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Reviewed by
EDWIN BERRY BURGUM

Cartoons by Gropper, Ned Hilton, Snow, and others

ON THE COVER
Betty Shields-Collins
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AUG. 30, 1938

FIFTEEN CENTS

New MASSES

WE ARE very happy to announce that Martha Graham's first concert of the coming season will be for the benefit of NEW MASSES. The recital will take place on Sunday evening, October 9, at a New York theater to be announced in an early issue.

Miss Graham will present *American Document* which Owen Burke declares "must produce wide repercussions in the dance world." Miss Graham presented *American Document* at Bennington last month with tremendous success. This recital will open New York's dance season.

Robert Forsythe resumes his page with next week's issue.

R. Palme Dutt's next article is entitled "The Lull Before the Storm" and covers the European crisis and the world situation.

Granville Hicks will speak on "Fascism and Culture" at 295 Plane St., Newark, N. J., on Thursday evening, September 1, at 8:15 p.m.

Joseph Starobin's series on the little business man is scheduled to begin in an early issue. Two articles on the political situation in the states of Minnesota and Washington will appear shortly. The first, by Meridel Le Sueur, will place special emphasis on the role of Governor Benson, and the second, by Roger Chase, will deal largely with the Washington Commonwealth Federation.

NEW MASSES contributors occupy a prominent place in the publishers' announcements of late summer and fall books. Among the important titles we have noted so far are the following:

The Letters of Lincoln Steffens, edited with introductory notes by Ella Winter and Granville Hicks; *Rope of Gold,* by Josephine Herbst; *The Summer Soldier,* by Leane Zugsmith; *Dead Reckoning,* by Kenneth Fearing; *Whitman,* by Newton Arvin; *Little Steel,* by Upton Sinclair; *All the Brave,* by Ernest Hemingway, Elliot Paul, Jay Allen and Luis Quintanilla; *American Playwrights,* by Eleanor Flexner; *The Heroes,* by Millen Brand.

Albert Maltz, author of *Black Pit, Peace on Earth,* and other plays, will conduct a lecture-criticism course in "Foundations of Playwrighting" and two workshops in playwrighting for advanced students during the fall term of the Washington Square Writing Center of New York University. Maltz's recently published book, *The Way Things Are,* includes stories which originally appeared in these pages.

Ruth McKenney, who is coming on the staff of NEW MASSES immediately after Labor Day and whose recently published book, *My Sister Eileen,* is on the best-seller lists, will be interviewed by Cal Tinney on the Blue Network of the National Broadcasting Company Friday, August 26, at 8:30 p.m., Eastern Daylight Time. In New York, the station is WJZ.

What's What

MONEY is needed for the organization of workers' schools in Puerto Rico, writes Robert Steele, who heads the Comité pro Puerto Rico at 7 West 110th St., New York City. "Remember," he writes, "that American bosses oppress Puerto Rican workers. Let American labor support and help Puerto Rican labor," and continues:

"This summer there was established in San Juan, Puerto Rico, under the auspices of Prensa Libre a workers' school. It lasted only a few weeks and trained a minimum of students—fifteen. But we believe that the establishment of this school is an event of outstanding importance to the people of Puerto Rico, for it marks the first attempt on this island to train a body of capable men to lead the working class. Those who were given the opportunity to attend classes were workers well-schooled in action, but unschooled in the theory, tactics, history, etc., of working-class struggles.

"Certainly the peasants and workers of Puerto Rico are ready to join unions, to fight reaction in order to win those elementary human rights which have been so long denied them. The heroic longshoremen's strike that was won early this year demonstrated what the Puerto Rican workers can do. It also showed what militant action can accomplish when combined with good leadership and training."

Tom Mooney has sent us a copy of his pamphlet, a *Message on the 1938 California Elections,* together with a letter asking our cooperation in bringing this message before as many readers as possible in advance of the California primary elections on August 30. Mooney urges the election of State Senator Culbert L. Olson as governor; Olson is running on both Democratic and Progressive tickets against Sheriff Daniel Murphy of San Francisco, whose endorsement by the AF of L Political League is not representative of the sentiments of California labor. He also asks support of Ellis E. Patterson in his race for lieutenant governor, of William Moseley Jones for attorney general, and Sheridan Downey for United States senator. Mooney warns: "The coming elections are crucial ones. The reactionaries are spending vast sums of money and using every means at their command to place reactionary candidates in office. Labor, progressives, and liberals must unite and work intensely to elect candidates who will serve the people and not the predatory special interests. . . . Now is the time to drive back the forces of reaction. . . ."

Between Ourselves

THIS WEEK

VOL. XXVIII, No. 10

August 30, 1938

Art work by Gregor Duncan (cover), James Dugan, Ned Hilton, Malman, William Gropper, Snow, Soriano, Carl Sandelin, David.

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

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Who's Who

MYRA PAGE was formerly Moscow correspondent for the *Daily Worker.* She has written a novel, *Moscow Yankee.* . . . Jay Allen was a newspaper correspondent in Spain for over ten years. His account of the massacre in the bull-ring at Badajoz, early in the war, has been widely reprinted. Elliot Paul, long associated with the *transition* group, is author of *The Life and Death of a Spanish Town.* . . . The article on the Dies committee by Earl Browder is the second of the weekly articles by the general secretary of the Communist Party. . . . Lee Coller was formerly associate editor of the Louisiana *Federationist,* an official AF of L paper, and more recently was editor of the *New South,* a journal of opinion published by the Communist Party. At present she is at work on a book on progressive movements in the South. . . . Joseph Starobin is editor of the *Young Communist Review.* . . . Another of Granville Hicks' articles on problems raised by readers of his *I Like America* will appear shortly. . . . Edwin Berry Burgum is a member of New York University's English department. . . . Marjorie Brace has contributed many reviews to NEW MASSES. . . . Owen Burke is our regular dance critic.

Flashbacks

THE world's first working-class political party held its first convention in Philadelphia, Aug. 25, 1828. Members of this Workingmen's Party held, "We are prepared to maintain that all who toil have a natural and inalienable right to reap the fruits of their own industry; and that they who by labor (the only source) are the authors of every comfort, convenience, and luxury, are in justice entitled to an equal participation, not only in the meanest and the coarsest, but likewise in the richest and the choicest of them all." . . . The National Trades Union, the first nationwide federation of city central labor bodies, opened its first convention in New York, Aug. 26, 1834. . . . The Women's Suffrage Amendment was ratified Aug. 28, 1920.

James Dugan

CÁRDENAS SPEAKS FOR MEXICO

An Interview with Mexico's Progressive Leader

MYRA PAGE

An hour's ride out of Mexico City our car leaves the main highway and starts its journey toward Texcoco, an Aztec village that was populous and flourishing long before Columbus' discovery of the New World. The road grows steadily worse; we decide to go on toward the village by foot. We pass fields of ripening maize, then Indians preparing newly cleared ground with oxen teams and antiquated plows.

