NEW MASSES

FEBRUARY 16, 1937 FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY

LITHOGRAPH BY HOWARD COOK

Eight New Poets

EDITED BY

S. Funaroff

Why Do They Confess?

A. B. Magil

The Trotsky Committee

Three Resignations

Lincoln and Negro Youth

An Editorial

BETWEEN OURSELVES

AS WE go to press, we receive an open letter, signed by some fifty writers, educators, artists, and social workers, warning the liberal members of the "American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky" that their association with that committee is being made use of for partisan political purposes. The letter points out that while the committee was ostensibly formed for the defense of certain principles of civil liberties, its present activities can be interpreted only as "political intervention in the internal affairs of the Soviet Union, with hostile intent." Significant of the anti-people's-front character of the Trotskyite program which the

"defense" committee is furthering is the strongly people's-front character of the list of signers of this open letter, which includes: Lillian D. Wald, Heywood Broun, Colonel Raymond Robbins, Max Lerner, Louis Fischer, Newton Arvin, Corliss Lamont, Gifford Cochran, James Waterman Wise, Mary Van Kleeck, Professor Robert S. Lynd, William Mangold, Reverend William B. Spofford, Theodore Dreiser, Bernard Smith, Dr. John A. Kingsbury, Lillian Hellman, Maxwell Stewart, and others.

The capitalist press, of course, took little noice of this declaration, which is not exactly surprising, in view of the field day of fabrication and distortion which the capitalist press, almost without exception, has been enjoying in connection with the Moscow trials and Trotsky. Which gives special point to the Brooklyn *Eagle's* intelligent editorial on Trotsky and the trials, which lack of space prevents us from quoting in full, but which read in part as follows:

"When Trotsky became a leader without a mass following they [his followers] accompanied him into spiritual exile and they have since maintained a running fire of commentary, criticism, and invective that has given them the appearance of being a much more influential group than they actually are.

"They have succeeded in making it appear that the issue between Stalin and Trotsky was a purely personal fight for power, when there is every reason to believe that Trotsky's group was voted down in innumerable deliberations of the governing body in Russia, even before Lenin's death. They have attempted to prove that Trotsky was Lenin's 'logical' successor, when an examination of Lenin's correspondence and writings for the twelve years before the Revolution of 1917 demonstrates that Lenin and Trotsky were rarely in agreement on revolutionary policy. And they have hailed Trotsky as a brilliant theoretician, despite the fact that before and since his exile he was demonstrated to have been wrong on many important issues of tactics and theory. The Stalinists, it would then seem, have not been forced to 'discredit' Trotsky; it was Trotsky who discredited himself.

"The Trotsky-Stalin quarrel is again paramount in the current Moscow trials, as it was during those that brought death to Zinoviev and Kamenev in 1936. Trotsky and his followers have been crying havoc and making accusations of falsification and frame-up in the face of evidence that seems damning in its conclusiveness. . . . "

What's What

CONTRIBUTORS John Howard Lawson, Archibald MacLeish, John L. Spivak, Albert Halper, and others are among those who send the following appeal:

"The League for Southern Labor wishes to add its voice to the many appeals for immediate relief for flood victims. None need and deserve our aid more in this emergency than those trade-union organizers active in the flood districts. It is to these men that the League has pledged its support. Their plight can best be understood in the light of a recent letter from Organizer Don West, which reads in part as follows: 'Especially hard hit are those in the poorer sections. So suddenly did the water descend on us that my wife and I were barely able to escape with the clothes we were wearing. We have done all we could to help, but it is pitifully discouraging to be among so many who will never see their homes again, and who can turn to no one for help.'

"Those who can please send clothing to Don West, 317 Cedar St., Lexington, and address all money to The League for Southern Labor, 113 West 57th St., N. Y."

Contributor John Howard Lawson also figures in the news this week in a very different connection. His play *Marching Song* opens next Wednesday, under the Theatre Union's auspices, but the NEW MASSES is scooping the town with a theater-party preview Monday evening, Feb. 15. An amazing thing about Lawson's play is that, although written last summer, it involves a sit-down strike in auto! Good seats can still be had through our office for the preview.

Who's Who

A. B. MAGIL, who has been a frequent contributor to our pages, is on the staff of the *Daily Worker*. . . . Frederick Wilson is a Washington journalist who makes his NEW MASSES debut this week. . . . Henry Cooper has contributed to our pages before. He is an authority on early American history. . . . Leonard Sparks is active in waterfront work, and has written and collaborated on several pamphlets, among them *How to Get Jobs in New York*. . . . This week's cover, by Howard Cook, is one of a forty-nine-print series of lithographs, woodcuts, and etchings offered by the American Artists Group. The lithograph by Mabel Dwight on page 15 and the aquatint by Harry Sternberg on page 23 are included in this series, as are works by William Gropper, Rockwell Kent, Louis Lozowick, and others, including other NEW MASSES contributors. The Group is "committed to the policy of democratic popular art," and the original, signed prints, because they are not artificially limited in number, can be sold at $2.75 each. . . . Howard Cook, by the way, is having a show of prints and drawings at the Weyhe Gallery till Feb. 27. . . . S. Funaroff, who edited the symposium of new poetry in this issue, was editor of *We Gather Strength*, the *Dynamo* Poet's Series, and has completed a book of poems called *Fire Sermon*. The eight new poets are a varied group. William Stephens edits a weekly newspaper in East Chicago, Ind., and is at work on a volume of verse to be called *Factory Models*. Irving Lightbown is a chemist in a rubber tire factory; this is his first published work. Richard Leekley is on the editorial staff of the National Farm Holiday *News*, and on *Mid-West*, the organ of the Midwest writers' congress; he is completing an allegorical verse play. Sidney Alexander is a former editor of the *Student Review;* he is at work on a biography of Jack London. A. T. Rosen in 1933 published privately a volume of his poetry called *Prolegomena*. Eunice Clark is a Vassar graduate who, with the poet Muriel Rukeyser, edited the review *Housatonic*. Robert Friend is twenty-three, a college graduate, and has worked as a laborer in C.C.C. camps for five months.

Flashbacks

THE Spanish People's Front received a clear majority at the election just one year ago. Shunning the polls on February 16 were the potent Anarchists, who now participate in the Caballero government. Voting against the newly formed People's Front on that day were the Basque Nationalists, now determined enemies of Franco. . . . Wall-eyed, unwavering Susan B. Anthony, long the leader of American women in the fight for suffrage, was born Feb. 15, 1820. . . . One-eyed Big Bill Haywood and two other officers of the Western Federation of Miners were kidnapped from Denver, Colo., Feb. 17, 1906, and carried to Idaho to face framed-up charges of murdering ex-Governor Steunenberg.

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Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification direct to us rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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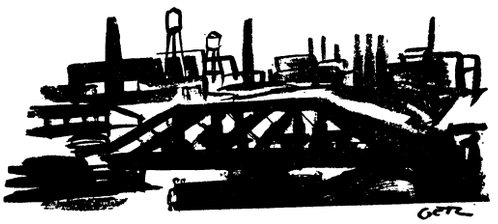


Why Do They Confess?

A comparison of the recent events in Moscow with those of the first great Soviet treason trials sheds some valuable light

By A. B. Magil

THE crimes and confessions of the Trotskyist conspirators in the recent Moscow trial bring to life again for me another Soviet trial which I attended as correspondent six years ago. The similarities in the testimony help one the better to understand the essentially parallel paths all counter-revolutionary activity against a workers' power must take. This first of the great Soviet treason trials will help to illuminate the last.

It was December 5, 1930. In the beautiful Hall of Columns in the House of the Trade Unions in Moscow, the eight leaders of the counter-revolutionary Industrial Party, eight distinguished men of science, were on trial for their lives. Prosecutor Krylenko had just demanded their execution on charges of sabotage, wrecking, treason, espionage, preparation of armed intervention by foreign powers. With me were newspapermen from all parts of the world. And, among them, the foremost journalist of the Soviet Union, Karl Radek.

"They were not strong enough to struggle with us face to face," wrote Radek of those counter-revolutionary criminals. "They could strike at us only by hiding in our institutions and, like the reptiles they are, striking from behind."

Six years later, and it is Radek who sits in the prisoners' dock. It is Radek who tells of sabotage, wrecking, treason, espionage, preparation of armed intervention by foreign powers. It is Radek whose death is demanded by the Soviet prosecutor, and on whom the eyes of millions of Soviet citizens are turned with hatred and indignation. And, ironically, now Professor Ramzin, chief of the conspirators in the 1930 trial, is a free man, his ten-year prison term (the death sentence had been commuted by the Soviet government) cut short a year ago because of good behavior and services to the Socialist state.

In this earlier trial, for Radek, Piatakov, and the others, substitute:

Leonid K. Ramzin, former director of the Thermo-Technical Institute and professor at the Moscow Technical High School.

Ivan A. Kalinnikov, former vice-chairman of the Industrial Section of the State Planning Commission of the U.S.S.R., professor at the Military Aviation Academy and at other technical schools.

Victor A. Laritchev, former member of the Presidium of the State Planning Commission and chairman of its Fuel Section.

Nikolai F. Charnovsky, former vice-chairman of the Engineering Advisory Committee of the Supreme Economic Council of the U.S.S.R., and professor at various technical schools.

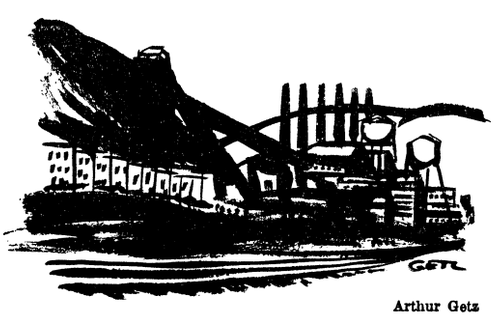
Alexander A. Fedotov, former chairman of the board of the Textile Scientific Institute.

Sergei V. Kuprianov, former technical director of the Textile Rationalization Department of the Supreme Economic Council.

Vladimir I. Ochkin, former secretary of the Thermo-Technical Institute and a leading official of the Scientific Research Section of the Supreme Economic Council.

Xenofont V. Sitnin, former engineer of the All-Union Textile Syndicate.

Ramzin, Kalinnikov, and the rest, at the instructions of the organized center of the émigré Russian capitalists, conspired with French and British imperialism, particularly the former, for the overthrow of the Soviet regime. The recent defendants, at the instructions of Trotsky, conspired with German fascism and militarist-imperialist Japan for the same end. In both cases, the conspirators organized large-scale wrecking, sabotage, and military espionage, and established contacts with foreign intelligence agents. In both cases, money was supplied by foreign imperialist circles—the Industrial Party getting it from the French and the Trotskyites from the Japanese. Ramzin betrayed science in the service of capitalist reaction; Radek, Piatakov, *et al.,* betrayed socialism and all that was revolutionary in their past. The latter, in one respect, "improved" over their predecessors by adding assassination to the arsenal of counter-revolution.



Arthur Getz

During the trial of the Industrial Party leaders, the capitalist press raised the cry of fraud and frame-up just as raucously as in the Zinoviev-Kamenev and Radek-Piatakov trials.

The New York *Times,* which in the recent trials has been far more temperate than in the earlier one, published such headlines as: "Deterding Charges Soviet Trial Cloaks 5-Year Plan Failure"; "Ramzin's Brother Calls Story False"; "British Call Trials by Reds a Frame-up"; "Soviet Trial Scored as Fake by Emigrés"; "Briton Says He Saw Troops Revolt in Moscow; Tells of OGPU 'Butchery' and Arrest of Rykoff."

P. J. Philip cabled the *Times* from Paris on November 29, 1930:

Inquiry which has been begun in Paris to ascertain whether there is any truth in the evidence and confessions in the Moscow trial of eight engineers is more and more leading toward proof that every statement made is absolutely without foundation, it is said, and that the accused have been forced either by torture or some clandestine arrangement to give completely false testimony.

Needless to say, Mr. Philip never bothered to cable the "proof." Neither has Trotsky revealed his "documentary" evidence after six months.

One voice was, however, missing from this anti-Soviet chorus in 1930—the voice of Trotsky, though Trotsky had already taken the road to counter-revolution and been deported from the Soviet Union. *The fact is that Trotsky accepted the 1930 trial as completely authentic.* Moreover, far from questioning the evidence, he cited it as confirming his own political views. In the January 1, 1931 issue of the *Militant,* organ of the American Trotskyites, he published an article on the Industrial Party trial in which he charged that "the Central Committee [of the Communist Party] was the unconscious political instrument of the

specialist saboteurs who, in turn, were the hired agents of the foreign imperialists and the Russian emigrant compradores."

A few months later, the leaders of another counter-revolutionary group, the Groman-Sukhanov Menshevik organization, were placed on trial in Moscow. American Trotskyites are particularly fond of pointing to the alleged contradictions of this trial as supporting their contentions that the more recent trials were frame-ups. *But Trotsky, in 1931, did not doubt the authenticity of the Menshevik trial; he accepted it at full face value in an article in the Militant of April 15, 1931:*

> The connections of the Menshviks with the wreckers, on one hand, and with the imperialist bourgeoisie, on the other, is not something unexpected. The discovery of this connection irrefutably confirmed by the avowal of the members of the Menshevik center has, however, a great significance, because it proves in a particularly striking manner that a policy, in spite of all the democratic abstractions with which one wants to cover it, inevitably is filled with a class content and embodies the interests of this class.

It is significant that Max Schachtman, the American Trotskyist, repudiates this view in his defense of the latest terrorists. Not only does the Schachtman pamphlet call the 1931 Menshevik trial a "frame-up" (p. 54), but it exonerates all the defendants in every trial of counter-revolutionaries since the 1927-8 Shakhty trial (p. 53). This would include the defendants at the Metro-Vickers trial, British engineers whose guilt was admitted by British journalists. In 1931, it will be noticed, Trotsky did not deny the defendants' guilt, "irrefutably confirmed by the *avowal* of the members of the Menshevik center."

ONLY those who, like myself, have attended Soviet trials, have seen the conspirators in the flesh, heard them "tell all," yet still evade and lie and squirm under the prosecutor's questioning, can appreciate the full insolent absurdity of any suggestion that all this has been prearranged. Apart from other considerations, the thing is psychologically impossible. On my return to the United States in 1931, I was asked repeatedly in the course of a lecture tour, was the trial on the level? My answer was: "If it was framed, those men are the greatest actors the world has ever known." Responsible correspondents, who covered the recent Trotskyite trials, have been equally positive. The only doubters seem to be those who have the advantage of omniscience several thousand miles away from Moscow—and in many cases the doubts are with malice aforethought. Nothing about these trials, in fact, is one-hundredth as incredible as the idea that they are faked.

Vividly I recall how Professor Leonid Konstantinovitch Ramzin, internationally known authority in the field of hydro-electric power, author of 150 books and pamphlets, delivered the most important lecture of his life in a monotone of short, clipped words. Forty-three years old, thin-lipped and pale, with a tuft of ash-blond hair bristling from his forehead, this was no mere professor, but a skilled organizer and man of strong will. In his youth, briefly a member of the Bolshevik wing of the Social-Democratic Party, he later became "non-political," and made a comfortable berth for himself under the old regime. The triumph of the October Revolution aroused in Ramzin, as it did in the other "non-political" specialists and engineers, all their latent class prejudices, and they engaged in petty sabotage. However, during the period of the New Economic Policy (NEP), beginning in 1921, most of them made their peace with the Soviet regime and entered its service. Ramzin declared that he became so strongly pro-Soviet that many of his old friends called him "Bolshevik" and refused to have anything to do with him. Yet, despite these Soviet sympathies, he managed somehow to be drawn into the whirlpool of counter-revolutionary activity and subsequently became the leader of the illegal Industrial Party.

Krylenko probed into this "somehow." Despite Ramzin's evasions, he finally laid bare the fact that what these gentlemen had supported in their "pro-Soviet" period was not the building of socialism, but the restoration of capitalism which they believed—erroneously, as it turned out—would be achieved gradually through the breathing spell that NEP gave the small capitalist elements in city and country. Later, when they realized that these calculations were wrong, they decided to "correct" their mistake through planned wrecking, sabotage, and the organization of armed intervention.

The trial revealed that every phase of these activities had been worked out in the greatest detail in consultation with the French General Staff. "France herself did not propose to intervene with military forces," Ramzin said. "At the most, she would furnish military instructors, perhaps the help of the naval and air fleets; the real military forces, which it was proposed should be used for the realization of intervention, would be those of Poland, Roumania, and the Baltic border states. Further hope was given of the use of the White emigrant military forces, that is, the Wrangel army which was maintained abroad."

The date for the military attack had been fixed for the summer of 1930, which, it was believed, would coincide with internal economic collapse. And the Great Emancipator had also been chosen: the white guard general, Lukomsky, who would give the affair a "Russian" character, and screen the role of foreign imperialism.

For their efforts in behalf of oppressed humanity, Poland and Roumania were to be rewarded by dividing up the western part of Soviet Ukraine, France would receive important concessions in the Caucasus—though De-

Aimé

"Mr. Bellyburton is the author of 'Russia from a Train Window.' He's going to explain the Moscow trials for us."

terding would probably have to get his cut of oil—what was left of the Ukraine and Georgia would be set up as "independent" states, and the whole of what had been the Soviet Union taken under the benevolent wing of French imperialism.

One of the factors that stimulated counter-revolutionary activity, Ramzin said, was "the firm belief in the imminence of intervention or of a counter-revolutionary coup d'état, which was taken very seriously in engineering circles, approximately in 1927." And believing intervention imminent, they decided to help it along.

Even so the Trotskyites. Asked by Prosecutor Vishinsky: "Were you for defeat [of the Soviet Union in war] in 1934?" Radek replied: "I considered defeat inevitable." "Were you for defeat?" Vishinsky persisted. "If I could have averted defeat, I would have been against it." But Vishinsky finally backed him up against the wall and wrung from Radek the admission that in 1934 he had accepted the entire line of Trotsky, which was *to work for the defeat of the Soviet Union in a fascist war to be launched in 1937.*

As one reads this shocking testimony and compares it with what Radek has written during the past six years—his brilliant interpretations of Soviet policy, his eulogies of Stalin—some may ask, how is it possible? How can anyone play such a Jekyll-Hyde role for any length of time?

Here again we can learn from the past that double dealing of this type is not unusual among the careerists of counter-revolution, though not everyone can bring to it the refined artistry of a Radek or a Piatakov. For example:

In 1928, the Shakhty trial brought to book a group of counter-revolutionary wreckers in the Soviet coal mining industry. The group worked under the direction of the Industrial Party, which at that time had not yet been uncovered. Two of the state prosecutors at that trial were the well-known engineers, Osadchi and Schein. Both were members of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviet government, and Osadchi was also vice-chairman of the State Planning Commission.

Two years later, at the trial of the eight leaders of the Industrial Party, I saw a broken old man brought before the court as a witness. It was Osadchi. Both he and Schein had, under instructions of the Central Committee of the Industrial Party, acted as prosecutors in the Shakhty trial in order to cover up the traces of the central counter-revolutionary organization!

The question is often asked, why do these people confess so readily? In the first place, it is a mistake to think that they confess readily. The Trotskyite plotters were in jail for months before they confessed. In the second place, their confessions are not as full-hearted as they pretend to be. In all these trials, revelations have been made under questioning in court which were concealed in the original confessions. And thirdly, even in court, despite protestations of repentance, there are attempts at evasion and concealment. In 1930, the witness Michailenko, brought in toward the end of the trial, revealed that the wreckers had ordered the draining of certain swamp lands along Soviet borders in order to facilitate the passage of foreign troops. Ramzin, confronted with this and other important facts which he had failed to mention, pleaded "lack of time."

Ben Yomen

And in the summer of 1936, Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Company "told all"—except what they knew of the Radek-Piatakov "Parallel Center," of wrecking, espionage, and the negotiations with Nazi and Japanese official circles.

"These people confess only to the extent that concealment is no longer possible," said Krylenko in his summary speech at the 1930 trial. "What they can conceal, they conceal."

And concerning the general question of confession, Krylenko had this to say:

> Why do they confess? I, for my part, ask, what else should they do? The hope that perhaps somehow, somebody will let them out of the mess is a poor hope indeed. Stubbornness, they know, will not help. And if they have the least vestige of conscience, it will prompt them to confess.
>
> If these people had the masses behind them, upon whom they could rely for support; if they had close intellectual and organizational connections to strengthen their political convictions, to arm them with a moral certainty in the justness of their cause, and develop in them a spirit of political firmness and integrity—that would be a different matter. But in this case? A wretched, isolated handful of men, working with the aid of foreign money, who have long since lost all authority and influence in the eyes of the masses, aye, who are even regarded by the masses as the enemy of the people—on what could this wretched little group count? That is why, when these representatives of a moribund class are caught redhanded, they confess. They confess because they have no alternative.

After the 1930 trial, Radek wrote the following in an article on Ramzin:

> Nobody in the world can be so naïve as to doubt for a moment that, in order to reëstablish the power of the landlords and capitalists, Professor Ramzin would have sacrificed not only the future of the country, not only all the people who would have perished in the struggle against intervention, but the hundreds of thousands, if not millions, who, if counter-revolution had won, would have paid with their lives for having been the first in the world to dare to build a world without capitalists and landlords.

One could think of more bitter words than these to write of Radek, who betrayed not only his country and socialism, but his incomparable literary art.

But let these words of Radek on the wrecker, traitor, and tool of foreign imperialism, Ramzin, be Radek's moral and political epitaph.

Grand Old Man of Spain

The president of the Spanish Red Aid is a living history of workers' struggles

By James Hawthorne

ISIDORO ACEVEDO, having just completed his seventieth year, was en route to an international youth congress in Paris. That was how he happened to be leaving Madrid. And I, who had been seeking transportation to Valencia for several days, had been assigned to the same automobile without knowing that I should have the good fortune of traveling with a one-man history of the Spanish labor movement. When we reached Valencia and stopped at the headquarters of the Spanish Red Aid (International Labor Defense), we were surrounded by people anxious to congratulate Acevedo on entering his eighth decade.

"Fifty years fighting for Spanish freedom, and not yet been President of the Republic," lamented one admirer.

"Ah, but watch the next fifty," countered Acevedo.

