booted about. What about the war that the Roosevelt administration is so feverishly preparing for? It may reasonably be predicted that the lot of the C.O.'s will be much harsher than in the last war.

SECOND SIGHT, by Clifton Cuthbert. William Godwin. $2.

A rather brief novel rendered unimportant, in the last analysis, by too much superficial and involved self-analysis, and failure to present concretely and convincingly the mistress-mother relationship into which the hero is driven. The maternal qualities of the mistress are simply not shown, and we are left uneasily aware that the author himself regards his theme as unimportant. Much more promising is the way in which Mr. Cuthbert sustains the note of melancholy and frustration; and his technique of contrasting the hero's introspective despair with the objective business and political world of his father is so striking and significant that we wish he had carried it out much further.

TIN SOLDIERS, by Robert Wohlforth. Alfred H. King. $2.

Robert Wohlforth entered West Point in July, 1923. By the third year, he says, he was "red as hell." He was graduated in June, 1927, and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the 18th U. S. Infantry and served at Forts Slocum, Dix, Hamilton, and Jay. He resigned in 1928 and since then has devoted his time to writing on military life. *Tin Soldiers* is his first novel One gathers that his purpose in writing the book is to expose the sordidness and pettiness of West Point life. He emphasizes the hazing of the first year men, the attention the school pays to football, the iron-clad regulations, the four years of unnatural, monk-like existence, and the discrimination against the occasional Negro allowed to come to the school. This is all to the good. Very few peple know this side of West Point training. But there is another book that Wohlforth or some other West Point graduate could and should write. It should be a non-fictional analysis of West Point's function in maintaining the status quo as revealed in texts used and lectures given and in the atmosphere of the school.

THE IRREPRESSIBLE CONFLICT: 1850-1865, by Charles Arthur Cole. The Macmillan Co. $5.

The irrepressible conflict treated in this book is, of course, the Civil War. It is a social, not a military history. Mr. Cole goes into the causes of the war but puts too little emphasis on the economic factor. The extreme value of the book lies in the facts which Mr. Cole has so laboriously dug out, largely from contemporary sources including newspaper and magazine accounts and letters from soldiers. He shows the strenuous life of the common soldier on both sides. Contrasted to this is the profiteering and sabotaging of the war by big business pirates. Another contrast is furnished in the detailed description of the life of gaiety and waste led by the socially elite at Saratoga, Washington, Newport and other resorts in the North and also the similar life led by the plantation aristocracy of the South. Mr. Cole's bibliography is probably the best on the Civil War yet compiled.

A BACKWARD GLANCE, by Edith Wharton. Appleton-Century. $3.00.

Mrs. Wharton begins by talking about great-grandfather Stevens, revolutionary major-general and successful East-India merchant—obviously the family's most important member since he founded its fortune. She continues with a description of the childhood of a daughter of a gentleman of leisure. Then comes an account of her adult life, with something about her books and much more about high society in Paris and London. There is a little about the war and a good deal about Henry James. On the whole this quaintly snobbish book is rather entertaining because the life it describes seems so remote and unreal. The most amusing thing is that Mrs. Wharton does not realize the collapse of the world of which she writes. On the contrary, she says that America has at last developed a social aristocracy. If that can be taken as evidence of the myopia that long residence in Europe has produced, it is no wonder that her work has lost the mild satiric edge that it once had and become completely empty and fatuous.

More About the English Poets

The following contributions are supplementary to the article Three English Radical Poets, *by Prof. Edwin Berry Burgum, in our issue of July 3. Editorial comment on Mr. Gregory's observations concerning Marxian criticism in the United States will be found on page 4 of this issue.*

—The Editors.

HORACE GREGORY

IT IS, of course, obvious to any American reader that the three poets are writing from an English tradition and that their work has behind it the advantages gained from a *verbal* revolution in English verse, precipitated by Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot. Spender has already acknowledged his debt to Eliot in a recent essay in the New Republic. Eliot's direct influence on Auden and Day Lewis is too obvious to be treated at length here. I question Mr. Burgum's suggestion that Spender derives from Whitman; if he does so at all, it is by way of a Whitman influence upon D. H. Lawrence. There is a wide stream of Lawrencian influence running through Spender, and I suspect that Day Lewis has also read him. I believe American Marxist critics have greatly underestimated the value of D. H. Lawrence to their cause, partly through ignorance of English literature and partly through carelessness in interpreting Marx. We all know, of course, Lawrence's flirtations with Fascism, but we must remember that ultimately they failed.

Several scattered remarks made by Mr. Burgum seem to me to be somewhat naive; I shall not cite all of them, but concentrate upon one which raises a problem of interest to all of us. With the short-sightedness of many American critics who have read Marx for the first time, Mr. Burgum becomes terribly concerned about Spender's use of the word "honor." We all know, of course, that "honor" is an abstraction and that words such as "honor," "nobility," and "dignity" had fallen into disrepute in a cynical post-war generation. The futilities of such abstractions have been pretty well explored, if not exploited, during the past fifteen years. Behind this shrewd exploration lay a profound distrust of everything, but most of all it revealed a distrust of a "valid" or "honorable" relationship between men. I would say that Spender is not using this particular word in the sense in which it was used shortly before the War. We have only to compare his poem with Ralph Hodgson's *Song of Honor* to see the vast difference in the meaning between the two uses of the word. Not to see that difference is to confess a hopeless lack of literary imagination and understanding.