Around us rise the low hills of dead volcanoes; in the distance the dim outlines of Popocatepetl and Istacchihuatl, ancient mountains around which the Indians have woven many of their legends. Popo's snow-capped volcano is hidden in mist.

For more than three centuries, beginning with the time when Cortes first pillaged the land and destroyed all records of Aztec culture, the Indians have passed on their legends of anger and deliverance by word of mouth, from father to son. Some day Poco would awaken, they said, go over to Izta the sleeping woman, twitch her by the nose, and together the two of them would descend into the valley and set their people free.

When Poco is angry, he gives off clouds of smoke. In earlier times this called for ceremonials of human sacrifice on top of the great pyramids. But in these days the volcano is quiet, for Poco is well pleased. Word has reached him that a man has arisen at last from among his people, a man capable of leading them to regain their heritage, returning the fields and wealth of the land to their rightful owners.

We enter the village of Texcoco, its quiet broken only by the pat-pats of unseen hands spanking cornmeal *tortillas* into shape. The tropic sun throws cleancut diagonals along the one-story adobe walls, some the dead gray of baked mud, others colored by plant juices a rich yellow or indigo. Barefoot women hurry along the narrow unpaved streets, earthen jugs of water balanced on their heads. Babies too large to be carried any longer in their mothers' shawls run alongside. There are no children playing near the tall cactus fence, for they are at work, either in school or in the fields. The men wearing brilliant *sarapis* and large sombreros are driving a group of burros before them, laden with kettles and sacks.

This is Mexico. Three-fourths of her people live in Indian villages like this one and work the land. But in Texcoco the Indians are fortunate; they are not only peasants but artisans as well. In the months they are not busy planting and harvesting the fields which the government has reclaimed and divided among them, Texcoco men work at their looms. We enter the adobe hut of Leon Venado (Lion Reindeer). He is standing at his hand loom weaving a *sarapi*. A brown-skinned baby is lying in a cradle made of hand-woven straw and swung from the ceiling on hemp twine. There is little furniture, the earthen floor is scrupulously clean. Hanks of dyed wool hang on pegs along one side of the wall. On the main wall the weaver Leon has placed, as an intimate member of his household, a likeness of the man about whom Poco has received word.

I had encountered the swarthy thoughtful countenance and unflinching eye of this man in many homes and remote villages, even in the little mercantile shops of San Luis Potosi. In the capital's largest railway shop, workers have placed him near their machines. Behind union leaders' desks, in homes of leading technicians and administrators, I had found him in the place of honor. From Torreon and Tampico to far-off Yucatan, the countenance and influence of this man has reached.

This is true, my stay in Mexico has convinced me, because Lázaro Cárdenas, Presi-

dent of the Mexican republic, and no less son of the people, has come to represent to his eighteen million fellow countrymen their growing unity and aspiration. Their confidence in him is a measure of their newly found confidence in themselves. He voices their aspiration toward a nationhood and freedom based on a realistic program for the common good.

The people will tell you many stories of Cárdenas—how at the age of seventeen he became the main support of his mother and six younger brothers and sisters; how as a lad he joined the revolutionary forces fighting against reaction; and his many exploits as a soldier and, later, army commander. They know his record in the oil fields, when as military governor in 1924 he tore up a check for $50,000 the companies offered him to allow their special troops to operate against the oil workers, sending back the curt order, "Begin at once to disperse your *Guardias Blancas.*" The companies had to comply.

To the Mexican people their President is no legend, no far-off mythical figure guiding their destinies from the capital, for they have met and talked with him not once, but time and again. Cárdenas has made it a policy to travel to the farthest villages and industrial areas, going when need be on horseback, conferring with the common people, listening to their desires and complaints. In the capital, in order to keep in close touch, he has organized the Bureau of Complaints and arranged for the telegraph system of the country to give free service every day from four to five for any messages to the government a peon or miner may want to send.

The most common remark you hear about Cárdenas is this: "He is our first President who has not gone back on his promises to the people, or his own ideals."

Even the President's enemies cannot accuse him of personal aggrandizement. They have to admit his sincerity.

This confidence which Cárdenas has in the people and theirs in him constitute a great strength. There is also the danger, however, that this may lead the President to underestimate the extent of the duplicity and plotting to which his enemies may go. His tolerance to date of the reactionary inflammatory press and of dangerous elements like Trotsky are cases in point. However, in his handling of the Cedillo rebellion, Cárdenas showed that he can act with prompt decision when a crisis does arise. And there is much vigilance among the leaders and workers, organized a million strong in the CTM, in the Communist Party, peasants' organizations, and all sections of the Popular Front, which, banded together in the Party of the Mexican Revolution, stand as a solid bulwark around their President and the policies he is carrying out.

It may seem a long way from Mexico's countryside, cut off as it is by mountain and desert and a general dearth of roads, to Cárdenas' office in Mexico's National Palace. Yet it is only by approaching the capital from the countryside, its main oil and railway and cotton-growing centers, that one gets the full significance of Cárdenas' program.

In a two-hour interview for NEW MASSES which Mexico's leader gave me recently in the National Palace, President Cárdenas discussed with characteristic directness his government's policies, domestic and foreign. Results of the oil expropriation, the problem of markets, agrarian reform, workers' administration of the national railways, probable effects of granting women the vote were among the subjects discussed; also the nature of the opposition to his government and the main base of its support, the government's program of education and for development of a people's culture, religious freedom and the rights of Jews, and the good-neighbor policy.

Replying to my question, "How far will the land reform go?" the President said, "Our agrarian reform will go on until the needs of all our people are met. As half our rural population is still without land, our agrarian reform is only half-way completed." To date over fifty million acres of land have been distributed to the peasants, of which about thirty million have been given them during President Cárdenas' regime. This redivision of the land and the breakup of the old feudal system has been the most fundamental aspect of the Mexican Revolution, beginning with the time of Zapata and his rallying cry, "Land and Freedom."

Referring to some criticisms that have been made, that lands should not be expropriated without immediate compensation, President Cárdenas said, "Some other governments are rich enough to pay promptly or in advance for any land expropriated, but due to the economic situation in Mexico, we would have to wait eternally to satisfy the needs of our people if we had to pay for lands in advance. This we cannot do.

"Our Agrarian Code, calling for redistribution of the land," he continued, "guarantees the rights of the small property holders. Properties which do not exceed 375 acres are left untouched. A man who owns no more than 375 acres of good arable land is protected in his right to make a comfortable living for his family and himself. Most of our big plantations are at least nine to twelve thousand acres. Many of the *haciendas* divided up and given the peasants have been as large as 100,000 acres. So you see we have not been dividing up small holdings in Mexico. My government is taking care to protect the rights of the small property holders and business men." When an estate is divided, in accordance with the Agrarian Code, the planter is allowed to keep 375 acres for his own use.

