Next Time You March, Legionnaires! *by* Hyde Partnow

NEW MASSES

OCTOBER 5, 1937 FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY

A Professor JOINS the Communist Party

An Answer to "Harper's"

★

Spotlight on Vigilanteism

By Alexander Kendrick

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BETWEEN OURSELVES

WHEN the *Harper's* article which is answered in this issue originally appeared, it was the subject of some correspondence between the office of the New York district of the Communist Party and the editors of the magazine. The party wrote to *Harper's* asking whether the editors wouldn't like to publish the other side of the story: an article by a professor who had joined the party and stuck. In reply, *Harper's* politely declined, remarking that it was another case of a man's biting a dog being news, but not vice versa. Unwilling, however, to give the notion that it's not startling for a professor to join the party although it is startling for one to quit, *Harper's* put it this way: there are lots of contented capitalists and no doubt there are lots of contented Communists; such stories are likely to be dull. Therefore *Harper's* wouldn't be interested. Well, by the same token, the story of a capitalist who became discontented and turned Communist should be news to *Harper's*, and any time the editors of that magazine wish to turn their theories of news into practice in this matter, the editors of the NEW MASSES can put them in touch with a number of renegade capitalists who have turned Communist. Meanwhile we offer the anonymous article starting on page three as evidence in refutation of *Harper's* thesis that the story of a "contented" Communist is likely to be dull.

The polemics between Michael Gold and Owen Burke in the Readers' Forum in this issue reflect the provocative nature of some of the comments on the arts in general and on the dance in particular which Mike made in his article on Isadora Duncan in last week's issue. We have received other letters in reply to his piece, one by a prominent dancer, which we will publish next week.

Likewise forthright was Granville Hicks's review last week of *New Letters*, compiled under the editorship of Horace Gregory, NEW MASSES poetry editor. Several replies have been received, including one from Mr. Gregory, which will be published in an early issue with answering comment by Mr. Hicks. The editors are of the opinion that this controversy will bring into the open for a more thorough examination certain literary and æsthetic issues which have lain dormant or have been aired chiefly on an oral basis, and thus contribute to a sharper definition of left-wing artistic principles.

The larger and quite different controversy which rages between the exploited many and the exploiting few on a world scale has many phases, with at least one which is constantly repeated: the slanderous attack on the Soviet Union which assumes its sharpest form when fascists or Trotskyites are speaking. The capitalist press in recent months has been given over more and more to such attacks. The NEW MASSES is fortunate, therefore, in being able to announce for publication beginning in an early issue a series of articles by editor Joshua Kunitz, who has just returned from a two-year stay in the U.S.S.R. and can from his own personal experience tell just what is going on there in the industrial and political spheres.

And as we go to press, the news from northwest China, where the erstwhile Red Army, now the Eighth Route Army, is reported to have its Japanese adversaries on the run, indicates that we will hit the bull's-eye in next week's issue. Philip J. Jaffe, managing editor of the magazine *Amerasia,* who has just returned from the former Soviet regions, has written a definitive article based on interviews with the Communist leaders and on personal observation of political and social conditions in the former Soviet regions and of the fighting forces of the new Eighth Route Army. Mr. Jaffe brought back some six hundred photographs, of which a selection of five pages of the best will be published along with his article.

What's What

MUSIC-MAKERS, attention! The American League Against War & Fascism, in coöperation with the Committee for Cultural Organization and the American Music League, announces a song contest open to any composer who wishes to participate. Songs submitted should deal with any phase of anti-war or anti-fascist activities: the present wars in China and Japan, recent fascist developments in the U. S., necessity for a united front against war and fascism, or any other anti-war or anti-fascist topic. The lyrics should be original if possible. However, the song contest committee has a group of lyrics available for the use of composers who cannot supply their own. The songs should be suitable for mass singing, preferably with a militant, march tempo. The judges will be a group of nationally known personalities in the fields of music and poetry. Among those who have already agreed to act as judges are Wallingford Riegger and Sergei Radamsky. The closing date is November 1. All songs should be received before midnight of that date.

Prizes from $10 to $50 will be awarded to the winners. The winning songs will be presented at a concert early in November, and also sung by a well-known soloist at the American League National Congress to be held that month.

All songs, whether prize-winners or not, which are worthy of publication will be published, and a 10 percent royalty on sales of such songs will be paid to the composer. All inquiries and entries should be directed to Josephine Bradley, American League Song Contest Committee, 112 East 19th St., New York City.

Minna F. Kassner writes in to ask readers who have access to facts concerning any actual recent instances of radio censorship to write to her about them at 1359 Broadway, New York. She is collaborating with contributor Lucian Zacharoff in bringing up to date an American Civil Liberties Union pamphlet on radio censorship.

The Downtown Music School, 68 East 12th St., New York City, announces the opening of three new courses for the semester beginning this week, as follows: the Music Dramas of Richard Wagner, conducted by Joseph Machlis; a Research Seminar in Musical History in Relation to Social History, conducted by Elie Siegmeister (prerequisites: knowledge of an instrument, harmony, and general familiarity with musical history); Intensive Course in Modern Music, also conducted by Elie Siegmeister. Further information can be had at the office of the school.

In our review of . . . *And Spain Sings* last week translation of certain of the ballads was attributed to Joshua Kunitz. The translator in question is Stanley Kunitz.

Who's Who

HYDE PARTNOW is a New Yorker who made his NEW MASSES debut some weeks ago with his article "We Won't Forget," the story of the August Workers' Alliance job march on Washington. . . . Alexander Kendrick's most recent article discussed the labor-political situation in Pennsylvania. Mr. Kendrick attended the "Little Steel" N.L.R.B. hearings which his article covers. . . . Martin Porter is employed in the motion-picture industry in Hollywood. . . . Elizabeth Noble has written for *Art Front* and the publications of the American League Against War & Fascism. She contributed a review of the Museum of Modern Art's "century of photography" show last year. . . Kenneth Burke, whose reviews we have published before, is the author of the current *Attitudes Toward History,* recently discussed in Review and Comment. . . . Harold Ward's comment on scientific subjects has appeared in the NEW MASSES, the *New Republic,* and other periodicals. . . . Richard Wright is a frequent contributor to the NEW MASSES and associate editor of the forthcoming *New Challenge,* a magazine of Negro literature.

Flashbacks

THE dress rehearsal of the resistance of the Spanish people against fascism began October 5, 1934. That day marked the start of a great general strike against the recently installed reactionary Lerroux government. Asturian miners, who have not yet been overwhelmed, carried their resistance to the point of armed conflict. . . . Mussolini, for whom recent rumors from Makale played a disturbing counterpoint to the sweet theme of Nazi rhetoric, may recall a bit ruefully his acquisition of an empire which began October 2, 1935, when Blackshirts crossed into Ethiopia near Danikil. . . . Another Italian anniversary plagued Mussolini on his highly armored junket into the land of the Nordics. Garibaldi, leading the fight for the freedom of the Italian people, routed Bourbon troops on the Volturno, October 1, 1860. . . . And as Hitler and Mussolini made a duet of their public protestations of martial virility, they gave unexpected importance to the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the birth of Karl von Ossietzky on October 2.

THIS WEEK

VOL. XXV, NO. 2

October 5, 1937

Art work by William Sanderson, Soriano, Lloyd J. Reynolds, John Heliker, Dan Rico, Snow, Ben Yomen, M. Bernstein, Bertrando Valloton, Charles Martin, Robert Joyce, Aaron Sopher, Helen West Heller.

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

Published weekly by WEEKLY MASSES CO., INC., at 31 East 27th Street, New York City. Drawings and text may not be reprinted without permission. Entered as second-class matter, June 24, 1926, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 9, 1879. Single copies, 15 cents. Subscription $4.50 a year in U. S. and Colonies and Mexico. Six months $2.50; three months $1.25; Foreign $5.50 a year; six months $3; three months $1.50. In Canada, $5 a year, $2.75 for six months. Subscribers are notified that no change in address can be effected in less than two weeks. The NEW MASSES welcomes the work of new writers and artists. Manuscripts and drawings must be accompanied by stamped and self-addressed envelope.

NEW MASSES
OCTOBER 5, 1937


William Sanderson

A Professor Joins the Communist Party

Answering directly a recent article in "Harper's," the author analyzes the reasons why one man resigned from the party while he himself stuck

Anonymous

MR. STUART BROWNE'S article explaining why he left the Communist Party (*Harper's,* July 1937) would have interested me under any circumstances. It fascinated me because, some time before reading it, I had joined the party myself. Like Mr. Browne I am a professor: we have in common, that is, training and occupation, we live in much the same cultural environment, presumably we think in the same way. The experiences of one of us are socially relevant to the other. Now, it is necessary for the reader to understand the academic mind; otherwise he will not appreciate the enormity of a professor's actually becoming a member of a revolutionary political party. We live, by the grace of endowments and our state legislatures, on the margin of society, removed from the tumult and the shouting. This cloistered existence develops strange characteristics: reputedly bold as lions in dealing with ideas, we are, anywhere outside our studies, rabbits for timidity. I had taken the tremendous step—tremendous for a professor—of doing something about what I thought. I had obligated myself to follow the line of a party, had pledged both my time and energy, and had, in addition, put myself in considerable danger of losing my job. I had not done these things without taking serious thought; I did them because I was convinced they were right. And here was Mr. Browne, who had taken the same decision and lived to regret it. Obviously I was vitally concerned in the truth or falsity of his argument.

One's reasons for joining the Communist Party are not those which lead an undergraduate to join a Greek-letter fraternity, or a business man the Elks: not for social prestige, not to have a good time, not because one's friends are "in." The party is engaged in serious business and rightly demands a serious attitude from its members. This does not mean that a sense of humor is anathema, merely that there are also more important things. In an intellectual discussion frivolity, which is often veiled by the term "humor," must keep its distance. We expect that a man who joins the party will have well-grounded reasons; we do not feel that the party is condemned when a member leaves it in a fit of pique.

WHAT WERE THE REASONS which led Mr. Browne to leave the party? Let me state parenthetically that I make no attempt to judge Mr. Browne's sincerity; I accept his article in good faith and will so answer it. He states his position most clearly toward the end. After two and a half years of membership he has decided to withdraw. He goes to see the district organizer for the purpose of handing in his card. In the course of their discussion, Mr. Browne makes the following statement which, in spite of its length, I feel must be quoted in full:

> In the first place I believe that I am not temperamentally fitted for the party. The rigorous routine, the stifling of individual initiative, the necessity for secrecy, the inevitable deception which forces one to live in two worlds, these disturb my peace of mind. It may be my fault, but I have lost contact with my old friends outside the party, and those in the party have no time for friendship. Before I entered the party, no one could predict the subjects which might come up for discussion when a group of us met. Now every discussion follows a path that is monotonous — perhaps worse than monotonous. I feel that my intellectual life, poor as it may have been, is stifled. I have no time to read the books and magazines that are free and unfettered, that give joy and adventure to the art of reading. My intellectual life has become dull. My teaching, which used to be interesting, has not flourished under the dictates of the party line. Instead it has become stereotyped. I have come to hate my classes. The solemnity with which the party treats every problem weighs upon my spirit. I cannot believe that the economic conditions in our country warrant an attitude which implies that the revolution is imminent. Every unit meeting is as serious in tone as though it were being held in a cellar near University City, Madrid. The interference to my personal liberty is no longer endurable to me. I'll give you one example. I am simple enough to take joy in the feeling that when I enter a voting booth in the United States, no one, in spirit or in fact, goes with me. I may vote wrong, and I may have to pay for my mistake, but I vote as a free man. As a Communist I voted according to the *line* laid down for me and all Communists by the Seventh World Congress in Moscow. These are a few of the reasons why I must withdraw. . . .

After hearing this long speech, the district organizer gazed out the window for a while and then said that it would be better for Mr. Browne not to explain to his unit meeting why he was leaving the party. The implication is that, since his arguments were unanswerable, the less said the better. The party's vaunted apparatus of self-criticism had broken down.

In addition to the reasons he had given the district organizer, Mr. Browne formulates, more or less as a postscript, several others which may be conveniently summarized here: 1) the party sabotages strikes in order to promote revolutionary ardor among the workers, 2) the party is working toward "a dictatorship with the name of democracy used as bait for the masses," 3) the party takes its orders from Moscow. "It will have to become an American party before it succeeds in America."

Now in a discussion it is possible to argue subjectively or objectively. A mathematical proof, for example, is an exercise in objective logic. The square of the hypotenuse of a

right triangle is equal to the sum of the squares of the two sides, and my personal feelings in the matter do not make the slightest difference. Other problems may be treated subjectively as well as objectively. Descartes, through an elaborate metaphysical construction, thought he had proved objectively that God must exist. But Jean-Jacques Rousseau, dining one day with a company of atheists, suddenly rushed from the room in a rage, shouting: "For me your arguments mean nothing. I *feel* that God exists."

Mr. Browne has naturally given us both Rousseauistic and Cartesian arguments, but it is easy to see which type he considers more important. Those which seemed to him "unanswerable" were, it is fair to assume, the ones which he brought up in his discussion with the district organizer. Others, of less interest to himself, he listed in postscript. However, it is just those arguments which were not important enough to find a place in his statement that form the most serious objective charges against the party's work. The arguments which were decisive to Mr. Browne were exclusively of a personal order: "I don't like the air of secrecy. I've lost my friends. I no longer enjoy conversation. My intellectual life is stifled. I hate my teaching. The party has no sense of humor. I can't vote as I please."

These reasons are not invalid because they are subjective. Continuing to feel as he did, Mr. Browne's attitude obviously set him counter to membership in the party. But, from Mr. Browne's individual reaction to the party, no conclusion can be drawn except the one which Mr. Browne himself very correctly prefixes to his statement: "I believe that I am not temperamentally fitted for the party." That cannot logically be made to imply any general condemnation of the work the party has been doing.

The case is quite different with the three postscriptual arguments. If the party sabotages strikes, if it attempts, with the bait of democracy, to land the fish of dictatorship, if it insists against all reason that America is a synonym of Russia, then it is wrong, absolutely and objectively, regardless of Mr. Browne's temperamental peculiarities. With this distinction in mind, we shall postpone the discussion of these admittedly serious charges in favor of a closer examination of Mr. Browne's personal griefs against the Communist Party of the United States.

PROVERBIALLY, time is money. Mr. Browne felt that the party demanded more of both than he could spare of either.

His article gives us the following "typical week" of the party worker:

Sunday: section plenum, 9 a.m. to midnight. This was a meeting of delegates from the various units to consider action to be taken at a scheduled plenum or conference of the sections making up the district—unit, section, and district being, in an ascending scale, the three lowest rungs of the organizational ladder. This meeting discussed such problems as work in the trade unions, tactics in getting

"Isn't there any way we can persuade you to join our pirate hunt?"

Daily Worker subscriptions, broadening the base of the finance committee, etc.

Monday: union fraction meeting, three hours. Communists belonging to other organizations are called "fractions" in those organizations. They meet to discuss the line they should follow in their union work.

Tuesday: meeting of the American Association of University Professors, 4-6 p.m.

Wednesday: unit meeting, 8 p.m. to midnight.

Thursday: the Brownes had two faculty colleagues for dinner. Corey's book, *The Crisis of the Middle Class,* was discussed.

Friday: Mr. Browne, coming home at three in the afternoon, was dismayed to hear the phone ring. Fearing it might mean more work for the party, he forbade his wife to answer. They then went driving in the country.

Saturday: cocktail party for the NEW MASSES. Strachey's latest book was discussed.

Tired and a little sad we went to bed at midnight. A typical party worker's week was over. I also taught some classes at the university during that week.

Good God, I said after finishing the above passage. I don't blame the man for being tired and fed up. Something to do every day in the week, hardly an evening to himself. And this goes on week in, week out, without let-up. Then I went back and read it over more carefully; then, puzzled, still a third time. With each re-reading my sympathy waned.

Try it yourself; you'll see what I mean. Friday was completely free, except for the suspicion that the party had taken over the telephone company. Or do Mr. Browne's non-Communist friends never call him up? Thursday evening's dinner party and Saturday's cocktail party don't strike me as really arduous revolutionary activity—indeed Mr. Browne's main objection to them seemed to be the quality of the conversation. Tuesday was devoted to the A.A.U.P. Now in most universities of my acquaintance the local chapter meets once a year; a few which are particularly active may have two meetings—chapter meetings are decidedly not a weekly chore. In addition Mr. Browne would presumably have attended, whether he were a Communist or not. The association is far from being a party stooge. Sunday was indeed a hard day. It appears only later in the article, and then indirectly, that such meetings are held once every six months. There remain the Monday and Wednesday meetings as recurrent weekly or bi-weekly affairs.

Thus, on analysis, the "typical week" is much less impressive than at first glance. The thirty-two hours devoted to the party in seven days may be broken down as follows: eight hours to social functions; seventeen hours to annual or semi-annual events; eight hours to regular party duties. Mr. Browne's revolutionary activity for Thursday, Friday, and Saturday consisted in having two friends in to dinner and in going to a cocktail party. Furthermore, it is hard to escape the conclusion that he has, perhaps unconsciously, colored the picture by including in a "typical" week two meetings which occur so infrequently as to be in no way typical—and these two meetings account for more than half the time spent. At

the very least, Mr. Browne should have made clear that these were semi-annual, not weekly or even monthly meetings.

My own experience has been that the party demands no more time from its members than they can reasonably spare from their other occupations. No one should join the party, who is not willing considerably to curtail the leisure at his disposal. The party is built on the principle of an active membership, and there is always work to be done. No one, however, can give more time than he has. To return to Mr. Browne, I cannot help feeling that he might have done more than he actually did — he might even have picked up the telephone receiver on Friday afternoon — and still have found time to teach his classes at the university, with a little research thrown in for good measure.

The mention of research brings up an objection to party membership not discussed by Mr. Browne, which is frequently heard in academic circles. In any leading university a professor's job is secure and his advancement probable only if, in addition to his teaching, he publishes worthwhile contributions to knowledge in his special field. The time that is not taken up in teaching and preparing lectures is set aside for research. How then can he undertake to give a number of hours a week to work not remotely connected with his profession?

I happened to discuss Mr. Browne's article recently with a friend who is recognized as an international authority in his subject. "I'm a Marxist," he said, "and have been for years. As far as possible I use Marxist interpretations in my writing and teaching. I speak before labor organizations as often as I can spare the time. But how could I afford to join the party? Whatever I get comes through hard work. For years I've forced myself to set aside every other evening for research. Without my three nights a week I couldn't get anything done. What chance would I have of keeping my work up once I started taking orders from the party?"

From my own experience this attitude is mistaken. The party does recognize the extra-party obligations of its professional members and does not make impossible demands on their time. This assertion is obviously unprovable, but I present the following detail as at least suggestive. Four members of my own unit have, since joining the party, been honored for distinguished scientific research by election to senior membership in Sigma Xi. One of these four holds, in addition, a responsible executive position in an important business firm. Time, after all, is what you make it.

"My yearly salary," writes Mr. Browne, "was three thousand six hundred dollars or, since we were paid on a ten-month basis, three hundred and sixty dollars a month. The scale of dues ranged from two cents a week for unemployed to three dollars and fifty cents a week for me. To this was added an extra week's dues every month for the International, plus an occasional extra levy of a month's dues for the American party convention in New York. In the two and a half years I was a member only two of these extra levies were made. Then there was literature to buy: books, pamphlets, magazines, and newspapers. Often we were required to buy bundles of these which we were permitted to resell [but which Mr. Browne, in his professional position, could obviously not resell]. . . . In all, my financial obligations to the party amounted to approximately nine hundred dollars in two and one half years."

If Mr. Browne says he gave nine hundred dollars to the party, I believe him. What is more, I admire him, and I speak, surely, for the Central Committee as well as for myself when I express my gratitude for his extreme generosity. For actually he didn't have to contribute much more than half that sum.

If Mr. Browne paid party dues of three dollars and fifty cents a week (and this I am less willing to believe), he made an incomprehensible mistake in the light of his complaint. An annual salary of three thousand six hundred dollars is equivalent, in anybody's language, to three hundred dollars a month. I, too, am paid on a ten-month basis, but I divide my annual salary by twelve before paying dues and have not yet been asked to hand in my card. Dues on three hundred dollars a month were three dollars a week in 1936, but were lowered in 1937. There is nothing secret about these figures; they can be easily verified by anyone who is interested. Mr. Browne's statements on the extra week's dues each month for International solidarity is correct. The levy for the party convention is not a frequent one. There has been only one national convention in the last three years.

In conclusion, let us tabulate the dues a) that Mr. Browne says he paid, and b) the dues he should have paid on a salary of three hundred dollars a month, at the rate in effect before 1937. After that date he should have paid only eight dollars a month.