Hodgson's use of "honor" is a pathetic, literary, would-be poetic cliché, which D. H. Lawrence has already noted and has done us a literary service in observing. Since that time (I refer to 1912 or 1913) many of us have gone through a complete cycle of experiences, not the least of them being the success of the Russian revolution. Spender, when he writes of "honor," is thinking of, or rather "feeling," the word as a description of an emotion that is again genuine. In a world that is resuming a moral attitude toward human relationships, a world that is seeking to abolish economic injustice, men may again undertake an honorable contract with one another, and through the humanity of a Marxian philosophy, may again walk upright and claim the rights of human dignity. There is much of this conviction in Spender's and it is unwise to sneer at it, or to label it as Platonism.

If Professor Burgum wishes to damn Spender in the name of Romanticism he comes fairly close to the damnation of Marx himself. This paradox that Mr. Burgum uncovers for us lies at the core of much that passes for Marxian criticism of literature in America. I know of only one critic who has successfully avoided this dilemma and he is an Englishman, John Strachey. That is why Mr. Burgum's interesting, if somewhat inaccurate, essay seems to me to be based upon a number of naive observations, and if I were to extend this brief commentary I would revise at length his study of Auden. Time, however, is short and my space is limited.

OBED BROOKS

BECAUSE the English writers of the school of Auden and Spender have introduced a new vitality, a new manner and, perhaps, a new substance in poetry, it is important that their work is beginning to be republished and more widely read in this country. At the same time, however, because their names have long been used in esoteric flourishes by American literary snobs and yet suggested as the consummation of Communism-in-verse, it is equally important that these pretensions should be critically examined as they are in this article by Dr. Burgum. Certainly I feel that Auden, for all his brilliance, represents a very personal and unstable combination of literary and intellectual influences. I do not find in his imaginative material, which I want particularly to consider here, much social coherence.

In most of his work Auden has concerned himself so far with two limited but highly significant kinds of experience. One is the largely verbal world of bourgeois ritual and apologetic. The other is his own fascination with military or insurrectionary tactics. The connection between them, I think, answers only to psychological necessity. In neither is his sensibility expressed in the particularized symbolic images of most modern poetry, although Auden draws widely upon his fellow poets for rhythms and evocations.

Toward public rhetoric, private habits and the English bourgeois respectables, Auden feels very much as Lawrence did in *Pansies* and in *Nettles*. He uses similar terms in diagnosis: onanism, loss of nerve, of identity, of will. With a very sensitive ear, he finds a record of this corruption in the very language which tries to hide it, and in the *Orators* studies it with some care. But the class nature of this decadence is by no means clear. Auden's appeals for a vigorous cure are made not to the economic, but to the spiritual sufferers, and with these, to a great extent, he identifies himself.

The cure is to be found in renunciation and in action, qualities that are resident in curious dream battles fought usually in the open countryside among ruined pylons, fallen wires, deserted mills. Occasionally the "enemy" is characterized, and proper measures taken against him ("A preliminary bombardment by obscene telephone messages destroys the *morale* . . ."), but more often the mind is completely occupied with the formal administrative problems of the *coup d'état*. We rarely see the enemy, because actually he does not exist; he represents moral weakness and funerary ritual. He is destroyed by his own spiritual diseases, not by the effects or equivalents of proletarian struggle.

In the brilliant and amusing *The Dance of Death*, the Fascist demagogue dies because he is not economically and intellectually self-sustaining. Karl Marx and two Communists appear only after the death, like king Fortinbras in *Hamlet*. The Marxism is merely interpretative. In *Paid on Both Sides*, the struggle is more like a Montague-Capulet Kentucky mountain affair, than a conflict of classes. Spies, intercepted messages, bombing planes, control of the passes, are the dialectic antithesis to the headmaster's speeches, white flannel pants and the Rothermere press. But Auden does succeed in giving emotional value to problems of tactics and group movement, and this should be considered, I think, in comparison with more directly Communist writing.

The Marxian intelligence as it operates in fields of struggle is a tactical intelligence. The demonstrations, marches, strikes which appear in the work of Communist poets are not merely "natural" phenomena, an expression of proletarian nature or a response to objective conditions, but they also have a greater significance insofar as they are directed toward a greater goal as the effective realization of a philosophy. It seems strange that the intricate problems of Marxian tactics, of the unity of theory and action in every field of experience, have not played a larger part in proletarian writing, that dialectics has not had the appeal to the intellectual, concettist Communist poets that scholasticism and science had, for instance, for Donne. (Whether cerebralism is

not one of the chief defects of Communist poetry, is another question.)