The President showed particular interest in

Ned Hilton

"Damn that fellow, Roosevelt."

my questions regarding the results of government ownership of railroads and oil fields, and workers' administration of the national railways.

"I consider these important questions," he said. "Those who say that workers' administration and government control must fail, have failed, are mistaken. The government, four months ago, gave the national railways system over to the railway workers' union to operate, on condition that the workers' administration undertake to run the roads at a profit, using part of these profits to extend our railway system, and also to pay off the large national debt incurred earlier by the railroads. In other words, the federal government would discontinue its subsidizing of its railroads. This was agreed. Today, after four short months of workers' administration, the railroads have become a source of revenue to the government, instead of being what they were formerly, a drain on public funds. Also, under this more efficient management, the railroads are beginning to pay off the national railway debt.

"Neither is it true," the President continued, "that government administration of the oil fields is inefficient. I have just returned from a trip to the Tampico oil fields. I noted particularly the efficiency of the oil workers and management, and the technical staff. The government has retained almost all of the former technical staff. Some of these technicians are foreign, the rest Mexican. They work very well.

"It is easy to understand that there are people interested in spreading misconceptions about the results of oil expropriation, that things are going badly in the oil fields. Quite the opposite is true. Wages and conditions of the oil workers have already improved. Profits accruing from the oil industry are being used to build schools and roads, open free clinics and medical services. New houses are being built, better supplies of water created. The entire community in the oil area is benefiting, where before all the wealth created by the oil industry was drained out of the country."

Turning to the problem of markets, the President said, "We are selling our oil abroad, also we are increasing our home consumption. The Mexican government planned originally to sell oil only to the democratic countries. However, if the democratic countries refuse to buy our oil in sufficient quantities, we shall be forced to sell to those who will buy. Otherwise the country's business might be seriously affected.

"The British and American oil companies are using this question of markets as a political issue against the Mexican government, while they themselves sell oil to anybody they please. The people in America and Britain should pay some attention to this. For example, at the present time Mexico is not selling any oil to Japan, but if for instance a Japanese ship should come to our shore for oil, for this one ship in a Mexican port there are ten or twenty in American ports already loading oil for Japan. The American people should take note of this fact. International commerce cannot be stopped, nor can the economic life of a country be brought to a standstill. We say clearly that nobody can get Mexico to cut herself off from the world market."

In view of the confusion created by oil-company and Nazi propaganda in America, I asked the President to state Mexico's position on such matters as religion, the treatment of Jews and other national minorities.

"There is no religious problem in Mexico," President Cárdenas said. "Of course, in every country you will find various tendencies for and against religious practices and beliefs, but as far as Mexican law and government are concerned, there is complete religious freedom in our country. In all parts of Mexico (except Tabasco where for many years there have been no churches), you will find churches open and people worshipping freely. The Catholic Church supported the Mexican Government in its recent expropriation of the oil wells. The Church did this, because it understood that the entire population of Mexico gave enthusiastic support to this measure, as a necessary step for the welfare of our country as a whole.

"There is no hard feeling or prejudice in our country against any country or race in the world," he continued. "In Mexico we treat all alike, regardless of their color or race. Discrimination or persecution of any section of the population is contrary to both the spirit and the laws of my government. We welcome all Americans, white or colored, Jew or Catholic; all we ask is that they comply with our immigration laws."

I handed the President a clipping from the New York *Times* of July 12, a misleading story headed MEXICAN UNIONS TAKE OVER FIVE AMERICAN MINES—one of many such inaccurate stories that the *Times'* correspondent has sent out of Mexico in recent weeks. This is not surprising, since Frank L. Kluckhohn's main source of news is the Hearst representative in Mexico, his closest associate.

"The facts in this case are quite different from what Mr. Kluckhohn supposed," the President commented. "There is no acute labor problem in the silver mines, there are no large companies there. Some of the companies, not finding it profitable to continue, offered to sell their properties to the workers. In the few cases where this occurred, the workers organized a cooperative association, bought the mine from the company and started to run it on a cooperative basis. There has been no question of the government expropriating the mine companies or confiscating their properties, as Mr. Kluckhohn states." There were many other inaccuracies in the story, such as the San Rafael mine being an American company. It is Mexican.

The President's comments on foreign relations were clearcut. "Mexico's understanding of the good-neighbor policy," he said, in answer to my question, "is that such a policy must be based on free and equal conditions between the two countries concerned. I agree with President Roosevelt in what he has said about the good-neighbor policy, but always it is necessary, I believe, to take into consideration the different conditions existing in our countries, so that the good-neighbor policy means a fair deal to both peoples concerned.

"I am strongly in favor of closer cooperation between our people and the people of the United States. We want Americans to come to Mexico, get in close touch with the people of our land. Let them see how we live, how much misery there is among the lower classes, how necessary it is for us to change and improve their life. We believe all fairminded Americans will return home and explain to their countrymen the real Mexico, and what it is we are trying to do. Let our two peoples have more contact and a better understanding of each other, for they are the best judges, I believe, of what their relations should be and how their mutual interests can best be served.

"In Mexico we have a democratic government, for the people and by the people—a people that expects to base its democracy on a better distribution of its public riches, in order to insure the welfare of our whole population. Our freedom goes as far as economic freedom. True democracy, I believe, must be based on a good distribution of a country's wealth.

"The strength of our Mexican government lies in the fact that it does not rely upon or deal in shallow politics, but in economic realities—improving the life of the masses. The forces of reaction in Mexico follow their own political system of ideas. They are opposed to giving the masses land and other benefits, therefore they are opposed to my policies. I am working for the good of the people of Mexico. The Mexican people know this, this is what they want, this is why they support wholeheartedly my government.

"The masses and only the masses of our Mexican people," President Cárdenas repeated, "will continue to be the main base of my government."

In closing the interview, the President expressed once more his desire that Americans, especially those who write and teach, should come to visit Mexico. When I mentioned the possibility of the next World Congress of Writers meeting in Mexico next spring, the President extended his cordial welcome to such a gathering, saying that his government would do everything possible to facilitate the visit of such a group.

★

PRODUCTION INDEX

WHILE industrial production in the United States in the first quarter of this year dropped about 32 percent below the first quarter of last year, the production index continued to rise in the Soviet Union. In January it was 5.5 percent above January 1937; in February it was up 9 percent, in March 12 percent, and in April 15 percent over comparable months of last year. ECONOMIC NOTES, *published by Labor Research Association.*

LOAD THAT FOOD SHIP

Two Loyalist Partisans Plead for Spain's People

JAY ALLEN & ELLIOT PAUL

THIS should be a plea for the Food Ship to Spain.

It is always an ungrateful job to have to ask people to break down and feed the hungry and clothe the naked. But in this case, in this magazine, to do so would be downright presumptuous. But there are some things to be said.

In Spain *before,* people were always kind and generous. On trains they shared their hard bread—bread that was both hard and hard to come by—and generously squirted wine down your throat from leather pouches they carry.