As president of the Spanish Red Aid, he demonstrates, in fact, a wealth of spirit and energy sufficient to carry him, if not another fifty years, at least far enough to see the promised land.

The father of Spanish socialism, and even trade-unionism was Pablo Iglesias, who died but a few years ago, although long retired from public activity. From Pablo Iglesias, daddy of them all, Isidoro Acevedo received the divine fire which he was to guard for more than half a century. He treasured a hundred letters penned to him by the old master over a long period, and guards a real love for the man who could not keep pace with his pupil.

In the Printers' Union of Madrid as far back as 1885, Acevedo collaborated with Iglesias, Garcia Quejido, Perezagua, and other names that call the roll of the founders of labor organization in the peninsula.

Isidoro Acevedo was born in Asturias. From Asturias, he brought the fighting quality of the hill-billy miners to the Madrid society of educators and reformists. Asturias is synonymous with revolutionary. Acevedo was always the revolutionary ferment in the Spanish trade-union movement, and in the Socialist Party which he entered in 1886, virtually as one of its founders. His first serious prison sentence was for *lèse majesté*. Ostensibly for that offense, really as a reward for success in solidifying the organization of the workers of Bilbao, he was sent to prison for eight years. A strong protest movement freed him in a year and a half, but very soon a military tribunal returned him to the same prison for a new term of six months.

In 1914, he returned to Asturias, native soil, to head the Asturian Federation of Workers' Societies and to edit its *Voice of the People*. In this key post he experienced the great revolutionary ferment of 1917. The war had sent prices sky high and at the same time created an artificial industrial progress in Spain. Acevedo journeyed to Madrid, where he persuaded the Executive Committee of the General Union of Workers, older and more powerful of the national trade-union centers, to launch a campaign pressing the government to relieve unemployment and living costs.

Bertrando Valloton

Isidoro Aceveda

In the heat of this campaign, a first great united front was reached. The campaign took a definitely anti-governmental, anti-monarchical direction. A national committee including representatives of both great trade-union centers was formed—the first joint action on a national scale with the Anarcho-Syndicalists. A twenty-four hour general strike grew into a revolutionary general strike. It lasted a week despite immediate use of civil guards, police, and some sections of the army against the workers. In Asturias, always tougher, the workers held out a month.

In 1921, the lessons of the Soviet had penetrated the far corners of the earth. The Spanish Socialist Party split. In his home in Madrid, Pablo Iglesias discussed the question over and over with Acevedo, but the latter was unable to convince him of the necessity of a positive position. Iglesias's prestige carried the majority. The minority, headed by Antonio Garcia Quejido, Virginia Gonzales, and Acevedo, founded the Communist Party. Acevedo returned to Asturias to head the Asturian Communist Federation and to edit *Aurora Roja* (*Red Dawn*).

Underground through the long dictatorship, in the open under the April Republic, Acevedo worked tirelessly until the collapse of the October 1934 movement. He published a novel, *Science and the Heart,* and then began what was to have been a series of novels portraying the lives of workers. One would have been devoted to the factory, another to the farm, and still another to the sea. In the press of revolutionary labor, only the first saw the light of day: *Los Topos* (*The Moles*). This figure of speech for the miners of Asturias became national slang, and in the book, Acevedo recreated not only the life of the heroic mountain diggers, but all the figures of her labor history.

THE COLLAPSE of the October movement meant a new persecution, of an intensity unknown even in earlier Spain. At the same time, however, a unity movement between various sections of the proletariat and of the workers as a whole with bourgeois democrats and petty-bourgeois republicans, made repression a failure. No organization worked as effectively in this period of determined resistance to oppression, as the International Red Aid. By its courage and capacity for labor, it defended the imprisoned victims of the Lerroux-Gil Robles repression, while building throughout the nation a morale of attack, of attack on the leftover monarchical institutions and bureaucrats responsible for the repression. At the head of the Red Aid was Acevedo.

President of the Red Aid is his post today. There he links the most advanced workers with the intellectuals, artists, traders, democrats, peasants, in a humanitarian labor and in auxiliary services for the front. Under his guidance, the Red Aid's 120,000 members of October 1934 were nearly 200,000 in July 1936, and over 300,000 now. The Red Aid has collected millions of pesetas for the front, supplied food, tobacco, blankets, warm clothes, a New Year's Eve package of luxuries. It sets up emergency hospitals, aids them, and renders assistance to the wounded. It has established hundreds of nurseries and evacuated thousands of women and children from threatened cities. The thousands who have been aided by the Socorro Rojo remember, and it is quite common for them to dedicate part of their salaries to the organization, thus enabling it to enlarge its field of operations.

This is the welter of activity directed by seventy-year-old Isidoro Acevedo. Perhaps in much less than another fifty years of activity, he will be needed for a high post in the new democratized Republic of Spain.

A Tribune of the People

The work of the LaFollette committee, now menaced by a lack of funds, has done much to show Americans how the world wags

By Frederick Wilson

IN DISCUSSING the Senate investigation of violations of civil liberties, it might be pertinent to recall at the outset one of the events in the Germany of January 1933 that led to the smuggling of Hitler into power.

Historians say that in those days the budget commission of the Reichstag, in the course of its examination of the public finances, came to the sums voted under previous cabinets for the relief of distressed landed property in the East Elbian districts, and began to unearth one juicy piece of scandal after another. The minister of agriculture dutifully did his best to suppress evidence and avoid giving names, but it became evident, from the temper of the commission, full revelation could not be delayed.

When it was learned that the political parties were going to demand a regular Reichstag commission of inquiry into the whole administration of the funds, drastic action was clearly necessary. For the Landbund there was but one remedy, Hitler, for with Hitler there would be no Reichstag and no opposition, and so no inquiry. Consequently, it was the Landbund, largely, that prevailed upon President Paul von Hindenburg to swallow his dislike of the Austrian housepainter and call upon him to form a cabinet.

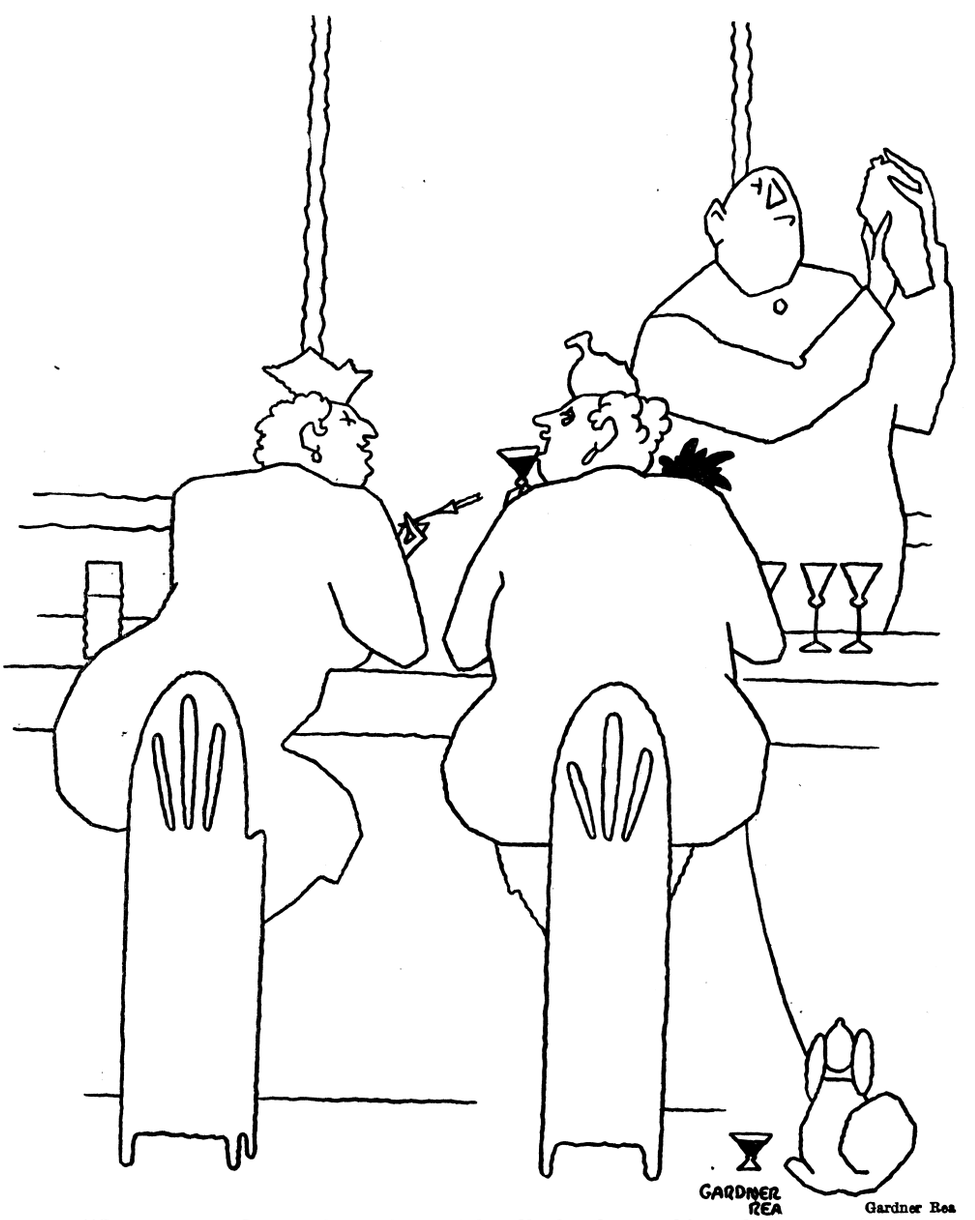
Without pressing the analogy too closely, it might be noted that a somewhat similar situation exists here. The LaFollette committee has, since last April, been examining the acts of industry in relation to the rights of workers to organize, their right to act and think in accordance with the concepts of free men as outlined in the constitution of the United States. In the course of its examination, the committee has found that numerous agencies exist, at the beck and call of industry, to thwart the exercise of those rights. It has examined the character of these agencies and found them composed of criminals and unscrupulous men ready to commit any act for an industry ready to pay.

The committee, so far, has confined its investigation to the Pinkerton Agency, the Railway Audit & Inspection Co., the National Corporation Service, the National Metal Trades Association, Corporations Auxiliary, Lake Erie Chemical Co., Manville Manufacturing Co., and a preliminary peek at U. S. Steel's subsidiary, the Tennessee Coal & Iron Co. in Alabama.

At this writing, the committee has just ventured into the automobile industry. It has under subpœna officials of the General Motors Corp., and it expects to ask these officials to explain, and justify if they can, the use by General Motors of four industrial espionage agencies, the Pinkertons, Corporations Auxiliary, Railway Audit & Inspection, and a fourth local outfit. The committee intends further to examine thoroughly the efforts of the corporation to defeat unionization in the auto industry by hearing testimony from union officials, from exposed labor spies, and from its own investigators.

At this writing, too, an undercover battle is proceeding in the United States Senate to choke the LaFollette inquiry.

Expenses for Senatorial committees are paid from the contingent fund of the Senate. Also paid from this fund are the routine expenses of the Senate, such as telephones, stationery, drinking water, and spittoons for the cloakroom. Senator Alva B. Adams (D., Col.), chairman of the subcommittee of the committee on appropriations concerned with the contingent fund, has recommended an appropriation of $125,000. With this sum it is proposed to pay the expenses of the LaFollette committee, of the Wheeler committee currently engaged in showing how Wall Street owns and mismanages the nation's railroads, the McAdoo investigation of bankruptcies and receiverships, and any other investigation that



Gardner Rea

"Sometimes I wonder why, with all the log cabins there are in America, we haven't had more Lincolns."

the Senate may deem desirable this session.

The LaFollette committee estimates its need at $50,000, aside from the borrowed personnel which is paid from other funds. The last convention of the American Federation of Labor voted to press for an appropriation of $200,000 for the LaFollette committee, but its political power is apparently at low ebb, for the Senate committee on appropriations has agreed, and so recommended to the Senate, that $125,000 is sufficient for the contingent fund.

It might be pointed out that on a purely practical basis, the LaFollette committee has already more than paid for itself. It started life with a $15,000 appropriation. In the course of its inquiry into the operation of various detective firms, it has discovered one agency withholding taxes due the U. S. Treasury. Those taxes amounted to approximately $20,000, or more than $5,000 in excess of the original cost of the entire investigation.

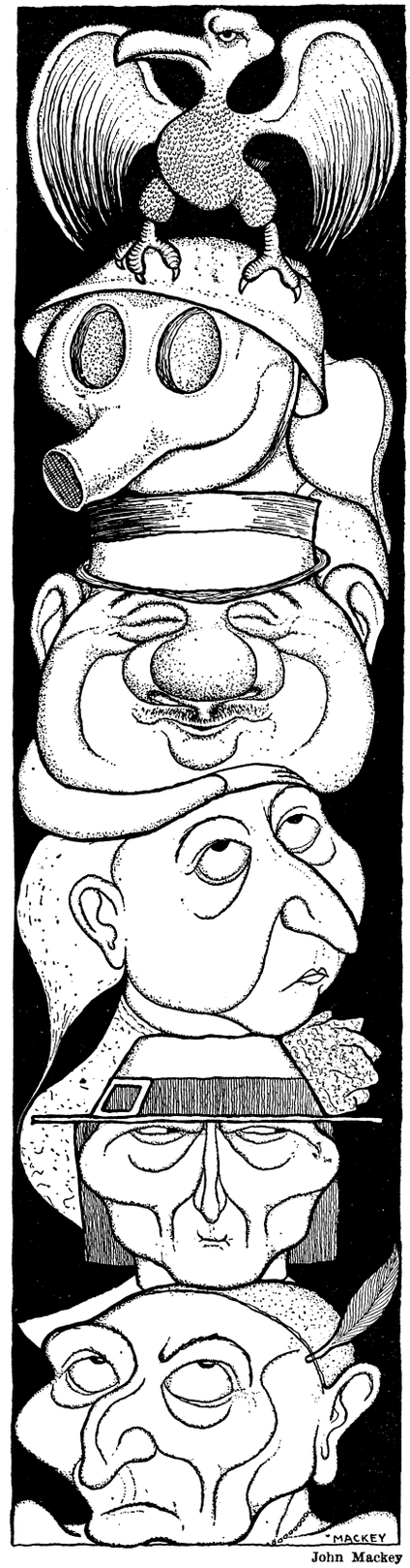
Clearly, it is not the cost of the LaFollette investigation that frightens the forces of Reaction into their battle against it and similar exposés. It is the thought of being stripped bare before the American workers, and revealed in their true role as despots unhampered by constitutional provisions for freedom, that moves them into desperate struggle.

Already this administration has exposed too much of industry's dirty linen. It has investigated, with Ferdinand Pecora, the practices of Wall Street in mulcting the people of their money. It has moved towards an evaluation of the munitions industry by opening the light of day on that industry's actions in drawing a nation into war. It has destroyed the myth of the American Telephone & Telegraph Co. as "a good corporation," it has shown the forces behind the lobbies that influence legislation, it is investigating the financing of railroads with the nation's money for the benefit of the Morgan group, and it has exposed the propaganda practices of the public utilities.

Now the LaFollette committee is moving in. Broadly, it is awakening the interest of the American people in civil liberties. By its very existence, the committee notes that civil rights in the United States have fallen into such a state of disrepair that it is necessary to investigate to discover their whereabouts. The committee is telling to millions what only thousands knew, that behind the abrogation of civil rights is the mailed fist of corporate might. It is also paying a tribute to the union men and women of the country, who have been able to make important gains despite the spies and strikebreakers that serve as the handmaiden of industry.

Specifically, as a result of the committee's work, the nation knows that Dent Williams, Walter J. Hanna, and James Leslie participated in the flogging of Joseph Gelders, southern representative of the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners. The nation knows further that Williams and Hanna are members of the Alabama National Guard, that Hanna maintains an unlisted telephone in the offices of the Tennessee Coal & Iron Co., and that because "T.C.I. owns about fifteen-sixteenths of the county," the assailants of Joseph Gelders walk unmolested and unashamed.

The nation, too, has learned of the methods used by the employers' own agency, the National Metal Trades Association. Evidence and testimony has shown how this group of employers banded together to fight unions with spies, strikebreakers, and coercion as their weapons. To such a group, dominating the metal-trades industry, even a company-unionist like Gerard Swope is a menace to be cast from their society, according to letters from its files.



John Mackey

In its findings on the Pinkerton agency, the committee has shown up the intolerance of Reaction. Blazoned for all to read is the testimony of Joseph Littlejohn, superintendent of the Pinkerton Atlanta office. "As a matter of fact, Mr. Littlejohn," Senator LaFollette asked, "do you not regard, and do you not so characterize, activity on the part of workers to organize into independent unions as communistic or radical activity?"

"Well, it is radical until we find out different, sir," Littlejohn replied. Goebbels himself could have answered no better.

Perhaps even more important to labor and more damaging to industry than the sensational revelations, is the practical knowledge made available to unions by the committee. Names of union spies for the National Metal Trades Association have been made public, and the International Association of Machinists is busy cleaning house.

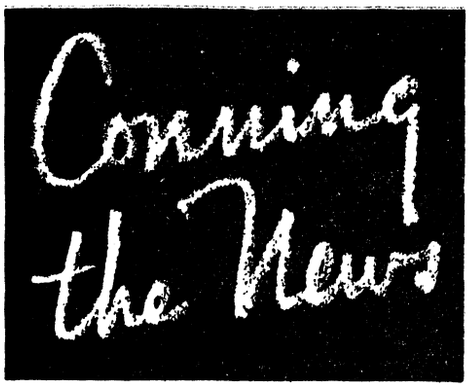
"Chowderhead" Cohen's usefulness has been greatly impaired, as has the utility of George F. Ruck, head of the H. C. Frick secret service; E. J. McDade, "hooker" for Railway Audit & Inspection; Jerry (alias Jesse) Cooper, fink for Railway Audit & Inspection; W. H. Gray, business solicitor for R.A.&I., and many another fink whose picture has gone the round.

Names of operatives of National Corporation Service, and their locations, have also been made public, and union men know where to look for the stoolpigeons. Numerous undercover operatives in the auto industry have been exposed by the investigators.

Union men, too, know more now about how stoolpigeons work. They know that when a new man comes into the maintenance department of an auto plant, able to wander through the plant at will and talk with whom he pleases, he is to be watched closely, for he is likely to be reporting to some detective agency or direct to the boss. Workers' wives have learned that when their men are on strike, and sympathetic persons come to visit and suggest that the strike is foolhardy and useless suffering, those persons are doing "missionary work" for a strikebreaking agency.

Equipped with such information, and equipped with the knowledge that no matter how large the army of stoolpigeons and strikebreakers facing them, unions can, by solidarity and singleness of purpose, achieve expanding goals; workers will become increasingly demanding of their rights. Industry will find it ever harder to crack the whip and extract the profits.

Capitalism in the United States is no longer expanding. Demands for decent wages and better conditions are met with less grace. Industry and capital must retain every weapon, even stoolpigeons and strikebreakers, in order to pile up profits. To what extent the present administration is a tool of industry and capital, as opposed to the workers, will be reflected more clearly in the fate of the LaFollette committee, now hanging in the balance.



Covering the events of the week ending February 8

"IN this one hundred and sixty-first year of the independence of the United States, President Roosevelt has brought forward a proposal which, if enacted into law, would end the American state as it has existed throughout the long years of its life." In these frenzied words the New York *Herald Tribune,* journalistic ace of the Republican Party, crystallized the response of America's reactionary forces to a presidential proposal for reform in the federal judiciary.

In cold fact, Roosevelt did not come to grips with the fundamental question of curbing the powers of the Supreme Court; he did not ask for an amendment or for a law that would permanently clarify the foggy relationship between Congress and the Court, and certainly he advocated nothing like outright defiance of the "nine old men," such as his hero Andrew Jackson had resorted to more than a century ago. Where Roosevelt's proposals touched the Supreme Court, they called merely for a voluntary retirement of the justices on reaching the age of seventy. Should a judge decide against retiring, the President would have the power to appoint a new member to the Court, presumably to lighten the burden of work, but in no case would the Court's membership be permitted to exceed fifteen. In immediate effect, of course, the law would enable Roosevelt to "pack" the present Court with men sympathetic to his plans and thus safeguard reënacted New Deal legislation.

The scheme was characteristically Rooseveltian. The Court had rendered impossible the promulgation of any genuine federal program of social legislation, however mild. Progressives wanted to make it clear once and for all that the Court had no such power under the Constitution. Reactionaries were all for treating the Court as something inviolate and beyond the control of the President, Congress, or the people. Roosevelt was unwilling to choose between these two views. He would not get at the root of the matter and fight to change this aspect of the American state, nor would he, on the other hand, stand by and see his own program thwarted by the Court. Hence, the middle course.

DETERMINED to continue the struggle to end for all time the autocratic power of the Court, progressive forces in general were not opposed to the Roosevelt move. Fully aware that it did not "represent any basic attack on the fundamental tyranny of the Supreme Court," the Communist *Daily Worker* pointed out that "Roosevelt's plan, timid and limited as it is, is in the direction of the overwhelming mandate of the American people."

Such doubt as there may have been on this score must almost instantaneously have been dispelled by a barrage of hysteric denunciation from precisely the quarters that had ranted against the New Deal throughout the election campaign of last fall. "It is the most damnable thing that has occurred since the government was founded," cried Liberty Leaguer James A. Reed. And from his fellow-Leaguer Bainbridge Colby, in New York, came the echo: "It is a sad and shameful day in the history of the United States." Such a questionable guardian of democracy as Silas H. Strawn, former president of the United States Chamber of Commerce, found the proposal "a short-cut to dictatorship," and added, "I don't believe the people will stand for it." Stock prices dropped sharply, and Representative Snell, of New York, floor leader for the G. O. P., proclaimed, "It is pretty near the beginning of the end of everything."

Almost drowned out by the sensational Court proposal was another message submitted to Congress by the President earlier in the week. This was a request for a six-year public-works program, to cost something like five billion dollars, and to serve as a sort of reservoir of "selected projects which can be utilized in periods of economic depression." Seemingly an ambitious program, the plan, based on a report of the National Resources Committee, would provide far less for flood control than was called for in the recommendations of the Mississippi Valley Committee in 1934. Nevertheless, progressives were disposed to push the proposal as a concrete step in the right direction.