At the present time any very complete unity is probably historically impossible. The European writers who have played most interestingly with combinations of concept and action have been socially irresponsible. There have been, for instances, the *Immoralist* and *Counterfeiters* of Gide, the *Conquerors* by Malraux where mass leadership is assumed "disinterestedly" for certain philosophic purposes, *Men of Good Will* by Romains where the characters are increasingly involved in social intrigues of a very sinister cast. In poetry, subjective use of mass techniques is found in Auden and some futurists, and discussed by Fascist idealists like Malaparte. I do not think, however, that a fruitful use in literature of such an important and very contemporary kind of thought depends on social detachment, and that interest in the complexities and devices of social struggle can serve only a psychological purpose. I think that to a great extent the secret of form both in proletarian poetry and the novel lies here, as this conceptualism can become the skeleton for the flesh of emotional partisanship and general revolutionary intention.

ROBERT GESSNER

BECAUSE of a literary inferiority complex, inherited from our teachers of English literature, American writers and critics even now look to England for superior models to guide an astoundingly healthy revolutionary literature going native. Looking across the ocean at Spender, Auden and Lewis, my colleague, Professor Burgum, sees especially in Lewis "the best probably of Communist poetry that has yet been written for an audience of intellectuals." That, precisely, is the character of these English poems, and therein is described the revolutionary position of those poets and the critics of their type. That is, these are transitional poems for a private audience of transit intellectuals. Lewis in his *Letter to a Young Revolutionary* explains how he and his generation of poets came to be transitional: "You might as well know that a few of us poets, in our capacity of receiving stations, do detect the vibrations of new life in Communism." It is no feat in 1933 with a super-seven tube set to pick up Moscow and hear there was a revolution and several more on the way. Ten years before, young Americans writing for The Liberator used the simile of a seismograph to show that the earthquake in Moscow was making the whole world quake. Our transitional poets, headed by Joseph Freeman and Michael Gold (who fortunately have never been bothered with grafting pains), have been fighting in the front lines of Communism for over ten years. Today the Communist movement in America is several years advanced over England's. These English poets, consequently, are concerning themselves in their revolt from their godfather, T. S. Eliot, with problems that were dealt with here a decade ago.

They have modernized themselves merely to the extent of having substituted a radio tower for an ivory tower, but a tower it is. They look upon the revolution from a detached aesthetic and spiritual height. Spender, for example, glorifies the physique of the working man because he feels the physical insufficiency of the English esthete aristocrats. Lewis, like Spender, is circumscribed by an adherence to English literary tradition, and being a nature poet consequently substitutes Communism for flowers. Like his model, Gerard Manley Hopkins, his approach is religious. In his *Letter* Lewis proclaims the spiritual approach, saying "and you are no more likely to have it ["the prime essential for the revolutionary—faith"] by reading Marx than to experience religions by reading theological text-books . . . not knowledge of economics . . . but a certainty of new life." This religious approach to Communism is not enough; it is the same as saying hooray for Lenin instead of Christ, which was stale stuff even ten years ago. Burgum calls Lewis' *Magnetic Mountain* "the absolute of Marxian philosophy"—but did not add "for private readings for transit intellectuals." No proletarian, no matter how well grounded in Marxism, could catch this "absolute" in Lewis' esoteric "world of sensory experience." Yet Burgum praises Lewis for not being "attracted [as so many American writers have been] merely by the crude exterior sometimes found in the working class" but in "its spiritual power."

There are, also, radio tower critics. Burgum approaches these poems in the same spirit as Lewis approaches the revolution. He betrays his professorial detachment when he says: "In real life between the bourgeois or the intellectual and the actual working of the capitalist system stands the impersonal appearance, the huge impersonal organization of the system itself." Capitalism is abstract only to an outsider, "the intellectual," but never to a working man I select at random an unsolicited letter to the Daily Worker: "The Agent Hopper gets a salary of $375 monthly (for contracting and getting on the good side of the shippers), has a bank account of over $250,000, has an 80-acre farm up in Michigan (all paid for) with a beautiful home, on which he raises cherries as a side line."

It is unfair, however, to criticize a transit merely because he is transitional; but in these days of street fighting we cannot wait for a fellow-traveler to make up leisurely his mind. It is notable that in England some poets have broken away from Eliot, but in America now we have little to learn from transits. Let it be known, however, that a poet as such is not a member of a separate class. Let his approach to Communism be as aesthetically spiritual or as individually intellectual as the approachee's background compels him, but unless he physically identifies himself with the working class (despite their "crude exterior") he will remain a perpetual approachee, even though his Marxism is "absolute." When that is done all the problems arising out of applying bourgeois aesthetics to proletarian material will dissolve, such as Spender's jitters over propaganda "trying to drag us away from poetry into the real world" and thus "destroy the poem's unity." Lewis will then be free of much of his artistic inarticulateness and of such bourgeois diction hang-overs as the line, "Oh subterranean fires, break out!" Charles Madge in his *Letter to the Intelligentsia* would be freed of such a hang-over line: "Lenin, would you were living at this hour England has need of you—." By writing directly for the class-strugglers, Auden, the most effective of them all, would be freed from stylistic inheritances which necessitate on the part of the reader an intimate knowledge of medieval ballad forms and Old English epics in order to appreciate fully his satire. When these English poets have climbed down from their radio towers and thoroughly identified themselves with the proletariat, realizing that the revolution is primarily for proletarians and not poets, they will be writing poems about the struggles of the working class, such as the Hunger March on London, to aid them in their battle, instead of about subterranean fires and Icarus for transit intellectuals.