	A	B
Dues for thirty months	$455	$390
International solidarity fund	105	90
Convention assessment	30	12
Totals	$590	$492

To repeat, I do not dispute Mr. Browne's statement that he spent nine hundred dollars in two and a half years. But, unless he made the remarkable error of paying approximately one hundred dollars more in dues than he owed, he gave about four hundred dollars of the total because he wanted to, not because he had to.

He suggests also that he was forced to purchase vast quantities of magazines and pamphlets. It is customary to offer for sale at unit meetings left-wing literature which cannot easily be obtained through ordinary channels. I have frequently bought such material because it contained interesting information; I have never been "required" to buy anything, nor have I ever heard, except from Mr. Browne, that the party anywhere employs such high-pressure methods in disposing of the products of its printing presses.

There is, finally, such a thing as moral suasion. The party is chronically in need of money. Unfortunately, we may not employ the efficient collection methods of Messrs. Hamilton and Farley, and alas, our traditional hoard of gold from Moscow is mythical. Thus contributions from any bona fide source are always welcomed. My New England ancestors observed the custom of tithing. Since Mr. Browne's nine hundred dollars represents just a tenth of his income over the two and a half years, he may be credited with the revival of an ancient and honorable custom. But in all fairness, let it be said, he didn't have to do it unless he wanted to.

Woodcut by Lloyd J. Reynolds

Imperialism

"INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM" is too important a rallying cry to be sounded without good reason. We must wait until the wolf has come before sending in the alarm. Otherwise we risk discrediting not only ourselves—which is bad enough—but the wolf himself—and that is far worse. The freedom of the press, for example, is tremendously important; as citizens of a democracy we take a serious interest in the problem, we resent any attacks on that freedom. But when we see the phrase invoked to justify the payment of starvation wages to newsboys, we begin to feel skeptical toward the whole argument. Similarly, the same unhappy fate may be in store for such a powerfully evocative word as liberty which, now that it has a league of its own, is in grave danger of being beleaguered.

The academic mind is peculiarly vulnerable to the intellectual freedom argument—and this does it credit. We—teachers, scholars, research workers in the various fields of science, natural, social, and historical—inherit from the nineteenth century its audacious belief that the search for knowledge is the search for truth.

Woodcut by Lloyd J. Reynolds

Imperialism

Putting aside any personal prejudice, any selfish interest, we must be accurate in the determination of fact, impartial in interpretation, honest in the inclusion of each detail which may run counter to our thesis—for truth, objective truth, should be our only criterion, the one objective of our effort. Sad experience has somewhat tarnished our first confident belief in this brave new world, but still we will rise as one man to protest any attempt to block our unremitting quest for what we know are facts, for what we hope is truth. We are right to set such store by our intellectual freedom; we invite our own destruction when we set gaily off to defend it from non-existent attacks. While we posture on the city's ramparts, our friends may stab us from behind.

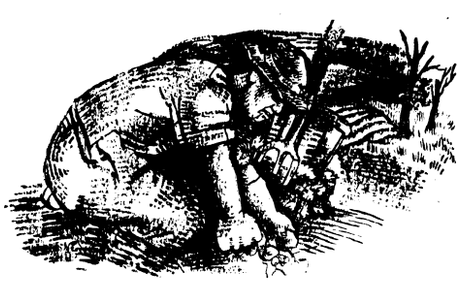
Mr. Browne's handling of this tremendously important question leaves much to be desired. As long as he is vague, what he says is impressive and disquieting; his specific charges lack body. "My intellectual life," he writes, "has been stifled." But how? He no longer has time to read books that are "free and unfettered," that give "joy and adventure" to reading. What sort of books are these exactly? Mr. Browne does not specify. It may be that his choice of words is unfortunate and that I do him an injustice, but a free, unfettered, joyful, and adventurous book sounds to me like *Gone with the Wind.* Actually his words are too vague to mean anything, but taken together they spell something very much like escape, which is all right in its way but has nothing to do, except by contrast, with the intellectual life. "My teaching has not flourished under the dictates of the party line. . . . I have come to hate my classes." Mr. Browne's inference is that the party brings about a state of intellectual apathy in its members. Our reading, our thoughts, our actions, even our jokes are prescribed for us in circular letters sent out from Moscow. Sooner or later we shall become automatons.

Just how true is this? I shall not deny that the tendency to think along stereotyped lines is a real danger. I shall not deny that there are Communists who seize the party line as a crutch and hobble along as best they can. I have met Communists whose utter absence of critical initiative and appalling intellectual blankness have dismayed me. I have also met readers of the New York *Herald Tribune* whose dependence on Walter Lippmann was no less nauseating. The intellectual attitude which fills an inner void with predigested material taken from without is alarmingly frequent, but for the most part its cause lies in human weakness rather than in the malevolent influence of Moscow.

When Mr. Browne attended his first unit meeting, he learned of the existence of the agit-prop, "the comrade in charge of agitation and propaganda," who also supervised the political education and prescribed the reading of the other members. The agit-prop in question was a furniture clerk, possessed of a hair-line moustache; his intellectual attainments had never impressed Mr. Browne in the course of his dealings with the furniture store. Mr. Browne violently resented being placed under such tutelage, and one is at first inclined to sympathize with him. Regardless of intellectual ability, the professor had certainly had more training than the furniture clerk in what Mr. Browne refers to as the "art of reading." On the other hand, it seems entirely reasonable to assume that in the one field of Marxist scholarship the hair-lined one may well have been better informed than the professor—although this may have been a bitter dose for the professor to take. To shorten the discussion we shall admit that the professor was the more intelligent of the two—pointing out that for this we have only the professor's own word. Here, too, my experience has differed from Mr. Browne's. No one has as yet undertaken my education or examined my doctrine. The only pressure on a party member is that he should read, and I have found that since joining the party my reading has ranged more widely and has been more stimulating in its results than ever before.

There remains the vexing question of the party line. Mr. Browne rattles this skeleton from time to time and leaves the reader with the impression that there is something pretty horrible hidden behind the arras. But here again he passes lightly over what the party line is, how it works, and what it does. When I joined the party, I agreed to abide by its decisions. This means that when the party takes a stand on an issue, local, national, or international, I will submit myself to the decision and act according to the *line* laid down. I will do this whether I think the party is right or wrong. This is the party line, and this, according to Mr. Browne, is the end of all intellectual freedom.

At first glance this suspiciously resembles the old formula of "my country, right or wrong." It certainly represents a voluntary curtailment of my freedom of action. It does not, however, imply a negation of my freedom of thought. I joined the party because I realized the futility of individual protest. Party discipline is essential if the party is to exert its full strength. The hierarchy of the army presents an obvious analogy, but the analogy is imperfect in a capital respect. If, as a private in the army, I go to my commanding officer and tell him that his strategy is mistaken and his tactics abominable, he will in all probability have me shot. As a member of the party, I have not only the right but the obligation to take as much part as I can in the formation of policies. If I think the policies and tactics are wrong or not being properly applied, it is my duty to criticize them and propose different policies or tactics—so long as I do this within the party structure, through the channels provided for this purpose. My criticisms and proposals may very well bring a change in the policies to which I see objection. This is a process which continually goes on inside the party. The strategy and tactics by which the main principles and aims of the party are carried out are not static things; errors are rectified; new tactics meet changing conditions. Obviously, it is best to be infallible; the next best thing is to discover our mistakes as quickly as possible and correct them. Curiously, Mr. Browne holds even the flexibility of the party line against us and dismisses, with a sarcastic fling, the party's willingness to mend its ways.



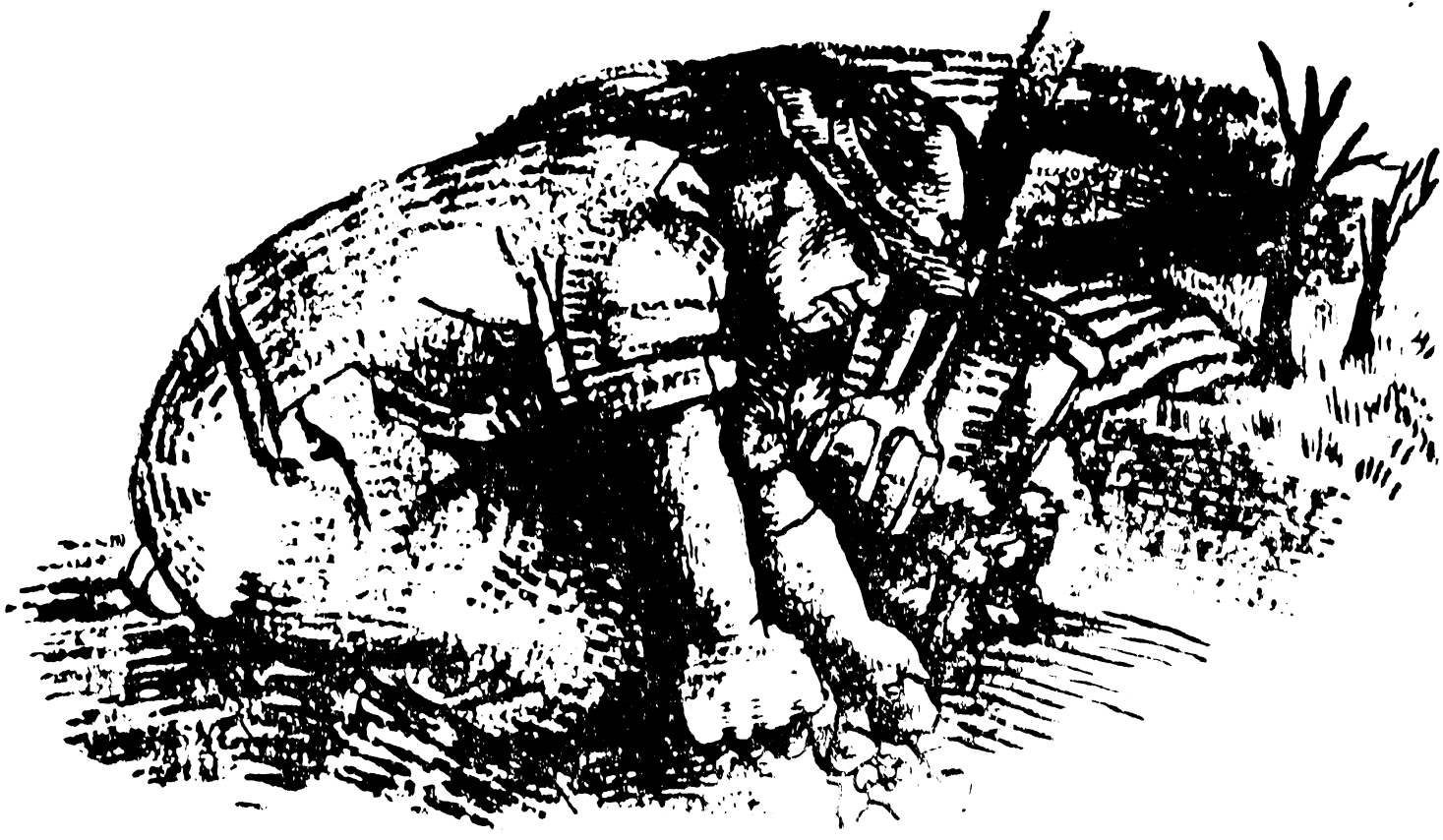
John Heliker

I mention here only in passing the fact that the party has a remarkable record for being correct, if this means anything to intellectual freedom, and it does, unless by this term is meant the right to believe anything pleasing to the mental palate, regardless of its correctness.

To sum up: the party must be continually on its guard lest, in its need for discipline, it overlook the equally great need for intellectual freedom. And the party endeavors in many ways to develop intellectual initiative—its vitality is predicated on it. Observance of the party line is not a curtailment of this freedom. In the last analysis, the relative intellectual freedom of a party member depends on his own strength of mind, on his capacity to develop in the intellectual integration which the party affords. It is once again a question of whether or not, as Mr. Browne puts it, he is "temperamentally fitted for the party."

IN THE FOREGOING I have done Mr. Browne the service of rearranging his arguments in a more logical sequence. No one, carefully reading his article, could fail to be struck by the apparently chaotic nature of its progress. Anecdote leads to anecdote until the main thread of the argument is hopelessly obscured. Underlying this intellectual chaos, however, there is a perfectly clear emotional sequence. Mr. Browne is not so much concerned with proving the party wrong as with proving himself right. Instead of performing an autopsy, he is dancing on the corpse, stamping now here and now there as fancy dictates.

Time, money, and intellectual freedom are not his only, nor indeed his most important, complaints. There is a list of others whose very miscellany defies analysis. I shall set them down in the order of their appearance. In the first place, Mr. Browne did not like the other people in the party. Then he disliked the "conspiratorial atmosphere." He found that Communists hold an unethical attitude toward the bourgeoisie—the reciprocal attitude of the bourgeoisie toward the Communists is not taken up. He found that he was forced to give up the friends he liked in order to cultivate left-wing sympathizers who might be recruited into the party. These he did not like. All party leaders were dogmatic and dull. And, as the dominant theme, Communists have no sense of humor. They are over-serious, they



John Heliker

are pedantic. They are as dull as dish water and as savorless.

If Mr. Browne says these things are true, then they are true—perhaps for him. As arguments they are irrefutable, being clear out of the field of logic. I cannot make Mr. Browne like Communists when he instinctively loathes their presence. If the sort of people he likes are politically to the right—which would seem to be the case—then he will be unhappy on the barricades. Again it's a matter of temperament—and more correctly his economic position and social background.

I shall pass to what were earlier defined as our author's "objective" charges against the party. It might seem more reasonable to have discussed these at first and at length. My arrangement has necessarily been conditioned by Mr. Browne's, and in his paper he has allotted curiously little space to the party's action. He seems indeed to have little interest in what the party is doing, whether it is right or wrong, successful or unsuccessful.

In one section of his article Mr. Browne makes an almost involuntary admission that the party is doing what it sets out to do. It will be remembered that one Sunday Mr. Browne attended a section plenum at which various topics were discussed. "Six months later," he writes, "I felt convinced that not a single objective . . . had been carried out, with one exception. Definite progress had been made in developing left-wing leadership in the trade unions." If the reader will refer to the agenda of the meeting, he will immediately realize that this was the one objective of major importance. It is necessary to get subscriptions to the *Daily Worker,* it is advisable to have a fraction in the Faculty Wives' Club, but unless the party can maintain its leadership in the working class it is done for. If all the other objectives had been carried out except this one, Mr. Browne might well have been skeptical and dissatisfied. This one having been achieved, the party's existence for the preceding six months was more than justified.

I have already listed the three specific charges which Mr. Brown formulated against party policy. They are easily answered.

1) The party sabotages strikes in order to promote revolutionary ardor among the workers. This statement is nonsensical on the face of it. An unsuccessful strike, far from promoting "revolutionary ardor," tends rather to bring about a defeatist attitude among the workers, who have risked their jobs, the security of their families, and often their lives. The party's growth depends on the unification of the working class; why then would it sabotage strikes which are the best means of promoting this unification? The essence of Mr. Browne's objection is probably this: the party in its trade-union work does not lose sight of the ultimate revolutionary aim. It does not consider the trade unions as a goal, but rather as one of the most important steps toward the goal which it has set itself. If Mr. Browne objects to this attitude, it is hard to see why he joined the party in the first place.

Woodcut by Dan Rico (W.P.A. Federal Art Project)

2) The party is working toward "a dictatorship with the name of democracy used as bait for the masses." I can only say that Mr. Browne might have benefited more than he did from the instruction of the agit-prop. His formulation betrays ignorance of Marxist doctrine on an elementary scale. Communists have never dreamed of denying that they stand for the substitution of the dictatorship of the working class for the present dictatorship of the capitalist class. What Mr. Browne has apparently never taken the trouble to learn during his eager search for "intellectual freedom" is that democracy for the people would be vastly extended if the working class supported by its allies took into its own hands the power which the reactionaries now use to restrict democracy. To deprive the small capitalist class of any political power would constitute a dictatorship over it to prevent its restoration to power, and the Communists have always said so frankly. But the great masses of the people exercising this dictatorship would enjoy both in extent and in quality a democracy never known before. This dictatorship, it should be noted, is unlike all other dictatorships in that it is avowedly and actually transitional, leading the producing population which it represents to the setting up of a socialist society and then the higher society of communism. I prescribe for Mr. Browne's education Lenin's *State and Revolution.*

3) The party "will have to become an American party before it succeeds in America." This is much the best founded of the three objections. I shall not attempt to deny it *in toto* because I feel it contains an element of truth. The party as a whole realizes this and is increasingly basing itself on American traditions. Last year Mr. Browder toured the country with the slogan: Communism is twentieth-century Americanism. The reader may decide in which direction we are traveling. America possesses a long-standing revolutionary tradition which has been unaccountably neglected. We are at last beginning to make proper use of this. We do not by any means repudiate the necessary international basis of revolutionary struggle; we do realize that we must become an "American party to succeed in America," and we are working toward that end.

THE PARTY played merry hell with Mr. Browne's private life. What has it done for me? What would I have to say to the district organizer if, like Mr. Browne, I called at his office? Something like this perhaps: "I believe that I am temperamentally fitted for the party. I do not care for a conspiratorial atmosphere—who does?—but I recognize the necessity for some private matters to be kept confidential. Since joining the party I have made many new friends who have helped to jolt me from a dangerous laziness of mind and body. I make better use of my time, and, having more to do, get more done. My intellectual life is more highly charged than ever before. I have a firmer grasp on reality, a keener interest in what is happening, in what has happened. My teaching and research have become more integrated with life, have assumed a new significance. There are, of course, residual conflicts—days when I should like to be a Left Bank expatriate, composing obscure masterpieces without benefit of capital letters, punctuation, or meaning—or when the great peace of a sun-swept hillside is more satisfying than the sweated torment of the cities. But such conflicts are the essence of living; I should be loath to lose their goading force. Many of the things I do in the party are of less than world-shaking importance, but I know that even their apparent futility fits into a larger pattern that makes sense. I've exchanged a measure of my individual freedom for the chance to play a rôle in changing the shape of things—and I've not been cheated in my bargain."

Woodcut by Dan Rico (W.P.A. Federal Art Project)

Snow

SECRETARY HULL'S LIGHT FANTASTIC

NEW MASSES

ESTABLISHED 1911

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Business and Circulation Manager
GEORGE WILLNER

★

What the People Want

IT shouldn't be difficult for President Roosevelt to find out what the people are thinking about. His long trip through the West will bring him closer to the voices he is trying to catch, but the chief things the people have been trying to tell him were perfectly audible in Washington. The soundproof walls erected by the economic royalists in their press and radio have muffled but have not been able to silence the people's demands on the administration. If Roosevelt returns to Washington with the air of having solved a great mystery, that may be of some practical value from the standpoint of dramatizing a "new" mandate; but the putting of this mandate into effect will be possible only because it represents the deep and unchanging desire of the people.

The people want of this administration in October 1937 the same things that they demanded, by a landslide vote, in November 1936.

They want more security, a better life. They want better houses to live in, more wages to enable them to live in those houses, shorter hours both to cut unemployment and to give them greater leisure. The farmers want to have the program which was sidetracked in the last session put into operation. The industrial workers want a wages and hours bill. The swelling tide of progressive sentiment in the country will not be satisfied until such fundamentally necessary legislation as the anti-lynching bill is passed. And to ensure that when Congress does act, as act it must in response to the overwhelming pressure of the country, that its enactments will then not be cancelled by the Supreme Court, the people want the court restored to its proper place under the Constitution, as a coördinate branch of the government, and not as the sovereign power.

We know of no evidence that the people themselves are opposed to the Supreme Court reorganization plan. We know of no evidence that the people have abated one point in the legislative mandate which they imposed on Congress and the President last November. If President Roosevelt undertook this trip to really find out what the people want, and not primarily to hold together the two-party system by reconciling the irreconcilable reactionaries and progressives among the Democrats, he will know by the time he returns to the White House that the people stand today where they have stood for the past year. And then it will be high time to call a special session and begin giving the people what they want.

Boycotting Japan

THE movement for a popular boycott of Japanese goods is spreading at a rapid pace throughout Great Britain and the United States—the two countries where it can do most good. In this country, impetus for the boycott movement has come from the trade unions. At the A. F. of L. convention in Denver, resolutions will be presented for an official embargo as well as an unofficial boycott on Japanese imports. In Atlantic City, the Committee for Industrial Organization will simultaneously consider a resolution calling for a similar embargo. An especially prominent part in the American movement has been taken by the strategically-placed maritime workers. The British boycott movement has reached the point where the press, from the laborite *Daily Herald* to the tory *Daily Express,* warns Japan that continued aggression will bring disaster to Anglo-Japanese trade.