With the floodwaters receding along the Ohio, and seemingly checked in the lower Mississippi by a far-flung system of levees, the cities emerging from water began the long and tedious job of digging out and getting back to normal activity. The flood's toll continued to rise slowly, with an occasional flood-induced disaster (such as an explosion in Louisville) swelling the total of deaths. The real tragedy —the aftermath of floods—came to the fore, as people completely penniless and homeless sought to continue life while federal and state relief plans underwent long and laborious discussion. Hope of immediate adequate relief was still far distant; even the Red Cross admitted that it was "providing for the needs" of only half of the million people left destitute.

Chief Justice—Retirement or help?

CONGRESS presented a low record of accomplishment for the week. The Senate approved with few changes the shamefully low deficiency relief appropriation, already passed by the House, despite the protest of Senators Bailey (D., N. C.) and Vandenberg (R., Mich.), who regarded the sum as much too high. Such federal responsibility for relief, said Bailey, must lead to "a national socialism that will repudiate the republic." Senator Bone (D., Wash.) led a gallant attempt to raise the amount to $1,200,000,000, in keeping with the demands of the Workers' Alliance. Congress, said Bone, was "playing with dynamite," and he reminded his colleagues that vast numbers of unemployed were roaming the streets of our cities, "unable to get jobs anywhere." In one concrete respect, the Senate measure was an improvement over that of the House. It eliminated the vicious House proposal that would prevent executive departments from lending their employees to Congressional investigating committees, such as the LaFollette subcommittee now investigating labor espionage and violations of civil liberties (see p. 7).

Neutrality and war-time emergency measures continued to hold a major spotlight on Capitol Hill as hearings were started before the House Military Affairs Committee on the Sheppard-Hill bill, one of several measures designed ostensibly to "take the profits out of war." Testifying before the committee, Bernard M. Baruch, chairman of the War Industries Board during the World War, admitted that the bill, known also as the Industrial Mobilization Plan, would mean a curb on wages during war time and might easily enable the President to establish a dictatorship not only during an actual war period but even in peace time. Complete government control over labor and industry might be established, under the terms of the bill, whenever Congress declared "the existence of an emergency due to the imminence of war." The American League Against War and Fascism characterized the measure as "an anti-labor plan throughout."

The intense labor struggle at Flint reëchoed in the Senate chamber when Senator Neely (D., W. Va.) introduced a resolution calling for a congressional investigation of General Motors. The Neely probe would examine the financial structure of the du Pont-Sloan auto empire and ascertain whether it sought "through propaganda or expenditure of money to influence or control public opinion, legislation, administrative action, or elections."

The auto strike situation became tense

during the week as General Motors harnessed all its powers against the strikers and the United Automobile Workers. C. I. O. chief John L. Lewis was on the scene in Detroit, where a series of conferences between auto and company heads failed to make much progress. With Alfred P. Sloan and William S. Knudsen on one side of the conference table, and Lewis, John Brophy of C. I. O., Homer Martin, Wyndham Mortimer, and union attorney Lee Pressman on the other, talks continued all week, but General Motors refused to budge from its anti-union stand. Counting on the courts, police, and company thugs to evict sit-down strikers from their Flint plants, corporation offiicals refused to recognize the auto union as sole bargaining agency for the workers, contending that the U. A. W. did not represent "all of our employees." To which union vice-president Wyndham Mortimer replied that U. A. W. represented 90 to 100 percent of General Motors workers.

Acting in accord with Sloan's wishes, Circuit Judge Paul Vincent Gadola granted General Motors an injunction ordering strikers to evacuate held plants and providing for a $15,000,000 fine against them and their union if they failed to heed the order. Gadola also forbade picketing of plants, "loitering" in near-by streets, and interference of any kind with scabs. When informed of the court order by corpulent Sheriff Thomas Wolcott, strikers laughed him down as they had done a month before when he had read them Judge Black's first injunction. Execution of the court order was delayed by Governor Murphy, however, as the conferees remained deadlocked. Acting under President Roosevelt's authorization, the governor sought a compromise whereby General Motors would recognize the union in return for the evacuation of plants held by strikers. An additional point in Murphy's plan decreed that General Motors would not attempt to reoccupy the plants until a mutually satisfactory agreement had been reached. Meanwhile, with the plants still solidly held by strikers, long after the deadline set by Judge Gadola's evacuation order, heavily armed troops surrounded the Flint auto buildings, giving them the appearance of a besieged city.

WHILE the auto strike in Michigan hit its point of greatest tension, another conflict, the ninety-nine-day strike of maritime workers on the West Coast, ended with a decided victory for the seamen. Effectiveness of the ship strike was attested to by Assistant Secretary of Labor Edward F. McGrady's estimate that the three-month conflict had caused a loss to shipowners of approximately $700,000,000. Longshoremen, stewards, firemen, sailors, and cooks won their basic demand —control of hiring halls. In addition, terms of settlement included provisions for higher wages, better working conditions, and a maximum working day of eight hours. In eastern and gulf ports, striking seamen terminated their battle by hailing as a victory the opportunity to conduct honest district elections of the I. S. U., through the facilities of the National Labor Relations Board.

Governor Murphy—Seeker after peace

Anti-union activities of the week reached a peak point when the American Newspaper Publishers' Association, in a brief filed before the Supreme Court, supported the Associated Press in its attack on the American Newspaper Guild and the constitutionality of the Wagner Labor Relations Act. The A. N. P. A., representing 425 publishers, insisted that freedom of the press grants publishers the freedom to refuse to bargain with the union of editorial employees and to fire union men at will. "When . . . a news writer or editor," the brief declared, "by reason of external affiliations, influences, or activities, becomes unsuited for his employment, no agency of the government has the power or can be endowed with the power by Congress to interfere with the exercise of that judgment."

IN the Spanish struggle, insurgent troops entered Malaga, important southeastern seaport, in what appeared to represent less a conquest than an evacuation. No large-scale battle was fought for possession of the port. The loyalists seemed to be pursuing a policy of fighting only when there existed a good chance of victory. In the case of Malaga, reinforcement and rear-guard action was impossible owing to isolation of the port from the main center of government influence. The rebel victory was considered important, though not decisive. Control of the city gave the insurgents a base from which to attack Valencia by land and sea, as well as complete domination of the southern Mediterranean.

The Rebel force against Malaga was reported composed of 20,000 Italian troops, several thousand Germans, and 1,000 Moors, aided by 100 Italian tanks, and commanded by German officers aboard the Nazi battleship *Admiral Graf Spee*. It was feared, and expected, that the foreign army of occupation in Malaga would make a bloody holiday of death to all loyalist suspects. An unconfirmed report that General Emilio Kleber, hero of the Madrid defense, had been captured was ground for fear of a further blow to the loyalist cause resulting from the Malaga defeat.

The critical stage of the Spanish struggle forced the Madrid defense junta, on which is represented every anti-fascist party—Anarchist, Socialist, Communist, and Republican—to end the lenient treatment accorded the Trotskyist Workers' Party of Marxist Unity (P. O. U. M.). After months of sabotage and treachery by the P. O. U. M., the defense junta finally ordered the Trotsky faction's radio station and newspaper confiscated and its headquarters padlocked. Three P. O. U. M. columns on the Aragon front that had consistently deserted their key positions were disbanded by the Catalan authorities, and their Trotskyist commanders dismissed. The P. O. U. M. papers responded by savagely attacking the People's Front, assailing the Soviet Union, first for lack of support and then for dominating the whole situation, and giving quotable copy to every fascist paper in Spain.

Another setback for Trotsky came in the form of important defections from the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky. Mauritz A. Hallgren, Sam Jaffe, Jacob Billikopf, Paul Ward, and Le Roy Bowman all resigned in the same week, and Lewis Gannett declared that his name had been used by the committee despite his explicit and repeated objection.

AN interesting sidelight on the Moscow trials of the Trotskyist terrorists was revealed by the *Week*, British source of confidential information. Whitehall, it was reported, feared how much the defendants would talk, for "one of the prisoners was active on behalf of the British government; it was, in fact, the surprisingly cordial relations between certain British government officials and one who was still, as the *Star* puts it, 'Marxist and Red' that first aroused the suspicions of the Soviet government and led to the discovery of the Trotskyist 'parallel center.'" The usual round of Warsaw and Riga dispatches on "riots in Moscow streets" and "a falling out of important Soviet leaders" appeared in the American press, but older heads remembered spurious dispatches following previous terrorist trials which put the current crop to shame.

Six Japanese warships outside Shanghai harbor led to reports of another great Japanese invasion of China. A Japanese spokesman at Peiping declared that the failure of the Chinese government to suppress the Communists made the Japanese militarists feel that they were "faced with the necessity of taking independent measures." Conflicting accounts made it difficult to establish the true status of the reported compromise reached between the Chinese government, the Shensi rebels, and the Communists. It was variously reported that spheres of influence in Shensi and Kansu had been agreed upon for all three parties concerned, that government troops had been fighting Communists, that the Communists had retreated to the Kansu mountains, and that important officers of Chang Hsueh-liang's former troops had been assassinated by disaffected troops.

EIGHT NEW POETS

The group of poems on this and the following two pages is indicative of the extent to which the social crisis and the agitation for a literature with social emphasis and proletarian bias has permeated the general literary scene and influenced a new group of writers. A number of them have no connections with working-class organizations, but their sympathies are definitely with the proletariat. This symposium is presented with the hope it will stimulate a new interest in and encourage a social poetry.—S. F.

Edited by S. Funaroff

Winter Landscape

Late risen, the winter sun glides like a thief
all day behind gray clouds that mask the sky;
wind shakes bare twigs, blows tattered scrap and leaf;
the sun still hides and never shows his eye.

His presence in those covering clouds is known
by this rain-colored light in the still air—
not light, but pallid rumors of a sun
that seems almost as if it were not there.

The day is hardly lighter than the smoke
puffed from those blunt switch-engines in the yards
where cold boys, loading gunnysacks with coke,
run faster than the stumbling railroad guards.

They dodge down alleys, over cracked cement,
hard haven to their flying urchin feet,
knowing that fire is winter's element,
which even in hovel stoves means food and heat.

WILLIAM STEPHENS.

Monday Morning

Sunday, accustomed holyday, is over: Christ's
body and blood have been eaten and drunk, and,
buried eight hours in the tomb of sleep, are now
remembered, but put aside for practical reasons.
Let no hand dislodge the stone from the sepulcher.

Daily as lysolwater splashed on cement floors,
to be spattered around by mops, swept out by brooms,
the sun spills its usual light on weekday streets
inhabited, this early, only by these equivocal
few men who have just emerged from the town jail.

Monday is better than Sunday: doors are unlocked,
behind which, until customers come, baker and grocer
may be persuaded to give Saturday's stale loaves,
bacon-ends, and perhaps a handful of ground coffee.
Another meal, in this man's world, is another meal.

Stirred in tincans or dented pans under the shadows
in oaktree jungles beside the railroad's right-of-way,
strong coffee is almost as good as lysol is, to wash
the ache from the bones, shivers
from the mind that knows
how hard cement floors will be
in any man's jail

until hands dislodge the stone
from the sepulcher.

WILLIAM STEPHENS.

Dirge for the Fearsome

No, it is not their fault:
How could they be otherwise?
Buried in the woodpulp vault,
Facing the martyred eyes,
Pacing the circular floor,
Sitting in a sad damp house,
Listening for a closed door,
Bleeding at the bite of a mouse.
Surely they are not to blame.
They will be punished for timidity,
They will die for their silly shame,
For their weak eyes' humidity;
They will rot for trembling fingers
That dared not turn the key in the lock;
Not one of them will linger
At the crow of the cock.
Forgive them the nervous sneer
And cheek's high angry flush,
Leave them alone with their fear
Whom the stone is loosened to crush.
Over them ghosts have marched
Times when they should have slept
And their voice is harsh
Choking with tears unwept.
No, they could not be otherwise:
Tender them your heart's pity,
Facing the martyred eyes,
Pacing the twilit city.

EUNICE CLARK.

Poem in the Pressroom

You are printing presses.
You work ceaselessly with steel claws
And tight electric muscle.
You make good sense, you are ruthless and virtuous.
I will be conducted as you are conducted
By necessity, by raw material,
By the product that is to be perfected,
By the annual estimate of the planners.
I will go hummingly in two shifts,
Fast for the dial turned right,
Slow for the dial turned left.
I will consume oil and grease.
I will march scattering steel dust with an ugly
Clank:

Beautiful in blackness,
Implacable in iron,
Flexible with axles.

EUNICE CLARK.

"Fired!"

Beneath you
The elevator drops like a gallows trap
And jerks the future out of place.
Your last day's work is done.
Exploding the dauntless streets,
Revolving doors shoot back the sun.
Yet, nothing is changed; precise concrete,
Neat buildings, the summer stock display,
The pushcart on the corner, nothing,
Except your thin hair's sudden gray,
Your white hands dangling at your sides.

Outside,
The streets crowd in, they rush together,
Then suddenly are wide.
Before the gutter has been spanned, you wait,
Vacuous and camera-eyed.

And you still hear
Trapped in your shapeless memory,
(It always will be heard!)
The brass-bell clanging of that final word.

RAPHAEL HAYES.

Phyllis and Corydon

Like young eaglets from their eyrie
Test their scarce-acquainted wings,
So beneath the broken table
Corydon to Phyllis brings

A broken mirror and a toy
Discarded in a garbage can.
Daddy brought it home one evening,
Daddy is a working man.

Earth beneath their hooded talons,
Monarchs of the world they see,
Corydon is twenty-seven,
Phyllis now is twenty-three.

Married comrades are so happy,
Two as one they bed and bathe,
Phyllis works all day at weaving,
Night finds Corydon at lathe.

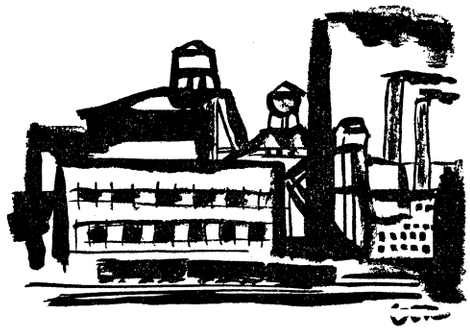
Earth sinks slow in sunset shadow;
Eagles shine in sun's last ray,
Sailing home to sheltered eyrie:
Peace and rest at shut of day.

Weary, weary, never finding
Peace they thought would shun the grave,
Corydon too old at forty,
Phyllis wonders who's the knave,

Wonders who, with wrinkled milk-paps,
Who has shrunk her child's lame leg,
Who has set her daughter whoring,
Who has made her husband beg.

Lonely, fierce, the dying eagle
Screams defiance to the sky.
Corydon spits bloody phlegm, and
Crawls behind a wall to die.

IRVING LIGHTBOWN.



Meaning

These lips hard on your lips to kiss the world
away, and in each other's eyes to read
each night a meaning. Each night beyond drawn blinds
the panicky streets between the oblong tenements
run to the black river. White flares search
the blind sky from the topmost towers in a wide arc,
swing out, swing back. What do they hope to find?

What do we hope to find? The lonely trains
rattle along the tracks long after day is over.
And we renew ourselves, seek to cast off
the world: again these kisses and these circling
arms, our selves a centre while the earth
wheels round, leaks in with roar of midnight trains
dying in distance, fainter and fainter heard,
and steady movements of the solemn clock
ticking towards death.

Light under the shades,
footsteps on the stair, voices in the hall
defeat our love. The moment like a wave
breaks upon the grimy shores of morning,
and we are stranded facing another day.
This love is solitary that will die this death,
it weeps on your breast, gathers loneliness
of all men who at the self-same hour
lying behind dark shades in a rotting house
shut out the light of history, shut out that love
which giving of itself gives to itself,
creates new worlds. That is our meaning,
and when I'll read it in the eyes of men,
sharing their lives with them, our purpose one,
I'll read it clear in yours.

ROBERT FRIEND.

Death of Barbusse

Suspecting my equals of some harm to myself,
of sloth, of dabbling in self-praise,
I watch them live their biographies with care.
While I recall but those finest of our shape:
alive men patient for their spirits' triumph,
Frank Wright, Orozco, Yeats, and this dead,
replenishing our ground.

My desires, a seaman's charts unrolled,
are marred by errors, uncertain data,
show dry islands, bays false to shipping.
See, here, with wide made lines these great
draw journeys; are proud of such craft;
mean this for whoever reads their love,
and is urged by it.

RICHARD LEEKLEY.

Sonnet

The living soul is nailed upon a graph
and money bends the index toward despair
but, cushioned soft, our half-hog humans laugh
the child's way, ego's—their private joy sole care.
And still they throw as gypsies do a card,
staking the world come fortune lapse or thrive;
still pitch coins to a ghetto-ghost in the yard;
still yap, "Stay yoked!" and still, "Be glad alive!"
Here's paradox, puffed to your size: reject your class,
parcel your pity off for a fool's iota,
fatten yourself like a pet bug under glass,
live for yourself and lo! death's sure your quota!
But death damned more, to end as fascist meat,
hung like a butchered rabbit by your feet.

A. T. ROSEN.

Intellectual to Worker

Here, comrade, this is fine . . . so sit right there
across the table and let's talk this straight . . .
I see that same sneer on your face I know so well,
as well as I know myself, my mirror says;
which perplexes me and makes me somewhat sad,
for the time for sneering's dead—you know that well,
and so do I . . . and yet we still persist
in spinning the old orbit like a moon
rotating death-pocked, ghastly, and no use . . .
Perhaps some coffee and a smoke or two
may get us yet to see things eye to eye.

You are a worker, true, and as for me—
look at my hands, the fingers are all there
and, unlike yours, they're none the worse for wear;
one gets no callous turning leaves of books
although a callous may grow thick on top
inside the head, a curio-shop of death
and a black deep well . . . and yet the skin is white,
and I'm willing to bet the palm you shook just now
felt like no turtle's back, caked hard and cut,
like yours to mine, and that's your badge and pride . . .

Well, I wear no leather apron; the steel I forge
can't even be seen and won't melt in a torch;
and though you'll smile perhaps at what I say
and silent match my thin arm with your huge;
believe me, I've sweat too, and my back's ached
to chase a beam of mind around the world,
to hold it squirming in a trap of words
as hard as steel . . . and then a snap! and gone!

I know . . . to you that's spider-web so thin,
a trillion strands of it twirled cable-wise
won't hold the bridge one second that I walk,
and spill me in a hopeless flood below . . .
but I've been spilled before and yet bobbed up . . .
there's bridges and bridges, we build them differently
and yet there is a link from you to me.

You've had no premium on mockery:
for my part, I have held the strength of you,
the burst of energy, the way you bent
the earth to your own purpose, milked the sun,
ran water into pipes and up a hill,
built mansions for the rich and slept in slums . . .
of less importance than a couplet's curl,
a twist of phrase, a syllogistic flip . . .
you read and wrote no odes, so what were you?

Oh don't scowl so! I'm over that at last . . .
Please have some patience with me for a while;
I'll get another coffee . . . here, you see
we drink one coffee: my anatomy's
the same as yours . . . I never realized
how bellies make an integer of men . . .

Yes, now that the whole world is falling down
somehow the odes and paintings don't make sense;
and when I see a breadline coil the streets
I don't feel much like splitting hairs of hairs
somebody's split a thousand times before . . .
Something in me—the earth-core and the blood—
would seize an axe, and shout, and runamuck . . .
but then I clamp a lid upon that tide
and dam it up, until, I know, released
the flood will really sweep the stables clean . . .

You see, we're not so different after all—
perhaps I've read a trifle more than you,
perhaps I know old Hammurabi's code,
a date or so, and even *Kapital*
more literal than you've had time to scan—
useless and useful, keys that fit and don't,
I've tried them all . . . and every string of words
had a damned snakish trick of coiling back
and winding itself up into a sphere
intoxicated with its own hot smell
of logic that went nowhere . . . now I know
the circle must be straightened to a line.
You smile? you laugh? . . . well, here's my hand on it!

Yes, comrade, there's a big job for us both:
sometimes I see you standing (though you'll laugh . . .
my head is really crammed with thoughts like this)
I see you standing like that Hercules
who cleaned the stables of the Augeas,
but huger than he was—a mile in height,
with feet firm-planted right across the sweep
of idle river and of plowed-up plain,
with forearms folded, and a beveled eye
surveying what a mess there is to clean . . .
the thirteenth task of Hercules is yours!

And yet across the table sitting there
and smoking so, and with the sneer all gone . . .
I swear . . . you look exactly like myself!
The mirror image of a face reveals
that what is your task has become my task:
Spearhead and shaft, do we not fly together,
one hate transfixing? and its horror burnt,
shall not its ashes be our common mortar
which we shall raise to towers swift and clean?

SIDNEY ALEXANDER.