STANLEY BURNSHAW

WITH the forthcoming American publication of Auden, Spender and Lewis our criticism will be subjected to a valuable test. By his basic reaction to the problems raised by the English poets we shall be able to tell the degree to which each critic essentially understands revolutionary literature today. In a precise sense whatever a critic says may be held for or against him—and this is true not only for bourgeois critics but for those who stand in varying degrees of sympathy to the revolutionary movement.

The reasons for this situation are apparent to anyone who has read Auden, Spender and Lewis. Although these poets are acutely concerned with the chaos of contemporary society and its solution in terms of socialism—as are many critics both bourgeois and radical—none of the poets has arrived at a clear-cut self-identification with the proletariat in its present battle for power. Rather, Auden, Spender and Lewis are each wrestling with their individual angels of reaction; achieving at moments what seems to be liberation, but still tangled in doubts and uncertainties. It would be gratuitous to insist that many critics relatively sympathetic to Communism as well as a number writing in revolutionary periodicals find themselves in an analogous position. To them, naturally, the problems implicit in the work of these English poets will be of personal immediacy.

These problems must be discussed; they are of basic concern today. So many members of the middle class who realize (intellectually) that Communism offers the only way out, start on the road to join the proletariat but for obvious (emotional) reasons find it hard going. The baggage of bourgeois-romantic-idealist

tradition which must be shed on the way frequently looms too valuable to part with—and they may find themselves stranded midway with their treasures, or looking with hopeless longing, or turning back in despair. Others walking the road to revolution may see—with Auden, Spender and Lewis—ahead in the distance dazzling mirages of honor, faith, etc. That these mirages may exist as virtues valid for individuals must be recognized; that the imagination is justified in perceiving hitherto unarticulated reasons for embracing Communism must be accepted. Moreover, it is the duty of revolutionary criticism to establish the validity of these perceptions while at the same time indicating their relationship to Marxism as a whole.

There is no doubt that Auden, Spender and Lewis display more poetic brilliance than any other group of poets writing in English today. Besides, they have gained a mastery of expression which will lead many to overestimate their essential importance. Their brilliance and mastery, however, can contribute little to a literature written for the masses. Auden, for example, beneath the exterior of an individual style betrays an eclecticism drawing on Langland, Skelton, Morris, and T. S. Eliot, although he has kept himself free of the vicious vulgarity that grins out of passages in *The Waste Land*. To a slighter degree Spender draws on Hopkins, Rilke, and Yeats, while adding fresh draughts of his own. Naturally these poets will fascinate the literary critic and please readers who have the misguided notion that sophisticated expression stands in direct ratio to literary importance. Perhaps such language is the only effective means of addressing this audience. On the other hand, the modes of expression employed by Auden, Spender and Lewis are eminently unsuited to a revolutionary poetry immediately concerned with the masses, for whom it is fighting.

At present certain revolutionary poets in America are trying to prepare an instrument capable of reaching not only multitudes of unsophisticated ears, but sophisticated ones as well. To be sure all sorts of crude, banal, and false notes grate upon our ears during these days of preparation; but occasionally we hear poetry which makes readers of all tastes and sensibilities listen. Unfortunately such poetry so far occurs too seldom, whereupon some critics offer a mechanical "solution": that to special groups of readers be purveyed special types of expression. Such a suggestion "solves" nothing: it merely offers an easy escape for writers whose tastes and inclinations are impediments in the making of a literature addressed both to sophisticated and uneducated tastes.

In the present absence of a body of such poetry, however, the American publication of Auden, Spender and Lewis can have real contemporary value. Not that their work or that their periodical "New Verse, is likely to be as much of an influence in the movement of English literature of the immediate future as Poetry has been in the past," as Mr. La Drière has suggested (Fleur de Lis, May, 1934), because of the limited communicativeness of their work. Nor that these poets will alter the direction of those revolutionary writers who wish to reach many more than a small audience of special tastes. We may expect, however, some reallocation of poetic energies: certain of our poets to "concentrate" on reading sections for which they seem best equipped to address. We may even see a mild tendency toward developing different schools of revolutionary verse.

In any case the publication here of these English poets should help to loosen up some of our musclebound poets, should stimulate them into making poems of the very difficulties now blocking their way to alliance with the forces of revolution.

Unholy Wedlock

ROBERT FORSYTHE

JOHN GALSWORTHY was so preeminently the historian of the decaying British upper classes that we are apt to read very profound meanings into his most trivial works. It is hard to understand why he wrote *One More River* and his other later novels unless he had set such a standard of labor and living that his pen moved automatically at eleven every morning and continued until tea time. They were not bad novels because Galsworthy wrote with such competency and precision that everything he touched had an air of distinction, but coming after *The Forsythe Saga* they were certain to furnish an anti-climax.