Short of actual collective action on the part of the great powers, this boycott is likely to be the most effective method of restoring peace in the Far East. Japan cannot prolong the war without the benevolent neutrality of Great Britain and the United States. From these two countries, Japan imports most of the sinews of war, especially oil, scrap iron, cotton. The money to buy these semi-military products is primarily obtained through the sale of raw silk and other goods to the United States and Great Britain. In July 1937, for example, the United States purchased over six million dollars worth of raw silk from Japan. Japan in turn bought cotton and scrap iron for the bombs and bullets which are now devastating peaceful Chinese cities.

A popular boycott hits the Japanese militarists in their most vulnerable spot. It will hasten that economic dislocation which Tokyo fears most of all. It will hearten the Chinese to continued resistance. Incidentally, the American League Against War and Fascism is sponsoring a mass meeting at Madison Square Garden, Friday, October 1, in protest against the Japanese aggression. U. S. Ambassador to Germany, William E. Dodd; Rev. D. Willard Lyon, former national secretary of the Y.M.C.A. in China; Dr. Harry F. Ward, and the Rev. Stephen S. Wise are among the speakers. Meetings such as this and boycotts of Japanese silk, toys, pottery, and cheap rayon and cotton goods are sure to be heard in Tokyo and Nanking.

Misrepresenting the U.S.S.R.

AS we read some of the latest lucubrations on the Soviet Union presented to the American public in the capitalist press, we are reminded that "simple and unpretending ignorance is never revolting. At times, it may even be charming, but there is little that more deserves contempt than the pretense of ignorance to knowledge." Thus Webb Miller of the United Press in one of his "uncensored stories of Soviet Russia" proclaims in a leading paragraph that, "Creeping paralysis has struck Soviet industry, seriously affecting fulfillment of the Second Five Year Plan." A dozen times he emphasizes the Russians' anxiety over the threatened non-fulfillment by Soviet industry of the Second Five Year Plan. This danger was "freely admitted" to him during his three-thousand-mile trip into the interior. He even saw it "caustically criticized and bewailed by the Soviet press."

The achievements in favor of Soviet industry and agriculture will be discussed in a forthcoming series of articles by Joshua Kunitz. Here we merely wish to point to a couple of typical examples of ignorance pretending to knowledge so frequently found in reports on the Soviet Union.

Mr. Miller's story has not only been "uncensored." It has been unchecked and unverified. For the point is that Soviet industry fulfilled the Second Five Year Plan as far back as April, that is, nine months ahead of schedule. Every child in the Soviet Union knows that. Indeed it was in celebration of this fact that the Council of People's Commissars decreed on April 28, 1937, the reduction of retail prices of various manufactured products to the amount of 1300 billion rubles for a year. Actually, what Mr. Miller has heard "freely admitted" and "caustically criticized and bewailed" was the threat to the much increased plan for the year 1937. The figures he cites prove it. Mr. Miller apparently did not know that in addition to a general Five Year Plan, there are annual plans which are quite elastic and are made to accord not merely with the general plan but with the progress of industrial development already achieved. By the time the plan for 1937 was being worked out, it had become clear that the general Five Year Plan would be fulfilled much earlier than was originally expected and that,

therefore, the 1937 plan would have to be jacked up so as to ensure considerable overfulfillment of the Five Year Plan. Such are the facts. However, a little slip of Mr. Miller's interpreter's tongue or his translator's pen—and hundreds of thousands of innocent readers are left with the wrong impression that the Soviet Union is failing to carry out the Second Five Year Plan.

Mr. Harold Denny of the New York *Times* is even worse. "One hears much less of communism in Moscow," declares Mr. Denny, "than in New York, Berlin, London, and Paris. The word itself is seldom heard except in reference to the Communist Party." And again, "That goal (communism) has receded beyond the horizon and is seldom even thought of in Moscow."

When Mr. Denny asserts that communism as a goal is seldom even thought of in Moscow, he, it seems, steps out of his role as reporter and claims to be a mind-reader. He is more within his province as a reporter when he says that communism is seldom heard of. Of course, the implication is that Mr. Denny is not deaf, that he goes about the streets of Moscow, visits Soviet homes, sits in at Communist Party meetings, spends time in workers' clubs, frequents lecture halls and schools, and that as a result of his free and easy contact with Soviet life, he is in a position to report that the word communism, while very popular in the capitalist countries, is seldom heard in the U.S.S.R. Unfortunately, Mr. Denny, like most of his bourgeois colleagues in Moscow, has been a comparatively short time in the Soviet Union, knows nothing or next to nothing of the language, history, or literature of the country, has (for reasons both subjective and objective) but the slightest contact with the Soviet masses, and for the information that goes out to his unsuspecting readers is forced to rely on interpreters and gossip picked up on the backstairs of the various embassies.

Naturally, in Mr. Denny's Moscow the word communism is "seldom heard" and "seldom even thought of." But there is another Moscow, a Moscow of the existence of which Mr. Denny doesn't even seem to be aware—the Moscow of four million workers, the Moscow of the Kremlin and the Communist International, the Moscow where communism both is a word and a goal, is an ever living, ever growing, ever throbbing reality. We have on our desk a fresh batch of Soviet papers, and under the date line of September 3, just a few days before Mr. Denny reported the disappearance of communism from the Soviet vocabulary, we see prominently displayed in all the papers a wonderfully moving appeal sent by a meeting of Stakhanovites of the city and district of Moscow to all workers, engineers, technicians, and employees of that city and district. The appeal is much too long to be quoted, but here is one paragraph reflecting the communist feeling of the Soviet worker:

> Our country is the socialist fatherland of the world proletariat. The workers and oppressed of all countries look toward us with hope and pride. Fulfilling our international obligations to the workers of the world, we will by our Stakhanovite work, raise ever higher the incomparable banner of the socialist state of workers and peasants. . . . Comrades, forward to new victories of Communism!

Let us glance at the slogans for the twenty-third International Youth Day proposed by the Central Committee of the Young Communist League of the U.S.S.R. and published on the front page of every newspaper in the Soviet Union (September 5, 1937).

On internationalism: "The spirit of internationalism must always soar over our Komsomol. Let us bring up the youth of our country in the spirit of the great brotherhood of the toilers of the world."

On communism: "Young Communists, boys and girls, youth of the Soviet Union, let us draw our ranks closer around a great Bolshevik party! Let us hold high the banner of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin! Let us dedicate all our strength, all the flame of our youth, to the great cause of communism!"

The Stakhanovite appeals are read by millions of people. The Young Communist slogans are carried on placards in the Youth Day parades in every city and village in the Soviet land. The word communism is seen and spelled and recited and sung and heard in every nook and corner of the U.S.S.R. The spirit of communism is everywhere.

As to Mr. Denny's report in the New York *Times,* well "there is little that more deserves contempt than the pretense of ignorance to knowledge," especially when it is the vicious pretense of a journalist who undertakes to slander the most inspiring social phenomenon in the modern world.

It Must Be a Real Census

SOME time in the near future a government-sponsored census of unemployment will be taken. Eighty thousand letter carriers are to distribute some thirty-one million blanks throughout the country. All of the unemployed and those working at part-time jobs are expected to fill out the questionnaires, which will then be collected by the post office department. When the results of this voluntary registration are tabulated and analyzed, it is hoped that for the first time a full and true picture of unemployment will be available. John D. Biggers, directing the project, has five million dollars to spend, and his work must be completed by April 1.

Certainly no one can quarrel with the announced objective, even though the means adopted are desperately inadequate, but both the magnitude of the task and its social implications raise serious questions.

Though it is essential to enlist the full coöperation of the jobless and to reach them all, there are other vital considerations. One of them has long troubled government experts, namely, what is the proper definition of an unemployed person and what are the age limits and skills (if any) that qualify one as employable? This country has nearly seventy million people between the ages of twenty and sixty-five. How many of that number would be at work if jobs were available? There has been a strong tendency in the past to regard as unemployed only those people who formerly had jobs of one sort or another. This neglects both those who wanted work but were unable to find it and the yearly increment of young people arrived at working age.

Thorough preparation and a realistic approach can solve these problems. Mr. Biggers and his associates have the opportunity to gather facts and figures of prime social importance. Labor especially should insist that this census be full and accurate and that no loose definitions be permitted to minify the number of men and women who want work and can't get it.

Childs' New Labor Menu

WINNING wage increases, free uniforms, a closed shop, better working conditions, and vacations with pay, the Hotel, Restaurant & Cafeteria Employees' Organization Committee has signed a contract with Childs. More than three thousand workers in fifty-two restaurants throughout Greater New York are affected. Organized in July, the Committee was established to represent eleven American Federation of Labor locals in New York. Childs' employees in other cities and in fact all chain restaurant workers can draw encouragement from the victory of the H. R. & C. E. Organization Committee.

The A. F. of L. Convention

THE American Federation of Labor begins its fifty-seventh annual convention next week. Delegates to this Denver meeting will deal with problems which touch the lives of working men and women from Maine to California. The play of economic and political forces and the tremendous growth of the Committee for Industrial Organization have combined to make genuine trade union unity the supreme convention issue. And just as the impact of social

change is bringing new alignments in the political field, so too, the A. F. of L. finds itself driven toward a choice between progressive and reactionary tendencies. At Denver forward-looking elements representing rank and file sentiment for labor unity will face a strongly entrenched leadership that is determined to perpetuate the narrow, splitting policies of Green and his faction.

If the annual report of the Metal Trades Department, presented to its recent convention by President John P. Frey, may be taken as a sample, the A. F. of L. leadership will put forward a thoroughly reactionary and destructive program. Besides a bitter attack upon the C.I.O. and the forecast of an attempt to expel all C.I.O. unions, Mr. Frey's report sharply criticizes the National Labor Relations Board, recommends that the Wagner Act be amended to conform with craft union policy and urges that the N.L.R.B. be not permitted to determine whether the unit for collective bargaining shall represent craft, plant, company, or industry. A generous portion of the report is given over to Red-baiting; the United Auto Workers' union is taken to task for its conduct during the General Motors and Chrysler strikes. And, of course, Mr. Frey finds that a farmer-labor party would be contrary to the "well established non-partisan policy of the A. F. of L." In fact, this document, which the Liberty League could well endorse, shows all too clearly the hopeless backwardness of William Green and his diehard cohorts.

A number of A. F. of L. unions, however, have already adopted progressive resolutions. The American Federation of Teachers, the International Pocketbook Workers' Union, the Brewery Workers' and the International Typographical Union, to mention only a few, are out of sympathy with Green's tory attitude. These elements at Denver will be helped immeasurably in their fight for unity, and the whole labor movement will gain force if local unions and district councils make known their demands, if they insist upon a sound program and a progressive convention. And it goes without saying that only the principles of industrial unionism for basic industries can be the foundation of real labor unity.

Green Attacks the Guild

MORE than three hundred members of the Brooklyn *Eagle* staff—editorial, circulation, and business department workers—are on strike. They walked out September 13 in protest against mass dismissals and the obvious bad faith of Preston Goodfellow, *Eagle* publisher. The latter had been "negotiating" with the Newspaper Guild over a long period before the strike was called. Ostensibly, the chief points at issue involve: rates of pay comparable to those prevailing on other New York newspapers, an end of "company unionism," the five-day, forty-hour week in all departments, no wholesale firings, and the Guild—not the closed—shop.

Actually, however, Mr. Goodfellow's shifty tactics indicate quite plainly that his real purpose is war against the American Newspaper Guild. This hostile attitude is given startling confirmation by two former *Eagle* executive editors, both of whom participated in negotiations for the management. One, Lyle Dowling, is now on strike himself; the other, William M. Hines, resigned rather than carry out the orders for dismissal which Mr. Goodfellow issued after having promised in a written notice that there would be no extensive firings during the negotiations.

Mr. Hines told the Guild:

> It was impossible for me in honesty and good faith to repudiate that statement [Goodfellow's promise]. I could not agree to the discharge of forty-two editorial employees in the interests of economy or any other reasons within less than thirty days after that statement was posted and sent to staff members. . . . I believe that the dismissal of forty-two editorial employees from a total of about 170 constituted wholesale dismissal and the plan to dismiss them in my opinion would have precipitated a strike and the stockholders and creditors should be made fully aware of the danger.

An aggressive campaign is being carried on to cut the *Eagle's* circulation and reduce its advertising revenues. *Eagle* strikers and the Guild are receiving strong support from other labor groups and from liberals throughout New York City. Needless to say, however, this militant struggle does not commend itself to A. F. of L. leaders. Indeed, William Green picked what must have seemed to him an opportune moment to declare war on the Guild. Hoping to bore from within, Green announced the beginning of "a militant drive against the C.I.O. unit through its own newspaper unions." In a deliberate attempt to check the Guild's growing strength, Green said he would invite all news and editorial employees throughout the country to join federal unions organized by the A. F. of L. His expectation being that "Members of the Guild who voted against affiliation with the Committee for Industrial Organization, or against its political policies, will form the nucleus of this new organization."

After saying that all state and central labor bodies will be instructed to expel Guild locals and "refuse them any further coöperation," the A. F. of L. chief fulminated against the dangers of dictatorship and ranged himself squarely on the side of tory publishers by alleging that it was necessary to fight the Guild "in the interests of the newspaper workers and to help preserve the freedom of the press."

Nothing in his extended record of labor betrayals better reveals William Green's hapless drift toward company unionism. And it is a certainty that newspaper people the country over will treat his siren song with the contempt that it deserves. In a recent issue, the Washington *Guildsman* points out that Green's proposals are an attempt to use newspapermen as "cannon fodder in his war against the C.I.O." Coming from a Guild unit which had sponsored the national referendum to reconsider the Guild's progressive convention decisions, this judgment is especially significant.

London Pattern

POLITICALLY-MINDED statisticians might make themselves useful by keeping count of the number of times Mussolini has been reported (1) ready to withdraw from Spain, (2) determined to stop sending more "volunteers" to Spain, (3) forced to deny both preceding versions in favor of an "unequivocal" announcement that (4) Italy will help Franco until "communism is destroyed in Europe," by which is meant (5) that another load of Italian victims have been sent to die and kill in Spain. Generally speaking, the first two "reports" have emanated from London just when the British Foreign Office was trying to put across some especially odorous diplomatic double-cross. Last week, London cables reported that Mussolini was ready to be good. It was no coincidence that efforts were proceeding simultaneously to bring Italy into the anti-piracy accord. They know how to time these things better in England.

There was no more truth in the report this time than on past occasions. Mussolini seized the opportunity again to strike the Napoleonic pose in the full glare of the publicity thrown on his meeting with Hitler. This meeting ought to dispose of any lingering doubt that the Berlin-Rome axis will not be weakened at least while world conditions remain what they are. Italy, since the Ethiopian adventure, is on a war footing even though a general European or world war is still in the distance. The strain of actual mobilization puts Italy at a serious disadvantage compared to other powers. That is why Mussolini dare not stand alone. Hitler, on the other hand, has found that Germany extorts concessions from Great Britain and France only when its bark is worse than its bite. The alliance with Mussolini puts Hitler into a better bargaining position, and he is still making the most of it.

Next Time You March, Legionnaires!

A tin cup and one war is the measure of the difference between the parading ex-Yanks and certain others of us

By Hyde Partnow

THIS year they gathered from the Rockies and the lakes and the keys in the village green on Times Square and kicked up their heels like goats in a pasture. They yelled *Whoo-ee-ee* and showed off to us —who had never gone over there, never gone over the top, never gone into action—that they, middle-aged American bucks, had—*Whoo-ee-ee*—and damned glad they were, too, for not being dead and gone but were still standing on the ground. Still talking with their own tongues to those topnotch New York girls. Still touching with their own fingers the city things. Still seeing with their own eyes the first city of the world. Belonging, still, *Whoo-ee-ee,* to the body of life, not six feet under long before their time. They were crazy with wonder how the guns had not gone through them but missed them somehow and left them standing and permitted them to be left alive and become middle-aged and marry their women and make and lift up children. No wonder they did not sleep or let New York sleep.

They drove clanging boxcars, forty men and eight horses, over my toes. They fired their toy cannon through my hat and yelled at the hole in my hat and the echoes on the walls. They shot me with squirt guns and yelled like hell when I got wet. They dropped water bombs from their hotel windows, and yelled like hell when they exploded on my shoulder. They grabbed coconuts and oranges from the open street stands and threw them like hand grenades and yelled like hell when one got me. They used hot boxes and jump sticks on me when my back was turned and yelled like hell when I jumped.

I WAS neither a sour-puss nor a wise guy, I didn't pull them in for assault or for housebreaking. They were making sport, as I saw it, of those objects of war that had insulted and injured them once. They were remembering how glad they were to be alive.

But never forget the dead, Legionnaires. Never forget, you unknown living soldiers who made a big noise to make yourselves *KNOWN,* the legions of unknown dead in Arlington and Flanders and Argonne—in olive groves and wheat fields and forests—in roadway ditches—in Soldiers' Homes, in the Florida Keys (their bellies floating grotesquely in the Gulf, then burnt in a bonfire.) Remember them, Legionnaires.

I was a kid when you were young men. You came back up Fifth Avenue and I stared at you. I followed your parade then and my ears were confused with the marching and my eyes dazed and I remember I got lost following you. There was noise and lights. I got fascinated by the round glint on a shining tuba and I followed it and got lost and I felt tired and I walked into Central Park, I remember, and lay down in a meadow and slept. It was dark when I got up. You were gone and I began to cry.

Now I'm a young man. I was on Fifth again and I followed you again. It was dark when you went off and left me, alone on Fifth, in the shambles of smashed boxes and torn-up litter under the weird yellow lamps. I stayed there in the wreckage until dawn, walking about. It's a fine dawn you get in New York; I think you know it. As fine as in any of your cities or on any of your farms. I have seen them all. But this dawn I saw was more than just day coming. I wasn't tight, Legionnaires. I saw more than fifty million ghosts on Fifth Avenue. They had been hiding under eaves and behind doors and in all the side alleys while you marched in the Indian-summer sun. They waited a long time, for the two or three hundred thousands of you to pass. But after you left they got out on the Avenue and walked. Their feet whispered on the littered avenue, throngs of ghosts. One of those ghosts was *myself,* Legionnaires.

Pull in those Sam Browne belts all you want to, you still can't hide those waistlines. Don't hide them. Do something about it. Don't lean on those official American Legion canes. Throw them away. Do something. Do something for me, the generation that springs from your seed.

I listened to your leaders say you are stabilizing America, you Legionnaires. I listened to them say this at the same moment when outside you were tying up law and order in a blizzard of noise and color in a hundred different ways. While you were frolicking in the streets they were passing resolutions lumping communism and fascism in a bogey of "isms." They were forbidding marches on Washington. They were okaying neutrality. They were resolving to "work for world peace, to combat propaganda of international hate and thus aid in averting the tragedy of war and making permanent the blessings of peace," but the headlines still stalked the news—JAPAN THREATENS TO WIPE NANKING OFF MAP—THREE THOUSAND KILLED IN CANTON AIR RAID—CHOLERA RAGES IN SHANGHAI.

While you outside were pulling up fire hydrants and ripping the stuffings from pillows, the others inside were ripping up your right to live and your right to make sure that those who come from your loins do not die. You were letting them divert your violence against war into tearing pillows to pieces.

I talked to you, Legionnaires. Hundreds of you. In spite of the bugles and clanging and hog-calling and banging, I managed to talk to you. I was the quiet young man whom you squirted guns at and used a jump stick on and you made a hole in my hat. In return, I made you talk to me. Your talk was fine. And your talk from the floor of your convention was fine, too. It is the mood behind talk like that which killed resolutions in your Americanism Committee this year against the C.I.O. and the Court Plan and the Soviet Union. So much is good. Good enough, that is, for today. But not for tomorrow. You still have not seen to it that your men may not don tin hats and badges to break strikes.

NEXT TIME you march, enjoy the confetti and the streamers, the crowds, the music. But steal a lesson from the others who call each other comrade. When you march, hold up banners in your hands. Hold up your slogans. Don't let your convictions languish in monopolized newspapers. Bring them to the sidewalks. Don't camouflage your hatred of war behind a circus. Or, rather, don't let them make you camouflage it. Wisconsin, still carry your milk pails and three-legged stools; Iowa, your stalks of corn; Florida, your palm leaves; Minnesota, your Indian head-dresses; Pennsylvania, your mining caps. But, all of you, come holding not canes in your hands but slogans. Let's see what you are for and against. Take sides. Let's judge you. You must take sides. Your middle-aged mission is to save the young from the guns. Remember the beggars in New York, the crippled and the blind who play on saxophones and violins and accordions, shuffling through the crowds, playing "Margie" and "Over There" and "Keep the Home Fires Burning" and "Mademoiselle from Armentières." The only difference between you and them is a tin cup. The only difference between you and us who spring from your loins is one war.

Don't dodge your duty to us.