In the villages they shared what they had and what they didn't have—nobody had to face what starvation there was alone. That is probably the case everywhere when people are close to the realities of life and death and hunger and thirst.

They had an old tradition of doing things in common. As far back as the Iberians, which is quite a ways back, they farmed the land in common and it was only later that they had to do it for others.

One of the clichés about Spain is that quotation from the Frenchman who said that Spain was a country where a few people *(un peu)* work a little *(un peu)* so that the others might eat a little *(un peu)*. The truth is that they worked very hard to eat that little and it was never too little to share.

Spain was always a poor country and when Ellery Sedgwick says what he says about the prosperity, well-being, and content (you could never find content on empty stomachs) of the mass of the citizenry in what the press generously calls "Franco's Spain," it must be admitted that he has something: the "solution" for a chronic state of undernourishment in 50 percent of the population *is* civil war after all.

Of course there are some people with suspicious natures who felt that Franco's revolt was not so that those who always ate little could eat more, but so that those (whom the French saw didn't mention) who always ate plenty should never have to worry.

Then of course the death rate in "Franco's Spain" has been very high. Perhaps that was what Sedgwick, who has read Malthus no doubt, had in mind. The dead don't eat. Not one of the three thousand humble folk, employees of the Norte railways, school teachers, trade unionists, who were shot in Valladolid, to name only one of the scores of towns where such things took place, will ever eat again, much less join parties and unions which stress the importance of adequate diet for the working masses. The hunger of the dead is not a consideration any more than is their silence, the silence which the Sedgwicks, the Bishop Atlers, and the Bishop Gannons (soon to be back) carry no handy instruments to record when they visit the generalissimo's happy, happy land.

They were very poor and hungry *before* but, it was then everywhere agreed, they were a very fine people. Even the grandees of Spain and the foreign ambassadors in Madrid thought that. One of the latter, a Frenchman whose fate it now is to sit on the Non-Intervention Committee in London and collaborate in the slow strangulation of the Spanish people, once said back in 1931, "The Spanish aristocracy and the Spanish bourgeoisie are simply bad imitations of the Spanish *people.*" The Spanish dukes thought so and detached writers like Salvador de Madariaga who were loud in their praises of the virtues of this frugal, long-suffering, and supposedly resigned people.

So highly did they value the virtue of the Spanish people—virtue born of hunger and sacrifice—that they fought tooth and nail to prevent any change at all *before,* and then, when it looked as though the republic would ruin the country by putting the peasants on the land, teaching them to read and write and all that, they were willing to make the enormous sacrifice of bringing in the Moors, the Germans, and the Italians, and a few Portuguese, to save their virtuous people.

This was a very great sacrifice for "nationalists," Catholics, and descendants of the hidalgos of the Reconquest.

In Spain, it used to be said, no one ever starved to death. Not quite. Those who had a little gave. And those that had much gave a little too, because Spain was a Catholic country. There was the famous beggar in Toledo who used to say "Give, to save your own soul," and they all said "God will repay you." And so a class of people to whom these considerations were important did give, coppers now and then, advance installments on immortality.

Throughout the world today the people who have a little are giving. Those who have much no longer give. It may be that saving their own souls doesn't interest them now or perhaps they have other ways of doing it.

There was a time—and we won't go back to the poor Belgians—when America gave very generously. In the years just after the war, until 1921, we sent $2,393,418,567.80 (New York *Herald Tribune,* Jan. 16, 1921) for relief in Russia, Czechoslovakia, Germany, and other famished lands. In the case of Russia there may have been ulterior motives on the part of those who administered but not on the part of those who gave.

And today? Hardly a million and a half has been raised for Spain. Chinese relief is doing very badly. Mr. Hoover has other things to do this time. The Red Cross isn't much in the fore these days although now that Norman Davis, who understands what is going on in the world, is at the head of it, it may again become an agency for exteriorizing the warmth of the American heart.

Can it be that the heart of America has shrunk? So many of the older values have gone by the board. For instance, there was a time when we were very firm about the Freedom of the Seas. But now we tolerate the blockade of the ports of Republican Spain, a nation with which we have formal and friendly relations, by a rebel, whom we do not recognize socially (diplomatically) and not only tolerate it but when an American ship, the *Nantucket Chief,* was pinched on the high seas by a rebel (or Italian) warship, we had nothing to say. Back in 1804-5, when we had only one ship of the line, the *USS Constitution,* sometimes known as "Old Ironsides," we sent her over to deal with pirates not very far from where the *Nantucket Chief* was pinched without the State Department seeming to know or care. Now nobody, least of all the authors of this piece, wants the United States to go to war over the Freedom of the Seas—although there is something to be said for it as a principle and as such it is defensible even when the banks, the State Department, and the British aren't finding it useful. And surely there ought to be some happy medium between fighting for the Freedom of the Seas and allowing a ship to be stopped and searched without protest.

And then, in addition to charity and the Freedom of the Seas, there was the Monroe Doctrine. But now when the Germans and the Italians, a new Holy Alliance far more ambitious and far more virulent than the one Mr. Monroe warned off the shores of the New World, is using Spain as the jumping-off place for adventures westward, we aren't interested. Worse, by an embargo, we deny arms to one people of all the nations in the world that is fighting the menace to our own security.

Surely one of the most remarkable phenomena of our cockeyed age is the way the old shibboleths have been abandoned. Where are the "jingos" now? Nobody, not even Mr. Hearst, talks "yellow peril." Nobody talks of the "Hun." Now and then a voice is raised in the name of a minimum of international order. Then the inventors of the old mumbo-jumbo, the old war cries, are horror-struck and say, "So you want a Holy War, huh?"

The way things are going, it wouldn't be surprising to find Mr. George Creel, from San Francisco, joining the deplorers of the "propaganda" about the bombings of Barcelona and Canton, or the American Legion getting up a new Ford peace ship. Like those parasite crabs that live in shells, they have crawled out of their old abodes into the shells of neutrality and isolation. (Have they devoured the proprietors of these?)

All this should be comforting and would be if there weren't the lurking suspicion that these people haven't really reformed but are simply waiting for a more popular cause, for something more important to them than the little matters at stake today. Probably it won't be democracy's plight the next time. And probably not until the British decide that civilization is menaced again will they get on the bandwagon for the "decencies."

Another of the strange phenomena of our age is the way ideals seem to go into reverse. For instance, there was Mr. Roosevelt last fall in Chicago, talking about quarantining aggressors. Immediately some people thought that maybe he meant to try to organize collective security or something like that and there was an outcry. So we don't quarantine aggressors. But the idea was a good one, so we quarantine the aggress*ee,* as in the case of Spain. And collaborate lustily in fostering collective *in*security.