Arthur Getz

Thomas Paine: Agitator

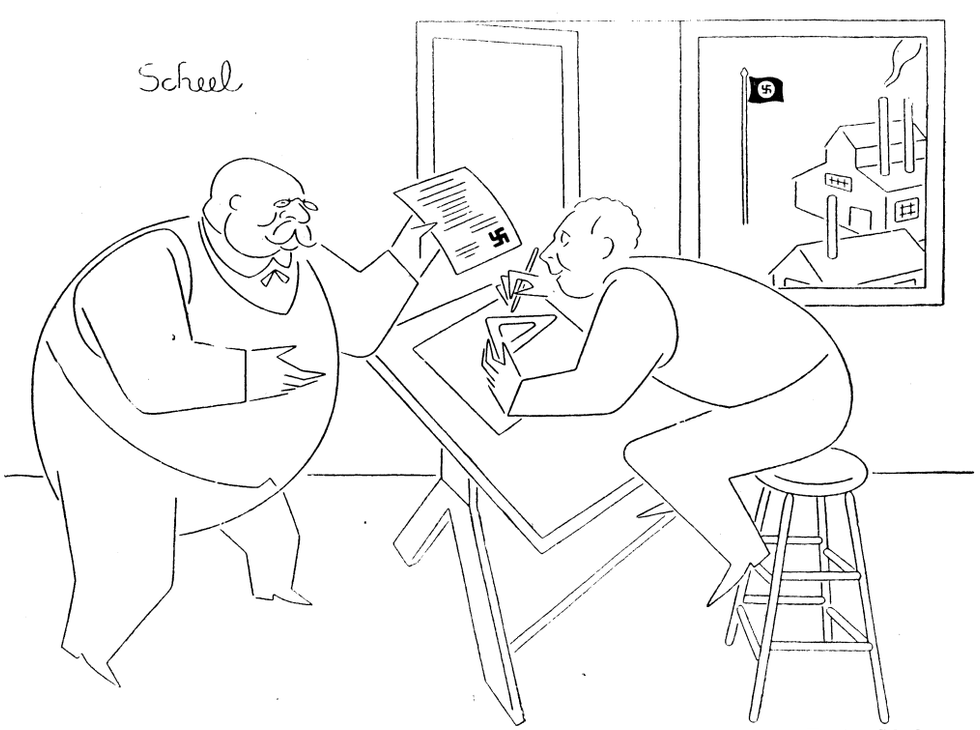
The two-hundredth anniversary of one of the fathers of his country finds an ardent theoretician and practitioner of revolution neglected

By Henry Cooper

WHEN Benjamin Franklin expressed the praiseworthy sentiment, "Where liberty is, there is my country," Paine replied with one even more magnificent: "Where liberty is not, there is mine." Tom Paine's service to the cause of American independence ranks with that of Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, and Sam Adams; his contributions to world progress rank even higher. Yet his name today is buried so deep in obloquy, heaped upon it by successive generations of reactionaries, that relatively few are aware of his true stature. Our school-books, when they mention Paine at all, handle him gingerly, pay him grudging tribute, and hurriedly dismiss him from the stage of history. The two-hundredth anniversary of his birth still finds him without the honor due him, while the glory goes to lesser men, who feared and even sabotaged the Revolution when it was in process, and who hastened to betray it when its military aspect was successfully completed.

Paine was born January 29, 1737, at Thetford, England. The son of a poor Quaker corset-maker, he left school at thirteen, worked at his father's trade, followed the sea for a time, and became a tax-collector. Twice married, he lost his first wife through death and separated from his second because of incompatibility. His life was a constant struggle against poverty and hunger. In 1774, he lost his job as exciseman for leading his fellow-workers in a demand for higher wages. Paine was then in London, where he met Benjamin Franklin, who was acting as colonial agent in England. Franklin was so impressed by the Englishman who, like himself, was self-educated and displayed an intense interest in the scientific developments of the day, that he urged Paine to emigrate to America. Armed with a letter of introduction to Franklin's son-in-law, Paine sailed for Philadelphia, arriving at his destination penniless and alone. A few weeks later, he was editing the newly-established *Pennsylvania Magazine,* reflecting the progressive sentiments of the Philadelphia group led by Franklin, Rush, Clymer, Rittenhouse, and Muhlenburg.

Within a year, the insurrection was on. The year 1775 had seen the battles of Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill. George III had proclaimed the colonies to be in a state of rebellion. The towns of Falmouth (now Portland), Me., and Norfolk, Va., had been burned to the ground by the British. Rebellious Boston was besieged. The Americans were deposing British officials and setting up their own provincial governments. They were up in arms: a Continental Army under Washington had been formed. But what were they fighting for? On this all-important question, there was only confusion and division. The Tories, consisting mostly of large landowners and traders whose profits depended on British good-will, stood solidly against armed conflict and separation from England. The commercial and professional classes and the small landowners, who furnished most of the leadership of the Revolution, wanted only a redress of their grievances: less taxation and more representation, removal of restrictions on industry and commerce, etc. As late as March 1775, Franklin declared that he had never heard an expression in favor of independence in America "from any person, drunk or sober." In May of the same year, Washington stated, in reference to the question of separation from England: "If you ever hear of my joining in any such measures, you have my leave to set me down for everything wicked."

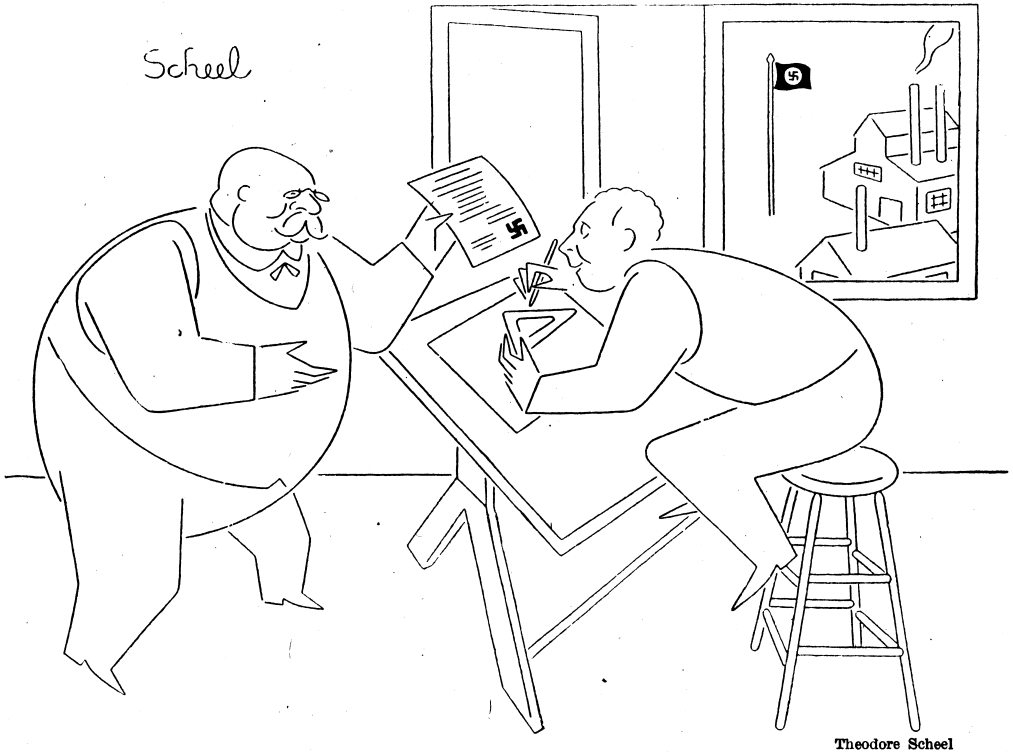


Theodore Scheel

"Three months more we have our jobs safe: Again is Goering all out of medals to give himself."

LEADERS were vacillating. The goal was uncertain; the path to be taken was undefined. Then came Paine's great pamphlet, *Common Sense,* saturated with boldness and confidence, clearly illuminating both the goal and the path that the Americans must pursue. Its language was simple and direct; it was the language of the people, written by an immigrant who had arrived little more than a year before! It was an irresistible argument to the people for the overthrow of British domination and the establishment of an independent democratic republic. With biting logic, he lashed out against those who urged conciliation with Britain; conciliation meant ruin. "The period of debate is closed. Arms, as the last resource, must decide the contest. By referring the matter from argument to arms, a new era for politics is struck; a new method of thinking hath arisen." A declaration of independence must be proclaimed at once. "Until an independence is declared, the continent will feel itself like a man who continues putting off some unpleasant business from day to day, yet knows it must be done, hates to set about it, wishes it over, and is continually haunted with the thoughts of its necessity."

Common Sense swept over the colonies, firing the people to an intense pitch of revolutionary fervor. The time was ripe for it; the people were now ready for the principles it espoused. And no pamphlet in history, with the sole exception of the *Communist Manifesto,* ever exerted so profound an influence for a political cause. Discounting some of its eighteenth-century aroma, *Common Sense* remains a masterpiece of agitational propaganda. It should be made required reading for all budding pamphleteers in the revolutionary



Theodore Scheel

"Three months more we have our jobs safe. Again is Goering all out of medals to give himself."

movement of the twentieth century. The profits from its sale would have brought Paine a modest fortune: he turned all his royalties over to the cause of independence.

Six months after the publication of *Common Sense,* the Declaration of Independence was promulgated. As originally drafted by Jefferson, it contained a clause attacking the traffic in slaves. This clause, said to have been drawn up by Paine, who was Jefferson's close friend, was stricken out at the insistence of the slaveholding group.*

The Declaration signed, Paine shouldered a musket and enlisted as a private in the ragged Continental Army under Washington. "Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom," he wrote, "must, like men, undergo the fatigues of supporting it." He fought in Washington's army through the crushing defeats of Long Island and New York in the summer of '76, followed by the heartbreaking retreat through New Jersey and escape across the Delaware.

Children's Clinic

Lithograph by Mabel Dwight (American Artists Group)

The outlook for the revolutionary cause was bleak indeed. Discouragement was rife; the army's morale was at low ebb. The weary, hungry, and ill-clad ranks were rapidly being thinned by wholesale desertions. General Washington was driven to pessimistic utterances. Only Paine, it seems, was not dismayed. Soldiering by day, he was writing at night, by the light of campfires, the first issue of the *American Crisis,* intended to bolster the morale of the army and the people. With simple eloquence, Paine explained to the soldiers the cause they were fighting for, and the great issues at stake. Boldly he told those ragged, hungry, half-frozen men that they were more than a match for mighty Britain. Paine did not under-estimate the importance of winning the support of the inhabitants of the war area, so vital to the success of a people's army. Addressing himself directly to the civilian population, he showed them why they must regard the revolutionary soldiers' cause as their own, and the need for their moral and material support.

As was the case with *Common Sense,* Paine's confidence proved contagious. The spirit of the soldiers returned as they read the *Crisis.* Cheerfulness and determination succeeded despair and vacillation. Stragglers began to return to their posts. On the eve of the battle of Trenton, Washington ordered the *Crisis* to be read before every corporal's guard, with its inspired opening sentences:

> These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands it now deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph: what we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly; 'tis dearness only that gives everything its value. . . .

Trenton was won the next day, and the victory at Princeton followed soon after, marking a turning point in the conflict. Infinitely more valuable with his pen than with his musket, Paine was pressed into service as the first political commissar of a people's army; a fitting prototype for his twentieth-century successors.

IN 1787, the American Revolution accomplished, Paine journeyed to Europe, intending to spend a twelvemonth there. But fifteen turbulent years were to pass before he returned to America. When the Bastille was stormed in 1789, signalizing the outbreak of the French Revolution, Paine threw himself into the struggle, drew up a Republican Proclamation, and placarded it all over Paris. In 1791, he founded a Republican Club in Paris, intended to forestall any attempts to reëstablish the monarchy. Meanwhile, Edmund Burke, the Ramsay MacDonald of his time, had published his *Reflections on the Revolution in France,* a venomous, hysterical attack against "the swinish multitude," filled with flagrant misrepresentations of what was happening in France. Paine, who had been Burke's friend when the English statesman still professed liberalism, immediately set about preparing a defense of the French Revolution. The result was the great political polemic, *The Rights of Man,* which not only exposed Burke's falsifications of the French Revolution, but set down the principles of the bourgeois-democratic republic in the most complete form up to that time.

Where Burke had portrayed the French revolutionists as a blood-thirsty, anarchic mob bent on murder and pillage, Paine produced evidence of their remarkable discipline and orderliness; where Burke had described them as an amorphous, unreasoning herd, acting blindly, Paine pointed out the dynamic, self-conscious role of the masses in revolutions. Where Burke had shed crocodile tears over the plight of a few aristocrats, with not a thought of the age-long sufferings of the French peasants, Paine said: "He pities the plumage, but forgets the dying bird."

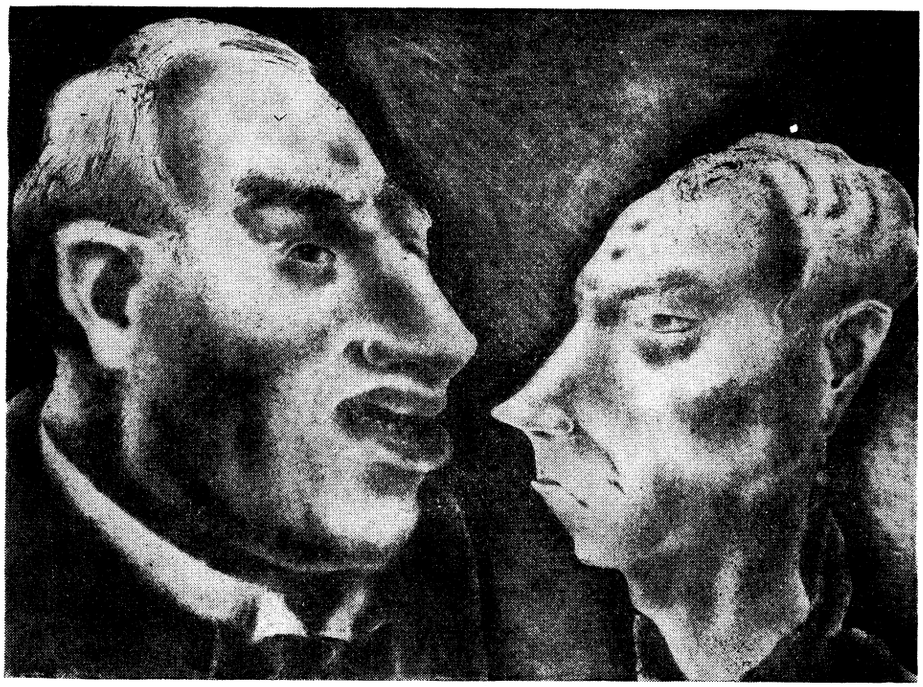
In a passage which bears especial relevance to the present fight of the Spanish people for democracy, Paine wrote: "The cause of the French people is the cause of all Europe, or rather of the whole world; but the governments of all these countries are by no means

* On the eve of the Declaration, Paine had written a stirring warning to the American people: "Forget not the hapless African!" Unfortunately, the Negro slave *was* forgotten.

Children's Clinic

Lithograph by Mabel Dwight (American Artists Group)

favorable to it. It is important that we should never lose sight of this distinction. We must not confuse the peoples with their governments." Defending the right of revolution, he declared that "a nation [that is, the people] has at all times an inherent indefeasible right to abolish any form of government it finds inconvenient, and to establish such as accords with its own interests, disposition, and happiness." To Burke's contention that the men of 1688 had fixed forever the form of government under which their descendants in England must live, Paine replied that the dead cannot fetter the living, that each generation has the right to decide for itself how it shall be governed, and that the claim of any generation to govern beyond the grave is the most insolent of all tyrannies. There's a text to be studied by our present-day tories, who argue that the destinies of America were fixed for all times by the men of 1787!



"Why don't they go back . . . ?" Lithograph by George Biddle

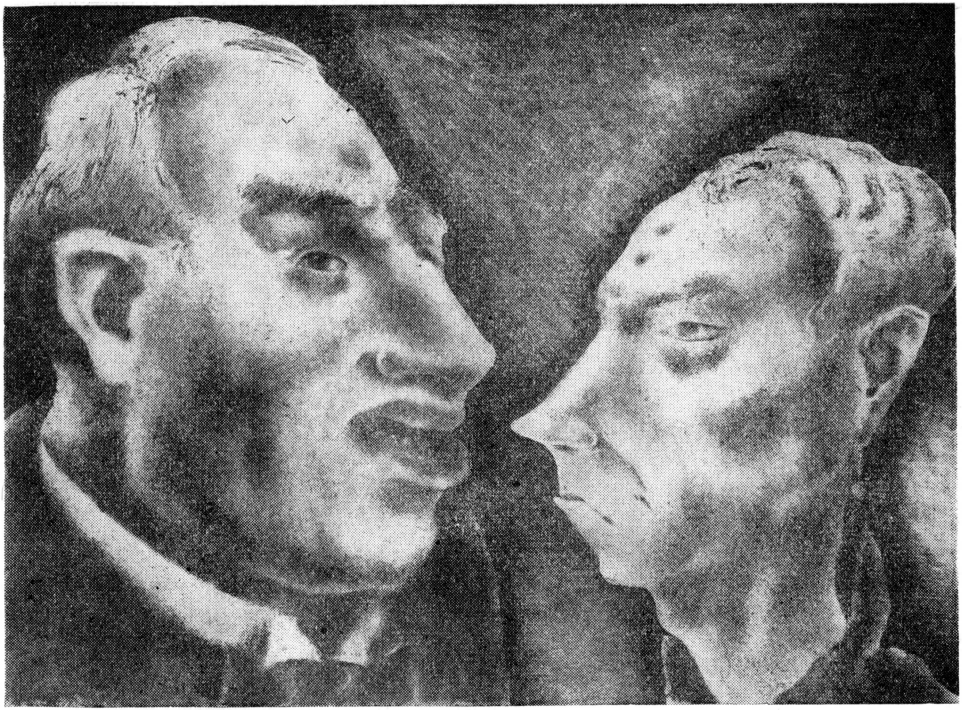
THE political opinions of Paine reflected the doctrines of "natural rights" and "the social compact" current among the progressives of the late eighteenth century. But he infused these doctrines with concepts of his own, which made him the most radical democrat in the English-speaking world of his time. He had an unshakable faith in the common people, and stood forth as a sincere advocate of government of the people, by the people, and for the people. At a time when the right to vote was restricted to a relatively small proportion of the population through property qualifications, he fought for the principle of universal manhood suffrage. While the constitution-makers of 1787 had sought all sorts of checks against the possibility of control by the common people, Paine urged stringent safeguards against governmental manipulation by the privileged few. Only when government rested directly in the hands of the common people could it be trusted.

As Burke's *Reflections* was intended primarily to check the revolutionary sentiment spreading among the English people, so Paine's *Rights of Man* was intended to stimulate that movement and bring it to a head. How close he came to succeeding is hardly realized today. The *Rights of Man* spread rapidly through England. Working-class societies demanded and eagerly bought up cheap editions. It sold 200,000 copies within two years. Paine turned over all his royalties to the Revolution Society and other radical organizations then springing up throughout Britain. He became the great hero of the British working class. The infuriated aristocrats burned him in effigy, and took to wearing nails stamped "T.P." on the soles of their boots. Paine's influence was evident in the great mutinies at Spithead and the Nore in 1797. The demands of the rebellious sailors contained many of Paine's phrases; a copy of his pamphlet was found on one of their leaders.

In 1792, the royal government suppressed the *Rights of Man* and ordered its author arrested on a charge of sedition. Warned by his friend William Blake, Paine fled to France just in time to escape capture. He was later condemned for treason and outlawed. He arrived in France to find himself elected to the National Assembly by three different departments. His activities in the later years of the French Revolution followed a varied course. Eleven months were spent in prison. While imprisoned, he wrote part of his *Age of Reason,* the most uncompromising attack on established religion to appear up to that time. Paine was not an atheist, but a deist: nature was his God. His decision to write this book was largely determined by his observation that the established churches in all countries invariably stood in the vanguard of reaction in any fight against progress. His *Agrarian Justice,* published in 1797, was one of the pioneer works in land reform, and contained many suggestions for humanitarian reform far ahead of the time. It advocated, among other things, a liberal system of old-age pensions, maternity insurance, and child welfare, at the expense of the rich, by means of a steep inheritance tax.

PAINE returned to America in 1802, an old and lonely man. At home, he found himself the victim of one of the worst campaigns of calumny in American history. It had been carried on systematically for years by his reactionary enemies, who used every means to discredit this most radical of all the Jeffersonian democrats. Chief among the character assassins were Gouverneur Morris and John Adams, men who had led the betrayal of the people at the Constitutional Convention, men who were aristocrats at heart, who yearned for a hereditary king in America. For these men, no adjective was too vile, no tale too base, to attach to Paine. They vented their fierce hatred of him in unbridled vilification, and they succeeded all too well. And the men who should have fearlessly defended Paine during his absence, the friends whom he had inspired with his own great courage in the darkest days of the Revolution, were, with few exceptions, men with the "genius of prudence," who elected to remain circumspect and silent.

PAINE spent his last years among a small group of radicals, avoided by the "respectable people." The incredible, cruel myth woven around him penetrated so deeply, that a coachman once refused him as a passenger for fear that God would strike the coach with lightning. The crowning irony came in 1806, when Paine tried to cast his ballot in New Rochelle, where he lived on the farm presented to him by New York State for his services in the Revolution. Paine was denied the right to vote by an official who had been a hidebound Tory during the Revolution, on the ground that he was not an American citizen! When Paine lay dying in 1809, priests and preachers hovered like buzzards about his bed, hoping to extract from the "great infidel" a death-bed recantation. He brusquely sent them about their business, but the thoroughly false tale about a last-minute repentance has become part of the monstrous Paine myth. Upon his death, he was denied decent burial in a cemetery; he was interred in a corner of his farm by six faithful friends, two of whom were Negroes. Throughout the nineteenth century, no monument was erected to him. No cities, streets, or squares were named for him, so far as I am aware, in the nation he helped to bring into being. On January 19, 1937, however, the French People's Front erected in Paris a statue of Paine, designed by Gutzon Borglum. So, not until the common people, whose rights he championed, had come to power, was Paine properly remembered.



"Why don't they go back . . . ?"

Lithograph by George Biddle

Waterfront Art Show

One significance of the coming industrial exhibition is that it defines in concrete terms the relations between art and work

By Leonard Sparks

LAST YEAR, a group of artists revolted against the pitying attitude of many radical intellectuals towards workers. Most of them had been trained in the tough three-morning-a-week schedule of the waterfront units of the Communist Party. They knew that longshoremen were not lounging bums nor beaten derelicts, were no more pitiable than they.

These artists expressed their revolt by holding a Waterfront Art Show, to which they sent pictures showing strikes, shape-ups, leaflet-readers—but no lounging bums. Numerically, they were swamped by pictures of lounging bums, absolutely beautiful marine blues, chugging tug boats. The show was very popular with artists, just as marine subjects have always been in New England and New York.

But in sales, the pitiful bums were no more important than they would be in an I.L.A. meeting. All but one of the militant pictures were sold; the majority of the pictures of people found buyers. But most of the tug boats and other dehumanized scenes remained with their creators.

This year, the Waterfront Art Show is coming forward much more pretentiously, offering the wares of the finest American artists to those of small purse who are willing to buy on the basis of their own judgment. Last year's exhibition was held at a workers' club, without any backing except that of a marine club. This year, the backing includes An American Group, Inc. (an important group of progressive artists); and the place is the New School for Social Research, beginning February 15. The traditional popularity of the subject wins over the most diverse contributors, until most of the great American artists are promised.