You have the power. We saw you take over a city like New York and get off scot-free. No one but you could have done it. Anyone else would have been arrested wholesale and jammed into jail. Charges of obstructing traffic, disturbing the peace, resisting an officer, assault with intent to rob, vandalism, arson would have been placed against them. But not you.

Use this power. Don't masquerade in ladies' satins even in travesty. Don't hold aloft reams of toilet paper even in mockery.

Next time, when you march in Los Angeles, hold up slogans.

Spotlight on Vigilanteism

The N.L.R.B. hearings on Bethlehem Steel's anti-union activities show how employers cultivate native fascism

By Alexander Kendrick

THE steel mills pour forth black smoke in Johnstown, and the newspapers speak of "the rich blessings of returning prosperity." And Johnstown is truly blessed, say its wealthy burghers. Out of the disastrous Johnstown flood of 1889, for instance, emerged a new and greater city. And out of the dastardly steel strike of 1937, they say, rose this new and glorious movement on behalf of the "inalienable, constitutional right to work."

Not always has there been this laudable concern for the dignity and the right of labor in Johnstown. During the depression, for instance, when the steel mills stood desolate, no one seemed to care much about the right to work. Around the barred gates desperate, hungry men clamored for jobs, and the steel bosses did not hear them as they sat in their mansions high atop the hills which encircle the city.

But the strike in little steel opened the eyes, as well as the pockets, of Johnstown's industrialists. There was steel to be made in the eight-mile-long plant of Bethlehem, and scabs, strikebreakers, and company guards could not make it. Obviously what was needed was a rebirth of treasured American principles, and the midwifery of the gifted propagandist and fun-raiser, John Price Jones. Luckily, Jones is a Johnstown boy. Gladly he gave up a Harvard reunion to speed to his stricken city and set the wheels of triumphant patriotism turning.

A Johnstown "Citizens' Committee" was formed, headed by the Rev. John H. Stanton, pastor of the Westmont Presbyterian Church. This leader of the people operates in the loftiest and most exclusive suburb of Johnstown, where the steel superintendents dwell, and where the green grass has not been laid waste by the soot from the blast furnaces below. Two pastors of working-class congregations, a priest and a rabbi, were invited to join the committee, but it did not take them long to learn what was going on, and they resigned.

Under John Price Jones's guiding hand, the Johnstown committee ran a series of full-page newspaper advertisements appealing for national support. The ads were reputedly paid for by Weir of Weirton. The keynote of a fervent meeting on July 14, when a national organization was formed, was "Thank God for Tom Girdler!" This early did the Weirs and Girdlers put their stamp upon the Citizens' National Committee, formed to preserve the right to work, even if it meant breaking strikes, and to combat "alien, destructive forces."

The committee, outgrowth of the steel

John Heliker

strike of June 11-July 8, is now under investigation by the National Labor Relations Board in Johnstown. So, too, is the strikebreaking activity of Johnstown police and deputies, the connections between the city of Johnstown and the Bethlehem Steel Co., and the conduct of Mayor Daniel ("No. 1707") Shields.

These are important matters that the Labor Board is sifting. Johnstown's bosses are not alone in their militant patriotism. The Citizens' Committee has spread to fifteen states and seventy-five cities. Chambers of commerce, "law and order" leagues, anti-union forces, all have joined. It has set up national headquarters in New York. It has become the country's clearing house for the new vigilanteism.

It is easy to see what is happening in America. As organized labor grows in strength, and gains more and more support and sympathy, labor struggles have become deeper and more intensified. The old, brutal, anti-labor methods will no longer do; the old paternalism is outdated. Company towns have revolted and company unions have gone on strike. New anti-labor devices are needed and so, under the cloak of patriotism, the "back-to-work" movement has been launched. The new vigilantes, backed by big business, do not use the rope and whip. Their weapons are the press, public emotions, and cold cash.

For instance, when the Labor Board summoned Stanton, organizer of the Citizens' Committee, it was told he was occupied out of town and could not attend. What was the business which was important enough to keep him from appearing as a witness? He was in McKeesport trying to form another vigilance committee. To speak before that steel principality's Junto Club he had to force his way through a double picket line which bore banners reading: "We Don't Want Vigilantes."

Johnstown, citadel of Bethlehem Steel, is the perfect breeding ground for vigilanteism of the kid-glove type. It is a company town pure and simple. If you don't work in the steel mills, there is no job for you except clerking and the like. Stores, banks, schools, churches are all dependent upon the steel mills for existence. When there is a strike, these institutions suffer. They have not the solidarity, strength, and backing of the workers. Therefore they turn to vigilanteism, believing they will thus preserve themselves.

Johnstown has been unfortunate in its public officials. The present mayor, Shields, did open strikebreaking for the steel company, as will be shown. The previous mayor, Eddie McCloskey, was a cheap politician elevated to high office. The mayor before that, Joseph Cauffiel, was convicted for corruption in office and ran the city administration from the county jail.

Things like this happen because Johnstown's mayors are chosen by the steel company. When a strike comes, Johnstown police are supervised by the steel company.

The Labor Board hearings in the little schoolhouse in Franklin borough (owned 96 percent by Bethlehem), just outside Johnstown, have revealed all these things. Sufficient light has been thrown upon the Citizens' National Committee to stamp it for what it is—a vigilante band with top hats and frock coats.

Central figure in the Johnstown mess is pudgy Mayor Danny Shields, sometimes called the "blood-sweating behemoth." He is addressed as "Your Honor" by Bethlehem officials with their tongues in cheeks, but by steel workers and the man on the street he is generally referred to as "No. 1707." That was his number in the federal penitentiary at Lorton, Va., during prohibition days, when he served a one-year term for the rugged individualism of bootlegging and for his boyish faith in the axiom that all revenue agents would accept bribes.

Aside from his natural love for law and order, displayed when he swore in hundreds of company police as deputies and gleefully patted them on the back as they smashed picket lines, Mayor 1707's conduct may perhaps be explained by the theory of conditioned reflexes.

He is in debt, for instance, to four banks and several business houses, including the

notorious Johnstown *Democrat,* Bethlehem's mouthpiece. In Johnstown there is no doubt as to who controls the banks, and for his services during the strike the steel company may by now have wiped off the $16,400 Shields owes to the Penn Trust Co., the $1073.72 he owes to the Johnstown *Democrat,* and the various other obligations he has amassed. It may even have paid off the $78,000 for which the federal government has a judgment against him, and the $1200 he owes on his local tax bill, unpaid since 1931.

Shields was elected, God save the mark, as a reform mayor in 1936, and he had the support of most of the local clergy. It is obvious that if he represents reform, then the Johnstown flood must have represented nature in her kindliest mood.

The pudgy mayor's gentle reformist nature is best exemplified in the following remarks which deserve to be hallowed as classics. The mayor is sitting as a magistrate during the steel strike, handing out one-hundred-dollar fines and ninety-day jail terms to pickets.

Attorney for the strikers: Now, Mr. Mayor, don't you think Officer Kreis got a little too excited when he fired a shot through a man's abdomen and then reached around and used his mace on this defendant's head?

Shields: I don't agree with you at all. I cannot commend his action too highly. I think he showed more presence of mind than either of us would have had. [The steel worker audience boos ominously.] I think he wonderfully, wonderfully did his duty.

Attorney: Shooting is not going to quiet matters.

Shields: We have got to have the police in these times. A world without police would be like a world without music—dull, a gloomy place.

During the first days of the Labor Board hearing a parade of steel workers moved through the witness chair, accusing Bethlehem of trying desperately, if not entirely originally, to break up the C.I.O. union.

Here, for instance, is George Fetzko, charging machine operator, who was for three years an employees' representative in the company union, and who testifies concerning the progress of that admirable organization:

Leonard A. Keller, N.L.R.B. attorney: What did you do as employees' representative?

Fetzko: Well, one time in 1935 we tried to get a wage increase. We had a meeting of all the representatives.

Keller: What happened?

Fetzko: We voted to ask for a raise, and did.

Keller: Did you get the raise?

Fetzko: No, we didn't.

Keller: Did any company official ever say anything to you about that?

Fetzko: Mr. Howells, the big shot of the whole works [Frank E. Howells, superintendent of open hearths] called me into his office. Harry Marley, his assistant, was there. Mr. Howells said, "George, you are trying to run these mills. You are trying to get men to go after more money. What business did you have in bringing up an increase in wages? There is where you started all the trouble. You are a trouble maker and I am telling you for the last time, stay the hell out of the general office. Whenever you go to bring up something in a meeting, why don't you come to us to advise you? We will tell you if it is all right to bring it up. We know everything you say to anybody."

Then Fetzko joined the steel workers' union. Previously he had been called in by Howells. The conversation:

Fetzko: Howells said, "George, do you belong to the union?" I said, "No, I don't." He said, "Come on and tell me." I said, "No, I'm telling you the truth." He said, "Them damn miners and that damn John Lewis. They done it all." That's how I come to join the union. I thought if he didn't like it, I did.

The Wagner bill was introduced in Congress. The employees' representatives met. Fetzko quotes Clare H. Williams, their chairman:

Fetzko: He said, "We don't want that damn Wagner bill. It is no good. What we want is to take a vote one hundred percent with all the representatives and send it to Washington. No, send it to the other steel companies and have them all sign it and send it to Washington to the Congress, that the men in the Bethlehem steel mills do not want the Wagner bill; it is no damn good."

Fetzko continues: "I figured if the Bethlehem Steel did not want that bill it would be a good thing for the working people."

José Jaime, a chipper, testifies about plant election methods under the Employees' Representation Plan. He called for his pay. The paymaster ordered him to vote first. He said he didn't believe in the employees' plan. The paymaster said he couldn't draw his pay unless he voted. So he voted. "Did you have any privacy?" he was asked. "No, it was in the same office."

Hoyt A. Moore, Bethlehem's attorney, made much of the fact that Jaime was not an American citizen. The boomerang follows, in cross-examination by an N.L.R.B. attorney, Earle K. Shawe:

Shawe: Well, how did you come to Johnstown?

Jaime: I was in San Antonio, Texas, in 1927. Some men come around and say, "You want to work in steel mills?" I say, "Sure." So they sign me up, send me to Johnstown.

Shawe: Did you pay for your transportation?

Jaime: No.

Shawe: Have you ever repaid your transportation?

Jaime: No.

Shawe: Do you know if it was deducted from your wages?

Jaime: Yes, they take it out, but after a year they give it back to me.

After throwing light on the Employees' Representation Plan, the hearing swung its attention to Mayor Shields.

The steel strike was called on June 11. Picket lines surrounded the gates of Bethlehem, all along the eight-mile front. The third day of the strike the same José Jaime was a picket captain at the lower gate of the Cambria plant. Mounted policemen stood a short distance away, warily watching the pickets. It was about six o'clock in the morning. Mayor Shields came bustling up.

Jaime: He come to one of the mounted cops. He said, "Get the men out of the road and break it up." So the cops broke the picket line. The mayor stood by the gate and called to a bunch of scabs across the street. They come over and went into the mill. The mayor patted them on the back and said, "Atta boy."

"Which one of you guys is the brains of your outfit?"

Now the testimony is veering away from general atmosphere to the important points—the interlocking structure of Bethlehem Steel, Johnstown city officials, and the vigilante committee. Michael J. Sewak, trim, dapper burgess of Franklin borough, is the witness. Martin I. Rose, N.L.R.B. attorney, is questioning.

Rose: Tell us what happened before the strike.

Sewak: A couple of days before Albert Bergman, chief of the company police, and Ralph Hough, assistant general manager of the company, came into my office and talked about the strike coming on. They expected a lot of trouble and they wanted me to swear in the company police as special officers in Franklin borough. They talked about it and then they wanted to know how I was getting along. Mr. Bergman said, "I understand you are having a little trouble with your hotel building in Conemaugh." He said he understood the Pittsburgh bank wanted to sell the building for me for $7500. He asked me if that was right. I said it was. Mr. Bergman looked at Mr. Hough. Hough spoke up and said if I would go along with them and do what was right that little obligation would be taken care of, and they would see there was enough money in my pocket to get a good start in business.

Burgess Sewak refused the noble gift, and a few days after the strike started no one less than C. R. Ellicott, superintendent and general manager of the plant, came to his office. "He said, 'My God, man, something must be done. Just look at what's going on. We are taking a terrible financial loss. You must go along with us.' I told him I would not. Then he said, 'Did Bergman and Hough make you any offer?' I said they had. He said, 'Well, I will double the offer, but you have got to go along with us.' I told him my answer was definitely no. He said, 'You will be sorry and you will pay damn dearly for this.' And he left."

Within a few days Sewak received an invitation to come to a meeting of the new Citizens' Committee. It was delivered by a state police lieutenant in uniform, who said grimly, "You'd better go." Sewak went and met Francis C. Martin, cashier of the U. S. National Bank and president of the Chamber of Commerce, and Lawrence W. Campbell, secretary of both the Citizens' Committee and the Chamber of Commerce. Campbell said, "We want you to go to Harrisburg and see the governor and have the governor instruct the state police and highway patrol to go out on the roads in and about Johnstown and stop the coal miners from coming in." (He was referring to the rumored, but never materialized, "invasion" of Johnstown by a "horde" of miners. The rumor caused Governor Earle actually to order out the militia and, to the dismay of the steel company, to padlock the mills.)

Then Martin addressed Sewak. "He said if I went to Harrisburg and done what the group of representative citizens of Johnstown told me to do I certainly wouldn't have anything to be sorry for." But Sewak refused.

Perspiring profusely, Bethlehem's attorney tried to trip up Sewak on cross-examination but couldn't. He thereupon moved that all Sewak's testimony be stricken from the record as "irrelevant, incompetent, and immaterial." He explained, "The witness was asked to do something that was entirely proper and within the law."

Labor Board attorneys, however, declared that the testimony clearly came within the scope of the complaint against Bethlehem and the examiner, Frank Bloom, upheld them.

The testimony becomes sharper and so does Bethlehem's lawyer. Robert L. Brunner, Johnstown city controller, is being asked about wage payments to special strike policemen and has been told to produce his books. Company Attorney Moore rises to protest:

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"We have nothing to do with those affairs. There is no connection between the company and the city of Johnstown."

Keller, one of the Labor Board attorneys, corrects him. "The complaint charges that the company caused armed men to patrol the streets of Johnstown for the purpose of intimidating the strikers. The connection between the city and the Bethlehem Steel Company has already been shown. It has been testified that the general manager of the plant [Ellicott] assured employees at the E.R.P. meeting that they would have adequate police protection if they wished to work. It has also been testified that Mayor Shields spoke at a meeting of the citizens of Johnstown at which Sidney D. Evans, special management representative of the steel company, also spoke." Evans's high-falutin' title conceals the fact that he is the company's strikebreaking and propaganda expert.

Brunner's books are scrutinized and show payments of $5000 to police for overtime work during the strike, $500 for police badges, and $700 for "safety hats." These payments are for regular police and equipment. There is no official record of payments to special police, drafted from company guards. But a taxi fleet operator, Jeno De Rosa, supplies a clue. All five of his cabs, he testified, were on hire to Mayor Shields for the duration of the strike; cost, $500. Three drive-it-yourself cars were also at the mayor's disposal; cost, $966. Two taxicabs were leased from Alexander Zack by the mayor; cost, $380. Seven were leased from John Zamen; cost, $780. Total cost of taxicabs, $2626.

All the money was paid over at the mayor's office, in cash. The cars were used by policemen. "Ordinary policemen or special policemen?" De Rosa was asked. "They didn't tell me," he replied. But there could be no doubt that the cars were used to haul company guards and deputies to the strike scene.

Sheriff Michael Boyle is called, and testifies that Ellicott, Shields, and members of the Citizens' Committee suggested he send a telegram to Governor Earle asking for help. They helped him draft the message, and it was sent off. Next day the troops were called out, but instead of protecting strikebreakers, they closed down the mills, thus aiding the strikers. The Citizens' Committee and company officials were extremely perturbed by this unexpected development. They called in Sheriff Boyle and blamed him for what had happened. They asked him to send another telegram to the governor, asking for the withdrawal of the troops. But this time Boyle refused, left them stewing in their own juice.

And now we come to the actual formation of the Citizens' Committee. Among those invited to join were two clergymen, Rev. N. J. Woloshuk, pastor of St. Michael's Ukrainian Church, and Rabbi Abram M. Granowitz, of Beth Zion Temple. Both attended the organization meeting, held June 14, at the Elks Home. Both withdrew when they found out what was up. Both are witnesses.

The Sidney D. Evans mentioned above spoke at the meeting, Woloshuk said. "He said that the officials of Bethlehem Steel are making every effort to keep the shop open and it's up to the citizens of Johnstown to give protection to the men who are working and want to go to work."

Present at the meeting were Campbell, Stanton, Martin, and Mayor Shields. Rabbi Granowitz takes up the story:

The mayor said he was having difficulties in connection with the strike and in managing the pickets, and was very much disturbed by the violence. He said the union officials ought to accept responsibility for this violence and he felt David Watkins [S.W.O.C. organizer] ought to be told if he didn't accept the responsibility, the mayor couldn't be expected to do anything if a number of citizens decided to take matters into their own hands.

Here is vigilanteism actually being born.

Rabbi Granowitz also testified that he was named a member of the Citizens' Committee publicity group, but he did not know who wrote or authorized the insertion of full-page ads in papers all over the country, signed by the Citizens' Committee. The publicity board protested to Martin that it didn't know what was going on and was told it would thereafter be consulted. Ads continued to appear without its knowledge, however. As to how the ads were paid for:

Rose: At the first meeting were any contributions asked for?

Granowitz: None that I know of.

Rose: At the second meeting on Thursday, June 17, at the Central High School, were contributions asked for?

Granowitz: No.

Nevertheless, somebody paid for the ads, at a rate ranging up to $3000 in the New York and Philadelphia papers. It is no secret that the money, $50,000, apparently came as a heartfelt contribution from Ernest T. Weir, of National Steel, who is having his own troubles with the National Labor Board.

When he was approached by Stanton to attend the organization meeting of the vigilante group, Rabbi Granowitz said, he was assured "it will be a spontaneous movement of citizens to take up the problems of the strike."

Spontaneity, thy name, it seems, is Stanton.

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Four Letters from Spain

What an American in the fighting forces there thinks about is clearly shown in what a seasoned revolutionist wrote his wife

By Rubin Schechter

RUBIN SCHECHTER, who wrote these letters to his wife, died on August 28, 1937 of the wound he describes. Schechter was section organizer of the Communist Party in the Third Assembly District of Queens County, N. Y., when he went to Spain. He had previously served as educational director of his section for more than two years after joining the party in 1933, and was considered by his comrades to be a model Bolshevik. He was thirty-two when he died, a worker in the fur industry, a member of the Omicron Alpha Tau fraternity, a graduate of Syracuse University, '27, where he majored in English. One of his outstanding pieces of party work in Queens was with the Committee for Equal Opportunity, which fought through to a successful conclusion its campaign to end the Queens County General Hospital's discrimination against Negro doctors.—THE EDITORS.

OUR training has taken on a spurt in the past week. We are rapidly shaping into a competent battalion under the marvelous leadership of a "Mexican" brand of commander ($2 \times 2 = 4$). We are being trained not in the bourgeois way—their way is to work away at a man until they have turned a thinking human being into a blind, brutal mechanism. Our way is to develop military understanding through open discussion and lectures. Every soldier is taught in such a way that he is able to understand and think alongside of his officers. We never say, "Do this!" We always say, "The following is our purpose today. In order to achieve this, you can do it best in the following manner." Of course this takes longer, but your soldier remains a dignified, thinking person. He grows in understanding and flexibility. A dangerous situation is something for him to think about and solve to the disadvantage of the fascist enemy, not something to run away from as the first instinctive reaction of one whose thought process has been shattered by bourgeois brutalization. Our army is superior to the fascist armies because its man-power is free. It follows, of course, that victory must be ours.

It will certainly please everyone in Queens County to know that Jordan is doing well at the front. Bill saw him last week and gave about the only dismal report I ever heard about Jordan—namely that he had raised the usual Van Dyke beard. It hasn't hurt his fighting any and I don't think anything can ever hurt his fighting. The unemployed movement in our country should be very proud of him and, because of his leadership, start doing something for Spanish democracy. While I am touching on the matter of aid to Spain, I'd like to say a word to our comrades in Queens.