We voted a Neutrality Act which makes it possible for us to do that, for us to be neutral and thus, as it has worked out, unneutral, for us to non-intervene along with the British, the French, the Germans, and the Italians and so intervene. *For we are intervening* in the Spanish war, as much as if we had sent the marines to help Franco. And if anyone has any doubt of it let him look around and see who is defending the Neutrality Act in its application to Spain. Who—Senator Nye, Dorothy Detzer, Miss Thompson, et al.? No, the British line (or tow-rope, as you will) boys in the State Department and the Roman Catholic hierarchy. So that by virtue of our neutrality, their man Chamberlain may go on doing whatever it is he is doing and their boy Franco win the war. We had to have a Neutrality Act before we could get into a really first-rate foreign entanglement such as we are in now. And we will have the Neutrality Act and the embargo, it would seem, as long as the British want it and as long as a sector of opinion that used to be found on whatever side *wasn't* the British side—and the Irish are supposed to have long memories!

Mr. Arthur Krock, fresh from the capitals of the Old World, brings us via the New York *Times* the intelligence that the British would like us to change our Neutrality Act so that arms might be sold to the democracies. But apparently not to the one democracy that is now fighting for its life and is denied the right to provide here for its defense.

Spanish democracy and possibly Czech democracy have to go under first, before the defense can be begun. Weeks ago the New York *Times,* in a two and a half column editorial warning the aggressors that we would be on the side of justice when the time came, didn't mention aggression in Spain, and so one had to assume that the crusade couldn't begin until the Spanish republic had been done in. The *Times* was very sharp with the Japanese in China, however, even if it didn't mention the Germans and Italians in Spain, and doubtless felt safe in the knowledge that there is no Shinto hierarchy in this country to proclaim that the Mikado is saving China for civilization—and to prove it by diminishing your circulation and advertising.

In the old days you knew what the words and slogans meant, more or less. "Make the world safe . . . " We knew what it meant. Only we didn't do it. Those who said it have overlooked the fact that *this* is the war to make the world safe for democracy, and except for the Lincoln Brigade we are on the wrong side.

On the wrong side, but still neutral. The Neutrality Act has been invoked. That's the trouble, these new terms are misunderstood. There was non-intervention. Now in reality that was intervention, to prevent the republic's buying arms and thus to accomplish a Franco victory quickly, before the Germans and Italians got in too deep. Even the authors get confused. The authors of non-intervention which was intervention, knew it was intervention but didn't know that Franco wasn't going to win. They didn't know that the device to "save" Spain from Communism, as the saying goes, was to precipitate her into the arms of the Soviet Union (when the democracies had closed their arms markets to her and to her alone in the world) and (anticlimax) that she still hasn't gone Communist! Not only hasn't gone Communist, but looks to the democracies sadly but not bitterly, still a little hopefully.

And strange and farcical things have happened as a result of the non-intervention which was intervention. All, of course, because the Spanish republic refused to lie down and die in the interest of *haute politique.* The non-interveners, holding the republic's arms behind its back like the honest referees they are, have got badly shot up by the challenger they are helping. And in their anxiety to keep Spain safe for capitalism they denied their industries the good gold of republican Spain, anxious and able to pay cash. For the first time the powers which have made such a fetish of gold found gold that wasn't clean gold and had to be quarantined as hot money.

Malman

American business firms have been prevailed upon to refuse offers of payment of $30,000,000 in blocked credits by the Spanish republic, because it is Franco, not the republic, which is defending the sanctity of business!

Now if the time is ever to come when Mr. Chamberlain's retreat brings him back against a wall and the relief call goes out and the Creels and the others quit playing 'possum and go back to their patriotic work of saving civilization, the chances are good that none of us modest folk who simply wish now that the United States of America would quit helping to wreck civilization the way it is doing, while there is yet time, will stand very high with the crusaders. If the things that matter to us don't matter to them *now* they never will.

So the Spanish people *must* keep going. They absolutely must. They owe it to us and to the democracies of Great Britain and France that we like to think are somewhere to be found behind the Chamberlain and Daladier façades, to keep on with their resistance.

First, because when the time comes for the world to be made safe again, it will be well to have the real, authentic democracy over which all the trouble started extant as an example of what we are fighting for. We might forget like we did the last time.

Second, because when that time comes it will be well to have some of the good strategic corners left to the champions of civilization, and some of the best of those corners are in Spain.

And third, much the best reason, because if they continue to fight on they will have made it impossible for Mr. Chamberlain to panic the democracies any further with his retreat which is designed, we hear, to win the friendship of Mussolini. But Mussolini won't be friends with Britain unless Britain sees that Franco wins. So if Franco doesn't win (and he can't if the loyalists won't lose, which is the purest of logic, isn't it?) then Britain may have to throw in her lot with the democracies, after all, and in that case aggression stops. Of course it stops. There has been no aggression these past years except by virtue of tolerance for it. But the State Department maintains the embargo, apparently to keep Mr. Chamberlain from being made to look silly.

Now the authors of this article are convinced that there are factors much more important than Mr. Chamberlain's pride. They are willing to grant that the State Department does not think so when it uses a Neutrality Act for such peculiar purposes. They are also willing to grant that the State Department would not be opposed to the ultimate triumph of the democracies.

It therefore behooves the American people which long ago decided not to be led on any new adventures because of the banking or social affinities of anybody, to try to be neutral in spite of the workings of the Neutrality Act, and to help overcome the fearful handicap imposed on the loyalists by our refusal to sell them—alone of all peoples in the world

Malman

—the arms necessary for their defense, by helping nourish them through the winter.

In this country people are still, in spite of considerable sales talk by the friends of the Franco crusade, hesitant about accepting the indiscriminate bombing of civilian centers as a commendable measure in war, and doubtless they feel the same about the starvation of a civilian population. Certainly they would not approve it on the part of neutrals.

We did not intend it and the makers of our Neutrality Act did not intend either that we should participate in both in the case of Spain. In the bombing, by denying the loyalists the right to buy even anti-aircraft guns for the defense of their towns, and in the starvation process by acquiescing in the blockade which by all the rules, if any, of international morality (also if any) is illegal. And in the whole fearful picture, by refusing to apply the embargo to the aggressors as well as the aggressee. But that is the way it has worked out.

There is a tendency in some quarters to feel that any appeal for relief in such cases masks a dangerous propaganda appeal for sympathy, just as in these same quarters it is felt that any appeal for simple respect of treaties, like the Kellogg pact, or any mention of horrors, amounts to incitation to a Holy War.

A historian warned the other day that "propaganda favoring our entry into the next world war will be far more powerful and skillful than 1914-17. There will be more and better things to lie with (radio, television, newsreels) and better things to lie about." Up to here we are in agreement, but he goes on, "And fascism and the Yellow Peril will supply more effective raw materials for propaganda lies than Germany and her Kaiser."

"*Will* supply?" "Lies?"