Why this sudden popularity of a relatively new idea? (It is the purpose of this article to contend that it is not a question of the absolute beauty of marine blues or waterfront bums.) In essence, this is a show of industrial life, and by industry the world is organized. New York depends upon its place as a harbor in much the same fashion that early Athens depended upon the olives (of which Athena was the goddess; the Parthenon celebrated her in her dual role as goddess of olives and of thunder), and Florence upon wool (it reeks of mutton in its art).

The modern world is even more definitely organized in this fashion. The employer has direct control of the workers for seven to ten hours a day. In addition, lunch and transportation, at least, are almost always in company with those from the same plant or dock. Thus, a large part of human relationships is based upon industry in a sense even beyond economics. Sailors can hardly walk three blocks on South Street without meeting a friend, but might go the length of Broadway unsaluted. The writer alone knows three poker clubs in Harlem founded on workers from three docks. One includes all the Negro workers on that dock. In other industries, there are company towns overshadowing the plants. There are union meetings, trade schools, trade brothels, saloons, churches. This industrial world is the modern reality, and anything that brings art into contact with it, brings new life into art.

Sid Goteliffe

A special limitation is always needed to furnish unity to an art show. The "style" of a single artist treating a variety of subjects has generally proved unsatisfactory. Different styles are needed to present different subjects. Differences in subject matter have been shown by many investigators to be more important than any usable differences in style. Hence, style as a unifier is most likely to degenerate into a mannerism. The organization of art by industries becomes a natural unifier of schools. We can have Lozowick showing the cranes, Jones and Orozco the workers, Gropper their political life, Raphael Soyer social gestures—all supplementing and criticizing one another.

One of the mechanisms that will eventually improve art standards is the increased contact with a broader audience. Principal among the contributions of the great Soviet school of folklore scientists is the analysis of the importance of audience reaction to the artist. Last year, we were able to get members of the industry to the show and learn which of the works were most popular, and much about the regard or distaste held for the others. Naturally, the longshoremen were largely in agreement with the artists who knew them best. Pitiful things were particularly hated. Real work, pain, tragedy, courage, and the like were admired. This year, we should go further and sell some of the most favored pieces to prosperous workers. Nothing could be more logical than that they should be interested in themselves — in their own problems, their lives, in their struggles, in the scenes to be viewed from their vantage points. Researches show inductively that this is the case, that the worker is interested in working scenes. Experience with shop papers shows that the old Chinese maxim always applies: A good picture is worth a thousand good words. Selling art to the workers may be as difficult as getting five thousand to stand for a W.P.A. theater performance. They are accustomed to sit at shows, and they are not in the habit of buying art. But it is just because of its having reached a new audience that the W.P.A. theater is an accomplishment.

Without any question, we will be able to reach new groups of the middle classes—the groups that hitherto have not thought themselves able to purchase original works of art, groups that have a considerable knowledge of the crafts covered.

Some of the artists may not like what this new audience will say of their art. Personally, I delight in many abstractions. But equally, the teamsters will at first make nasty cracks about the unsubstantial nature of Stuart Davis's "Coffee Pot." Way-up-in-the-air Soviet illustration has lost some of its smartness since illustrations, radio, music, and cinema subjects have become questioned for popular vote. We have lived so long in a split culture that popularity has apparently become synonomous with unworthiness.

This is, of course, not the truth. From the example of the epics, popular ballads, Shakespeare, Phidias, Giotto, Siqueiros—artists know intellectually that popular art can be great art. And a little consideration will convince them that only by being in contact with their audience and reacting to it, can they be sure that they have an audience. In fact, the "ivory tower" metaphor admits as much, even if its theory does not always do so.

Sid Gotcliffe

Who Is Trotsky's Foe?

He says he campaigns against Stalin and "Stalinism," but an examination of his political career tells a very different story

An Editorial

"Something always remains and sticks from the most impudent lies, a fact which all bodies and individuals concerned in the art of lying in this world know only too well, and hence they stop at nothing to achieve this end." Adolf Hitler, in *Mein Kampf,* after asserting his faith in "the very correct principle" that "the bigger a lie, the more quickly it will be believed." (1935 German edition, p. 252-3.)

THE most carefully cultivated historical lie of Hitlerism is that which places the whole responsibility for the cruelties and indignities forced upon the German people after the World War upon the Weimar republic. The lie was necessary in order to claim a succession of "successes" for the Nazi regime.

The most carefully cultivated historical lie of Trotskyism is that which asserts his opposition to be exclusively against the leadership and policies of Stalin. This legend was necessary to give Trotsky the appearance of having the blanket endorsement of Lenin; for if it could be shown that Trotsky's opposition was directed, at its origin, against Lenin, then it would follow that his conflict is with bolshevism, not merely with Stalin—that Trotsky would have clashed with whomever was chosen to carry on the Bolshevik tradition. An examination of the historical record shows that had Lenin lived, Trotsky's plots would have been directed against Lenin.

A knowledge of Trotsky's differences with Bolshevik theory on fundamental questions is essential to an understanding of the evidence against him at the recent terrorist trials in Moscow. There are some who find it "incredible" that Trotsky should seek to restore capitalism in the U.S.S.R. Such "incredibility" rests on acceptance of the premise that capitalism has been wiped out in the U.S.S.R. and that a totally new system has replaced it, for capitalism could not have been overthrown and an economic vacuum installed. But Trotsky has never for a moment accepted this premise. The denial of the possibility of building socialism in the Soviet Union is one of the foundation theories of Trotskyism. In 1922, in a postscript to his *A Program for Peace,* Trotsky wrote:

So long as the bourgeoisie remains in power in the other European countries, we are compelled, in our struggle against economic isolation, to seek for agreements with the capitalist world; at the same time, one may say with certainty that these agreements may at best help us to cure some of our economic ills, to take one or another step forward, but that genuine advance in the construction of socialist economy in Russia will become possible only after the victory of the proletariat in the most important countries of Europe.

But the proletariat has not come to power in any other country in Europe, and Trotsky's defeatist conclusion still holds good, if one accepts his doctrine. It may be said that this was written in 1922, and that Trotsky may have changed his mind in the intervening period. Trotsky *has* changed his mind, but only to insist with increasing vehemence of expression that Soviet leadership and Soviet economy have "degenerated" and "decayed." As we shall see, he organized an opposition bloc in October 1923, on the charge of "bankruptcy." Fourteen years have passed, and conditions are still getting worse, according to Trotsky. Obviously the 1922 quotation from his writings is, from the Trotskyist viewpoint, too optimistic, and not too defeatist.

Compare Trotsky's position with the statement made by Lenin on November 20, 1922, at a plenary session of the Moscow Soviet, his last public speech:

At the present time, socialism has already ceased to be a question of the remote future, it has ceased to be some abstract picture, an icon. As regards icons we still hold our old opinion, and that is a bad opinion. We have dragged socialism into day-to-day life, and it is there that we must define our position. That is the task of our times, the task of our epoch. Permit me to close with an expression of my assurance that no matter how difficult this task may be, no matter how new it may be in comparison with our previous tasks, and no matter how many difficulties it confronts us with, we shall all of us together—not tomorrow, but within a few years—perform this task at all costs, so that out of N.E.P. Russia will come Socialist Russia.

This was the position adopted by Stalin and the majority of the Central Committee of the Communist Party after Lenin's death; it was the position which Trotsky categorically denied and defamed.

But this was no academic dispute. And the testimony at the Moscow trials shows its subsequent bearing on Trotskyism. It was agreement on this point that made possible the opposition bloc of the Trotsky faction and the Zinoviev faction in 1926. These factions had clashed in 1923-5, but gradually made peace with each other on the basis of the denial of the possibility of building socialism in the Soviet Union. An important part of Piatakov's testimony brought this agreement up to date. Said Piatakov:

When I asked how it was possible to establish contacts with the "Rights," Kamenev said directly that this in general was an exhibition of definite political childishness on my part, that yesterday's disagreement [the Trotsky-Zinoviev bloc temporarily split in 1928] could not divide us because there existed a unity of aim—the overthrow of the Stalinist leadership and the abandonment of construction of socialism, with corresponding changes in the economic policy.

Those who find it "incredible" that Trotsky should seek to "restore" capitalism in the U.S.S.R. simply exhibit their ignorance of one of the fundamental issues in the conflict between Trotskyism and Leninism. Trotsky always denied the possibility of building socialism in the Soviet Union without victorious proletarian revolutions "in the most important countries of Europe." It might be hard to conceive that a man who recognizes socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. should plot capitalist restoration; but the development of Trotskyism from the position denying the possibility of building socialism in one country, such as the U.S.S.R., to the position of conspiring with capitalist powers in order to hoist himself into power, is clear.

THE FACT that Trotskyism clashes with the main body of Communist thought and action can be shown historically, as well as theoretically.

To get to the origins of the conflict between Trotsky and the Bolsheviks, represented by Lenin, we must go back to the year 1903, the year of the Second Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party. At this Congress, the right and left wings of the R.S.D.L.P. parted company in a sharp theoretical struggle on the organizational nature of their party. The Bolsheviks, in a resolution drafted by Lenin, contended for a strongly centralized, highly disciplined, compact party; the Mensheviks, represented by Martov's resolution, wanted a loose, undisiplined party. Trotsky sided with Martov against the Bolsheviks. In his pamphlet *Our Political Tasks,* written the very next year, he denounced the "anti-democratic" tendencies of Lenin. He called Lenin "the leader of the reactionary wing of the party." He assailed the "morally repugnant suspiciousness of Lenin." He wrote: "For Lenin, Marxism is a dishrag." The pamphlet was dedicated to "my dear teacher, Paul Borisovich Axelrod," leader of the Mensheviks.

After the abortive 1905 revolution, an influential Menshevik group came to be known as "Liquidators," because they demanded the liquidation of the Bolshevik form of organization, adopted by the 1903 congress. They favored a parliamentary party styled after German Social Democracy. Trotsky again sided with the Mensheviks as a "Liquidator." He gave the Menshevik position a characteristic twist, however, a fact which did not escape Lenin, who wrote:

Trotsky and the Trotskyists and compromisers who resemble him are more harmful than any of the Liquidators, since the convinced Liquidators elucidate their views straightforwardly and it is easy for the workers to make out their mistakes, but the Messrs. Trotsky deceive the workers, conceal the evil, render its exposure and cure impossible. Whoever supports Trotsky's group supports the policy of falsehood and deception of the workers, the policy of screening liquidationism.

On all questions, Trotsky's policy was to appear to the left of the main body of Mensheviks while making common cause with them and with other groups against the Bolsheviks. This policy finally culminated in the formation of a bloc in August 1912, under the leadership of Trotsky and Martov, against the Bolsheviks. Lenin counter-attacked in a famous article, "Violation of Unity Under Cover of Unity," in which he wrote:

Trotsky avoids facts and concrete indications just because they mercilessly refute all his angry exclamations and pompous phrases.

After the collapse of the "August bloc," Lenin wrote:

Trotsky has never had a "physiognomy" and has none now; he flutters about, he comes and goes from liberals to Marxists; he flings about pompous phrases torn from this source or that. Trotsky deceives the backward workers, for he defends the Liquidators when he raises hypocritical questions about the illegal apparatus, when he asserts that there is no liberal working-class politics among us, etc. Trotsky, who has broken his own August bloc, who has rejected all decisions of the Party, who has cut himself off both from the illegal apparatus and the organized workers, is a splitter of the worst variety.

Trotsky, in the midst of the controversy, told his Menshevik friend, N. S. Chkheidze, in a letter dated August 1, 1913, what he thought of Lenin:

And what a senseless obsession is the wretched squabbling systematically provoked by the master squabbler, Lenin, that professional exploiter of the backwardness of the Russian working-class movement. . . . The whole edifice of Leninism at the present time is built on lies and falsifications, and bears within it the poisoned seed of its own disintegration.

Substitute "Stalin" for "Lenin" and it is obvious that Trotsky has made many of his old phrases do multiple duty.

The "August bloc" collapsed. Trotsky took an internationalist position during the war, but Lenin, in May 1917, still reckoned him as one filled with the "vacillations of the petty bourgeoisie." After the February revolution, Trotsky and his faction, now called "Interregionalists," appeared to be coming closer to the Bolshevik position. The whole faction entered the Bolshevik Party in August 1917, and three "Interregionalists," including Trotsky, were given important posts. As subsequent events showed, Trotsky had not become a Bolshevik; he had made his peace with Bolshevism by temporarily suppressing his differences.

It is seriously argued that Trotsky, once having been a member of the Bolshevik Party, could never have traveled so far away from Bolshevism as the testimony at the trials indicates. By the same logic, Trotsky could never have joined the Bolshevik Party; once having been a Menshevik, it could be similarly argued, he could never travel so far away from Menshevism as to become a Bolshevik. But the truth is that the present cannot be wiped out by reference to some period in the past. Considering his entire career, Trotsky was a member of the Bolshevik Party for only a relatively short time; it would be just as foolish to confuse his Bolshevik period with his long career as a Menshevik as it is to confuse his opposition period with his short career as a "Bolshevik."

The mere date of Trotsky's entrance into the Bolshevik Party disposes of the myth that he is an "old Bolshevik." The violence of his denunciations of Lenin, and the severity with which Lenin criticized him from 1903 until 1917, dispose of the myth that the differences between the two were "superficial." Through the long, hard, dark, critical years before the October Revolution, years in which the Bolshevik Party developed into an irresistible fighting force, Trotsky was an enemy of Bolshevism. He made his peace with the Bolsheviks only on the eve of the revolution. But not for long.

On January 7, 1918, Lenin proposed that an independent and immediate peace be made with Germany despite very severe terms, because a "breathing-space" was critical to the continued life of the young Soviet republic. Opposition came from two directions. Trotsky put forth the slogan, characteristically useful as a two-edged weapon for political maneuvering, "Neither peace nor war." Bukharin and others called for a "revolutionary war," i.e., no peace, but an offensive. The Bukharin group, which included Radek and Piatakov among others, styled themselves "Left Communists" and denounced Lenin for selling out to the Germans. As Lenin pointed out, both Trotsky and Bukharin were in essential agreement, for neither position could lead to peace, the real point at issue.

As a result of the Trotsky-Bukharin opposition, the negotiations with the Germans were long drawn out; the Germans kept advancing farther and farther into Russia, and the harshness of their "peace" terms grew with their military progress. In February, while the negotiations with the Germans were dragging out at Brest-Litovsk, a delegation visited Lenin to discuss the treaty. Lenin told them, at one point: "I would first like to get the advice of Stalin before answering you." A little later, Lenin again answered the delegation: "Stalin has just arrived; we are in the midst of a discussion, and we will soon give you our answer." A reply was then forthcoming, signed jointly by Lenin and Stalin, in which

"Why are we putting up such a battle against the union? Because we don't want our employees paying tribute for the right to work!"

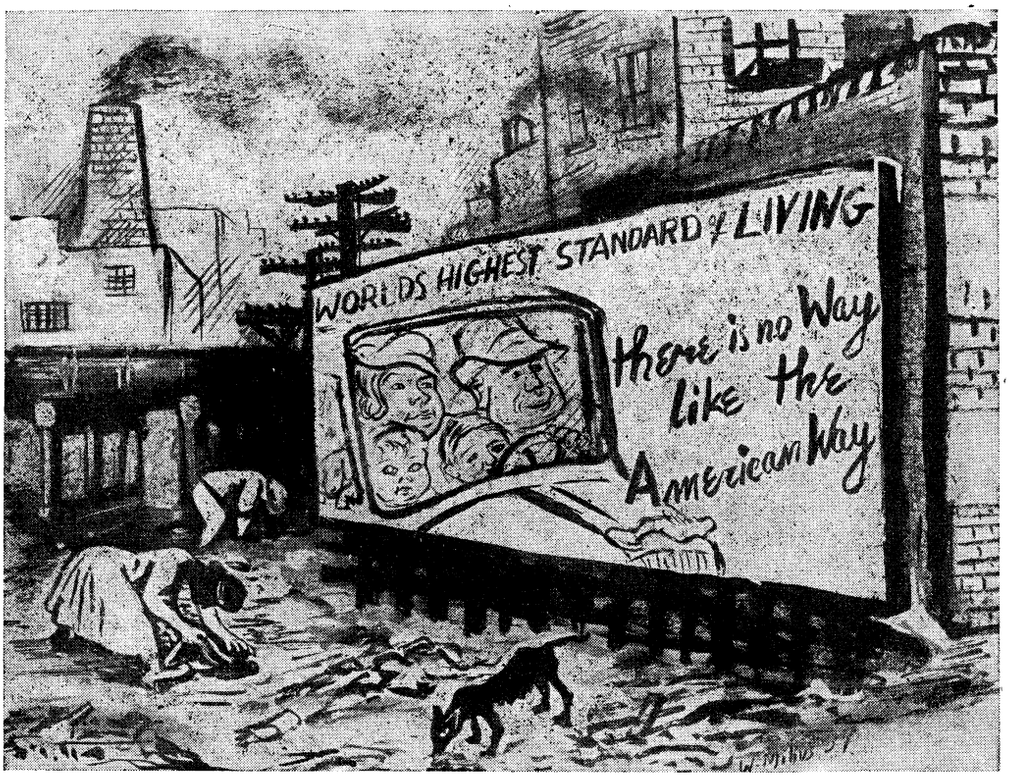
both maintained their original position: immediate signing of the peace treaty. A study of the voting in the Central Committee on the Brest-Litovsk issue shows that Stalin firmly supported Lenin against both the Bukharin and Trotsky factions from the very beginning.

The policy of Lenin and Stalin finally prevailed only after a long and bitter internal struggle. A number of persons, including Bukharin and Piatakov, resigned from their leading positions in protest at the signing of the treaty. Later they, as well as Trotsky, admitted their mistake, but it is impossible to credit such people, as did the *Nation* recently, with being the "brains and consciences of the Russian revolution."

In 1920, the "Left Communist" faction adopted the name of "Democratic Centralism" (it was characteristic of the oppositionists to try to turn Leninist slogans against Lenin) and attacked Lenin for trying to foster a "dictatorship of party officialdom." The attacks against Lenin are in every case similar to the later attacks against Stalin. The pretext for the "Democratic Centralism" group's opposition was the effort made by the Central Committee, under Lenin, to overcome the prevailing anarchy and inefficiency in production through the introduction of one-man management, technical specialists, piece work, abolition of food quotas from the peasants, and the like.

The party sharply rejected the criticisms and proposals of this "left" opposition, only to be confronted with two other oppositions on the trade-union issue. One faction, the "Workers' Opposition," sought to convert the trade unions into the highest organs of the state on a syndicalist program. Trotsky adopted the same ruinous attitude towards the unions, in reverse. As head of the Railroad and Water Transport Workers' Union, his bureaucratic, despotic methods forced a split. In order to bend the disaffected workers completely to his will, Trotsky proposed that the unions be made appendages of the state and treated accordingly with military severity. So great was the distance between Lenin and Trotsky on the question, that Lenin wrote: "Trotsky's error, if not recognized and corrected, will lead to the collapse of the dictatorship of the proletariat."

Trotsky did neither, but, instead, precipitated a furious debate when the party could least afford inner dissension. The interventionist armies were invading the Soviets on many fronts; famine was racking the home front. The whole controversy came to a head at the Tenth Party Congress, March 1921, which Lenin opened with the words: "We are going to put an end to opposition now, to put the lid on it; we have had enough of opposition." Both the Workers' Opposition and the Trotsky opposition were decisively defeated on the trade-union question. On a motion by Lenin, the Congress explicitly prohibited the continued existence of factions or groupings within the party. In his speech, Lenin said: "We will not permit disputes about deviations. We must put an end to this. The situation is becoming extremely perilous, is becoming an outright menace to the dictatorship of the proletariat."



W. Milius

Stalin was elected secretary of the party in March 1922, prior to Lenin's first illness. The Trotskyist opposition, which had made public appearances on the Brest-Litovsk question, the trade-union question, and phases of the New Economic Policy (Trotsky submitted a proposal, which was rejected, to permit Soviet enterprises to mortgage their property to private capitalists), prepared for an open break with the party leadership. A new edition of the 1912 "August bloc" was in order. On October 8, 1923, forty-six oppositionists, led by Trotsky, filed a statement with the Central Committee which charged that the existing leadership was ruining the country. The forty-six signers constituted a heterogeneous bloc of Trotskyists and remnants of all the previous oppositions, "Left Communist," "Democratic Centralism," and "Workers' Opposition." Among the forty-six were Piatakov (an inveterate oppositionist and a member of the "Left Opposition" since 1918), I. N. Smirnov, and other of the defendants at the recent trials.