I have been rather boastful about Queens. Watching the *Daily Worker* and the reports coming through Dick and Harold, there is plenty to be happy about. Certainly none of us here from Queens would have expected that in less than two months, the great American upheaval would have shaken the stronghold of the N. Y. Chamber of Commerce (or its equivalent). The way organization and strike action in Queens has grown by leaps and bounds is remarkable. They are spontaneous bursts of bomb-shell lit by the fuse of the C.I.O. It is true that we had some organization here and perhaps a Y.C.L.'er there, but we could hardly speak of organization really fixed among the workers. These bursts were not the result of long planning. There will be hundreds of such bursts until we can get hold of all this spontaneity; harness and lead it under the organized command of the C.I.O. Then we will begin to have a movement. To look at these bursts in any other way than that of spontaneity will only turn our heads and make us dizzy with success. Do you want to test this spontaneity? I will tell you how. Just compare these marvelous bursts with the still crawling progress in Sunshine Biscuit, railroad (although important national factors are here involved), Anchor Cap, Lily Tulip Cups (even though we can record a good deal of organization in this shop). In these places we have done a great deal of work. Over a period of three or four years we have hammered these points with literally millions of leaflets on organization and the relation of the working class to nearly everything in human life.

May 12, 1937. RUBY.

YOU HAVE HEARD of our attack. The Lincoln and Washington Battalions took decisive parts in the great opening offensive. Right now we are participating in a few defensive actions. But not defensive in the old sense, the sense of stopping a fascist advance. We are holding and fortifying positions which we have already captured. We are fortifying our offensive. On other fronts, of course, we keep advancing. Our battalions have proved themselves to the Spanish people. Indeed, there is a sort of whisper spreading that we are shock battalions. Our American masses can be proud of this. They have not sacrificed in vain. We have struck deep into the vitals of the despoilers of humanity. Soon fascism will be in flames.

I write these general lines during these moments when everything is far from general. Twice during the course of these few sentences I have had to stop and quickly flatten out to keep out of sight of planes. (In this case they proved to be our own planes.) Everywhere the bullets are whistling and crackling. Right now our artillery is raising hell with the fascist lines. But almost daily we have experienced the crashing and smashing of their artillery. And as they have tasted of our aerial bombardments, so have we of theirs. I can say with all the pride I can summon up that our battalions have been subjected to two of the severest and most dreadful bombings from the air, and that we came out of them with flying colors; not a scratch on our morale. As for loss of life, there is this to say about artillery and aerial bombardment: there must be a direct hit in order to do real damage. Aerial bombardment rarely gets many. It is successful if it manages to shatter the nerves and morale of those who are subjected to the bombardment. Strafing by planes is also of the same nature. After the second bombing we were strafed, but we didn't lose a man either dead or wounded. Hence our total loss of comrades, dead and wounded, in both bombings was extremely small. The greatest loss of life still comes from the machine gun and the rifle; it still comes from men who face each other almost within sight of each other and shoot one another. In the final analysis, planes, artillery, and tanks too are auxiliaries to the soldier with his rifle and to the machine-gun crew. They are peculiar auxiliaries in that they seem to dwarf the man with the rifle and even the machine-gun crew. The most fearful electric storms with bolts of lightning, crashes of thunder, and sleets and sheets of storm rain does not give such a feeling of man's helplessness and tininess as the smashing and crashing and tearing and earth-ripping and deafening rips of thunder from which all silence has been torn out of the aerial bombardment.

Darling, the last sentence I finished one hour after I started it. During this time we were subjected to a terrific aerial bombardment plus strafing. Again the damage is almost unmentionable. But how can you fight this horror? In no way at all. You lie prone, your face buried in the dirt, your body elongated, you clutch onto something. You wait. When it is over, comrades begin to raise their heads toward each other and a smile begins to flicker and spread. The curse words begin to be heard and they also spread. Then the tension snaps. Some begin to look around for the hurt. Others begin to tell their feelings and, of course, how very close they were from a bursting bomb.

You can see, darling, from what I have just written (and even from the slant of my writ-

ing) that it is extremely difficult to write under our present conditions. However, I must write you just as often as possible so that you can see my writing and know that I am still well.

Permit me to finish off. Perhaps some other time (when I can recollect many emotions in tranquility) I shall be able to tell you how often and how beautifully you appeared in my thoughts in these hours of trial. I can only tell you this thing to make you happy: *I have never once been afraid.*

Here is my kiss for Toby. My love. *Salud!*

July 21, 1937. RUBY.

MY DARLING, I was shot through the right arm in battle on July 24. The fact that I am writing you the very next day (using my left hand, of course) will show you that it's nothing to worry about. The bullet went clean through the upper fleshy portion of the arm and did not touch the bone, which means quick healing. I ought to be back with the battalion within fifteen days. My left hand will not permit me to describe the circumstances of the battle or the sensations of being hit; only this about the latter, that if one goes into a war like this one without fully knowing the possibilities, he is an ostrich indeed and does not make the best fighter for the annihilation of fascist barbarism. And now I will end with a burst of praise for the beautiful and loving and thoroughly scientific succor which the Spanish masses have organized for their wounded fighters. The very best places in Spain have been turned into hospitals and sanatoriums. See where I am—in what was formerly one of the greatest hotels in Europe. I occupy a gorgeous, big, up-to-date room together with two more comrades. We have our tremendous closet (for which we have no special use), our three-mirrored vanity table (good for writing and eating), and a large, fully equipped bathroom (including the usual ladies' douche with running water—excellent for washing the loins and feet). We are served no differently from a private patient in Mount Sinai. Only no one counts your teeth to see how much money is hidden away in the cavities. Here they know you by your last name and first name, by the brigade and battalion to which you belong, and by the bleeding fact that you have been wounded in the war. These facts bring into motion speedily and unassumingly the most comradely and modern service now known in hospitalization. Here is one more mighty indication of the future, another Joe Louis wallop at the punch-drunk doctrine of private initiative.

That's all, darling. A few days ago it was not easy to write because of the airplane bombings. Now it is not easy for the want of the habituated right arm (and hand too; the bullet shock has a special effect on the fingers—it numbs them except for fire-points of pain which suddenly pierce through their deadness every few minutes).

Keep writing to me care of the Washington-Lincoln Battalion, Socorro Rojo Internacional, Albacete. There is no need writing to the hospital. By the time you get this letter and answer it, I shall long be back in the battalion. Of course there is no need to tell the folks or our daughter, who talks in all directions. It has taken much effort to write this letter, but it is a special kind of love letter—one which we have never had need or growth enough to write. You will, therefore, surely forgive me if I do not write again until I can use my right hand again, which ought to be in about ten days. Give my kiss to little Toby. To you my love, my deepest kiss, knowing how you, too, are kissing me.

July 25, 1937. RUBY.

Bertrando Valloton

Rubin Schechter

MY DARLING, as you can see, wounds are stubborn things. My right hand and arm are still not harnessable. My left hand will still have to speak to you—in its rickety way, of course. If it were just a matter of where the bullet passed through, I would be ready to return to the front any one of these days, so well healed are the punctures. But it's the partial paralysis in the fingers (three of them —thumb, index, and center) which takes time and sometimes very painful waiting—until the torn nerves repair themselves or if possible are repaired by the surgeon's skill. Hence you will be happy to know that I am under the vigilant care of one of the greatest neurologists in all Europe.

Because I am not certain as to whether you received my last letter, I will repeat to you that I was shot through the right arm above the elbow on July 24—a little before sundown. It was on the now famous Brunete sector. How did I come to be wounded? It was on account of a mule (still one of the chief methods of transportation in this land). Our battalion was readvancing to a position which for strategical reasons we had temporarily abandoned. We had not gone eight hundred yards when we bumped into a fascist military patrol. Naturally, we strung out and started to go to work on the bastards. But we were short of ammunition, and I started back for ammunition to our temporary base eight hundred yards away. I got there, loaded a dark-skinned donkey with four cases of bullets, and started toward our fighting comrades. But the donkey had his own idea of how fast to go, and he proceeded to stroll leisurely down this field of whistling bullets as if it were Sunday on Fifth Avenue. I spoke to the donkey in my best English (I had too much to tell him to say it in Spanish). I said to the donkey, "See what a damn fool donkey you are. You think your dark hide will save you. You think you are camouflaged. But no one is aiming at you in particular. See how the bullets are coming over in all directions. If you really had sense, we could take this gap on the run. The comrades will not believe their eyes if you come up with their ammunition. They will positively adore you. You will be a donkey such as never was on sea or land. This argument does not move you because you are a typical product of the old order. You prefer to drag along at the pace of all your forefathers when some real speed would give us both a glorious lease on life. As it is, you will probably be the death of both of us. That is where you conservatives always lead us to." So I spoke to this unreasonable donkey. And you may believe me the donkey supplied me with plenty of time to say these things. Nor was he a bad listener, his only fault was that he merely listened. And so it came to pass that it was no more than thirty seconds after I delivered myself of this exhortation that one of those countless bullets swished, shot through my arm, and I was forced to drop to the ground, shouting aloud for first aid. A Spanish comrade, stooping very low, came quickly to me and speedily applied the first-aid bandage we all carry with us. You may be sure that I did not let go the reins of the silly donkey. I turned him over to another comrade who came stooping by, with instructions for him to lead the donkey all the way around to the right and then to the battalion, since there was no way of making him run straight through. I also took care to take all the battalion records from my knapsack. Then, assisted by the Spanish comrade, I cautiously and safely made my way back to our temporary home, where I delivered the papers to the proper authority and myself to the medical station.

You know, darling, that I am not able to write much more. I must revise my estimate of my return to the front. Perhaps it will be another month before I return. I cannot handle Jewish except with my right hand, so I propose you read this letter to the folks. Kiss little Toby. She will probably enjoy the story of how her father was hit. And you, darling, have no worry at all. Here is my love. Write me often. Lovely darling.

August 12, 1937. RUBY.

Bertrando Valloton

Rubin Schechter

"Heart of Spain"

The current Frontier Films feature is seen as having made an original contribution to the art of the documentary film

By Elizabeth Noble

THE documentary film is in the vanguard of cinema activity; how it can be socially useful, how it differs from the enacted screen drama, how it can reach the public are vital questions. Yet one of the season's most important documentary films, *Heart of Spain,* has been almost entirely ignored by the press—this despite the fact that it is built on principles technically and dramatically valuable for the form. Reviewing *Heart of Spain* two weeks ago, NEW MASSES called it "pictorial dynamite." Evidently dynamite is too risky for critics to handle.

There have been many documentary films, designed to be informative and instructive or to hold the mirror up to current history, and some splendid ones, but few packed with the emotional power of this three-reel "short." This is because *Heart of Spain* is a new kind of documentary film. Literally forcing the audience to identify itself with the Spanish people on whom death is rained from the skies, it drives its message home in a different way from the usual documentary film. For when it tells of war's devastation and of unconquerable human spirit, of the contrast between fascism and freedom, between destruction and life, it does so by virtue of a dramatic integration not customarily found in the form, by a dramatic impact made possible because of its makers' method and approach.

A Frontier Films production, *Heart of Spain* was documented in Spain by Herbert Kline and Geza Karpathi and scenarized and edited by Paul Strand and Leo Hurwitz. In the editor's handling of their material lies the reason why the film possesses emotional intensity not usually found in the documentary film or short. That, to atttain its fullest effect, the documentary film must have sustained dramatic unity is the underlying principle. How unity may be achieved is thus the problem posed for the contemporary documentary film; and the answers given by *Heart of Spain* point the way for future films.

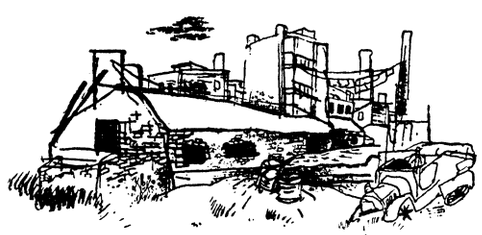
Unlike the enacted film, in which the audience becomes emotionally involved in the internal life of the characters, their needs and their hopes, the documentary film is made up of disconnected fragments of reality—of people, places, and events which the audience does not know specifically in relation to dramatic plot. The documentary film must therefore find equivalents by means of which the audience can be involved in what is happening on the screen. Unless this identification takes place, the documentary film cannot hope to drive home the deepest and most dramatic meaning of its material.

Therefore, in making *Heart of Spain,* what its impact on the spectator should be had to be determined before editing or cutting could begin. The meaning, implicit in the 10,000 feet brought from Spain is stated in the commentary: "From the heart of Spain, blood—blood to renew life." The dramatic line inherent in these words had then to be developed: "While at the front the Spanish army and the international volunteers spill their blood to save the land and the people; behind the lines those who do not fight or cannot fight create a vast reservoir of blood to renew those whose blood has been spilled."

Thus war and blood transfusion are the scenario's core. With this tool, the editors imposed the superior reality of human reason and feeling on the unrelated atoms of reality seen by the camera. Cutting in the silent film's best tradition, Strand and Hurwitz were able—by building on the tension of opposites—to produce powerful relations between sequences and to create not only the sense of historic fact but also the sense of drama, of conflict, moving and beautiful, poignant and heroic.

In analyzing the form of *Heart of Spain,* it should be emphasized that the sequences are not thematic variations, but true developments growing out of previous situations and in turn causing new situations to arise. The film's dramatic progression falls into three divisions: (1) Spain is torn by shells of international fascism; (2) to save the land and the people, the army moves into battle; there is frightful loss in shattered limbs and broken bodies, blood spilled; (3) behind the lines, the people create a vast reservoir of blood to renew the life of those who fight for Spain and freedom.

Internally a similar pattern is found. The first section, for example, is developed as follows. Blood has been shed in physically torn Spain, the ruins silently declare. Yet—life must go on. Go on it does, almost as usual. A sudden explosion, and people run in the streets to escape death. Still life goes on, soberly, heroically. Another explosion, an aerial bomb—Italy and Germany are invading Spain—and babies buried in flames. From fascist threats, men and women flee the city.



John Heliker

The method described does not indulge in analysis for its own sake, but for the sake of the result. Spain is the burning issue of the western world today. How better make this clear than by the camera's stark horror? But besides observation, the record must have significance added by its creators' conscious intention. For this purpose, the method is a tool of high value.

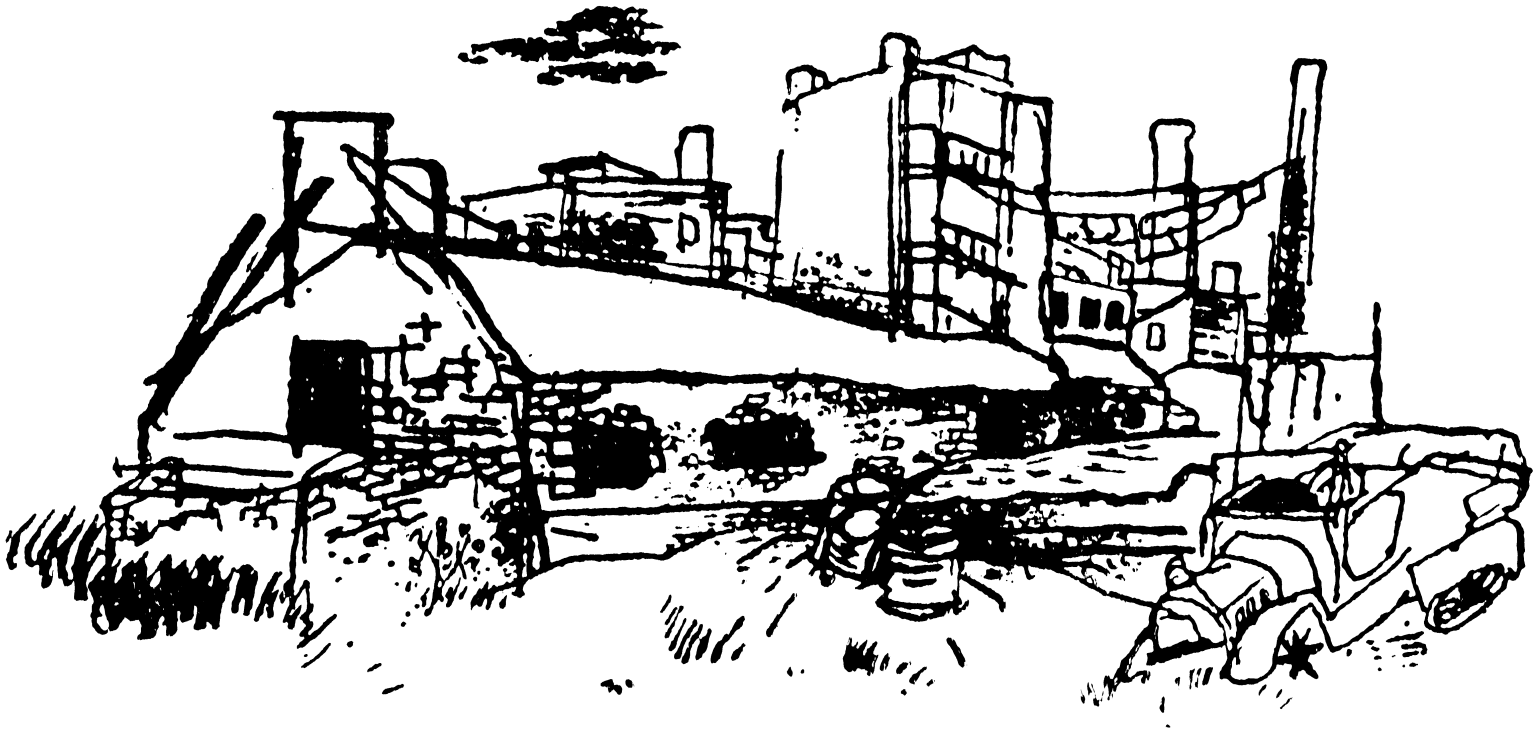
Heart of Spain applies the new approach not only in the scenario, but also in the cutting. From the 10,000 feet showing the work of the Canadian Blood Transfusion Service in Spain, scenes had to be selected not only for dramatic quality but so as to enhance the film's whole movement. To prove the inexhaustibility of the reservoir of blood, material had to be significantly juxtaposed. For instance, by cutting in close-ups of living soldiers in the International Cemetery sequence, the mood was established that men die, but other men will take their place, until Spain is free.

These ideas controlled commentary and musical arrangement as well. Lacking direct shots of blood, yet wishing to begin the film with its hero, blood, the editors had recourse to: "Silent. Blood has been spilled here." Spoken as the spectator sees Madrid's ruined buildings, these words become a part of the visual image's syntax.

So with the music. For the wounded at the front, music with the tearing effect of wounds. For the hospital, two guitars playing a sad and gentle Spanish folk air. At the end, renewal, new life: a soldier handing another a cigarette, a nurse smiling, an elderly woman coming to see the wounded soldier to whom her donated blood has been given, and over all a woman's throaty voice singing an heroic *fandaguilla.* By such an apparently simple device, the film builds to a resolution of hope and invincible courage.

In a coda, symbols are recapitulated: the blood bottle filling up, arms reaching out to give their blood, the loyalist salute, citizen-soldiers marching. "Win the war" becomes the most noble sentiment, while the musical *leitmotif,* the theme with which the film began, now concludes it, leaving ear and eye with a completed whole.

By this method, the makers of *Heart of Spain* have produced one of the finest of documentary films, a film of which some of Hollywood's leading actors and directors wired on opening night, "unanimously acclaimed the most compelling document ever shown of war-torn Spain." Thus it is demonstrated how, by the union of feeling and of craft, art may approach the stature of reality.



John Heliker

Another Hollywood Picture

Progressive actors, writers, readers, and directors are fighting against the reactionary unionists and their allies, the employers

By Martin Porter

HOLLYWOOD is a city of paradoxes, contradictions, and sophistries, pretty much like any other industrial city. The air is cleaner, the sun shines more often, but it is still a company town just as Aliquippa, Pa., and the others are. True, in the steel and coal towns, there are company stores and the like, and in Hollywood they allow you to spend your money as you please, but in most other respects Hollywood conforms to the fascist pattern. To the world at large, Hollywood means glamorous stars, temperamental directors, and fabulously paid screen writers. It is the Glamour City, and the streets are paved with gold—and fat contracts.

Let me disabuse you.

For every swimming pool there are a thousand furnished rooms with "the shower down the hall." For every Rolls Royce there are a hundred Chevvies barely able to limp from studio to studio. It is time the vast majority of workers in the cinema capital were taken into account.

The carpenters, electricians, make-up artists, utility workers, and the like are well organized. This does not mean that they are members of democratic, rank-and-file unions. On the contrary, they are members of A. F. of L. unions subject to the worst abuses of the craft-union system. All are run from the top by bureaucratic, dictatorial officers. These misleaders are cognizant of the strong C.I.O. sentiment on the lots and are making desperate efforts to retain control. They work hand in glove with Pat Casey, the bosses' labor relations expert, and are making a drive to take over the entire industry on an "industrial-craft-company-union" basis. This is in line with George Brown's boast at the Tampa convention of the A. F. of L. that he would show the C.I.O. a thing or two about organizing. Brown is head of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees which is now making these sweeping jurisdictional claims.