When I mention the decaying British upper classes I do it not in the casual qualifying sense. I mean that what Galsworthy was doing in the *Saga* was exactly what Shaw was doing consciously in *Heartbreak House* and Proust was doing unconsciously in his great work: he was showing the gradual decline of the aristocracy to which he belonged. As a book *One More River* had something of this in it, but it does not show in the picture which has been made by James Whale for Universal. The tragic story of Dinny's love for Dornford, which made up the principal theme of the book, has been eliminated entirely and what we have is a straightforward tale of the evils of the British divorce laws; in brief, the story of Lady Clare's difficulties. This may not be a thing of justice to Galsworthy, but it probably makes a better screen drama. However, to an American audience it must surely be a matter of bewilderment that such a fuss can be made over a lady, a very noble lady, wanting to depart the bed and board of a gentleman, a very noble gentleman, who showed his gentility by striking her across the face with his riding crop. Divorce has become so ordinary with us that we are convinced at first that we must be seeing a custom drama of the 80's about conditions which have long been altered in such a freedom-loving land as England. In any event they have, as is well known, Hyde Park for complaints and nobody surely would have been so unkind as to keep Lady Clare Corven from exercising her rights in the traditional English fashion. It seems, however, that the feudalistic divorce laws are still a very modern problem in Mayfair and Lady Clare had a sad time of it.

As an aside and before going into the more serious analysis of his latest Laemmle masterpiece, it occurs to me that working for Papa and Junior might be the very best sort of job for one who must profit by Hollywood. It is hardly likely that the management would see fit to question the management of Mr. Whale and Mr. R. C. Sherriff (who wrote *Journey's End* and did a good job on the present picture) about things British. It would be a little more difficult with Mr. Irving Thalberg who has undoubtedly sat at the captain's table on the Berengaria before the North German Lloyd boats became so popular, but putting Junior Laemmle in his place with an Oxford accent must be one of the simpler experiences. At any rate we can thank somebody for allowing Mr. Whale and his English cast to do the thing in a thoroughly Sussex-Essex-Surrey fashion. Everything is there including the townspeople and farmers who have been trained by Mr. Westbrook Pegler and tip the hat and duck the knee in a little curtsy whenever the Lord or Ladies of the Manor appear.

The film opens with Lady Clare returning on the boat from Ceylon where Sir Gerald had been unkind to her; in fact (and I hesitate to say it) Sir Gerald has given her quite a smacking around. With her at the rail as the ship docks is Tony Croom, who is out of work but brave and anxious to get into anything, including running a stable, which he finally does. Sir Gerald follows her on the next boat, insisting that she return to him. She holds her head high. There is no doubt that Sir Gerald is a brute. She can't divorce him because she has only the evidence of her own word against his and he won't divorce her. And there is Tony. She doesn't love him, but she doesn't mind him around and they carry on a most innocent friendship in which he neither holds her hand nor presses a chaste

kiss to her brow. He never even touches her when they are marooned over night in the woods in his roadster. I can testify to this, because I watched the scene very carefully and it was difficult to sit in my seat at the subsequent trial and hear the insinuations of the barrister representing Sir Gerald.

In these pages recently I have referred with some pride to America's reputation for hypocrisy, but nothing ever known in the world has equalled the moral hypocrisy of the Victorian era, echoes of which still come strongly to us in such laws as the one now under discussion. A. P. Herbert, the man from Punch, has just written *Holy Deadlock,* which I have not read but infer is about the same topic. It seems to be a crying subject among the upper classes and I have rarely been so moved as at the trial of Lady Clare when she was subjected to such indignity for doing nothing more serious than running about with Sir Galahad.

When I speak of such things as English hypocrisy, I endeavor to be supported in my opinions. Not content with mentioning the body of Galsworthy's work and the biographies which have sprung up around the Victorian and Edwardian eras (Wingfield-Stratford, E. F. Benson, André Maurois, etc.), I can bring as witness Gertrude Atherton. Do not smile. Her autobiography contains several priceless chapters on the British nobility at home. It was an understood thing that the noble ladies should have their lovers and it was equally well understood that it was a subject which should never be recognized, let alone mentioned. It is hard for a reader today to understand the furore which grew out of the famous scandal of Sir Charles Dilke, the first great case to come into the open. The Prince of Wales, later King Edward, was involved in that, along with the moral authority of the British ruling classes and the blow to that authority was so profound that it has never recovered from it and can never overcome it. The festering sores had lingered there for generations, known and denounced by a few who were considered trouble makers and traitors, but disbelieved by the masses. When the explosion came from within the effect can be imagined. It was no labor leader insisting on the evils of British society; it was British society itself flaunting them.

Without understanding this, *One More River* will have little meaning. As I say, the spectacle of a woman suffering for the sake of a divorce which a member of the Roosevelt family could be getting in Nevada in six weeks is almost too fantastic for an American audience. What remains is the acting of Diana Wynyard, Lionel Atwill, Alan Mowbray and Gilbert Emery and the mugging and gagging of Mrs. Patrick Campbell and the excellent direction of James Whale. The court scenes seem to me to be fine, but then I am always a sucker for the law in action. In any event, Mr. Whale has spared nothing in giving them authenticity. The court looks much like pictures you may have seen of the trial of Clive and Hastings. On the bench is Gilbert Emery, who may be remembered—at least he is by me—as the Emory Potts who was the boy orator of Hamilton College sent out during the war to show the collegiate youth that a *Croix de Guerre* earned in the Morgan-Harjes unit of the American Ambulance Corps was more to be treasured than the education which might be earned by clinging to Alma Mater. Whatever the cause, Mr. Potts spoke more truly than he perhaps knew in estimating American education. In this present instance he makes a fine caustic judge in the British manner.