What happened in Barcelona and what happened in Canton *did* happen. The hideous injustice of Austria was not invented by anti-Nazis. To date no one has asked us to go to war about it. None of the newfangled instruments that would have made it easier for Mr. Creel and his predecessors (they didn't need them, we were a pushover in 1917) have been turned on. And when they are turned on it won't be by those of us today who know what is going on in Spain. *We* don't own radio, television, the newsreels. Let Mr. Harry Elmer Barnes reflect on this.

It is a very dangerous thing to try to be neutral in one's emotions. The Neutrality Act was not designed to neutralize our feelings: it was designed to keep us from being drawn into situations which would make it desirable and profitable for the people who own the gadgets Mr. Barnes mentions, to invite us to war. (The next Neutrality Act might take this into account.)

There can be no such thing as emotional neutrality; there can, however, be emotional obtuseness. A people which can feel indignation over the bombing of Barcelona and Canton is less a menace to peace than a people which feels nothing. A people which can feel indignation over the injustice done to Spain is not a people which can easily be led to do like injustice. And a people which can feel indignation over a Chamberlain will not easily be led to war when the Chamberlains of the world find that war serves their interests better than retreat.

Need indignation be feared so much? There was indignation in England over Abyssinia and the Laval-Hoare sellout, and what came of it? It is only official indignation, officially nurtured through the instruments Mr. Barnes mentions, that must be considered suspect. And this kind is not often communicable to those who have the real thing. If the indignation in this country were to rise high enough, then we could become neutral, truly neutral in time to avoid catastrophe.

If Mr. Barnes will look around him and see who is indignant over the "atrocity lies" of 1938 he will be reassured, we think. None of them could or would get us into war. But if he finds Boake Carter indignant over injustice in the international scene let him then beware. It will be high time! If not too late.

There is in addition to those who would not let the emotions be touched, another school which would feed America first. This is a very sound idea but what one finds is that the citizen who contributes to the feeding of Spanish babies is the one most apt to think of the baby next door. The heart knows no frontiers in these matters.

From all over the world doctors and nurses, contributions of food and money, volunteers have gone to republican Spain. Never has there been such a showing of unofficial solidarity on an international scale. And by whom? By those classes and individuals who have struggled hardest for the welfare of the unjustly treated, the hungry of their own lands.

There are many people who sincerely believe that General Franco is fighting for their ideals, political or religious, for the preservation of their class. But it is interesting and it is important to note that Franco has received almost no relief, almost no medical and nursing missions, almost no "volunteers" except for black or brown shirts.

There was a striking case in this country about a year ago when Ogden Hammond and some other Friends of Nationalist Spain undertook to raise funds for the crusade. They collected $28,696 and spent $30,359 getting it.

The only relief that goes consistently into "nationalist" Spain is administered by the Quakers and they raise funds from non-partisan sources and moreover send the bulk to republican Spain where the need is greater.

There are those of us who would like to send a foodship to Franco's Spain, to go with it and to see the distribution. For we should like to see that the children of the miners of Rio Tinto, of the doctors and lawyers of Seville and Granada, the peasant defenders of Badajoz, the railway workers of Valladolid, of the liberals, the Ibizenco masons, trade-unionists shot by Franco were fed.

But the need is not so great as the Quakers have indicated. Nobody torpedoes or bombs ships for what is called rebel Spain. There is no blockade of their ports. There are no marauding armies of Moors advancing in rebel Spain, with refugees fleeing before them at whatever risk rather than be "saved" by the little crusader of the swastika, fasces, and the crescent. The towns are not bombed and shelled. And Franco has the grain of Estremadura and Old Castille, the livestock of Galicia. The harvest was good, good enough for grain and beef to be shipped to Germany, like the iron ore and copper.

The population of the territory left to the republic is swollen. There are 1,800,000 refugees, of which 1,200,000 are in the southern part of the territory governed by the republic and 600,000 in Catalonia. These do not include a million more who have fled before the invader but are more or less self-supporting.

Winters are harsh in Spain, even along the Mediterranean. Yet correspondents in Madrid and Barcelona all agree that the morale of the civilian population has not suffered from privation. What country has suffered both hunger and military disaster and not had disorders in the rear? As Havelock Ellis says, these Iberians are a "firm-fibered race"—but they must eat. Not otherwise can they go on with the battle which is not only theirs but ours. And they must go on. For our sakes.

So let no emotion enter into this. We will feed them for purely practical and selfish reasons. So that they may fight the better, the soldiers untroubled about their families, the workmen in the new war industries, able to match their will with physical resistance . . . because they will keep the fascists busy, too occupied and preoccupied to strike elsewhere, because they are the only people in the West fighting the plague that menaces us all.

Let International Tel. & Tel. contribute, and Armstrong Cork, and the National City Bank, because they know, now at long last, that Franco is not fighting to make Spain safe for *American* capital, any more than Germany and Italy would make South America safe for Guggenheim and United Fruit. Catholics should give lest the pagan Nazi triumph in Spain. So many should give, selfishly, to save not only souls but skins and pocketbooks.

Luis Quintanilla once said, "It would be fine to send milk to the villages so that the mother who has sent her man to the front, with no assurance that the front will not come to her through the air, may look up at the fascist planes which the non-interveners have either sent or tolerated, and still know that Spain has not been abandoned by the world."

The food ship will leave and will get through as the scores of others, but not enough, get through. And anyway, the United States government has offered protection. Old Ironsides is to come down from Boston and escort her across, just as before when there were pirates she was sent into the Middle Sea. We remember our traditions. The British only half way. Nelson made a fine showing in the Mediterranean when Napoleon tried to do what Mussolini is trying today. He had a blind eye and guts. Chamberlain has inherited only the blind eye.

DIES PUTS ON A BURLESQUE

But the Impresario Misses Some Wonderful Effects

EARL BROWDER

THE Dies committee has already made itself the laughing stock of the country by its burlesque "investigation" of "un-American" propaganda. According to Congressman Dickstein, himself an expert of long standing in this field, Dies deliberately encouraged the Nazi agents and organizations to destroy their records before he gets around to them—though why they should be so nervous as to do so is not clear, since the Dies committee is so obviously friendly to them. So far, Dies has been rehashing the moth-eaten stories of Colonel Frey, supplemented by underworld characters and professional Red-baiters. But it is all so clumsily done that it is a pity Dies cannot find an expert adviser to make his act more entertaining.

For example, how could he possibly have failed to expose the secret meeting between Franklin D. Roosevelt, John L. Lewis, and Earl Browder that took place in Washington in December 1936, shortly after the elections? Sitting at the same dinner table in the Mayflower Hotel, unquestionably those conspirators there and then completed their plans to overthrow capitalism, as Mr. Dies could so easily prove by the same methods he now uses on less significant incidents. Of course, the participants in that meeting were pledged not to repeat any political word that was spoken, but I am sure that Mr. Dies, with the aid of editor Steele of the *National Republic,* could reconstruct the scene. What a marvelous thriller he could have made of that! Perhaps it is not too late to use it even now, and I pass the word on to him for whatever he may find it worth.