This drive is now under way with the I.A.T.S.E. attempting to absorb all workers from sweepers to directors. Here is a battle that will be fought on many fronts. The independent guilds are putting up a determined fight, and the battle will not soon cease. Enlightened workers know what Brown and his stooge, Bioff, will lead them into. Enlightened workers are banding together to stop the drive. We may expect to hear much from the Hollywood labor front in the future.

The white-collar workers are organized into Studio Employee Associations with dollar-a-year membership dues. Calls to meetings have been posted on studio bulletin boards, meetings attended on company time, employees paid for distribution of company-union literature and petitions, company lawyers engaged. No worker has dared raise his voice in protest—the Hollywood blacklist is merciless, unforgetting, and efficient. As sops to the white-collar employees, the studios have granted slight wage increases, vacations, sick leave, and the like. A studio official present at a white-collar workers' meeting made this statement: "You are here today because the studios have the choice of three evils: the C.I.O., the A. F. of L., and the employee-association plan. We chose the latter. Mr. ———, your lawyer, will now read the constitution."

The cutters, artists and illustrators, art directors, set designers, draughtsmen, and interior decorators are also organized—in guilds with non-union status.

The actors are members of the Screen Actors' Guild which holds its A. F. of L. charter through the Actors' Equity Association and is the only incorporated trade union in the United States. Ostensibly, the guild was formed to "help the poor extra"—actually, it operates to enslave the extra and the small-part and bit player. The 50 percent salary cut at the bottom of the depression frightened the stars and featured players into action, and the S.A.G. was born.

Being a corporation, there is stock.

The Senior Guilders—those who earn more than two hundred and fifty dollars a week—hold *voting* stock. Members of the Junior Guild are given *non-voting* stock and have no say in the management of the S.A.G. In other words, the eleven or twelve thousand members of the Junior Guild have no vote, are not consulted, can make no protest, and take no action. The less than a thousand Senior Guilders have provided themselves with an effective weapon for their own use. The Junior Guilders pay high dues ("to keep out the non-professionals and distribute the work") and have gotten nothing out of their association with their "betters." At the last general meeting the members of the Junior and Senior Guilds were segregated. They used separate entrances and the aisles were patrolled by hired thugs to prevent any protest from militant actors.

Charles Martin

At the same time, pressure was brought to bear on progressive Senior Guilders who felt a responsibility toward their fellow workers, and they were effectively and efficiently silenced. It must be stated that certain militant actors familiar with the situation and sensing what was ahead did raise their voices. By manipulation of the microphone, the chair drowned out their speeches and much of what they said was lost in the vast reaches of the Legion Stadium. However, there were willing listeners, and actors are beginning to question the infamous ten-year no-strike agreement with the producers.

Junior Guilders must realize that they have skill and talent, that their work is an important, integral part of the industry, that they are being used by the fat boys on top for their own selfish ends. They must realize, as many of them do at last, that their only hope for security is through control of Central Casting and the abolition of the Call Bureau.

Hollywood picture directors are organized in the Screen Directors' Guild. They are a great potential force for decent trade unionism in the industry although they have, at present, no direct affiliation with any other union or guild.

Directors in Hollywood do not strut about in open-neck shirts with leather puttees on their legs. They are hard-working, responsible artists to whose hands the actual work of picture making is entrusted. Some of them receive tremendous sums per picture, others are engaged under weekly term contracts, a large number of them shift from studio to studio as best they can—and many of them are unemployed. They work, these directors, under constant pressure from the producers, who have a budget to meet that has been set for them by the front office. Many directors

Charles Martin

put in eighteen and twenty hours of work a day. They have no control of the cutting and assembling of the picture (except in a few isolated instances). The actual work of cutting and assembling is controlled by the producer and the front office. Directors with a point of view or who have made a picture with a definite mood in mind all too often find that the powers-that-be have maltreated and butchered their product.

The S.D.G. is still an unknown factor in the field. It is a guild that had renascence under the provisions of the Wagner Act. It is too early to prophesy its course and direction. However, the S.D.G., like the actors and writers, have made clear to Brown and Bioff that they will have no part in the I.A.T.S.E. jurisdictional claim. They insist that the S.D.G. will continue to speak and act for its own membership.

The Screen Writers' Guild of the Authors' League of America is also a direct result of the Wagner Act's provisions. A year ago last May, company stooges scuttled the S.W.G., formed the Screen Playwrights, a company-spawned organization, and the S.W.G. lay dormant. With the Federation of Motion Picture Crafts on strike and the S.A.G. talking action, a group of progressive writers was able to force the old Guild board into action. The rank and file made it clear from the beginning that they wanted leadership from below and control of strategy and tactics. They elected a progressive slate and, in a short time, have grown until they now have over five hundred members. They are demanding that the producers recognize them as the sole bargaining agent for screen writers under the provisions of the Wagner Act. The National Labor Relations Board has ordered a hearing on the question of whether an election should be held to determine the bargaining agency. (The result of this hearing may be known by the time this issue appears.) The Screen Playwrights are fighting this election tooth and nail on the ground that the Wagner Act does not apply to screen writers and that writers are no more to be considered employees than is the president of a bank.

Soon after the Screen Playwrights scuttled the S.W.G the producers recognized *them* as the bargaining agent for the writers. That this company agreement failed to touch on the vital problems of the writers the Screen Playwrights ignore.

The wage scale for writers as well as for the other creative professions is disproportionate. On the one hand, we find a Ben Hecht with a reputed six-thousand-dollar-a-week salary and at the other end of the scale there is Mr. Average Writer who may earn as little as fifty dollars a week—when he can get it. This does not mean that Mr. Hecht is not worth his salary or that Mr. Average Writer is being overpaid. Writing is still one of the arts and one man's opinion is as good as another's.

The matter of "screen credits" is a sore problem with most writers. Often they do the rough, brain-racking work on a script only to find that it has been assigned to a more important writer who receives complete credit for the film. Writers feel that their work on a picture is worthy of recognition. Actors, directors, and producers are known to the general public, but the screen writer is still largely anonymous. In France, England, and the U.S.S.R., the writer's importance is understood and they receive their full share of encomiums. It is true that the "code" of the Screen Playwrights covers this point, but the phrasing is vague and there is no real machinery for compelling the enforcement of its provisions.

Several of the companies have lured young collegians with writing talent to Hollywood with typical "golden" promises. These young men and women find themselves employed at twenty-five dollars a week. The producers operate on the theory that if they can get *one good idea* from these youngsters, the entire course of employment is paid for.

There is no reason why a minimum salary should not be established for writers. Producers will meet this argument in various fashions, but the fact remains that minimum wages have been set for most of the industry.

It is a common practice for the independent studios to purchase an idea for as little as $100. They then advance another $200 and order the writer to develop his story. It is agreed that the studio will make a further payment—a more substantial one—if the balance of the work is acceptable. The writer spends a month or six weeks on the script—for $200—only to find that the studio does not like what he has done. He is dismissed, and the story and its development become the property of the studio—which orders another underpaid writer to finish the job.

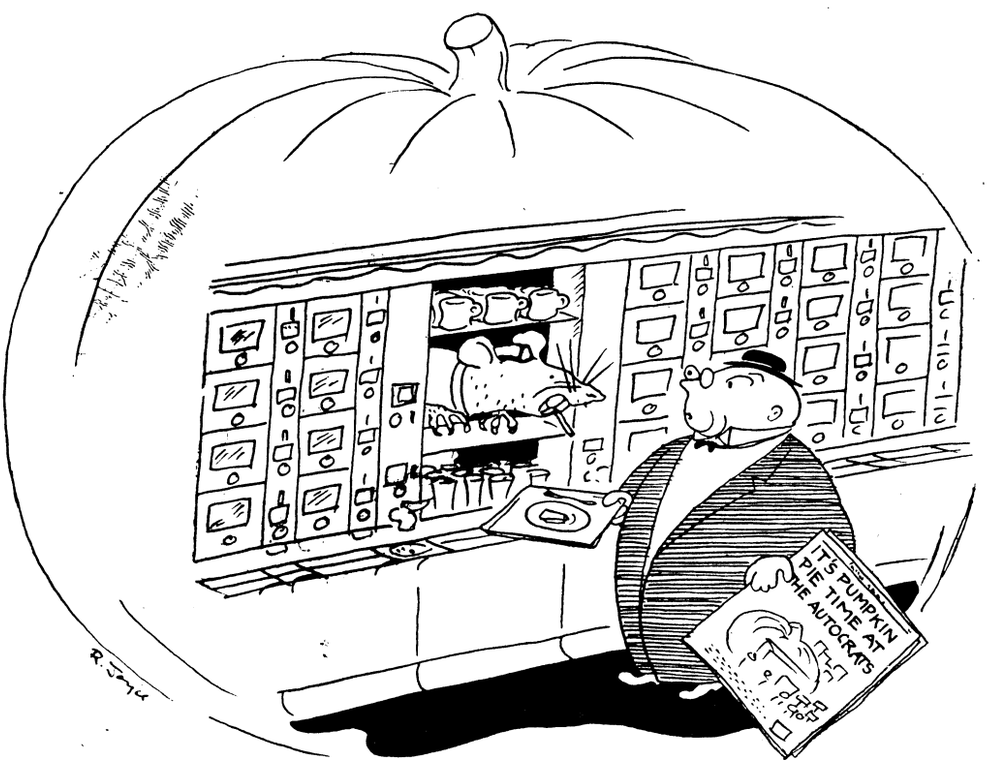
There is another group of motion-picture workers—the screen readers—these poor people who spend their lives reading plays, stories, novels, and the like in search of possible screen fare. Most of the companies maintain permanent staffs of readers who receive from $22.50 to $50 a week. For this they are expected to read an incredible number of pieces. They work under pressure as there is keen competition among the studios for material, and it is important that Superba Films read Mr. Harold Bell Wright before Colossal does. The speed-up is used constantly and is a continual nightmare. Protests of readers are hushed by the bosses, who point out that many readers have become writers—whereat the poor reader is sent back to his or her cell with hopes high and eyes a-gleam.

In addition to the "inside" readers, there are "outside" readers. These are on piecework, being paid so much per play or story. During the last few years the efficiency experts have evolved a new sort of system. If, in the reader's judgment, a story he is assigned to read is screen material, he is paid five or six dollars. On the other hand, if the reader is certain that the studio will not be interested in the story and rejects it, he is paid two dollars.

There are readers in Hollywood and some in New York. Their plight is equally bad on both sides of the continent.

I have touched on but a small part of the Hollywood picture. It is impossible to go into further detail within the limited scope of a single article. By this time, the reader must realize that the problem of the film worker is the problem of every worker.

The next time you go to your local movie palace, whether it be in Kalamazoo or on Broadway, remember the film workers and their struggle. It is inextricably linked with your own.



Robert Joyce

"So you found rats' whiskers in our delicious pumpkin pie? So what?"

Robert Joyce

"So you found rats' whiskers in our delicious pumpkin pie? So what?"

READERS' FORUM

Owen Burke and Michael Gold on Isadora Duncan—Another view of army life

TO THE NEW MASSES:

Mike Gold may have known Isadora Duncan, found in her a "complete vision of life and revolution," but his knowledge of the young revolutionary dancers seems a bit meager and confused. There isn't even the evidence in his story on Duncan that he has seen Anna Sokolow's *Strange American Funeral* danced to his own poem.

Isadora "belongs to us forever," says Mike. And she does. Not because he says so, but, and contrary to his rhetorical question, because there isn't a young dancer in the whole country that doesn't know the great pioneer's work.

No, the young dancers are not "dancing democracy" particularly, but it isn't likely that an Anna Sokolow dancing *anti-fascist* satire or a Sophie Maslow dancing *Two Songs for Lenin* will ever dance an imperialist ballet. Nor will they ever say, as Isadora did, that Nietzsche gave dance its "spirit."

Isadora was as great a pioneer as Mike Gold indicates, for all the broad romantic sentimentality of her work and life. But there's no reason to deprecate the metal of the younger dancers. Isadora's record speaks for her. The young dancers are still fashioning theirs, and doing a good job of it.

True enough, for some time the dance "substituted geometry and technique for emotion and the spirit," but it was a passing phase in the development of a new language, and it wasn't long in passing. Isadora was never the "old devotee surrounded by the young philistines of a new sophistication." Isadora was dead long before this short period set in.

These "philistines," incidentally, now stir audiences—as Isadora never could—with Negro songs of protest, with passionate protest against fascist invasion, with unequivocal damnation of imperialist wars. Nor did these "philistines" run away from their America, as Isadora did. You'll find the Virginia reel, the round and square dances of our American ancestry in the dances of our young revolutionaries. The "young philistines" turned to the "American folk-life" as Isadora never could. The Irish jig she learned from her grandmother she developed in terms of Greek vases, no more the "natural expression" of the "human body" than the present day "geometrical contortions." Geometrical distortions is the more advisable phrase, distortions that aren't any more related to the "post-war German Dadaists" than is José Limon's satiric *Hoch* to the cultural dictates of the Führer. And since when are "geometrical contortions" a vice of themselves? Look at Picasso's anti-fascist Guernica canvases. And George Grosz.

No, Mike, you haven't seen "our young revolutionary dancers" if you speak of them in terms of "ugliness," "despair," and "no hope." No, they do not "create such images of a new human beauty toward which the race may strive in socialism." They leave that to the utopian romantics. It may have been all right for Isadora in her muddled utopian way to do beautiful Greek bodies. The young revolutionary dancer is more of a realist. And it was a bit of a gratuitous slap that you, Mike, delivered in suggesting that the young dancers do a festival "in honor of Isadora to testify that struggle is not enough, there must also be a vision and goal."

The young revolutionary dancer walks the picket line, stages a sit-down, goes on a hunger strike; the young revolutionary dancer does active party work; the young revolutionary dancer knows of *no* struggle in a vacuum—he has a real vision and a real goal. Isadora was never involved in party struggles; she was alive while John Reed wrote for the proletariat of the world. Isadora never walked a picket line, never got a pink slip; she had her Lohengrin, her private yacht, champagne and oysters along with her "prattling" of Marx. Sure, give Isadora all the credit she deserves, and she deserves plenty; give her a festival; but it's time a good many besides yourself, Mike, paid a little comradely respect to our own young and militant revolutionary dancers.

New York. OWEN BURKE.

Mike Replies

TO THE NEW MASSES:

Isadora Duncan never walked a picket line and neither did Walt Whitman and Henry Thoreau. Isadora never got a pink slip, but neither did John Reed. Isadora was not involved in party struggles; but did not I say in my original article that she was a utopian socialist in the trancendentalist American tradition?

I thought I was careful enough to say that Isadora was not to be judged as a modern Communist. Comrade Burke wants to debate me on that issue, but it's not an issue at all, unless we are to apply the same foolish retroactive test to every American revolutionist from Tom Paine down. This isn't the way to learn from our historical forerunners, or have they nothing of their own to teach us?

But I believe Isadora Duncan had something to teach the younger generation of revolutionary dancers, and I have tried to indicate what it was. I believe, similarly, that Walt Whitman has more to teach our younger poets than has T. S. Eliot, by whom so many of them have been affected, with what I believe are sad results.

I am not denying the great revival of interest in the American dance, and the freshness, enthusiasm, and vast talent shown by the young revolutionary dancers who have created this interest. We owe them a great debt.

I have been present at some of their festivals, and watched the audiences, too. I still believe that much of their work is as deliberately unintelligible and overtechnicalized as the "modern" poetry. I think it hasn't the simple, humanist approach of Isadora, or her feeling for beauty. I know "beauty" is an outmoded, old-fashioned word, but I have come back to it in my own thinking, and am firmly convinced we will never develop a fully-rounded, humane, revolutionary art unless this old word is restored to its rightful place in our scale of human values. You think Isadora was a "romantic"—well, Lenin must have been the same sort, because he once said after a futurist concert in Moscow, when the futurists were ruling the Soviet art world, "It may be called modern and revolutionary, but it gives me no joy."

Well, again, to repeat: I wasn't "deprecating" the younger dancers in order "to raise monuments to Isadora." In a brief article I tried to make a single point: that in our revolutionary poetry and dance I would like to see more beauty and romanticism—the sort one finds in all folk-ballads, for instance. I just don't like cerebral art, and don't believe I ever will. Aren't we of the minority to be allowed to say this any more? They bite your head off—these poets and dancers.

New York. MICHAEL GOLD.

What's Wrong with the Army?—

TO THE NEW MASSES:

In your September 14 issue you featured an article by Joseph W. Mitchell dealing with life in the army. It is encouraging to see the NEW MASSES publishing material relating to the soldier and his life in the army, as there is much to be said about it. However, articles of the Mitchell type will only serve to arouse antagonism in army circles, rather than gain popularity for the MASSES and its radical friends.

Because he simply grouches all over the place instead of trying to deal with the soldier and his problems in an intelligent fashion, Mr. Mitchell's article should have been entitled "My Gripe About the Army." This is the kind of stuff that every post commander will use to show his boys what gold-bricking good-for-nothings these radicals are.

To begin with, Mr. Mitchell isn't the so-called soldier he presents himself to be. He is a sergeant and a clerk. These two facts place him in a much better spot than the average doughboy. Just imagine if our author had been No. 2 of the rear rank in an infantry squad, and drilled several hours a day, stood guard duty, kitchen duty, parades, polished brass, and dog-robbed for some officer. Or if he were a private in a field-artillery unit and had to scrub the horses' backs every day, sweep the stables, etc. And to top it off received only half of his monthly pay of $45 on which to get drunk.

The point that I wish to make is that Mr. Mitchell's tendency to exaggerate, dramatize, and look at things purely subjectively has negated the truth of his facts and will not result in a clear understanding of the soldier's life by the average citizen of our country. The natural question aroused after reading the article is how the devil does anyone stand the army for any length of time? In order to answer this, it is necessary to know the average soldier.

The majority of young men in the army are from small towns (mill towns, coal towns, steel towns, etc.). Almost all of them turn to the army as a sort of last resort, a means of escape from drudgery and unhappiness at home. Therefore they do not find the food so objectionable, the work so menial or so difficult. They form friendships, and rather enjoy sitting around chinning at the table with the same old faces. Most of them go in for some sport, and enjoy the ball games. Yes, although they are a definite minority, I know men who actually like the army because it seems better than spending your life in a factory or a coal mine. Getting up at 5:45 a.m. is not only the soldier's lot; many workingmen do it. And believe it or not, there are plenty of men who shave every day even though they are not forced to do so.

There are three main reasons why a soldier's life is a tough one: (1) his economic conditions are very poor; extremely low pay, inferior food, etc.; (2) the extreme red tape and discipline which he must always put up with; (3) the isolation of the soldier from all normal links with life (especially true of foreign duty). It is this latter point that leads the soldier so often to drink and debauchery.

These conditions are characteristic of any army under a capitalist system. Therefore, the solution is not a simple one, such as an individual "buying out."

It is an accepted rule that soldiers must not think about anything going on in the world. They are simply supposed to take and carry out orders. They are even deprived of the basic right of every citizen—to vote. This must be changed!

I think the hope of the soldier lies in the direction of making this country as progressive as possible; such as would exist under a farmer-labor leadership. The soldier's problem, just as that of the workingman and farmer, is a big one and requires a major change in the social system. This is the message that should reach every doughboy so as to lift some of the gloom and show him his future is not just one hopeless routine job after another.

A living example of what the army could be is offered by that of the Soviet Union. I would like to see an article dealing with the everyday life of the soldier in the Red Army. That should prove interesting and enlightening by comparison.

New York City. A FIRST LIEUTENANT.

REVIEW AND COMMENT

The "science" of race-thinking—Two Negro novels—Quest for the absolute and the Pacific puzzle

JACQUES BARZUN'S study of "race-thinking"* is a tremendously valuable survey that assembles in one place a most astounding record of flimsy theorizing. One will certainly do well to avoid it if he would make his own baleful contributions to the "science" of racial discrimination. Here is a house of horrors if there ever was one—and I think that its evidence should be included in the exhibit of lynch ropes, Klan robes, and kindred devices assembled at Commonwealth College. The ropes themselves are "neutral." They might have been used for tethering cattle, and the robes would probably do quite well as night shirts. Here, however, is the record of the "ideas" that guide their use for malign purposes.

The book, for me at least, contained surprises. It was surprising to be reminded that "race-thinking" was not always reactionary. Tacitus, for instance, played an important part in "starting the powerful race dogma of Nordic superiority," yet he was actuated by the exact opposite of chauvinistic purposes. His "essay on the Germans, which contains so many of the facts and so much of the feeling that animates modern racialism" was motivated by emancipatory intentions:

> Tacitus wrote as traveler, historian, and moralist, but especially as an embittered foe of the imperial tyranny. Hence his eulogy of the Germanic race is systematic and politically pointed. According to him the Germans are an indigenous race; they are virtuous, individualistic, freedom-loving, and jealous of their racial purity; physically they are tall and blond, brave and tough, they live frugally and are adventurous rather than toilsome.