Since seeing *Grand Canary* (Fox) several weeks ago I thought I was prepared for anything in the way of confused endings, but I must confess that *One More River* went through such a tatter of cross emotions in winding up that I am still not clear whether Mr. Galsworthy had trouble with his psychological interchanges or whether Mr. Whale was faced with the necessity of ending it before the budget ran out or whether there were direct orders from the Vatican transmitted through Cardinal Hayes to Mr. Joseph I. Breen, the new Catholic censor of Hollywood. There are reports that the picture went through a moral fumigating and this may be one of the regenerated portions, but in any event I found that people were looking at me to see if they had missed it and I had got it and I was doing the same. It may have been only that we were failing to understand the more delicate subtleties of the English. It may even have been that the English didn't understand them.

—o—

The House of Greed

THE normal or the formal cinema of the Soviet Union cannot be compared with the routine films of America. The so-called Soviet routine film is far from a deteriorating process. On the contrary, the recent Russian films have shown a steady, if slow, progress in the art of the sound movie. While it is true that it has been a long time since we've had any films of the magnitude of *Potemkin, The End of St. Petersburg, Arsenal,* we have had *Golden Mountains, Shame, Patriots, Broken Shoes,* which were just short of being "great" films. And with all its faults, Budovkin's first sound film, *Deserter,* is years ahead of the American sound film.

The Soviet Cinema has had its problems. The "masters" (Eisenstein, Pudovkin, Dovzhenko, etc.) have been experimenting and trying to find their way in the sound film. At the same time new and younger directors have been developing and maturing. It takes a long time to learn to make films—good ones. The Soviet Union has neither the money nor the desire to import foreign talent. On the technical front the Russian film industry has been expanding its studios, developing its own sound system, building laboratories, and manufacturing its own negative stock. The first Five Year Plan with its concentration on heavy industry prevented as much money as might have been desirable from being devoted to the kino industry. Another factor was the lack of good scenarios. The Communist Party, realizing this, pointed out that there would have to be more cooperation between Soviet writers and the producers of films. It further pointed out that it was important to delve into the classics of Russian literature and the stage. Thus in 1933 among the films to be produced were *Stenka Razin, Eugene Onegin, The Storm* (a stage classic) *Petersburg Night* (from Dostoyevski), *By Fire and Water* (a historical episode of the Ukraine during the reign of Catherine the Great) and *Indushka Golovlov* from the nineteenth century novel, *The Golovlov Family,* by Saltikov-Shchedrin.*

Iudushka Golovlov is the first of these films to be released here. It comes to us under the title of *The House of Greed* (Acme Theatre) and is the first full length film of A. V. Ivanovski. Director Ivanovski is also co-author of the scenario. It is to his credit that he has excellently reproduced in a series of scenes this famous subtle and witty picture of the land-owning classes of the nineteenth century Russia: the cruel distortions of personal and family relationships, the stupidity, drunkenness, debauchery, the exploitation of the peasantry with the Grace of God.

The theme

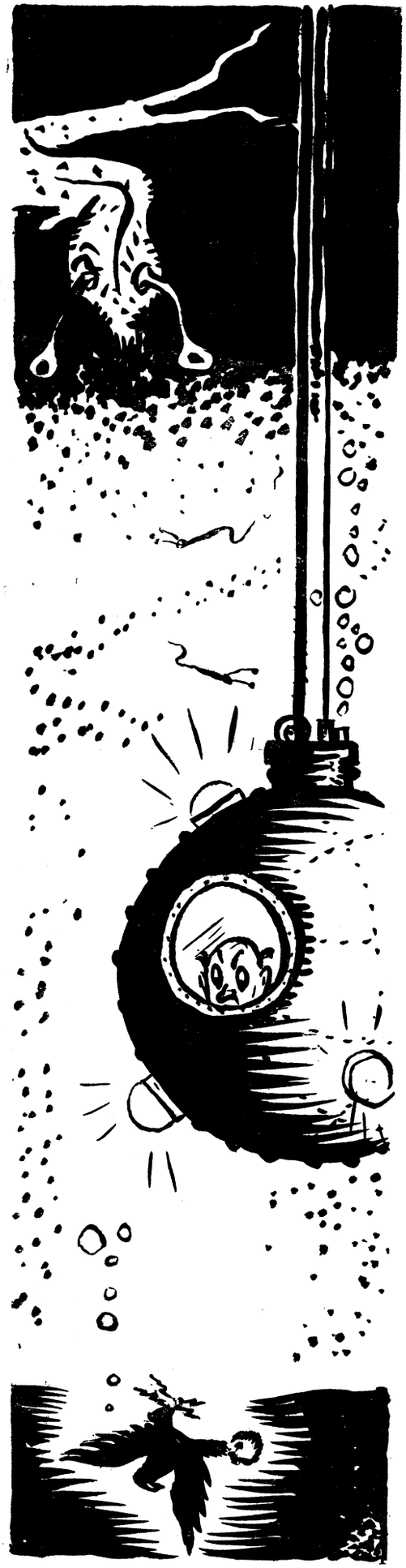
> The family is attacked by vermin, by misfortune or vice that steadily gnaws away at it, gradually creeping to its very core and undermining generation after generation. There appears a whole crop of weaklings, drunkards, debauchees, idlers, and good-for-nothing men generally. As time goes on, the family degenerates more and more till at last it produces such miserable weaklings as Golovlovs.