The key paragraph in this statement read:

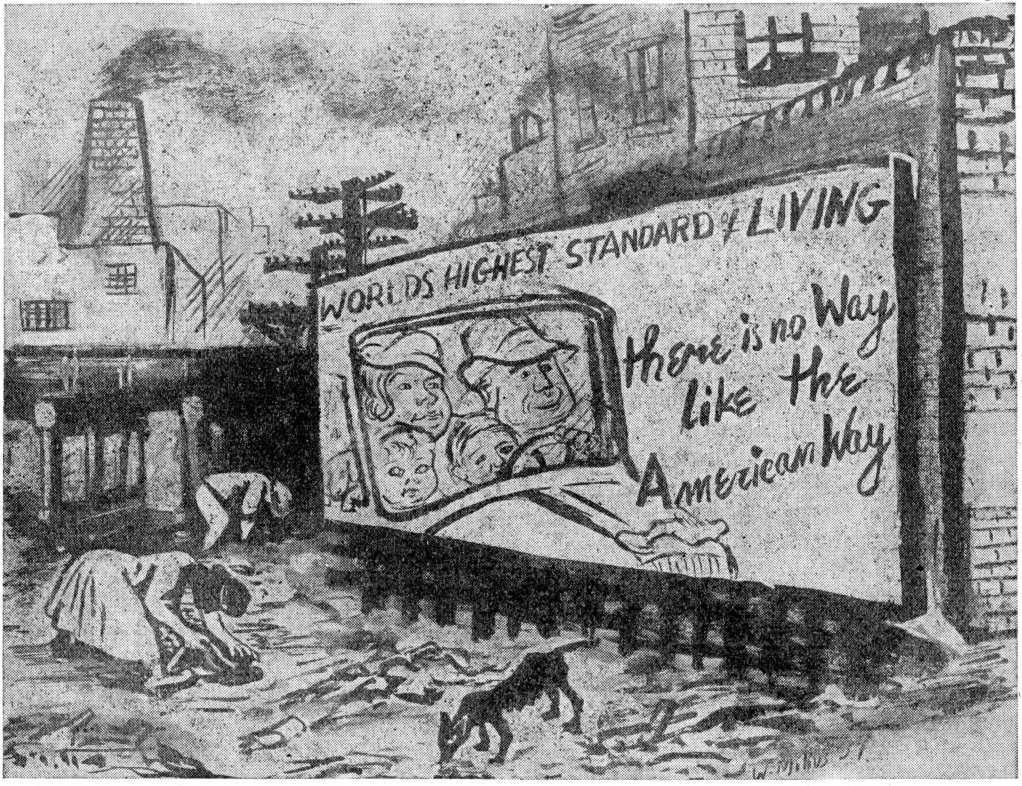
> The regime which has been set up within the party is absolutely intolerable. It destroys the initiative of the party, replacing the party by a selected bureaucratic apparatus, which does not fail to function in normal times, but which inevitably misfires at moments of crisis and which threatens to prove absolutely bankrupt in the face of the serious events which are approaching. The present situation is due to the fact that the regime of factional dictatorship within the party which objectively developed after the Tenth Congress had outlived its usefulness.

This statement reveals the true character of the Trotsky opposition. Its reference to the Tenth Congress is its essence. The Tenth Congress featured a bitter debate between Lenin and Trotsky on the trade-union question. The Tenth Congress laid the basis for the New Economic Policy. Above all, the Tenth Congress prohibited opposition factions and groupings. The Congress antedated Lenin's illness by almost a year. It preceded Stalin's election as secretary of the party by a full year.

The Trotskyist attack on "the regime of factional dictatorship within the party which objectively developed after the Tenth Congress" could not have been an attack against "Stalinism," although Stalin supported Lenin on every issue. It was an attack against Lenin, who introduced every key resolution at the Tenth Congress, and who was in active leadership for almost another year.

From this time forth, Trotskyism came into sharp collision with bolshevism in quite the same way and on the same issues separating Trotsky from Lenin until 1917. The language which Trotsky has used against Stalin since 1923 is identical with the language he used against Lenin until 1917. With characteristic facility, he attacks Stalin in the name of Lenin just as he attacked Lenin in the name of Marx, just as the "Left Communist" and "Democratic Centralism" oppositions attacked Lenin in the name of "pure" communism. The strategy is as old as the revolutionary movement, and the condition for its effectiveness is ignorance of the history of the revolutionary movement.

Trotsky as the inheritor of Leninism is a historical legend concocted for reasons of political expediency. Trotsky's fight against the leadership and policies of Stalin is the natural continuation of his long fight against Lenin and Leninism. The relatively brief detour made by Trotsky in 1917 should not obscure his political development since 1903.


WORLD'S HIGHEST STANDARD of LIVING
there is no Way
like the
American Way

W. Milius

READERS' FORUM

Three more letters repudiating connections with the Trotsky "defense" committee

● Following are letters from three men, outstanding in their various fields, who have been named by the "American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky" as members of that committee. These letters of repudiation of the Trotsky committee were received by the NEW MASSES in response to requests for comment on the letter of resignation from Mauritz A. Hallgren which we published last week. Mr. Hallgren is associate editor of the Baltimore *Sun,* Mr. Gannett is literary critic of the New York *Herald Tribune,* Mr. Bowman is a member of the faculty of Columbia University, and a member of the executive committee of the League for Industrial Democracy, and Mr. Jaffe, star of the Broadway production of *Grand Hotel,* is now playing a leading role in *The Eternal Road.* The letter from Mr. Bowman to the New York *Times* has not, so far as we have been able to discover, been published by that paper. We are informed that several other members of the Trotsky "defense" committee have resigned, including Jacob Billikopf, an official of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, and Paul Ward, Washington correspondent of the *Nation.* A number of other answers to our inquiry were received, some expressing private regret that their names had been included "by mistake," but asking us to keep the matter confidential, as they believed the mistake had been "honest"; others, like that of Professor E. A. Ross of Wisconsin University, declaring that Mr. Hallgren's letter had expressed "what some of us are beginning to think," but limiting their action to watchful waiting; still others, like Norman Thomas and Manuel Komroff, declaring that they expected to stand by the committee. We may have an opportunity to publish some of these other letters in future issues.—THE EDITORS.

From Critic Lewis Gannett

● You address me as a member of the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky, and ask my position on Mauritz Hallgren's letter.

I have never been a member of the Trotsky committee, though my name has appeared on its letterhead. I had expressed, informally, my belief that Trotsky should have free asylum, and full freedom of speech, at a time when he was gagged in Norway; and a member of the Trotsky committee apparently understood that to mean that I would join the group. While Trotsky was in difficulty in Norway I made no protest; when he landed in Mexico, and began exercising a liberal freedom of speech, I wrote the committee asking how my name got on their lists, and, when informed, assured them that it was a no doubt honest misunderstanding and asked them to remove it. They assured me they would; but they continue to send it out in their publicity.

The committee has ceased to be a committee for the defense of Leon Trotsky; it has become a committee for the propagation of Trotskyism, an organ of apparently indiscriminate attack upon the Soviet Union. I am not as clear in my mind about the facts of the recent Soviet trials as Mr. Hallgren appears to be; on the other hand, I have no faith in Mr. Trotsky's virginal innocence of the art of conspiracy, and no sympathy with the dogmatic fulminations of this misnamed committee.

Sincerely,

LEWIS GANNETT.

From Actor Sam Jaffe

● I have read the Hallgren letter with a great deal of interest. My own position in this whole matter—one that I have explained to your Mr. Freeman some weeks ago—was concern over the right of asylum for political prisoners. That part of the committee's work done, I too felt that my connection with it was automatically brought to a close. When, however, I found my name in the New York *Times* linked with their further activities, I immediately called the secretary and asked that it be withdrawn, for the reason that I have already stated.

May I add that I am no member of any political party or organization and that I feel myself a genuine friend of Soviet Russia.

Sincerely yours,

SAM JAFFE.

From Professor Le Roy Bowman

● I was glad to read the proofs of a letter by Mauritz A. Hallgren that you sent and also today to see his article in the *Daily Worker,* which I take it is identical. I doubt if it is necessary for me to comment on that at all since you will see my position from the two communications, carbons of which I am sending to you herewith. The first was sent to the New York *Times* on February 2 declaring that I had gone on the Committee only to help to get asylum for Trotsky and to work toward an impartial inquiry of the trials in Russia and Trotsky activities that would tend to clear up the questioning in people's minds. The other is a letter of resignation to the Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky, stating again the fact that I had joined the Committee for these two purposes, that I am not at all in sympathy with the implication of the report of their activities in the New York *Times,* and that I am certainly more in sympathy with the present Communist government in Russia than with any opposition. This is said, you will understand, as coming from a non-Communist.

I sent both these letters before reading Mr. Hallgren's statement, so you will understand that I have not needed to change my opinion. My position has been the same all along.

Very sincerely yours,

L. E. BOWMAN.

February 3, 1937.

To the American Committee
for the Defense of Leon Trotsky,
Dear Sirs:

I must ask that you let me resign from the committee. I was very heartily in sympathy with the two purposes that are printed at the top of your news bulletin and that I was told about in the letter that asked me to lend my name to the movement, namely: (1) To safeguard Trotsky's right to asylum; and (2) to join in the organization of an impartial committee of inquiry.

The report that came out in the New York *Times,* February 1st, seems to me to indicate too strongly that the members of this committee were sympathetic with the political philosophy of Trotsky. The article certainly sounded as if the members of the committee were defending Trotsky's point of view, but I do not want to enter into that controversy. My sympathies are much more with the present Communist government in Russia than with the opposition.

Very sincerely yours,

L. E. BOWMAN.

February 2, 1937.

To the Editor of the New York *Times*
Dear Sir:

The article in the *Times* of February 1st telling of the pronouncements of the American Committee for the Defense of Trotsky raises an issue not unknown to defenders of democracy. It is the question of the right of a person to be heard if he is to be judged. The accusations that were detailed against this man in the Russian trials are startling. They aroused in a group of liberals and radicals the desire to get at the facts that might be revealed from sources not given much credence in the trials. I was one ready to support such a purpose of the American Committee for the Defense of Trotsky.

One other purpose of the Committee made appeal to a sense of justice, namely: the effort to get for Trotsky, the safe asylum due a political exile.

There is a real difference, however, between defense of a person's right to asylum and to be heard, and, on the other hand, defense of that same person's acts or the political philosophy behind the acts. Trotskyism is too much a bundle of intense feelings and extravagant accusations as well as defensive reactions, to let such a distinction go unheeded in the matter of the American Committee. I, for one, approve of the efforts of the Committee spoken of above. I can in no sense let it be thought that in so doing I am a defender or defamer of Trotskyism.

The statement of the Committee as included in your article of the 1st would indicate that those whose names were listed are attempting to "clear" Trotsky, and to prejudge before investigation the trials in Moscow as ex parte and unjust. I cannot subscribe to such imputation. There is much concerning Trotsky and the trials about which I would like to know more, and it was because the Committee seemed to be an impartial effort to get at those things that I joined it. Beyond that purpose I feel I cannot go with the Committee. I imagine the majority of American citizens would have something of the same reaction.

L. E. BOWMAN.

Dan Rico

Terror in Jersey City

● It may perhaps be of interest to you to learn how easily it can happen here. Jersey City's esteemed Mayor Hague must have learned plenty on his visit to Germany last year, and now his Gestapo need not take a back seat compared with Hitler's organization. This week, a police lieutenant accompanied by a uniformed policeman visited the shop where I am employed and asked my employer if there were any Communists in the shop, or if there were any employees that he suspected of being Communists or "labor agitators."

It is not reasonable to assume that our shop was singled out for this purpose, as there has been no "labor trouble" since the establishment of the firm. The fate of any labor-union sympathizer, once the powerful Hague machine has put its finger on him, can be only too easily conjectured.

Q. M.

Dan Rico

NEW MASSES

ESTABLISHED 1911

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Lincoln and the Negro Youth

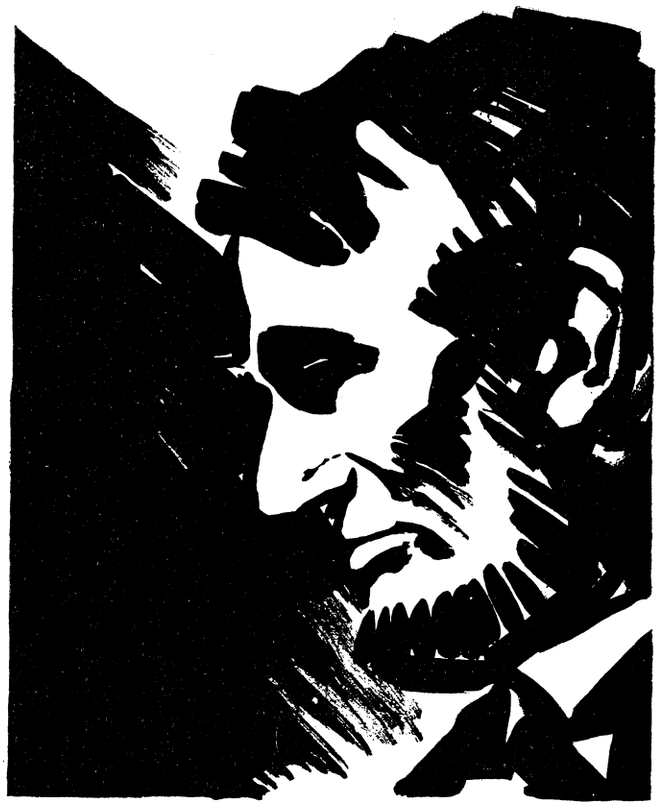
THE 128th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth finds the people of the United States still beset by foes of their freedom and progress. The great financial empire centered in Wall Street, the far-flung utilities interests, the dominating industrial corporations and the political parties which they finance and control are more powerful (and more subtle) enemies than the slavery armies of the Secessionists. While slavery no longer exists as a legal system, it has been supplanted by the slavery of economic control, in whose nets are strangled not only the Negro people ("emancipated" these seventy-six years), but their white brothers as well.

Seventy-two years after Lincoln's death, a twenty-two-year-old Negro youth, Wesley Johnson, is lynched in Alabama. In New York City a charge of murder against a young Negro apartment-house attendant kindles the lynch spirit of supposedly progressive newspapers, as well as the Hearst sheets, which vie with each other in a campaign of incitement against the entire Negro population of the city.

But Lincoln has never been forgotten by the youth of America, particularly the Negro youth. Through decades of post-Civil War reaction they have kept his words, and the words of the great Abolitionist leaders alive; and this year, from February 13 to 15, the first conference of southern youth is scheduled to gather in Richmond, Va., former capital of the slave South, to discuss "all economic, social, political, religious, and educational problems of Negro youth." Four hundred delegates are expected, from every southern state as well as from the North and Middle West. These delegates will be animated by the spirit of the great American Negro leaders of the past—the spirit of Nat Turner, of Frederick Douglass, of Harriet Tubman. They will find encouragement toward solidarity with their white brothers in the examples of men like John Brown. And they will have before them the living, courageous figure of a young Negro leader of their own day, Angelo Herndon.

The Negro youth of America today remember Abraham Lincoln with the critical respect due to a progressive of almost a century ago. While conscious of his limitations and faults, they realize that these were the limitations of his age, limitations which only a few great figures, here and in Europe, transcended. But they also recall his words, spoken in 1860: "I want every man to have his chance—and I believe a black man is entitled to it—in which he can better his position. . . ."

Not only by his deeds and words, but by his entire life,



Scott Johnston

Lincoln symbolized a spirit now outgrown but true to the progressive currents of his day. The westward expansion of our people was still in progress when Lincoln was President; seemingly unlimited opportunity presented itself to a people whose land and other natural resources had not yet been entirely grabbed up by railroad, timber, and mining interests —the robber barons of the second half of the nineteenth century. Lincoln never recognized the working people as a class, nor the Negro people as part of that class. But he did feel that their rights and their futures were interwoven. And his speech of March 6, 1860, delivered at New Haven, Conn., has a peculiar significance today, both to Negro and white workers:

> I am glad to see that a system of labor prevails in New England under which laborers can strike when they want to, where they are not obliged to work under all circumstances, and are not tied down and obliged to labor whether you pay them or not. I like the system which lets a man quit when he wants to, and wish it might prevail everywhere. One of the reasons why I am opposed to slavery is just here. . . . When one starts poor, as do most in the race of life, free society is such that he knows he can better his condition—he knows that there is no fixed condition of labor for his whole life. I am not ashamed to confess that twenty-five years ago I was a hired laborer, mauling rails, at work on a flatboat—just what might happen to any poor man's son. I want every man to have his chance.

Today, with automobile workers by the thousands fighting for their rights and their lives, with the great steel and other industries in ferment, with the C.I.O. preparing and leading the battles for industrial democracy on a dozen fronts, these words of Lincoln have special meaning. But to the masses of Negro youth who are preparing to meet on the day following Lincoln's anniversary, they have an even deeper meaning; for they foretell that union of Negro people and white for which the progressive forces of both are now fighting, and through which alone the Negro people can achieve "all economic, social, political, religious, and educational" equality.

REVIEW AND COMMENT

A new novel by Contributor Newhouse—Willie Gallacher's life story, and other things

ON several occasions, I have heard persons ask why none of the contemporary social-minded novelists write with the Communist movement for background and with Communists for characters. I have read novels in which one of the central figures was a Communist, usually either heavily romanticized or heavily misunderstood, and some other novels with cloudy, minor characters called Communists. The reasons why interested novelists have failed to dramatize this scene and cast may range from ignorance to timidity. The reasons, however, are no longer very important since that book has now been written; and it is Edward Newhouse's new novel. Dating from the publication of this book, it will be appreciably easier to write imaginative, not imaginary, works about persons in the Communist movement; it will not be easy to write a better book about them than *This Is Your Day*.

In a release accompanying the book, the publishers say it is a novel "that may well be recommended to those people who are under the impression that Mrs. Franklin Delano Roosevelt or Roger Baldwin or Heywood Broun are Communists. . . . It will be a revelation to the mass majority of America." These are not overstatements. For the reader will learn in these pages what causes human beings—American human beings, young and old, city dwellers and country people—to become Communists; what they do after they join the Communist Party; how they struggle against personal hang-overs from former days, against inertia among people with whom they work, against financial difficulties, and then become keener, more mature Communists.

It is an invaluable service merely to take the false whiskers off the Hearst-conceived Communist. To that service, Mr. Newhouse adds his luxuriant, imposing, creative talent in telling the story of Gene and his girl, Alma, who no sooner became his wife than Gene was transferred from Party work in New York to an agrarian district. Gene cannot take Alma with him; while he knows that he is supposed to reorganize some poorly functioning Party units, he is not certain why he should be sent on the task. He goes, not out of obedience—that's something else, he tells himself—but out of discipline and out of the unshakable certainty that his roots are in the Communist Party. The separation does not diminish his love for Alma; but dominant for him are the events that take place during the separation, the series of small victories and small defeats, the mounting recognition of what should be accomplished, and perhaps could be accomplished, given long enough, through his instrumentality. In New York, Alma, finishing her last year at college in preparation for becoming a teacher, tries to identify herself more closely with Gene by becoming active in the movement. Another goad for her is the contemplation of her brother, Harold, once Gene's friend, once interested in the movement, now a weak and contemptible opportunist who tries to rationalize his cowardice. Each member of Alma's family is wonderfully well drawn. Each member of Gene's family—farmers whose demonstrations for relief he directed, farmers who are going to be evicted unless they stand together and act—is remarkably conceived.

Mr. Newhouse brings to this novel humor, bite, insight, and substance. There's nothing more to ask for, except another novel by Edward Newhouse—soon.

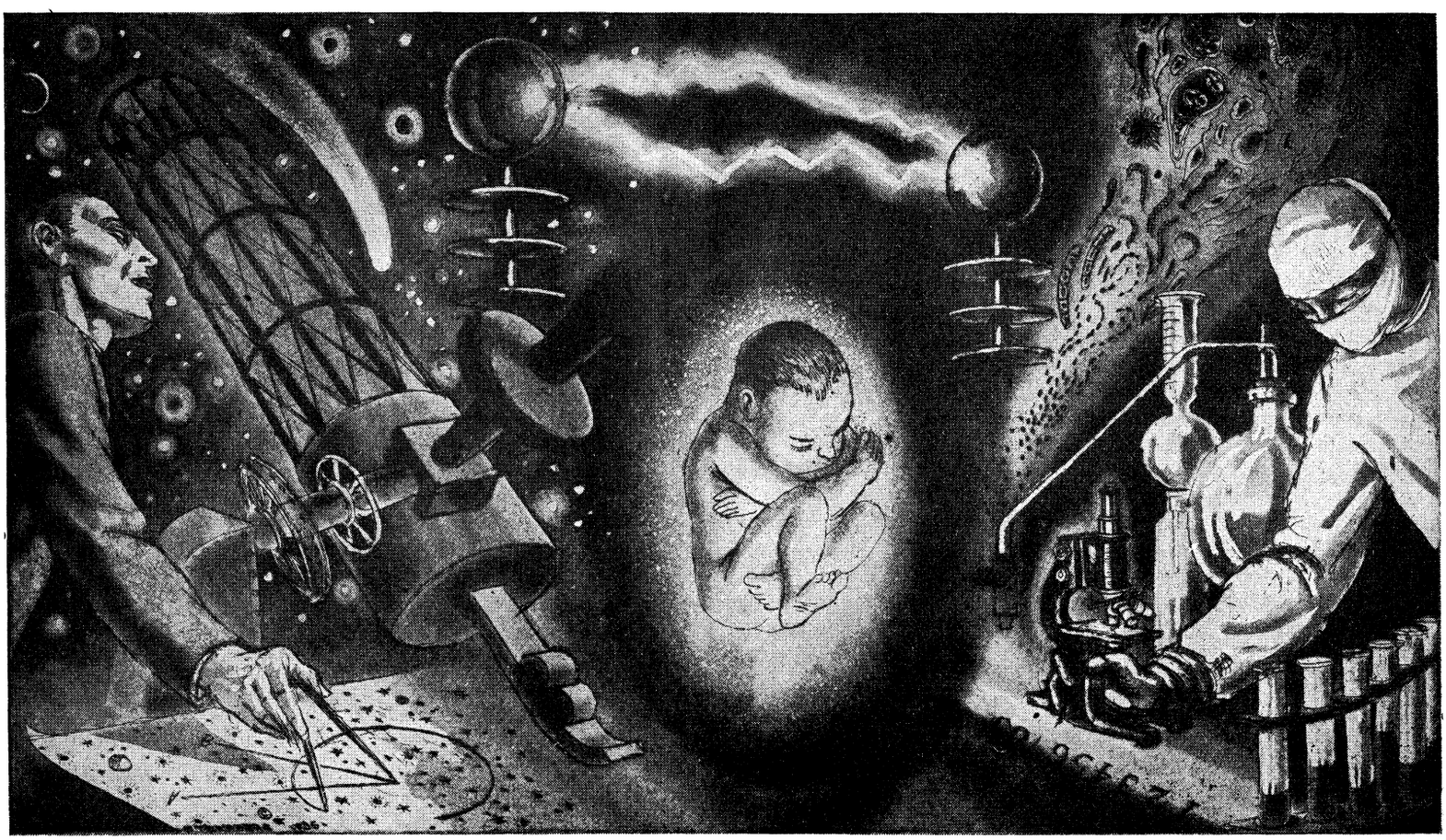
LEANE ZUGSMITH.

* THIS IS YOUR DAY, *by Edward Newhouse. Lee Furman.* $2.50.