In other words, he was building up the picture of an "ideal" race as a political weapon against tyrannical trends at home. It was apparently a roundabout way of saying, "Let *us* be virtuous, brave, tough, frugal, adventurous, individualistic, and freedom-loving." Later we see the uses of such thinking begin to shift.

> Leaning on the *Germania* for a description of the special gifts and institutions of the Frankish or Germanic race, the Count Henri de Boulainvilliers (1658-1722) evolved the still lively notion that all freedom and independence come from the Germanic strain. Hence Louis XIV's absolute monarchy, based on the Roman idea of the imperium, was a government fit only for slaves. Boulainvilliers wanted the nobles of his day to revolt against slavish institutions and restore the aristocratic freedom of the German forest.

We also find that race-thinking serves, a little later, to enunciate a muddled doctrine of class-consciousness in an emancipatory direction:

> Just before the French revolution the Abbé Sieyès, the author of *What Is the Third Estate?*, had tried to settle the race issue for all time. The nobility, said Sieyès, claims that its political rights are based on the inheritance by blood of the privileges won in the Frankish conquest. "Very well. We, the Gallo-Roman plebs, will now conquer the nobility by expelling and abolishing them. Our rights will supersede theirs on exactly the principle they invoke."

Hence, after the revolution, when "the bourgeoisie had overthrown both the monarchy and the aristocracy and had lumped the two," we find that "'Freedom' had thereby changed camps, from the Franks to the Gallo-Romans. This is the initial alteration of the Nordic myth of freedom found in Tacitus."

The general pattern was now secure, though its variants would be endless, with all sorts of new strains introduced each time some new scientist found another way of classifying differences. Those who tend to feel that race-thinking is "peculiarly German" (an attitude that is itself an example of race-thinking) will discover ample evidence that it is ubiquitous, with far more important systematic contributions coming from writers in France than from writers in Germany prior to the rise of Hitlerism (the "Franks" enjoyed a special tactical advantage as vessels of liberty, because of the pun lurking behind the name).

Much of such thinking, as Barzun points out, was not cast in the "superiority-inferiority" mold at all. It was liberal, neutral. Particularly in æsthetic theories as to different "racial" or regional characteristics, the distinctions were frequently made along "parliamentary" lines, with the notion that each "race" had its own special contribution to make toward the common cultural pool of mankind. Herder's romantic historicism was of this sort. However, such theories incidentally reënforced the belief in racial distinctions by *taking it for granted that they existed.* Hence, such a mode of thought indirectly served reactionary ends, since it maintained the belief in distinct "racial" traits (with a trait like "humor," or "musicality," for instance, being allocated to some particular "blood"). Political rivalries arising from economic pressure could always provide the groundwork for resentments that converted such *neutral appreciation* of differences back into an *invidious comparison* of differences.

Charles Martin

And always, as the author shows, in the heat of such impassioned controversies the crassest inconsistencies could be charitably overlooked. For you worked the system two ways: first you discovered "Aryan," or "Semitic," or "Celtic" traits—and whenever you found an "Aryan" that didn't fit the "Aryan" pattern, you thereby "discovered" that he was *really* "Semitic," etc. Or you extolled a certain "blood stream" as all-powerful, capable of winning out over any other (along the "nobility will out" line of thought), and coupled this heroic disclosure with admonitions lest this all-powerful "blood" be contaminated by other "bloods."

Each advance in physiology, geography, philology, anthropology, history, laboratory technique, psychology, and medicology was in turn drawn upon for service in the cause of racial quackery. Any innovation in scientific measurement provided a fresh opportunity for "us vs. them" racial patterns of one sort or another, with each suppositious faction slightly revising the terms for the opposing traits. "We" had "boldness" on "our" side, for instance—but a thinker on "their" side would name this same trait "brutality." "Merimée was right when he said that racial historiography was the democratic form of dynastic history."

The book concludes with a summarized critique of such thought, and with suggestions as to the great number of ways in which it must be modified if it is to be anything but damned nonsense (nonsense serviceable for the uncritical scapegoat devices of political demagogues). The book should also be read by Marxists because it indicates how both "class" and "regional" divisions can, in naïve hands, lead to a schematization of psychological traits that is hardly other than a concealed variant of the same oversimplified patterns as prevail in "race-thinking." On Marx's own testimony, a theory of purely economic classifications must be subtilized when one is analyzing the expressions of any specific individual.

KENNETH BURKE.

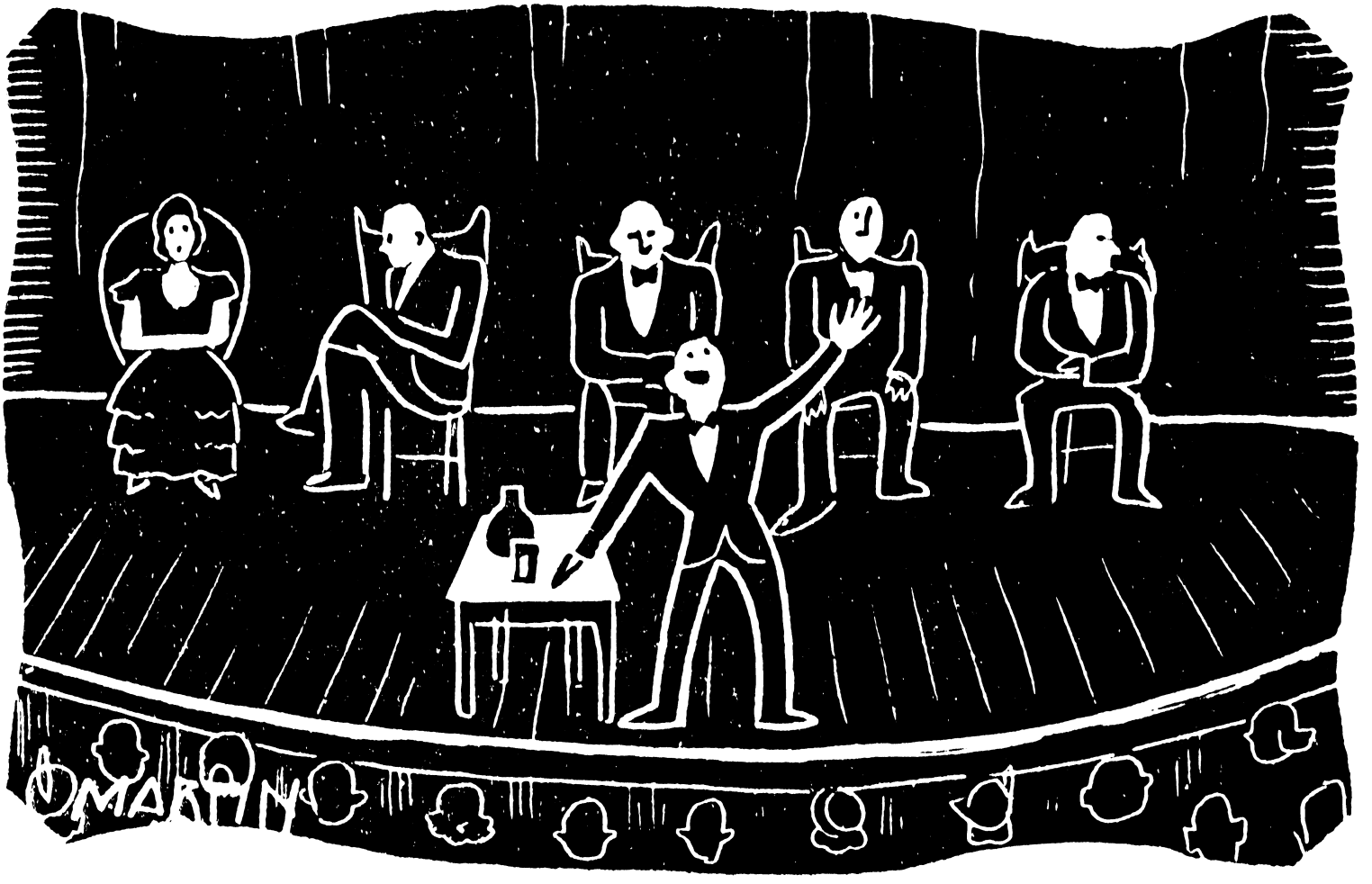
* RACE: A STUDY IN MODERN SUPERSTITION, *by Jacques Barzun. Harcourt, Brace & Co.* $2.50.

Between Laughter and Tears

THESE LOW GROUNDS, *by Waters Edward Turpin. Harper & Bros.* $2.50.

THEIR EYES WERE WATCHING GOD, by Zora *Neale Hurston. J. B. Lippincott Co.* $2.00.

IT IS difficult to evaluate Waters Turpin's *These Low Grounds* and Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God.* This is not because there is an esoteric meaning hidden or implied in either of the two novels; but rather because neither of the two novels has a basic idea or theme that lends itself to significant interpretation. Miss



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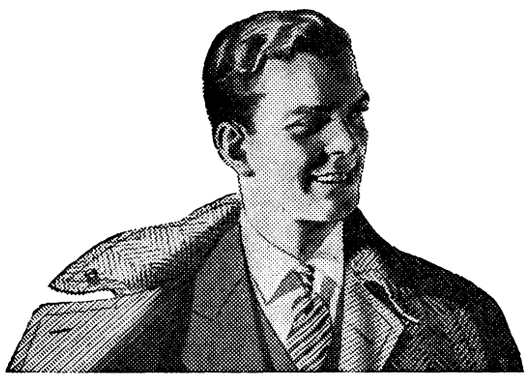

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Breakfast Cereals

If Barnum Were Alive . . .

He would probably find a career in cereals, where circus tactics outweigh actual virtues as sales appeals, to his liking. A report on 37 brands, including Quaker Oats, Shredded Wheat, and Grape Nuts, shows most cereals to be cheap foods in expensive forms; gives tables showing the relative costs of brands in terms of the number of calories one cent will buy. (A cent will buy from as little as 40 calories to as much as 290 calories depending on the brand you select.)

Price-Fixing

The Tydings-Miller price-fixing bill passed in the last session of Congress raises prices, makes the high cost of living a more serious problem than it was before. An article and an editorial give the consumer's side of the story and tell what to do about price-fixing.

Oil Burners and Coal Stokers

Engineers' Advice on Heating Systems

Numerous makes of automatic oil and coal heating equipment are compared and rated on the score of efficiency and economy. Nearly a hundred makes of oil burners, coal stokers, boilers, and hand-fired coal furnaces are rated as "Best Buys," "Also Acceptable," and "Not Acceptable."

Auto Radios

One of the 14 models in this report is rated as a "Best Buy." Two are "Not Acceptable." Arvin, Philco and Motorola models are included in the ratings. In adition to ratings on the basis of price and quality, rankings are given on the basis of performance alone. Advice is also given on which type of auto aerial to use.

Women's Slips

Some Are Part Lead

Twenty-seven rayon and silk slips ranging in price from 69c to $2.98, are rated on the basis of tests. A few brands were heavily weighted with lead or tin salts, a few were misleadingly labeled.

Winter Motor Oils

Household Oils and Typewriters

Three reports give ratings of winter motor oils and household oils and preliminary recommendations on portable typewriters for the benefit of students and others who must buy a machine this month. Next month's issue will report in full the results of extensive tests on portable models of the best known machines.

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CONSUMERS UNION OF UNITED STATES, which publishes *Consumers Union Reports,* is a non-profit, membership organization with 40,000 members throughout the United States. It is controlled entirely by its members and is sponsored by over 70 nationally famous scientists, educators, government officials, labor leaders, and editors. Each month in the *Reports* Consumers Union gives you the results of unprejudiced tests of the comparative value of competing brands of such products as refrigerators, gasolines, etc., with ratings *in terms of brand names.* Reports are also given on the labor conditions under which goods are made.

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Hurston seems to have no desire whatever to move in the direction of serious fiction. With Mr. Turpin the case is different; the desire and motive are present, but his "saga" of four generations of Negro life seems to have been swamped by the subject matter.

These Low Grounds represents, I believe, the first attempt of a Negro writer to encompass in fiction the rise of the Negro from slavery to the present. The greater part of the novel is laid on the eastern shore of Maryland where Carrie, upon the death of her slave mother, is left to grow up in a whorehouse. After several fitful efforts to escape her lot, Carrie finally marries a visiting farmer, Prince, with whom she leads a life of household drudgery. Having helped Prince become the leading Negro farmer in the county, Carrie rebels against his infidelities and domination and, taking her two young daughters, runs away. Years later Prince discovers her and persuades her to return home. As she is about to make the journey, she is murdered by Grundy, her drunken and jealous lover. The two daughters return to the farm; Blanche remains with her father, but Martha flees North to escape the shame of pregnancy when her lover is killed in an accident. Martha's subsequent career on the stage enables her to send her son, Jimmy-Lew, to college to become a teacher. The novel closes with a disillusioned Jimmy-Lew comforted by his wife because of his bitterness over the harsh and unfair conditions of southern life.

The first half of the book is interesting, for Turpin deals with a subject which he knows intimately. Those sections depicting post-war Negro life in the North do not ring true or full; in fact, toward the conclusion the book grows embarrassingly sketchy, resolving nothing.

Oddly enough, Turpin seems to have viewed those parts of his novel which deal with the modern Negro through the eyes and consciousness of one emotionally alien to the scene. Many of the characters—Carrie, Prince, Martha—are splendid social types; but rarely do they become human beings. It seems that Turpin drew these types from intellectual conviction, but lacked the artistic strength to make us feel the living quality of their experiences. It seems to me, he should strive to avoid the bane of sheer competency. He deals with great characters and a great subject matter; what is lacking is a great theme and a great passion.

Their Eyes Were Watching God is the story of Zora Neale Hurston's Janie who, at sixteen, married a grubbing farmer at the anxious instigation of her slave-born grandmother. The romantic Janie, in the highly-charged language of Miss Hurston, longed to be a pear tree in blossom and have a "dust-bearing bee sink into the sanctum of a bloom; the thousand sister-calyxes arch to meet the love embrace." Restless, she fled from her farmer husband and married Jody, an up-and-coming Negro business man who, in the end, proved to be no better than her first husband. After twenty years of clerking for her self-made Jody, Janie found herself a frustrated widow of forty with a small fortune on her hands. Tea Cake, "from in and through Georgia," drifted along and, despite his youth, Janie took him. For more than two years they lived happily; but Tea Cake was bitten by a mad dog and was infected with rabies. One night in a canine rage Tea Cake tried to murder Janie, thereby forcing her to shoot the only man she had ever loved.

Miss Hurston can write; but her prose is cloaked in that facile sensuality that has dogged Negro expression since the days of Phillis Wheatley. Her dialogue manages to catch the pyschological movements of the Negro folk-mind in their pure simplicity, but that's as far as it goes.

Miss Hurston *voluntarily* continues in her novel the tradition which was *forced* upon the Negro in the theater, that is, the minstrel technique that makes the "white folks" laugh. Her characters eat and laugh and cry and work and kill; they swing like a pendulum eternally in that safe and narrow orbit in which America likes to see the Negro live: between laughter and tears.

Turpin's faults as a writer are those of an honest man trying desperately to say something; but Zora Neale Hurston lacks even that excuse. The sensory sweep of her novel carries no theme, no message, no thought. In the main, her novel is not addressed to the Negro, but to a white audience whose chauvinistic tastes she knows how to satisfy. She exploits that phase of Negro life which is "quaint," the phase which evokes a piteous smile on the lips of the "superior" race.

RICHARD WRIGHT.

Mathematics for the Elite

ASPECTS OF SCIENCE, *by Tobias Dantzig. The Macmillan Co.* $3.

SEVEN lean years ago Tobias Dantzig wrote a book about *Number, the Language of Science,* in which occurs the following passage—a thought so shrewd and invigorating that it was given a place of honor in Lancelot Hogben's brilliant classic, *Mathematics for the Million*: "It is a remarkable fact, that the mathematical inventions which have proved to be most accessible to the masses are also those which exercised the greatest development on pure mathematics."

Loyalty to this idea, so gracefully expressed by one of America's eminent "pure" mathematicians, enabled Hogben to write a book in which the queen of the sciences assumes her proper throne on our homely earth—whence, centuries ago, by the deceptive advice of Plato, she had sought refuge in the absolute. It is a real pity that we cannot say the same of Dantzig who, despite an exceptional intelligence, fine scholarship, and a style combining rigor with charm, persists in regarding not only mathematics but also science in general as forms of man's "quest for the absolute."

Aaron Sopher

His new book opens on a note of faith in that "which has guided man onward and upward in his quest for the unknown." This generalization, at once so attractive and so meaningless, provides the background against which the accomplished author sketches the outlines of what in reality is man's pursuit of exactitude in his knowledge of nature. With admirable skill and genuine insight into the vast technical difficulties involved, Dantzig portrays the slow development of mathematical concepts, symbols, and operation from the intensely "rational" but aristocratic Greeks through the theological bigotries of the Catholic Inquisition as immortalized in the "recantation" of Galileo, down to the bewildering ferment and confusion of the modern "relativity" period.

As history in the restricted sense, and as an account of the basic concepts of mathematics from number and geometry to the calculus, tensors, matrices, and the infinite, the book makes absorbing reading—especially for those who enjoy their science highly seasoned with philosophical meditations on the nature of time, space, matter, and reality. Nor does Dantzig fail to point out the impact upon "pure" mathematics of the developments in the physical sciences, although here, too, the tendency is to treat the whole subject as a sort of "universe of discourse," uncontaminated by the human world of struggle.

That is why, as history in any broad social sense, *Aspects of Science* falls far short of adequacy. How, for example, is it possible for a man trained in the rigors of "exact" reasoning to describe the French revolution (which gave us a constellation of scientists of the first magnitude) as resembling "more a convention of executioners and hangmen than it did an assembly of enlightened emancipators"? And why the constant undertone of melancholy that confuses the admitted failure of a mechanical materialism with the supposed futility of a genuine dialectical materialism whose achievements in the Soviet Union (which he does not once name) are damned with faint praise in a single tired paragraph?

The fault, as we have come to know it so well through the "God-seeking" of Jeans, Eddington, Whitehead, and the physiologist J. S. Haldane—not to be confused with his son, the biochemist J. B. S. Haldane—is a fault in attitude and approach, an inability to distinguish between the valid technical difficulties of a given human technique and the thoroughly spurious failures due to *the form of society within which the techniques must operate.* Curiously enough, Dantzig himself notes that such practical-minded Greek geometers as Eudoxus, Archytas, and even the peerless

Aaron Sopher

Archimedes were frowned upon by the aristocratic Plato and his disciples. He even quotes Plutarch to show that "in this manner mechanics was severed and expelled from geometry, and, *being for a long time looked down upon by philosophers, it became one of the arts of war.*" (Emphasis mine—H. W.)

What an opportunity Dantzig missed here. In those few words, written some two thousand years ago by an amiable Greek humanist, lies part of the secret of the stagnation of science under capitalism, of its literal chaining to the purposes of destruction by a class which is again turning to "philosophy" as a weapon against social progress. Let us suppose that the fine talents of a Whitehead had been trained and matured in a society that did not sever science from life, did not expel it from the humdrum liberty and happiness of all men and women, can anyone say that Whitehead would then have regarded modern science as merely a variant of the Greek idea of fate?

A striking example of the prevailing antithesis between "scientific" thought and social thinking may be found in Dantzig's comments on "shocks" in his chapter on "Signals."

"Our awareness of existence," he writes, "for which consciousness is another name, is stimulated by shocks. When violent and rare, these shocks remain engraved upon our memory; when mild and frequent, they create in us the sensation of rhythm. *But violent or mild, rare or frequent, shocks are our only means of recording experience, and we know no other method of measuring time than by counting shocks.*"

Is there not, implicit in every word of that paragraph, and especially in the words which I have emphasized, a fundamental tenet of Marxism: that all of human history, as all of nature, is summed up in the one word, change: "violent or mild, frequent or rare"? Strange that a mind capable of enunciating a thought so profoundly revolutionary could not have realized that human history, also, is measured by shocks; that he should end his book on a note of defeat: "So let us hear the conclusion of the matter. Read your instruments and obey mathematics; for this is the whole duty of the scientist."

That was not the whole duty of Galileo; certainly not even half the duty of Charles Darwin, Louis Pasteur, and Ivan Pavlov.

HAROLD WARD.

A British Slant on the Far East

THE FAR EAST COMES CLOSER, *by Hessell Tiltman. J. B. Lippincott Co.* $3.

MR. TILTMAN is an Englishman, a member of the "upper classes," a white man, and a keen, experienced reporter. As an Englishman, he thinks that there is an "unwritten law" committing Great Britain and the United States "to make common cause" in the Far East. As a member of the "upper classes," he thinks that Japan is "the greatest civilizing force in Asia" because "one can rely upon every train reaching its destination to a split second." As a white man, he accepts the "white man's burden," not as an old-fashioned and indiscreet phrase, but as a practical objective for Anglo-American cooperation. Finally, as a reporter who managed to be on the spot when history was made both in China and Japan, he tells a good many tales out of school, and integrates a remarkable amount of interesting, useful, and important information.