is not easily transferred to the two dimensional screen. It is much more satisfactory stage material. Novel into film is still a problem that demands satisfactory solution. Fully realizing these problems and that the content determines the form, Ivanovski wisely selected a portion of the novel for his scenario. The transfer demanded concentration. Thus the director built his film around Porfiri Vladimiritch Golovlov, nicknamed by his brother Iudishka (Judas) the Bloodsucker (portrayed by V. R. Gardin).

The threads of the "plot" (there is no plot in the conventional sense) are woven with a spider's efficiency. They slowly and deliberately ensnare the central character. From the very beginning we know there is no escape for the Golovlovs. This makes for a slow moving film. But no amount of pruning will ever make the film "move" any faster. Any cutting only serves to make the complicated incidents more and more vague.

The direction is formal in its treatment. It stems from such realistic films as *Czar Ivan the Terrible, The Living Corpse, The House of Death,* and especially from Otzep's German sound film, *Der Mörder Dimitri Karamazov.* The acting is straightforward and in the deliberate psychologic manner of the Moscow

* English translation published by Macmillan in 1931.



Philip Nesbit

PRETTY LOW DOWN

William Beebe has just made a record-breaking descent in his bathysphere.

Art Theatre. As a matter of fact, this is really an actor's film rather than a director's. Many of the scenes are long and involved literary monologues. The secondary and minor characters are drawn with the same sharpness and intensity of Gardin's Iudishka.

If the film seems choppy, it is not the director's fault. The New York censors tried hard to ruin a good job. The version that is being shown in New York is a fraction of the film.

Even in its final form, it is highly recommended. It is seldom that one finds such splendid acting and workmanlike construction in a single film these days. The dialogue is of a high literary quality that can only be found in Soviet films. Amkino is to be congratulated on obtaining the original negative, thus eliminating the necessity of making a "dupe" for the English superimposed titles. The result is a photographically clean print.

IRVING LERNER.

Other New Films

The Lady Is Willing (Columbia): A French farce produced in England with an English cast for Columbia by Gilbert Miller. This film has Leslie Howard as a comedian doing a parody on Leslie Howard as a comedian. The rest of the film is a dull musical comedy without the music. Unless you are crazy about Leslie Howard, don't go to see this one.

The Friends of Mr. Sweeny (Warner Bros.): A more or less dull comedy with some good acting by Charles Ruggles who impersonates the Timid Soul. There is also a Big Bad Bolshevik in this one, frothing at the mouth with the usual Hollywood ideology.

Hat, Coat, and Glove (R.K.O.-Radio): Let the producers review it themselves: "The attorney for the defense KNEW his client was innocent . . . but he could PROVE he was guilty, with a HAT . . . a COAT . . . a GLOVE! He wanted him dead! . . . but fought for his life! . . . knew he was INNOCENT of murder; . . . but GUILTY of stealing the love of the one woman in the world he wanted!" It's a mystery, this one.

The Girl from Missouri (M.G.M.): A night-club hotsy-totsy (Jean Harlow) out to hook a rich man (Lionel Barrymore) meets his Don Juan son (Franchot Tone). She slaps him for thinking she was that kind of a girl and Franchot makes a face that screams of true-love-for-the-first-time-in-his-life. You can guess the rest. This film would have been called *Born to Be Kissed,* if it weren't for the Legion of Decency.

She Learned About Sailors (Fox): More propaganda for the Navy, with Alice Fay and Lew Ayres. One of the films awarded the "Seal of Purity" by the Production Code Administration of Will Hays' organization.

Between Ourselves

A NEW organization—Friends of THE NEW MASSES—is being formed. A meeting has been called for Thursday evening, August 23, at the Irving Plaza, 15th Street and Irving Place, to which all readers of THE NEW MASSES in New York, subscribers and newsstand buyers, are being invited. (Letters are being sent to the subscribers; this is an invitation to the others.) The speakers will be Clarence Hathaway, editor of The Daily Worker, and William Browder and Stanley Burnshaw, of THE NEW MASSES.

The first project planned for the Friends of THE NEW MASSES is a Forum, to be known as THE NEW MASSES Forum. Beginning with a meeting at the Irving Plaza on the third Sunday in September, Sept. 23, and continuing weekly throughout the Fall and Winter, THE NEW MASSES Forum will carry on discussions, debates, symposiums, and lectures —the exact form of each meeting to be determined by its subject matter—on the issues of the day, from a revolutionary viewpoint. Results attained in similar meetings in the past indicate a definite need for such a forum, and a widespread response is looked for.