And why doesn't Mr. Dies reveal the Communist penetration of the United States armed forces, right up to the very top? Why does he ignore the fact of a meeting between Mr. Browder and the admirals and generals heading the navy, the marines, and the army? It had all the appearance of the most friendly social conversation, which doubtless covered up the most dastardly plot against "our institutions." Mr. Dies should have no difficulty whatever, once he gets on this scent, to dig out the horrendous truth.

Captious critics would, of course, sneer that all these things took place under the eyes of several hundred newspapermen and public personages at the dinner of the Gridiron Club, an organization of newsmen. But that only proves the diabolical cunning of the Communists, and reveals how cleverly they cover up their tracks, to throw off the scent those bloodhounds of the law whose ablest representative is Mr. Dies. In so far as any facts whatsoever have been dealt with in the Dies committee, so far, they have been even more widely known and took place before the eyes of the whole world; but that has not prevented Mr. Dies from weaving into such scant facts a rich tapestry of his own particular sort of "revealed truth."

While Mr. Dies had Colonel Frey on the stand, he should have brought out the stupendous fact that the Communists had even tried to corrupt the colonel himself. He should have forced from Frey the confession of his secret rendezvous with the notorious Communist leader, Robert Minor, not so many months ago. He should have revealed how Minor labored over him to involve him in one of the most widespread seditious conspiracies in all America—namely, the movement to obtain freedom for Tom Mooney, over twenty-two years in California prisons. Of course, Colonel Frey, his criminal conference thus brought into the spotlight of publicity, would have an excellent defense, merely by pointing to his record of touring the country to speak against Mooney when Tom was still under sentence of death, before President Wilson's intervention obtained a commutation of that sentence. Frey could also, with truth, declare that all Minor's blandishments were without effect, that he had never turned a finger in Mooney's behalf. But surely Mr. Dies would have detected an unsound spot in Colonel Frey, evidenced by his even meeting with such a notorious Red not to speak of listening to him for two hours, a crime of which he should have purged himself by public confession and repentance.

Even deeper conspiracies might have been unraveled by Mr. Dies, while he had Colonel Frey on the stand, if he had taken the colonel's list of "Red conspirators" in the CIO and traced their antecedents. Where did they come from, who had nursed them to the fearful maturity of their activities under the flag of John L. Lewis? Horror of horrors, he would have discovered that they came from the AF of L, and many of them from Colonel Frey's own metal-trades department! And the dear colonel would have been forced to admit that the Reddest of the Red among them had been outside of the AF of L, but were brought back in, with all their followers, in 1934 and 1935, by special negotiations in which Mr. Frey and his fellow officers of the AF of L guaranteed them full rights and even leading offices. It was only later, when these "Reds" came out in support of President Roosevelt and the New Deal, that Mr. Frey thought they had become a "menace" that must be "purged."

Further, Mr. Dies should have found it most interesting to ask Colonel Frey about his connections with a certain Mr. Jay Lovestone. Lovestone claims to be the reddest Red in all the world, and proves it by proclaiming that if Japan makes war on the United States, he will do his best to use that occasion to overthrow the United States government. He roundly condemns the Communist Party because it has declared its support of American democracy and American institutions if attacked by any of the fascist-militarist powers. This really seditious and treasonable person has relations with Colonel Frey, which lead through Homer Martin to the United Automobile Workers, and through George Sokolsky to the agents of United States Steel and General Motors—facts which surely ought to interest Mr. Dies as they do the general public. But again, Mr. Dies allowed his opportunity to pass.

It is abundantly clear that the aim toward which Mr. Dies is striving is, above all, to undermine and weaken President Roosevelt and the New Deal. He has missed the most outstanding evidence of the alliance with the Communists, however, and failed to prove it up to the hilt. He should make good this omission. He should bring out these facts, of interest to the whole country, which I will now reveal for him.

President Roosevelt has come out for democracy—and more democracy. That includes the right of Communists to exist, to think, to speak, to publish, to organize, to hold jobs, to vote, even to hold public office. The President, by his defense of democracy, has defended the Communists, and preserved the conditions in which the Communist Party freely operates everywhere throughout the United States. Of course, the President did not have this result in mind, but he has tolerated this "by-product," rather than adopt the only alternative, to destroy Communism by destroying democracy. And this is really at the heart of the ferocious hatred against Roosevelt by all reactionaries, whatever their label. They want to destroy democracy, and use the campaign against the Communists as the means to that end.

That is the real conspiracy against American democracy and its institutions. But Mr. Dies did not want to reveal that. In fact, it seems that he is up to his neck in that conspiracy himself. So perhaps we should not expect from him anything but a continuation of his burlesque, which is a laughing matter only so long as America has guarantees that the type of Dies, McNaboe, Garner, Landon, Hamilton, and Vandenberg do not get their clutches upon the throat of our country. They will certainly wipe out the Communists to the extent of their ability—but they will wipe out democracy at the same time.

William Gropper

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Defeat the Copperheads

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT has followed up his appeal for the defeat of Sen. Walter F. George of Georgia with an even sharper attack on Sen. Millard Tydings of Maryland and Rep. John J. O'Connor of New York. He described Tydings as a man who "wants to run with the Roosevelt prestige and the money of his conservative Republican friends both on his side," and O'Connor, chairman of the House Rules Committee, as "one of the most effective obstructionists in the lower House," who "week in and week out . . . labors to tear down New Deal strength, pickle New Deal legislation." In Maryland the New Deal has thrown its active support to Rep. David J. Lewis, who stands high on the list of candidates endorsed by Labor's Non-Partisan League, and in the Sixteenth Congressional District of New York to James H. Fay, who is being backed by liberal Democrats and the American Labor Party.

As in the case of Senator George, the replies which O'Connor and Tydings have made to Roosevelt's statement only serve to confirm his acid characterizations of them. It seems that for the President of the United States to express his preference in the primaries of his own party and declare who shall and who shall not ride his coat-tails is "an escalator to a dictatorship," according to O'Connor, and a threat to "the sovereignty of our state, the right of our people to pass judgment on their representatives," in the words of Tydings. Roosevelt would be recreant to his trust if he did not take steps to prevent the Georges, Tydingses, and O'Connors from again being in a position to betray the program for which the people voted so overwhelmingly in 1936 and to which these self-styled defenders of the public weal originally gave lip-service. Nor are the Republicans keeping hands off the Democratic primaries, for all their pious finger-pointing at Roosevelt. O'Connor is openly appealing to Republicans for support and is entering the Republican as well as the Democratic primaries. In Georgia James W. Arnold, Republican National Committeeman, has publicly urged Republicans to enter the Democratic primary and vote for George because "it is absolutely necessary that there be a split in the national convention of the Democratic Party in 1940." In Idaho Republicans packed the Democratic primary to defeat the New Dealer, Sen. James Pope.