A Scotch Communist

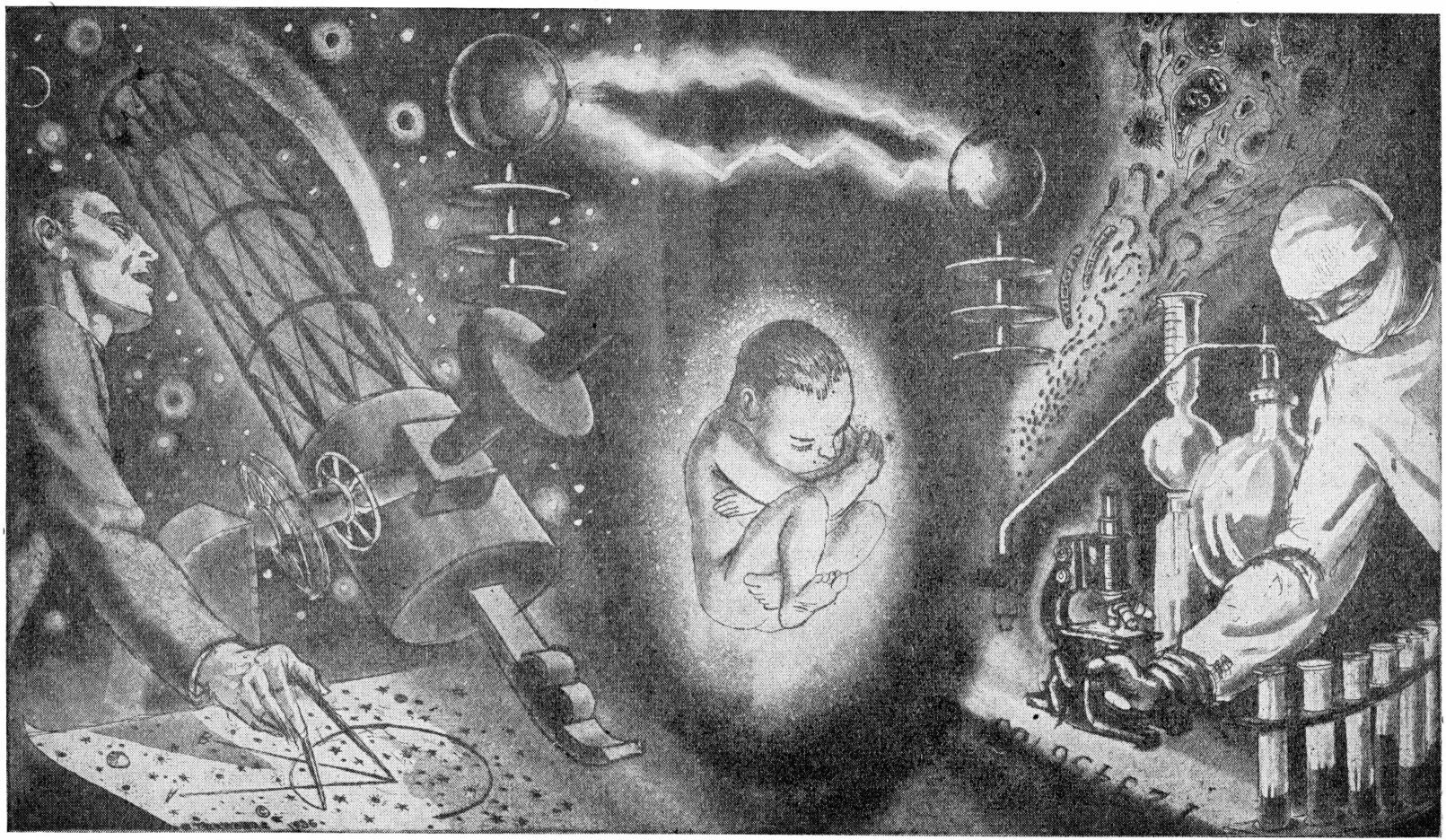
REVOLT ON THE CLYDE, *an Autobiography, by William Gallacher. International Publishers.* $2.50.

ON December 4, 1935, William Gallacher, Communist Member of Parliament for the working-class constituency of West Fife, delivered his first speech in the House of Commons. The text of Gallacher's talk, marked by frequent interruptions from the outraged benches on the Right, left no doubt about the force and clarity of this



The Secret of Life

Etching by Harry Sternberg (American Artists Group)



The Secret of Life

Etching by Harry Sternberg (American Artists Group)

worker's mind. Unembarrassed by an English public school education, Gallacher is a hard hitter (as the Glasgow constabulary will testify), and it was no surprise to find him, in his maiden speech, making a fighting talk against the government's calamitous program. The background of that speech is sketched in this book, which is as remote as possible from the romantic tradition of autobiographical writing. *Revolt on the Clyde* is the record not of an "interesting personality" but of a class-conscious worker's experience in the struggle against industrial tyranny. In the bourgeois Alger dream-story, the canal boy rises to the Senate by deserting his class; in the honest-to-goodness narrative of the workers' party the puddler is elected to Parliament by leading his class.

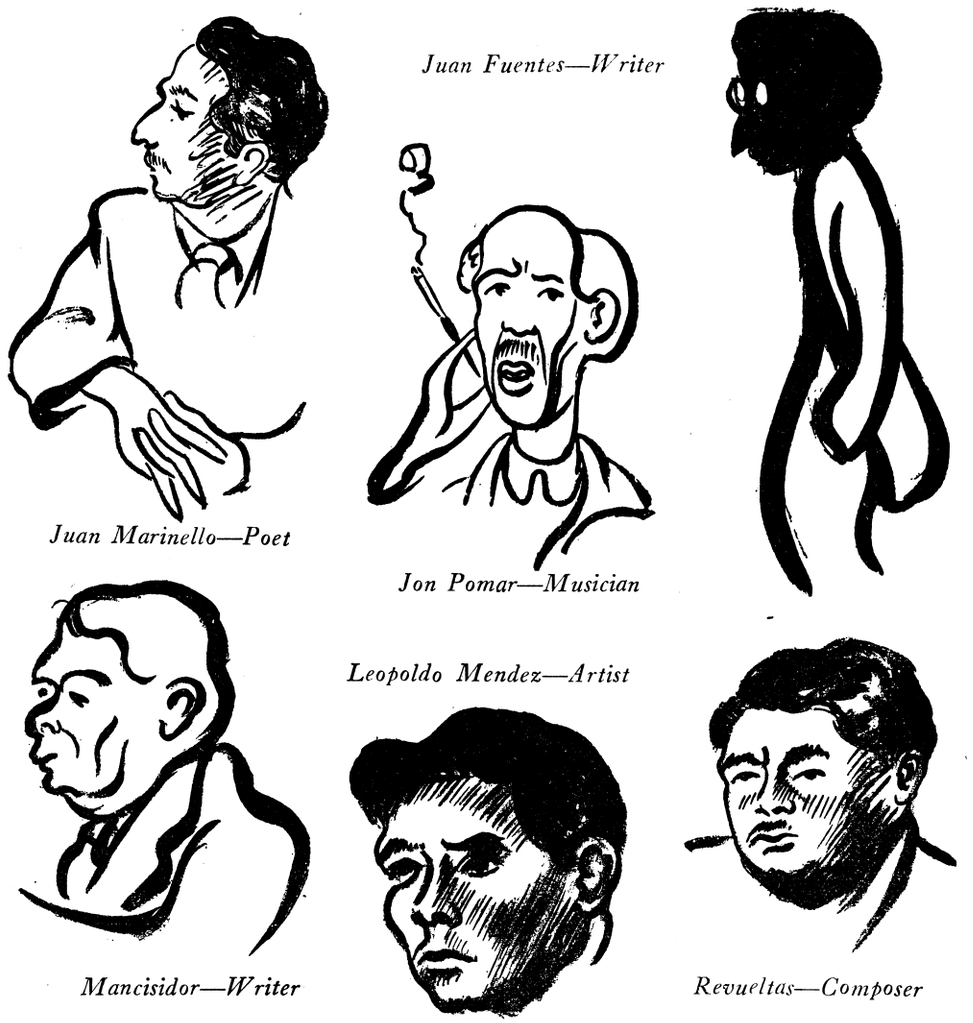
Willie Gallacher was born in 1881. His father was Irish, his mother a Highlander; both were beaten by poverty. The story of his youth is one of confused bitterness and hardship out of which was hammered a vision of a socialist society in which men might at last be free. But this vision found expression in concrete, daily trade-union activity rather than in artistic or philosophic articulation. The shops and mills of the Clyde bred realism. Willie Gallacher never hitched his wagon to a star; he was more fascinated by the possibilities of horsepower. And this power, he discovered very early, lay in the collective energies of his comrades on the job.

This account deals mainly with the hectic war years, which put to test the social doctrines and political parties which had bargained for support among the workers on the Clyde. Reformist groups like the Independent Labour Party and the DeLeonite Socialist Labour Party lacked leadership and program. Ramsay MacDonald had been labelled by Gallacher, even before the war, as the Pecksniff—and Snowden as the Uriah Heep—of the Socialist movement. Arthur Henderson brilliantly performed his part as fugleman (Scottish for stooge) for Lloyd George. And Lloyd George himself, as Minister of Munitions, was parading his miserable rôle of the people's friend while selling out the workers throughout the British Empire in the name of loyalty and liberalism. Among the genuine revolutionary figures who stood out in the recurring anti-war demonstrations and shop strikes, the most powerful was John McLean, the Scottish schoolmaster who earned the praise of Lenin. From McLean, Gallacher learned patience and fortitude. He was his master in irreconcilable antagonism to the ruling class, and it is natural that Gallacher should devote a considerable portion of his book to the activities of this Marxist.

The February and October Revolutions stirred the workers of the Clyde as no other event in their history had done. Gallacher was sent as a delegate from his militant organization, the Clyde Workers' Committee, to attend a national convention called at Leeds in 1917 to declare solidarity with the Russian Revolution and to organize Workers' and Soldiers' Councils in Britain. Lloyd George, to appease the workers, had to declare: "You see, I'm a bit of a Red Flagger myself." Huge demonstrations were staged in Glasgow. McLean was appointed Soviet consul for Scotland. Gallacher and his comrades were thrown into jail again and again, only to be released by the enormous protest pressure of the workers. Resistance to conscription laws was trebled. It was quite impossible for any government spokesman to make a public speech in Glasgow. In short, a revolutionary situation was present, Gallacher points out, but there was no disciplined revolutionary party to lead it.

The experience of these years brought home the need for a British Communist Party. Early in 1920, the question of unity and the possibility of affiliation with the Third International was discussed by the British Socialist Party, a group of the Independent Labour Party, and the group around Sylvia Pankhurst. Gallacher himself attended the second congress of the Comintern in that year. In Moscow he met Lenin, who cleared up for Gallacher the "infantile disorder" (anti-parliamentarism, anti-united front) with which Lenin had charged him in *Left-Wing Communism.* And from Lenin he learned not only the suicidal nature of that sectarianism into which he had fallen as a consequence of his bitter contempt for the Labour Party; he learned, too, those distinguished human qualities which separate the careerist in love with his ambition from the revolutionary devoted to socialism: "A man who was making history, great history, yet simple, unaffected, a true comrade in the deepest meaning of the word. Not for a moment could I dream of talking about him—to him. I couldn't even think of him when he was talking to me. The remarkable thing about Lenin was the complete subordination of self. His whole mind, his whole being, was centered in the revolution. So when I spoke to Lenin, I had to think not of him, but of what he was thinking—about the revolutionary struggle of the workers." It is no feeble tribute to Gallacher to say that his "autobiography" is distinguished by this trait which he recognized in Lenin. *Revolt on the Clyde* is no record of "How I Came to Socialism," but of "How Socialism Is Coming to the World."

WALTER RALSTON.



AT THE L.E.A.R. CONGRESS IN MEXICO CITY

Sketched during the sessions by Joe Jones

If There Were No Jews

ANTI-SEMITISM, *by Hugo Valentin. Viking Press.* $2.

"IF there were no Jews," a Nazi Voltaire might paraphrase, "it would be necessary to invent them." Anti-Semitism is such a handy blackjack for knocking a nation silly, that it is hard to imagine how that delicate political operation called fascism could be suc-

cessfully performed without it. Four hundred and fifty years ago, the Jews were expelled from Spain, and the country was left without a "Jewish question." Today, the fascist descendants of Torquemada, who have failed to achieve a mass basis despite their alliance with the Church, would give a hundred Caproni bombers and several divisions of Nazi "volunteers" for a few hundred thousand Jewish scapegoats.

It is remarkable what an ingenious Fascist can do with a few Jews. Goering may prefer "cannon instead of butter," but anti-Semitism is a much better spread. It can cover any side of any issue and both sides at the same time if necessary. Depending upon what class you are trying to befuddle, you can serve up your Jews as a ring of international financiers who invented capitalism—a diabolical scheme to mulct the Christian world, or you can roast them as a horde of international Communists, who are trying to abolish private property and destroy western (capitalist) civilization. In Catholic Poland, you can stir up the peasants to pogroms by denouncing the Jews as the crucifiers of Christ. Across the border in Neo-pagan Germany, you can attack Christianity by dubbing it an insidious Jewish doctrine. If you are a French Fascist, you can accuse the Jews of being pro-German and of trying to rob France of the fruits of her victory. According to Coty, the financial backer of French fascism, the depression and the Hoover moratorium was a plot of Kuhn, Loeb, & Co. to aid Germany at the expense of France. This need not prevent you, if you are a German Nazi, from branding the Jews as traitors, who sold out Germany to the Entente. Nor need the latter hinder you, if you are a British Fascist (J. L. Maxse in the *National Review*), from calling the London Jewish bankers "the German garrison in the City of London." The Jews are a ring of international financiers who are always plotting to embroil the peace-loving Christian world in war so that they can amass war profits. At the same time, they are a race of cowardly pacifists who are trying to corrupt the noble Aryan soul which, according to Allah Hitler and his prophet Rosenberg, is only happy when it has a hand grenade to play with. Even Japan, where Jews are about as common as quintuplets, has discovered the pernicious Semitic peril, and at the height of the Manchukuo adventure, anti-Jewish riots were staged in Tokio to divert the world's attention from China.

It is such mad slaver, lacking even the symptomatic consistency of ordinary phobia, which prompts well-intentioned Jewish apologists to works of scholarly refutation, such as the volume under review. One might as well make a chemical analysis of the witches' brew. Unfortunately, it is not sufficient to prove that Joseph Stalin is not a Jew, or that President Roosevelt's real name is not Rosenfeld. I do not underestimate the value of the statistical ammunition which Mr. Valentin, a Swedish-Jewish journalist, has assembled in his chapters. He has duplicated on an international scale the good job that the editors of *Fortune* did in their "The Jew in America." As might be expected, the emphasis is on German anti-Semitism. One of the most startling facts which he reveals is that, contrary to Nazi propaganda, the financial influence of the German Jews reached its peak during the pre-war Wilhelmine period and declined sharply under the "Jewish" Weimar Republic. The post-war inflation, blamed by the Nazis on the Jews, seemed to have hit Jewish business hardest. As for war-profiteering, the author proves that it was heavy industry, controlled for the most part by non-Jews (and, later Hitler's chief backers), which came to the fore as a result of the war, thrusting the banking interests, where the Jews were prominent, into the background. Mr. Valentin illumines the charge of "Jewish materialism" by pointing out that only two of Germany's forty-six multi-millionaires were Jewish, whereas eleven out of her forty-four Nobel prize winners were of the same race of money grubbers. Why Mr. Valentin should take pride in the achievements of an Einstein and apologize for the achievements of a Marx is less clear. According to a statement of Ambassador Luther (New York *Times,* May 25, 1933), fifty percent of government positions in pre-Nazi Germany were hogged by the Jews. According to official figures cited by the author, Dr. Luther erred slightly, the exact percentage being 0.16 percent.

But anti-Semitism is not a misguided school of ethnology, to be annihilated by facts and figures. If it were, the German Jews, who are better equipped for such scientific disputation than any other Jewish group, would not now be at Hitler's mercy. History, unfortunately, is no scholarly debate, but the clash of great social forces struggling for mastery. In the contemporary social struggle, anti-Semitism is merely a means to an end. In its period of decay, the failure of capitalism is so apparent that it cannot hope to save itself by a frontal attack. Hence, it must use all sorts of feints and sallies. Anti-Semitism is a feint of desperate capitalism to confuse the workers and the middle-class elements. It makes no sense as ethnology, but it does make sense as economics.

The Jew is learning, by a process of elimination, that there is only one answer to the "Jewish question." He has tried segregation in Poland and Czarist Russia, and invited pogroms. He has tried assimilation in Germany and fared even worse. He has taken a flyer in nationalism only to find himself the catspaw of British imperialism. The Jew is at bay. He can try to shoo off the mad dog of fascism by protesting that he is no Communist, that he regrets ever having fathered a Karl Marx, that Felix Frankfurter has no designs on the American succession, that he hardly ever uses Christian blood in his baking—and pray under his breath that somebody shoots the beast. Or he can help decide his fate, by allying himself everywhere with the social and national victims of capitalism in a struggle for a society free from economic and national exploitation.

ALTER BRODY.

Rockwell Kent

Democratizing Art

FINE PRINTS OLD AND NEW, *by Carl Zigrosser. Covici-Friede.* $1.

THIS very readable booklet is an intelligent, well-informed brief for the democratization of the fine print. The author is well known to artists as a progressive force in American graphic arts, and he presents here, in condensed form, some important ideas and information, valuable not only to the layman seeking a useful guide in the development of his understanding of art, but also valuable to a large number of artists, who have been left stranded by a small group of wealthy clients who no longer "need" art, or cannot "afford" to buy art these depression days. Such artists may find here some clues to redirection, economic and æsthetic.

In his opening chapter, the author brings out, in striking fashion, the numerous similarities between books and prints. Just as Gutenberg's invention of printing books from movable type greatly extended the existing limits for the dissemination of learning, so the inventions of the woodblock, etching, and engraving

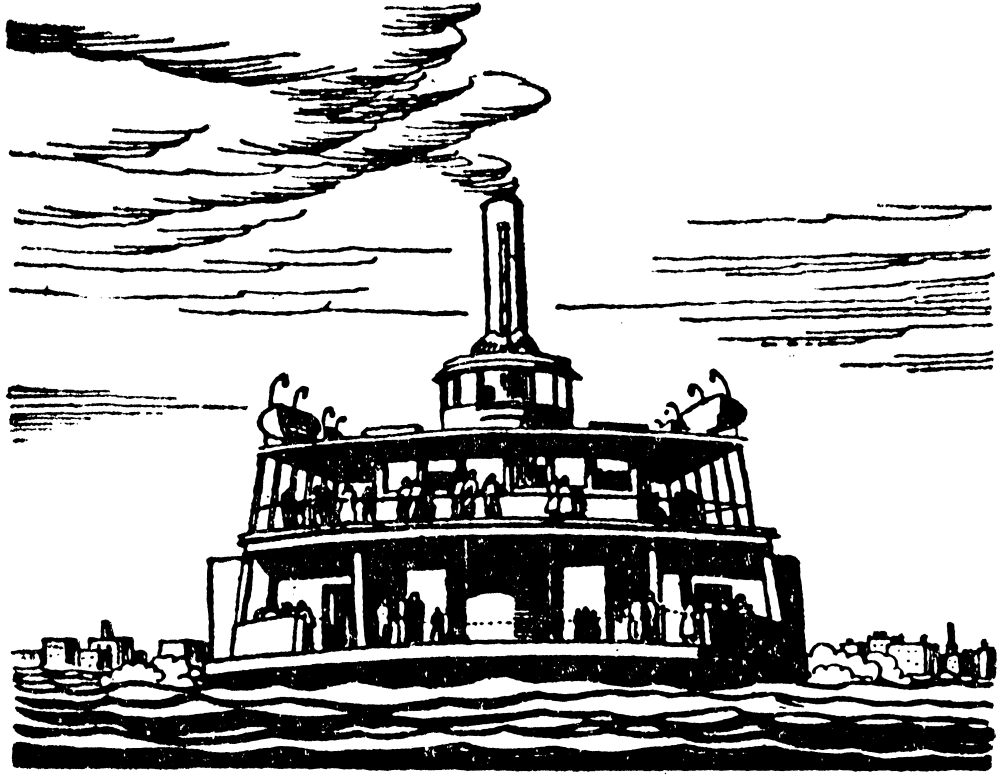
". . . transformed the unique drawing or painting which could be owned and enjoyed by relatively few people into a veritable multiplication of originals available to a widespread public.

"Books and prints are the products of a democratic revolution in the history of culture."

The closely parallel and related historical functions of the book and the print are described through well-selected examples, and the important point of their approximately equal market value is made by many quotations showing that works by such masters as Durer, Piranesi, Hogarth, Goya, Rembrandt, Daumier, and many others, sold during their lifetime for the equivalent of an average priced popular book, and without arbitrary limitation of the edition.

Coming down to recent times, the author shows how the fine print has been perverted from its traditional character and held captive by a small class of wealthy collectors. In the face of far-reaching technical discoveries which could easily make fine contemporary prints available to literally millions of people, the print has been kept "rare" and exorbitantly priced by an arbitrarily-imposed scarcity. "It is plain to be seen," he says, "that a portion of current print production is not a popular art but a sideline of the securities market."

Urging the artist and the public to help bring about a readjustment, and return to the great tradition of the print, Mr. Zigrosser points out the many advantages such a step would have for both, and especially for the



Rockwell Kent

artist. There are some brief but illuminating remarks on æsthetic problems . . . such as "the new versus the old"; modern and academic; the relation of art to nature; the sketch in relation to the finished work; and the effect of the invention of photography upon the character and function of the print. On this point the author comments suggestively to the artist:

"Since, however, photography has taken over certain of the functions, (mainly the reproductive), the graphic arts are free to carry on in another plane. In the objectifying and stimulation of collective emotions, in satire and caricature, in symbolism and synthesis of all kinds, in all purposive directions difficult to express in photography, the artist and print-maker have ample opportunity to give forth the best that is in them."

STEPHEN ALEXANDER.

"Living" Conditions

THE TENEMENTS OF CHICAGO, 1908-1935, *by Edith Abbott, assisted by Sophonisba P. Breckinridge and other associates. University of Chicago Press.* $5.