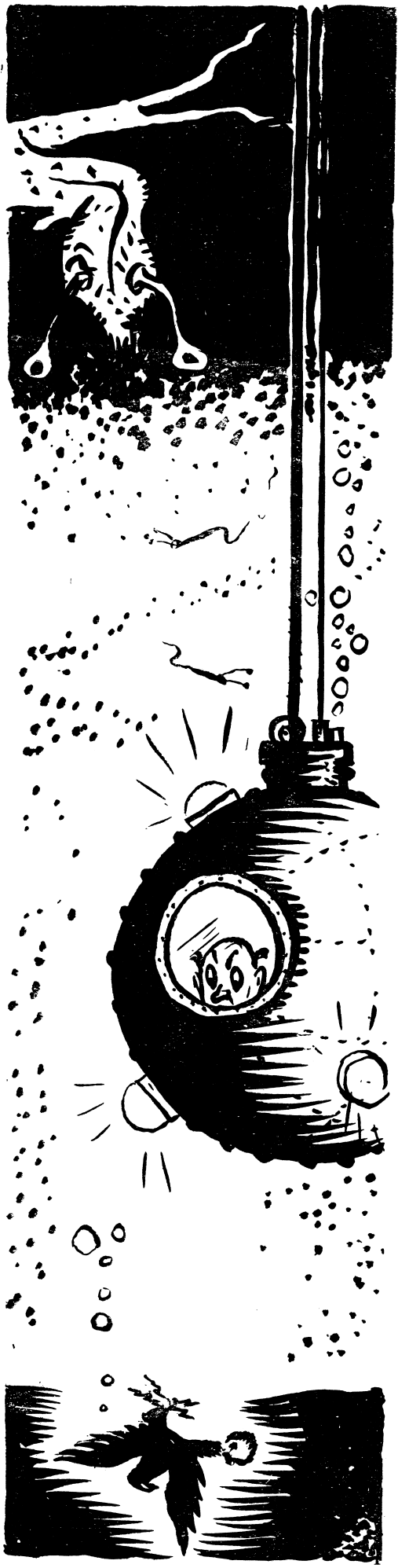
While Herndon is out on bail, his final freedom has by no means been achieved. He is temporarily free on $15,000 cash bond pending an appeal to the United States Supreme Court. Whether he will remain free depends upon the further development of the mass fight and support of the I. L. D. campaign to raise funds for the appeal for Herndon and the Scottsboro boys. Fifteen thousand dollars more is needed. One important step in the campaign will be a mass meeting in the Bronx Coliseum, Thursday, August 22—the anniversary of the killing of Sacco and Vanzetti. Meantime funds for the appeal of Angelo Herndon and the Scottsboro boys should be sent immediately to the International Labor Defense, 80 East 11th Street, New York City.

The poems by Isidor Schneider in this issue will appear in his book of verse, *Comrade-Mister,* to be published shortly by the Equinox Cooperative Press.

Samuel Putnam was the editor of *European Caravan,* which appeared a year ago. Among his translations is the definitive new edition of Rabelais, published half a dozen years back.

In a note in this column several weeks ago referring to Albert Halper, whose article on the post office substitute clerks we then published, it was erroneously stated that his next novel would deal with the post office. The novel deals with a foundry, and is being put out by the Viking Press.

A protest meeting against the terror in California and the persecution of writers and artists—the expulsion of Langston Hughes from Carmel, the banning of the John Reed Club in that town, the imprisonment of Tillie Lerner in San Francisco—will take place Friday, August 17, at 8.30 p. m., at John Reed Club headquarters, 430 Sixth Avenue. Among the speakers will be Heywood Broun; Milton Howard for the Daily Worker; Bernhard J. Stern and Orrick Johns for the John Reed Club; William Browder for THE NEW MASSES and Lawrence A. Wood for Pen and Hammer.



Philip Nesbit

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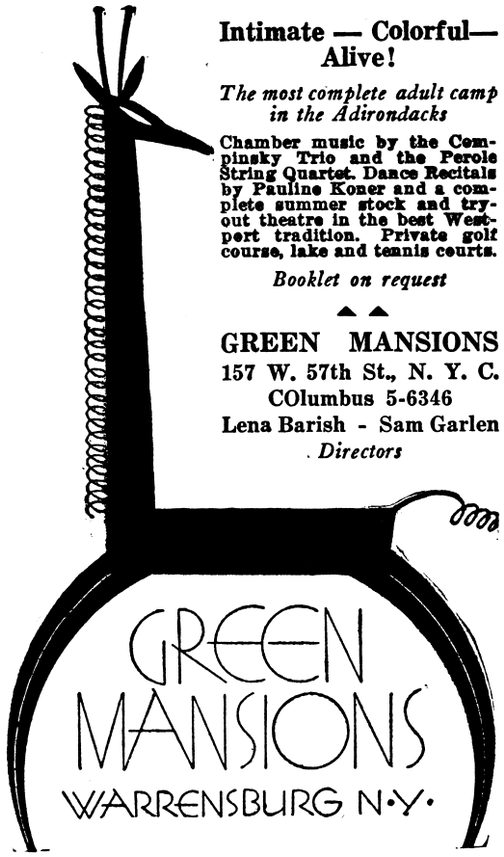

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