It is that kind of book. There are prejudices, contradictions, and crudities in it. There is also intimate knowledge and careful synthesis of the innumerable problems which go to make up the puzzle in the Pacific. It is a book which has to be read vigilantly, with one eye on the page and the other on the author. But for all that, it repays the effort.

The book starts out in 1931 when Japan invaded and conquered Manchuria, and ends somewhere in the early part of 1937 when General Hayashi was still premier of Japan. It stops just short of the emergence of Prince Konoe as the conciliator between the conflicting ruling groups in Japan. It was Prince Konoe's ability to submerge the internal differences between the politicians, the capitalists, and the militarists in favor of a common external front which made possible the present aggression.

To a certain extent, the book projects right into the present. Several persons made the headlines two months ago, who had previously been virtually unknown outside of China. Mr. Tiltman has a good deal of informative data and gossip about a number of them, such as General Sung Cheh-yuan, the gentleman who was at the head of the now defunct Hopei-Chahar Political Council, and Yin Ju-keng, the Chinese traitor who was at the head of the equally defunct East Hopei Autonomous Government. Unfortunately, the book has practically nothing to say about the Chinese Communists, either of their past or their present. The book is strong as narrative, rather than as analysis. I liked best of all Mr. Tiltman's revealing interview with Mr. Eiji Amau, until recently the crafty and successful spokesman of the Japanese foreign office—successful because he said so little though he spoke so much—and the dramatic, authentic, eye-witness account of the 1936 assassinations in Tokyo. Indeed, Mr. Tiltman is least entertaining and informative when he depends on his file rather than on his eyes and ears.

One of the significant aspects of the book is that the author, primarily concerned with preserving the British empire in the East, leans towards an international alignment of forces different from that supported by most of those influential Englishmen who have their eyes glued on Europe. The latter are apt to pray for a peace-at-any-price reconciliation with Germany. Without surrendering any of the British possessions to the Nazis, they would try to deflect Hitler's course from the empire to the Soviet Union, even to the extent of entering into an active anti-Soviet partnership. But Mr. Tiltman is

worried by Japan rather than by Germany. He looks about for allies in the East rather than in the West. He sees as possible allies, Soviet Russia and the United States. So, both at the beginning and end of his book, he speculates about a possible line-up in a world war which has started on the Outer Mongolian-Manchukuoan border and comes to this conclusion: Japan, Germany, and Italy may face France, Great Britain, Soviet Russia, and the United States. This type of speculation indicates the lack of complete unity among the British ruling class. One faction, though probably by far the less influential, views Germany as an enemy rather than as an ally.

Mr. Tiltman's constructive efforts are hard to take seriously. He suggests that a new Pacific conference be called to keep the *status quo* there. The conference must not "sit in judgment upon Japan." Instead, "let the Japanese army be asked to outline the true extent of its aims in China" and "let Japan be invited to expound her solution for the ills of that vast republic." As for the first demand upon Japan, that was satisfied back in 1927 when the then Japanese premier, Baron Giichi Tanaka, handed his famous memorial to the emperor. The second requirement is even now being fulfilled. There should be little doubt of Japan's "solution" after the bombardment of Nanking.

THEODORE DRAPER.

★

Recently Recommended Books

When China Unites: An Interpretive History of the Chinese Revolution, by Harry Gannes. Knopf. $2.50.

. . . *And Spain Sings. Fifty Loyalist Ballads.* Edited by M. J. Bernadete and Rolfe Humphries. Vanguard. $1.

40,000 Against the Arctic, by H. P. Smolka. Morrow. $3.50.

Men Who Lead Labor, by Bruce Minton and John Stuart. Modern Age Books. 35c. Book Union selection.

White Mule, by William Carlos Williams. New Directions. $2.50.

Europe in Arms, by Liddell Hart. Random House. $2.50.

American Stuff, An Anthology of Prose and Verse, by Members of the Federal Writers' Project, with Sixteen Prints by the Federal Arts Project. Viking. $2.

Spy Overhead: The Story of Industrial Espionage, by Clinch Calkins. Harcourt, Brace. $2.50.

One Life, One Kopeck, by Walter Duranty. Simon & Schuster. $2.50.

The Guggenheims, by Harvey O'Connor. Covici-Friede. $3.

The Life and Death of a Spanish Town, by Elliot Paul. Random. $2.50.

Shadow on the Land, by Thomas Parran. Reynal & Hitchcock. $2.50.

Ten Million Americans Have It, by S. William Becker, M.D. Lippincott. $1.35.

Moscow, 1937: My Visit Described for My Friends, by Lion Feuchtwanger. Viking. $2. Book Union choice.

The Profits of War, by Richard Lewinsohn. Dutton. $3.

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Former Chinese Red Army Wins In First Battle

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NANKING, Sept. 24 (UP).—Gen. Chu Teh's Eighth Route Army, the former Chinese Red Army, has won a major victory over a Japanese column in Northern Shansi Province, dispatches from North China said tonight.

It was the first big battle in which the veteran former Red Army, which was incorporated into the Central Government forces this month following the all-China front agreement between the Communists [illegible] engaged [illegible] Chinese

Mr. Jaffe's Article Covers:

1. Interviews with the Communist leaders, including Mao Tse-tung, recently appointed governor of the former Soviet region, and Chu Teh, famed Communist military leader.
2. Interviews with important Chinese government leaders, including Foreign Minister Wang Chung-hui and Mme. Sun Yat-sen.
3. Eye-witness investigation of conditions in the former Soviet region.

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CHINA'S COMMUNISTS TOLD ME

By Philip J. Jaffe

WITH FIVE PAGES OF PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN BY THE AUTHOR

THIS ARTICLE, documented by five pages of photographs, is the latest and most authentic source of information on what is happening in the regions under Communist leadership. Don't miss it if you want to know what is really happening behind the headlines in your daily newspaper.

Philip J. Jaffe, managing editor of the magazine *Amerasia,* visited the former Soviet regions (now called Special Administrative District) late in June. His party, which included T. A. Bisson of the Foreign Policy Association, and Owen Lattimore, editor of *Pacific Affairs,* was the last to come out of the former Soviet region. His four-month tour in the Far East included Manchuria, Korea, Japan, and North China.

Mr. Jaffe returned with over 600 photographs of all that he saw, a selection of which will be published with his article. In Yenan, he obtained the first authentic map of the former Soviet region, a reproduction of which will accompany his article. He spent four full days with the Communist leaders and out of these conversations came the material for his article.

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SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

James Cagney and Deanna Durbin in two good musical films—Phonograph records and Broadway comedies

FOR Cagney fans and for those who have never seen him as a Broadway hoofer, his first musical film, *Something to Sing About* (Grand National) will be a distinct pleasure. While it is a very entertaining film, it is regrettable that lack of imagination and a great deal of shyness has prevented this from becoming a fine polemic against Hollywood methods.

Even as it is I prefer it to most of *A Star Is Born.* The lack of *decor* and Cagney's acting gives the early part of the film (the building of the star) a great deal of validity. Cagney plays the part of a well-known New York orchestra leader who is lured to Hollywood. We follow him through the various stages of his grooming as Robert Taylor's dangerous rival. Cagney doesn't take any of this too seriously and when he finds that his career is interfering with his love life, he leaves Hollywood for married life and the band.

The casting, too, is unfortunate. No one in the cast can keep pace with Cagney's dynamic personality. It is he who shoulders the entire burden for whatever satiric and entertaining qualities the film has. That is what makes the film worth seeing.

Another musical film that will have a very wide appeal is Universal's *100 Men and a Girl,* which stars that delightful and excellent little singer Deanna Durbin and succeeds in being wholesome and enjoyable entertainment.

It is a musical film in which popular classical music (part of Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony, the *Hungarian Rhapsody, La Traviata, Zampa,* and even Mozart's *Alleluja*) features over popular ballads, and in which Leopold Stokowski is featured as a famous conductor rather than the diabolical monster of last year's *Big Broadcast.* The story is a fairy tale that can't be considered objectionable. Deanna Durbin is cast as the daughter of an unemployed trombone player (Adolphe Menjou) who gathers together, on the flimsy promise of a hair-brained Park Avenue matron, a hundred unemployed musicians into an orchestra. The plot merely tells about this youngster's efforts to obtain Stokowski as the conductor for this orchestra of unemployed musicians. The only excuse for Miss Durbin's successive failures to see and obtain Stokowski (she gets him in the end, of course) is to allow the film a certain number of Stokowski interludes in which the various compositions are played.

A second visit to the *Life of Emile Zola* confirms one's impressions of the excellence of the film. This second viewing brought out more clearly the difficulties under which the writers and the director had to work. Except for one very modest, and almost invisible, suggestion, there is no mention of anti-Semitism. This seems preposterous in a film about the Dreyfuss affair. However, the fact that the film emerges as good as it does, is not only due to Paul Muni's (and the rest of the cast, for that matter) acting but to the cleverness of the screen play by Heinz Herald, Geza Herczeg, and Neuman Reilly Raine, and the excellence of the direction by William Dieterle.

Mr. Dieterle, by the way, is just back from a trip to the Soviet Union. In an interview with William Boehnel of the New York *World-Telegram,* Mr. Dieterle said that the finest films being made today are coming from the Soviet studios. "I saw several films, which have not yet been released, which will surpass anything the Russians have yet produced. Nowhere in the world are there such brilliant actors." What he says about creative work in Hollywood is also illuminating: "There was a time when the director was in supreme command of the production of a film. But today supervisors take over the picture and when it is released, it is very often totally different from what it was like when the director finished it."

Mr. Boehnel also reported that Dieterle's "greatest ambition is to do a film based on the life of Karl Marx, but he admits that at best it is only a day dream."

PETER ELLIS.

PHONOGRAPH RECORDINGS

MAHLER. Columbia (Set 300) brings the long demanded complete *Das Lied von der Erde,* recorded at an actual performance in Vienna, May 24, 1936, by Charles Kullman and Kerstin Thorborg with the Vienna Philharmonic conducted by the great Mahlerian disciple, Bruno Walter. Occasional coughing and concert hall noises mingle with the score on the first few record sides, but later these disappear entirely as though the audience consisted entirely of the devout worshippers who rank this work with (if not above) Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* and Bach's *St. Matthew Passion.* The composer himself was certainly aiming at the artistic stratosphere when he inflated the haunting lyrics of Li Tai-po and other Chinese poets into this gargantuan "symphony" for tenor, contralto, and full orchestra. Ernest Newman believes that in its *Abschied* finale "sorrow for the death of the civilization of the nineteenth century finds its most exquisite, its final expression"; the more skeptical rank it as the most tragic of Mahler's failures. But good or bad, the work is admittedly colossal and badly needed on disks as the most illuminating revelation of one of the most tortured, ambitious, and fantastic of musicians.

Woodcut by Helen West Heller

Mozart. The incalculably vast and fertile field of Mozartiana is being tilled with fervor by all the recording companies. Victor (Set 350) is the first to record the unfamiliar string quintet in D, K593, played by the Pro Arte Quartet with Alfred Hobday as the second viola. Another first recording is Columbia's (Set X-79) piano sonata in B-flat, K570, a less profound work but one whose warm lyricism is beautifully captured in Walter Gieseking's delicate and transparent performance. Musicraft's Set 4, the string quartet in D-minor, K421, while not a phonographic "first" is just as good, for the Perole Quartet provides a welcome replacement of the old and cut Lener and Flonzaley versions of this work.

Handel. Columbia and Musicraft provide a fascinating comparison between the two methods of approach to Handel's sonatas for violin and basso continuo. The former (17098/9D) gives the D-major sonata, Op. 1, No. 13, in a modern version for violin and piano—Szigetti and Magaloff, while the Musicraft version (1030/1) of the F-major sonata, Op. 1, No. 12, is played in the old tradition with the figured bass part "realized" on the harpsichord reinforced by a 'cello. Szigetti does some marvelous fiddling, but the less highly colored performance by Stefan Frenkel (with Dr. Ernst Victor Wolff and Sterling Hunkins) has—besides its authenticity—a fascination of its own.

Shakespeare. Turning to the somewhat neglected realm of diction recording, it is a joy to hear at last a real phonographic drama—a far cry from the stilted and affected recitations that have formed the bulk of this repertory in the past. Columbia has done a magnificent waxing of four scenes from *King Richard II* with—of course—Maurice Evans and his company (Set 303). One secret of the success with which the rousing Evans performance has been captured on disks is the use of a new principle, the "mechanical monitor," by which the recording engineer can widen at will the space between the needle grooves, and by using plenty of width for the more vigorous passages can avoid the old *bête noir* of the needle breaking through too thin groove walls.

Recommendations: Bach's Violin Concerto No. 1 with Menuhin (Victor), Beethoven's Second Symphony conducted by

Woodcut by Helen West Heller

Beecham (Columbia), Beethoven's 'cello sonata in G by Casals (Victor), a batch of Chopin polonaises played by Arthur Rubinstein (Victor), Hindemith's unaccompanied 'cello sonata by Feuermann (Columbia), excerpts from Honegger's *Judith* conducted by Louis de Vocht (Columbia), a Purcell toccata in A and suite in D-minor by Dr. Ernst Victor Wolff (Gamut), Julio Martinez Oyanguren's superb performances of guitar pieces by Tarrega and Sirera (Columbia). ROY GREGG.

THE THEATER

IT IS a baker's dozen of years since Noel Coward's *Hay Fever* rolled us in the aisles with the spectacle of how silly the English are —and, from our Coolidge-prosperity viewpoint, they seemed very silly indeed, what with Mr. Coward's play revealing their traces of economic threadbareness and insecurity. Those touches were the only things that gave his play any real life; in the main it was just an unhibited farce of the doings of a goofy post-war English middle-class family. The goofy-family tradition in playwriting has gone marching on, reaching occasional heights in such items as *Three-Cornered Moon* and *You Can't Take It With You.* Its newest exponent is *George and Margaret,* which John C. Wilson has brought over from a successful London run and installed on Broadway.

The most interesting thing about this goofy-family play business is that all of them tread an uncertain path between farce and comedy, which is by way of saying that their material, without doing great violence to such artistic homogeneity as they possess, partakes both of the real and unreal in almost equal proportions. And when that has been said, it is worth noting that they are all concerned with middle-class families. The goofiness of these families derives in large measure from an exaggeration of what is true of them in real life, but not in any comparable measure true of working- or upper-class families: that the family group (as, indeed, each individual member of it) is pulled and pushed hither and yon by a variety of conflicting forces, emotional, economic, social, and moral. And just as *You Can't Take It With You* seems most artificial when its romantic theme tells of the successfully concluded romance between the middle-class girl and the upper-class boy, so *George and Margaret* seems most genuine when the middle-class son successfully concludes his romance with the working-class girl. And it seems clear that in each of the plays the authors are conscious of this, Messrs. Kaufman and Hart just sort of throwing in their romance gratuitously, and Gerald Savory making his largely the focus of the climax. His play is not as funny as *Hay Fever,* and is derailed by the artificial trick of seeming to point his play at the hearsay characters George and Margaret. But it is fairly funny and is likely to top most of the comedies Broadway will see this season.

One that it definitely tops is *Blow Ye Winds,* which brings Henry Fonda back from the films to the footlights. Mr. Fonda and the characterization of his role are both very good.

Apart from that the play is on more or less on a dead level in treating the old story of the rough course of true love of a modern career woman for a man (this time in maritime dress) who has taken Thoreau too seriously.

ALEXANDER TAYLOR.

★

Forthcoming Broadcasts

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

"Camille." Tallulah Bankhead and Henry Fonda star in this version, Thurs., Sept. 30, 8 p.m., C.B.S.

Viljhamur Stefansson. The president of the Explorers' Club talks on transarctic aviation, Mon., Oct. 4, 6:15 p. m., C.B.S.

Social Adjustment. Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, Mrs. Ogden Reid, Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia and others lead the discussion on "A Generation Finding Itself" at the opening session of the *Herald Tribune* forum, Mon., Oct. 4, 9:30 a. m., N.B.C. blue. Frederic and Irene Joliot-Curie, son-in-law and daughter of Mme. Curie, continue the discussion, at 11:45 a. m., Mon., Oct. 4, N.B.C. red; while Mary Lewis, vice-president of Best & Co.; Colby Chester, president of General Foods Corp., and Reinald Werrenrath wind it up, at 12 noon, Mon., N.B.C. blue.

A Free Press. James G. Stahlman, president of the American Newspaper Publishers' Assn.; Harold Cross, Columbia University professor of libel law; Dr. John H. Finley, editor of the New York *Times*; Alexander A. Troyanovsky, Soviet ambassador to the U. S.; Graham Hutton, assistant editor of the London *Economist;* and others lead the discussion on "The Status of a Free Press in the World Today" at the second session of the *Herald Tribune* forum, Mon., Oct. 4, 2:30 p. m., N.B.C. blue.

Explorations. Bruce Barton, Dr. Thomas Parran, surgeon-general of the U. S. Public Health Service; Dr. George Gallup, director of the American Institute of Public Opinion, and others at the third session of the forum, Mon., Oct. 4, 9 p. m., N.B.C. blue.

Proposed Government Changes. The fourth session of the forum brings to the microphone such men as Henry A. Wallace, General Hugh Johnson, Senator Vandenberg, Homer Martin, Governor LaFollette, and others, Tues., Oct. 5, 2 p. m., N.B.C. blue.

War Throughout the World. Francis Bowes Sayre, assistant secretary of state; Clyde Eagleton, professor of government at N.Y.U.; Edwin M. Borchard, law professor at Yale; and President Franklin D. Roosevelt are the speakers at the concluding session of the forum, Tues., Oct. 5, 10 p. m., N.B.C. blue.

Recent Recommendations

MOVIES

Heart of Spain. Frontier Films' documentary on medical aid to Spain has been rightly called "pictorial dynamite."

The Lower Depths. Gorki's famous play of the dregs of humanity is brought to the screen by Jean Renoir with a script that Gorki personally approved before his death.

Mayerling. A tender and moving French film based on a historical incident.

Baltic Deputy. The newest Soviet film is a matchless portrayal of the intellectual during and after the revolution. Ranks with the season's best.

The Spanish Earth. Joris Ivens's much heralded film of the civil war in Spain is a deeply stirring document that you cannot afford to miss.

Dead End. The realistic drama of kids from the East Side slums comes to the screen with its impact unimpaired.

The Life of Emile Zola. Easily the best film of the year, powerful and profound.

"GOINGS-ON"

FREE CHINA BALL. Palm Garden, 52nd & 8th Ave., N. Y. Fri., Oct. 22. Mike Gold m. c. Benefit $240,000 C. P. drive. Tickets 69c, One-third off in blocks of 50 or more. All tickets Workers Bookshop, 50 E. 13th St.

EXCELLENT CHINESE DINNER. Vital Discussion—"Will U. S. Neutrality in Chinese Situation Lead to Peace?" Speaker, Mr. Green, Co-editor of China Today. New Hankow Restaurant, 132 W. 34th St., Sun. Oct. 3, 7 p.m. Sub.: 75c. Aus.: Sunnyside Discussion Club.

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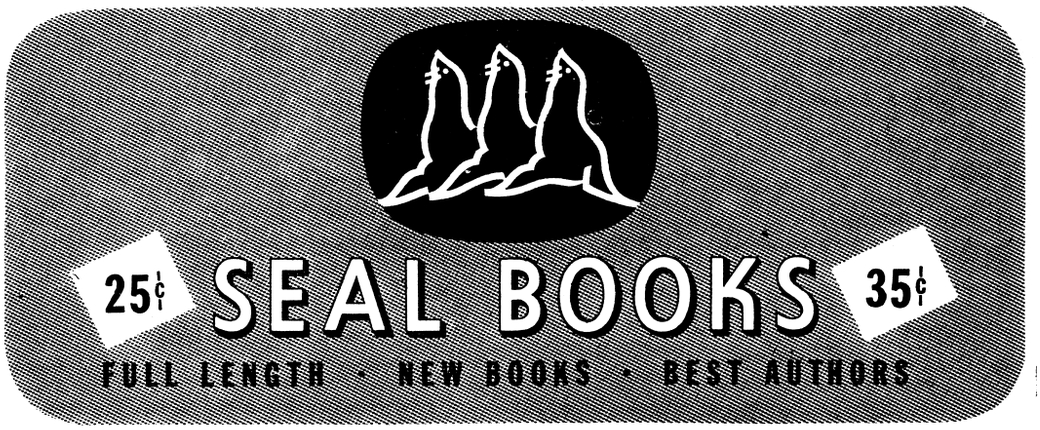

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