THIS many-sided story of the housing of Chicago's millions, past and present, is not pretty. More important, however, it is relatively thorough, detailed, and most carefully documented—the result of twenty-five years' research by several generations of students and faculty members in the School of Social Service Administration of the University of Chicago, directed by Miss Abbott, dean of the school and author of many works on social welfare. Basic census data as to growth of the city, population distribution and density, homes owned, rentals by local areas, and percent of population receiving relief are shown in a series of maps prepared by the Social Science Research Committee. Thirty-seven pages of photographs bring the maps and text to life. The reader is faced with acres of frame tenements, yard and basement toilets, filthy alleys, narrow lot-line passageways and illegal windowless rooms—all of which, in spite of an excellent tenement-house law passed in 1902, still characterize large areas where the workers must make their homes. Between 1908 and 1933, 151 blocks in scattered neighborhoods, chosen as typical, were canvassed and recanvassed. Special studies were made of non-family groups, families in furnished rooms, evictions during the depression and the housing of dependent families. The accumulated data constitute an imposing historical record of city growth and dilapidation under capitalism.

Uncomfortable living is no novelty to Chicagoans. The city was incorporated in 1837 with a population of 4,066, housed in about 400 dwellings, most of them cheap frame structures.

Chicago's swampy location, with unpaved streets and unsanitary homes, led to recurrent epidemics of cholera, small-pox, and typhoid, each epidemic followed by a temporary campaign against congestion, but with few lasting results. In 1886 the health commissioner estimated that one third of the population were dependent on the privy vault. In 1894 a federal investigation of slum conditions showed that 73 percent of the families in the area studied (east of Hull House) lived on premises with this form of sanitary provision. In 1890 "an ordinance was drafted declaring the privy vault a nuisance on any street on which there was a public sewer, but the City Council was urged without effect to pass this ordinance." (p. 51.)

The authors supply many illuminating facts as to tenement house legislation in Chicago, stating, "The great weakness was failure on the part of the authorities to make any genuine effort to enforce the new (1902) ordinance. . . . When an attempt at enforcement was made . . . the ordinance was at once attacked in what should have been the house of its friends, the City Council itself. Before the following April 4, 1903, twenty-eight orders had in fact been issued . . . exempting builders from the new requirements." (pp. 62-63.) An important section in the 1910 revision of the law required a certificate from the commissioner of health (to a builder) stating that all requirements of the law had been met before occupancy was allowed. We read that "In the report for 1911-18, figures are given showing that 'during 1913-16 upwards of 6000 tenement houses were constructed each year,' and during this period only 91 such permits were issued." In 1910 the commissioner of health recommended a separate division within the Bureau of Sanitation for "that Bureau's most important activity—the investigation and improvement of housing conditions in congested and neglected neighborhoods of the city." However, as Miss Abbott points out, "That separate division has never been created, and *the supervision of housing conditions constituted a less conspicuous group of activities in the work of the two departments (Building and Health) in 1935 than in 1903.*" (Emphasis mine—M. T.) The main explanation offered is that enforcement was found to be "bad politics."

The problems of the post-war period and the depression stand out sharply. *Congestion:* Over a third of the apartments over-crowded according to Bureau of Labor standards. In certain areas thirty-seven out of every 100 sleeping rooms illegally occupied. . . . "Beds everywhere." A woman living near Federal St. very proud of the fact that her beds were "working 23 hours a day." In a South Chicago "home" a lodger sleeping with the father, mother, and two children in a room with 800 cubic feet of air space, although 1600 cubic feet were required by the tenement house code, unenforced for twenty years. *Darkness:* Between 29 and 30 percent of the rooms reported as dark or gloomy in both the original and post-war canvass. *Sanitation:* Of 15,115 households, only 56.5 percent had toilets within the apartment. *Rentals:* Far too high for value received, even when seemingly low—and higher always for Negroes and Mexicans than for other nationalities. "Our studies confirmed the general impression that the rent paid by Negroes was appreciably higher than that paid by people of any other

group. . . . The whole of the 'black belt' seemed to be seething with misery during the terrible winters of 1931-32 and 1932-33. Condemned houses that could be used rent-free were eagerly sought after." The notorious "Angelus"—a seven-story building, relic of 1893—dark, unheated, without water—yet housing hundreds of persons, practically all Negroes, during 1932. (Miss Abbott's figure of 206 persons is inaccurate; the building had close to 800 residents in 1932.) "The visitor saw, one day, a tenant on his way to the fifth floor with a ten-gallon hogshead of water on his back. He had got the water nearly a block away" (p. 470). *Evictions:* A steady increase in the number of suits filed, through the years of so-called prosperity. . . . A jump in writs of restitution from 7215 in 1931 to 63,152 in 1932—after the relief agencies adopted the "extraordinary" policy of refusing to pay rents. "There seems to be no permanent record of the evictions themselves from which comparisons can be made over a period of time," say the authors. Chicago witnessed, in 1931, a series of determined struggles against eviction, led by the Unemployed Council, during which three workers were murdered by the police. The discussion of these struggles, though by no means hostile, is superficial and shows little understanding of the forces at work or of the very real gains resulting. The investigators observed, however, that the "rent moratorium" led to "almost incredible" hardships, that no landlord wanted to rent to a relief client, and that deception became necessary, with nervous and mental collapse increasing in frequency.

The conclusions drawn from this mass of data are not too optimistic. Indeed, the jacket of the book proclaims that "the results of recent investigations attest their own futility." On the last page Miss Abbott declares, "The final answer, if and when it comes . . . must come from the economic side. The unskilled workers even in periods of prosperity do not have the wages to pay for decent houses. The employer must pay higher wages, or very wide areas must be cleared and very great numbers of new houses must be furnished out of taxes. There is no other way." But social workers have been saying "must" for fifty years! Miss Abbott knows well that these essential wage increases will not come automatically. She quotes a "socially minded journalist" who suggests that "if the people in the slums have even a small object-lesson like this [a federal model housing project] before them . . . they will become politically articulate and 'supply the political force' necessary for more adequate and . . . vigorous rehousing plans."

It is this realism which distinguishes the present volume from the usual sociological study. There is little glossing over of municipal corruption, though certainly the processes gingerly uncovered are not followed through to their logical conclusion. It would seem that any candid social worker must agree with Willard Waller of Pennsylvania State College, who has recently said:

Many of the conditions which we treat as social problems spring from the very nature of the social organization. . . . Poverty of the wage-earner, sometimes called the basic social problem, is necessitated by facts which lie deep in the present economic system and in the relation of social classes to one another. Sub-standard housing, likewise, is the natural and inevitable result of institutions and practices of long standing. . . . The difficulty which he [the liberal humanitarian] faces is that the human misery which he deplores is a necessary part of a social order which seems to him good. . . . He wishes to improve the condition of the poor, but not to interfere with private property. Until the humanitarian is willing to give up his allegiance to the organizational mores, and in some cases to run squarely against them, he must continue to treat symptoms without removing their causes.

To sum up, we have here a gold mine of facts which await analysis. Some sociologist or historical materialist, turning to this task in the near future, and filling in the gaps by further diligent research, will lay bare the true relationship of the social forces in the second largest city of capitalist America, as they affect the housing of the masses. Meantime, this volume should greatly stimulate the demand for an immediate and extensive federal housing program. MARTHA THOMAS.

Brief Reviews

THE HUNDRED YEARS: *by Phillip Guedalla. Doubleday Doran.* $3.

This historical essay describes the important things that have happened in the world, from a certain colorless morning in 1837 when Victoria became queen, to a certain day in the year just past when her grandson died, and her great-grandson became Edward VIII. This era, Mr. Guedalla edits for us in a series of polite essays about places and people at the crucial periods. He tells us in his elegant way that Victoria loved Albert very much; that America inconsiderately stole California from Mexico; that there was street fighting in Paris in July 1848. In the chapter on Fort Sumter, Guedalla says: "There was no compelling reason in economics or sociology for the war between the States, and the tragic outcome was almost completely lacking in Marxian inevitability." This quotation will help to explain the dilletantism of Mr. Guedalla's approach to history and his queer reminiscing style.

D. G.

WHY WE WENT TO WAR, *by Newton D. Baker. Harper's, for the Council on Foreign Relations.* $1.50.

Woodrow Wilson's war secretary, who is also the one member of his cabinet—except David F. Houston—to remain completely loyal to his memory, sets forth on a second moral crusade. During and after the First World War, Mr. Baker played the part of knight-errant for the cause of democracy in general, and for the League of Nations in particular. Today, he has enlisted for the duration of a still longer war under the colors of the House of Morgan. The appearance of Walter Millis's *Road to War* in the spring of 1935 caused no little consternation in the neighborhood of 23 Wall Street, and a year later *Foreign Affairs* brought forth a bloated summer issue, big with Mr. Baker's brain-child defending what Charles A. Beard has called the "Morgan thesis" of America's active enlistment in the Allied cause. This thesis need not be rehearsed in detail here. Suffice it to say that it attributed America's declaration of war solely to Germany's submarine campaign. Mr. Beard and other historians at once challenged some of Mr. Baker's interpretations, and new light has recently been shed on the famous "sunrise conference" of congressional leaders with whom President Wilson discussed a possible declaration of war on Germany long before the German government announced its program of unrestricted submarine warfare. That Mr. Baker has not taken the opportunity to refer in his book to

these attacks on its demonstrable factual errors is the only point about it that deserves even passing mention. Q. H.

BELOVED FRIEND: THE STORY OF TSCHAIKOWSKY AND NADEJDA VON MECK, *by Catherine Drinker Bowen and Barbara von Meck. Random House.* $3.

Two volumes of previously unpublished correspondence between the composer, Tschaikowsky, and the wealthy widow, Nadejda von Meck, his benefactor, which recently appeared in the Soviet Union, have been the excuse for another biography, and a dramatic narrative at that. Barbara von Meck, granddaughter-in-law of Nadejda, now resident of New York, made literal translations of certain of the newly published letters and supplied reminiscent notes, and Mrs. Bowen told the whole story. Nonetheless, the publishers ambiguously state on the book's jacket that the letters were "seized" by the Bolsheviki; that the Soviet government "has refused to release them"; that "fortunately for the musical world," Barbara von Meck has translated them; etc.

The lush, wordy, thirteen-year correspondence underlies the "psychological relationship" about which the narrative is spun. The letters are certainly a fact, and their aspects require an evaluation. But the narrative is gratuitously superimposed "human interest," and whatever value it has is to literature and not to music. Apparently, the author re-lives the romantic ecstasy of her protagonists, and the outpourings of the pair who never met, swim helplessly among her own platitudes. In lyric prose, the lavishly dramatized characters emerge: now torn from within, now smiling through tears. They passionately survive Mrs. Bowen's innumerable artistic climaxes. M. M.

SIGNATURES. WORKS IN PROGRESS, No. 2. *Detroit, Mich.* 75c.

Signatures, a magazine devoted to the novel idea of presenting sections of the books noted writers are at work on, is at present the leading literary magazine in the country. Its second issue contains prose by Henry Roth, author of *Call It Sleep;* Paul Corey, who is rising in attention as a short story writer; Evelyn Scott, Glenway Westcott, Nathan Asch, James T. Farrell, Horace Gregory, and David Cornell de Jong; and poetry by Kenneth Patchen, Isidor Schneider, Muriel Rukeyser, Louis MacNeice, Winfred Townley Scott, David Greenhood, Kerker Quinn, and Isaac Gerneth. I. S.

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Recently Recommended Books

Tom Paine: Friend of Mankind, by Hesketh Pearson. Harper's. $3.

Almanac for New Yorkers: 1937, compiled by Workers of the Federal Writers Project of the Works Progress Administration in the City of New York. Simon & Schuster. 50c.

Change the World!, by Michael Gold. International Publishers. $1.39.

Behind the Spanish Barricades, by John Langdon-Davies. McBride. $2.75.

The Final Struggle, being Countess Tolstoy's Diary for 1910. Oxford. $2.50.

The New Soviet Constitution, by Joseph Stalin. International. 2c.

Hitler Over Russia?, by Ernst Henri. Translated by Michael Davidson. Simon & Schuster. $2.50.

A Book of Contemporary Short Stories, by Dorothy Brewster, Ph.D., with an Appendix on Writing the Short Story, by Lillian Barnard Gilkes. Macmillan. $3.50.

History of Florence from the Founding of the City Through the Renaissance, by Ferdinand Schevill. Harcourt, Brace. $5.

Selected Writings, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. International. $2.25.

The Crisis in the Socialist Party, by William Z. Foster. Workers Library Publishers. 5c.

SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

Fritz Lang makes another Hollywood movie—"The Good Earth" and some superlative Shakespeare

IN his essay "The Films of Fritz Lang" (in *Celluloid,* 1931), Paul Rotha pointed out that "Fritz Lang hardly seems to possess all the necessary knowledge of editing, of exact timing of shots, of precise discrimination of camera positions, and of other principles of film construction. . . ." By this time Mr. Rotha has seen the sound version of *Dr. Mabuse, M,* and *Fury,* and has, I hope, changed his opinion. If not, he will when he sees Mr. Lang's *You Only Live Once* (United Artists). This newest production is by no means as important a film, from a social point of view, as either *M* or *Fury,* but it bears every indication that Mr. Rotha's statement (in the same essay), that "Fritz Lang is to be reckoned with as a force in the world cinema," is the important statement in the essay. If nothing else, this new film gives Mr. Lang an opportunity to prove that he not only has a great knowledge of editing, timing, and camera position, but that he has a profound capacity for moving an audience. I have gone into these aspects of Mr. Lang's contribution to the American cinema because they are so clearly brought to light in *You Only Live Once.* I don't think that a more synthetic and incredible scenario has ever been turned out than the one Gene Towne and Graham Baker wrote for Fritz Lang. It has almost everything every Hollywood gangster-prison melodrama has had, including a great deal of Towne's and Baker's own *Mary Burns, Fugitive.* With the handicap of such a script, it is amazing that Fritz Lang produced the film he did. The story about a three-time loser and his love for a conventional middle-class girl is more than a terrific emotional experience. In spite of the pressure of the Hays production code, the limitations imposed upon the director by Hollywood, the censors, and the story, the conclusion one inevitably gets from this film is the impossibility of rehabilitation of criminals under capitalism. Even the *Motion Picture Herald* recognizes that *You Only Live Once* is "more a social treatise on criminology than it is entertainment. . . ." I do not mean to imply that this is an important social film. No doubt Mr. Lang would be the first to deny it. But when a director can direct *against* the script (as he did in *Fury,* but to a lesser extent) and distill from it as much as he does, that man is more than a craftsman. He knows movies, he knows life, and (what is paramount) he understands his audience. Both Sylvia Sidney and Henry Fonda respond beautifully to Mr. Lang's expert direction. In addition, Mr. Wanger should be given his share of the credit for making possible Fritz Lang's second American film.

It is a pleasure to report that although it took two years and dozens of writers and hundreds of thousands of dollars to bring Pearl Buck's distinguished novel *The Good Earth* to the screen via the Theater Guild, it is Hollywood's first honest approach to the Chinese people. Last week, Walt Carmon pointed out in these pages that the great value of Pearl Buck's books "is that she has dealt with the life of the masses rather than with old scholars in bamboo retreats; and with Chinese life in its own terms and from a viewpoint free from open or veiled assumptions of superiority." Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's *The Good Earth* has a little of that quality, and for that we are grateful. That does not mean that director Sidney Franklin and his staff of writers, which included Tess Slesinger, Talbot Jennings, and Claudine West, have successfully made their transfer of novel into film or that the production emerges as an artistic triumph. From Hollywood standards it is rather unique. Although the occidental members of the cast never fully succeed in making themselves Chinese, they behave like artists and human beings. Paul Muni comes through remarkably well, considering the direction and the nature of the role. It is Luise Rainer, however, who gives us a restrained and sensitive performance. Both Mr. Muni and Miss Rainer give one the feeling of the peasant struggle for life.

The best parts of the film are, of course, those which have direct bearing on the basic theme. Thus, the famine and the locust sequences are the high points of the film. It gives one an *indication* of what *The Good Earth* might have been under different conditions. Too much stress is laid on the "infidelity" angle of the plot, even though it may be true to the letter of the book. The novel is not a morality story. In addition, Mr. Franklin and the writers put too much emphasis on the coincidence of O-Lan (Miss Rainer) "finding" the jewels and her escape from execution.

Even in this film, Hollywood didn't lose an opportunity to take a dig at the "revolution." In the sequence in which we find Wang (Paul Muni) running with the crowd through the town, his companion remarks that "this is revolution." "What is a revolution?" asks Wang. And the director instantly cuts to the scenes of the looting. Anyone who has ever doubted Hollywood's capacity for subtlety had better examine this sequence.

A great deal of talent went into the making of *The Good Earth.* Slavko Vorkapich is responsible for several sequences of brilliant cutting. And one must admire the patience and artistry that went into the effort to make eighteen acres of California landscape look like the north of China. Of course, it is regrettable that all this energy and money wasn't used on a couple of films on our own farmers and sharecroppers. But for those we will have to look in a different direction.

Stolen Holiday (Warner Brothers) presumably inspired by the Stavisky affair, is really a fashion show starring Kay Francis. Both *Champagne Waltz* (Paramount) and Irving Berlin's *On the Avenue* (20th Century-Fox) are essentially film variety shows rather than

Second Balcony

Lithograph by Georges Schreiber

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musical films. As usual, you'll find the comedians outstanding: Jack Oakie and Herman Bing in *Champagne Waltz* and the Ritz Brothers (with a couple of new good numbers) in the other.

The Robber Symphony, which is at the Belmont Theater in New York, opened with a flourish as a prize-winning film and as the first surrealist-cinematic-musical film, but turned out to be merely an abortive attempt at fantasy. PETER ELLIS.

THE THEATER

WHEN Wat Tyler's men met Richard II and were promised such redress of grievances as seemed to them acceptable in the light of the revolutionary mass movement that stood behind them, they went back to the countryside, where, as we know, they were told it was all off; as they were, so they should remain. And presently troops came to drive the verdict home. Common people are slow in learning that the touchstone of statecraft is armed force. But the ruling class knows it, and it is for this reason that the breakup of the character of Richard II, as Shakespeare has shown it, is real even though it seems strange and even uncalled-for. When, some years after Wat Tyler, Henry Bolingbroke returns from banishment by Richard to face down Richard with a revolutionary army, yet asks as the price of peace merely that he be given back his lands and titles and his right to live in England, it seems a most modest request, and one which Richard could accept out of hand and so settle the whole affair. But instead, Richard reels off into a spiral parabola of words, heaping self-pity on self-reproach till the minds gags. He has, of course, been broken by the pricking of the bubble of his absolutism; he knows that the throne rests on armed force, and that since the force is Bolingbroke's, whatever Richard does is not the action of a king. As a kingly character he degenerates from that point on; in the essentially human qualities he grows in stature till his murder.

It cannot be said, however, that at any time Richard lacks in eloquence. Indeed, it cannot be said that any of the characters in *Richard II* lack in eloquence. The text of this play is a glittering fabric of chiseled phrase and pointed apothegm. Line after line, as the simple story unrolls, echoes and reëchoes in the mind's ear, and the impact of the lines is sometimes heavy, too, with content that has special interest for us today. When old John of Gaunt rises in his death agony to thunder his prediction of doom to Richard because Richard has become England's landlord, not her king, we prick our ears, as we do again when the gardeners remark how the royal contenders are harrowing the soil of England.

But the main effect of the play is literary, and it is indeed a rich experience. The acting company, headed by Maurice Evans in the title role (who is seconded beyond all that one could dare hope in Augustin Duncan as John of Gaunt), does a job in bringing

Shakespeare's words to life that we have no hesitation in saying outshines any Shakespeare seen in New York this or any recent season. Margaret Webster came from England to direct the play, which David Ffolkes has mounted beautifully, and Eddie Dowling and Robinson Smith are the justly proud producers. Put it on your "must" list.

One of those convenient railroad disasters permits playwright Philip Howard (writing from James Hilton's novel) to solve an unimportant and evade an important problem in *And Now Goodbye,* which John Golden has produced with Philip Merivale and Marguerite Churchill heading the cast. It is the story of Howat Freemantle, henpecked Nonconformist English clergyman, and how he almost caught up with his lost youth and lost musicianship by running away to Vienna with a young woman from his parish. Now, it should not be necessary to insist that such a lyrical drive is a potent determiner of personal history; it obviously is. At the same time, the same can be said for home and children and community love and esteem. A serious conflict between them is an interesting problem, therefore, for the playwright, and one which we (with foolish hope of a sound dramatic solution) awaited on the edge of our seat. Well, Reverend Freemantle goes to London, meets his soul mate, sows his oat, decides to run away from it all and go with her. He really tries, too, but that train wreck interferes, killing her and sending him (because of his frantic efforts to find her body) home the rescue-hero of the disaster. Here, home and family and community are at first abhorrent, but presently shine in a new light, and he stays willingly. Yes, Mr. Merivale and Miss Churchill are very good, and their psychological exploration of each other very convincing. But that train wreck was a kind of shoddy trick. ALEXANDER TAYLOR.

★

Forthcoming Broadcasts

(Times given are Eastern Standard, but all programs listed are on coast-to-coast hookups)

People's Lobby: "The American Standard of Living," a symposium including Senator Ernest Lundeen, Dr. Isidor Lubin, and others. Sat., Feb. 13, 1:30 p.m., N.B.C. blue.

"Youth Offers Some Solutions." Symposium, speakers not announced. Thurs., Feb. 18, 9:30 p.m., N.B.C. blue.

Recent Recommendations

MOVIES

Spain in Flames (Cameo, N. Y.). Raw documentation of the war.

The Plough and the Stars. Pretty satisfactory cinematizing of Sean O'Casey's play.

Black Legion. Warner Brothers' somewhat superficial document.

Camille. The old yarn, worth seeing only because it has Garbo.

PLAYS

Naughty Naught ('00) (American Music Hall, N. Y.). Amiable, simple-minded spoofing.

Dr. Faustus (Elliott, N. Y.). The W.P.A. theater's lively revival of Christopher Marlowe's classic.

But for the Grace of God (Guild, N. Y.). A proletarian play, with kids, written by Leopold Atlas.

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