The battle between progress and reaction, transcending party lines, grows fiercer. No American can afford to stand aside or permit the democratic catch-phrases which the tories use so glibly to conceal the real issues.

We are now in the midst of a crisis that is both national and international. Democracy, if it is to survive, must be the active concern and receive the united support of those whose votes will decide whether the people or Wall Street will control the next Congress.

Roosevelt's Indirect Warning

SPEAKING in Canada, President Roosevelt again demonstrated his mastery of the art of implication. There was nothing very startling about his direct pledge of United States support to Canada if ever the latter is attacked by a foreign power. Any aggression against Canada would most certainly be directed against the United States as well from the very start; indeed, the primary purpose of an attack on Canada would be invasion of the United States. But there are no signs of any immediate emergency. The President had something else in mind.

Since October 5 of last year, President Roosevelt has been educating American public opinion in the principles, if not the more important practice, of collective responsibility for the preservation of world peace. His speech at Queen's University could not have put the case more bluntly. The rumor of war on August 15 over far-off Czechoslovakia was felt by business men and farmers in Montreal and in New York, Vancouver, and San Francisco, he said. From this he drew two conclusions: the Americas have become "a consideration to every propaganda office and to every General Staff beyond the seas"; and thus we are "vital factors in world peace whether we choose or not." The pledge to Canada takes on real meaning within this international context, supplied by Mr. Roosevelt himself.

In effect, then, Canada acted as a stalking-horse for much larger game. Of course, it would have been more satisfying had Mr. Roosevelt dealt directly with Czechoslovakia, Spain, or China. But, *and this is crucial,* everything Mr. Roosevelt said about Canada applies equally and with even more force to the real danger spots in Europe and in the Far East. Four days earlier, a broadcast by Secretary of State Hull on our international responsibilities made the fascist powers uncomfortable to the point of bitter counter-attacks in their press. When Secretary Hull said, "Orderly and peaceful processes and methods of international cooperation have in many regions given way to military aggression and armed force," they pleaded guilty. Following this, the Canadian speech was an interesting and important development of the administration's foreign policy but it still means little until practical expression is given these excellently worded intentions. Spain and China are still waiting.

Our Turn to Answer Franco

IF MR. ROOSEVELT desires to give practical expression to his public peace policy, there is no time like the present. General Franco has provided the opportunity. His reply on the Non-Intervention Committee's plan to evacuate foreign combatants on both sides was brusque and unequivocal.

There is curious irony in the present situation. The role of Great Britain, France, and the United States has been a shabby, degrading one from the very beginning, more than two years ago. These three great powers have accepted affronts with humiliating meekness, which they do not display when a dispute with Mexico arises. Each fascist insult has been followed by a stronger one. They deliberately concocted the fraud of non-intervention and neutrality to avoid carrying out their obligations to the Spanish republic according to international law. But now, even this is not enough. The fascist axis demands further debasement.

The Ebro offensive was directly responsible for the seemingly inflexible reply from Burgos. The republican drive around Gandesa prolonged the war into next winter, by anybody's calculation, and it made necessary another huge shipment of German and Italian men and materials. Apparently, the coming fascist intervention will be so immense that the very pretense of non-intervention is no longer possible from their viewpoint.

It is important, as Mr. Roosevelt has insisted, to safeguard the security of Canada in order to protect our own. But if our isolationist practice is to be enlarged simply to include Canada, little has been accomplished. The future of both countries is in no small measure being decided in Spain, China, and Czechoslovakia. Why should we stand idly by when our own future, the future of world democracy, is in the making? General Franco has spoken. It is our turn.

A Plea For Spain

IN VIEW of the importance of the Relief Ship Campaign initiated by the Medical Bureau and North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy, and participated in by numerous organizations and thousands of individuals throughout the country, we asked Elliot Paul and Jay Allen, as Americans who have lived in Spain and given evidence long before the civil war of deep sympathy and understanding for the Spanish people, to write of the food problem facing the republican government.

Mr. Paul, novelist, author of that most moving of books on Spain, *The Life and Death of a Spanish Town,* and Mr. Allen, correspondent in Spain for over a decade, both think of this as the most urgent problem to be faced, now that the military situation is less menacing, by the Spanish republic and its friends in the democracies of the world. What these two men, liberals—antifascist but with no party affiliations—have to say ought to reach sectors of American opinion that sometimes justify by narrower considerations their indifference to the broad human and political implications of the Spanish struggle and thus to relief efforts here. The interest of both of these men in Spain is the interest of men who feel and understand the Spanish tragedy and who, as Americans (both were in the last war), are alarmed by the new threat to democratic ideals and to the safety of the New World itself.

At no time since the war began has relief been so urgently needed, what with the growing complacency of the powers toward the scandalous efforts of Franco and his German and Italian pilots to blockade government ports, and the huge refugee burden that must be borne during the coming winter.

To facilitate relief the Spanish government has set up a coordination committee, composed of the following prominent Spaniards: honorary president, Madame Azana, wife of the President of the Spanish republic; acting president, M. Martinez Barrio, president of the Spanish Cortes; members, Madames Alvarez del Vayo, Ibarruri (La Pasionaria), Kent, Montseny, de la Torre, and the MM. Benavente, Albornoz, and Pi Y Suner.

This government committee has, in turn, designated the International Coordinating Committee, the Centrale Sanitaire Internatoinale, the Office Pour L'Enfance, as its official international delegates. The members of these three international committees, each in its own country, will be officially recognized by the Spanish government agency. In the United States, the Medical Bureau and North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy thus becomes the officially recognized relief agency for the suffering people of loyalist Spain and as such can assure cooperating organizations the use of many special facilities without those organizations in any way losing their identity.

General Minus an Army

WYNDHAM MORTIMER, who addressed the conference of local representatives of the United Automobile Workers at Toledo last week, reported: "I want to say that the suspended and expelled officers have at all times consulted and been advised by the head of the CIO. We have not made one move without consultation with the Committee for Industrial Organization."

The thousand delegates at the conference represented seventy locals with 244,500 members. This overwhelming majority of the UAW petitioned John L. Lewis to appoint an administrator to head the union until the next convention, and to approve a call for a special convention to elect all international officers with the exception of president, which is to be filled at the regular 1939 convention. The delegates also requested democratization of the UAW constitution.

What has happened is that Homer Martin and his Lovestoneite advisers find themselves without substantial following in the union. With CIO support, the UAW is in the process of consolidating itself and of holding gains made during the past year and a half even in the face of Martin's disruption. Having, on Lovestone's counsel, illegally expelled union officials, Martin is discovering that the great majority of the rank and file remain loyal to their elected leaders. The attempt to break the unity of the CIO seems likely to catapult Martin out of the leadership of the UAW once and for all. The fight against factionalism and division finds Martin in danger of being a general in Lovestone's camp while the army silently steals away.

Education for Democracy

THE reelection of Jerome Davis as president of the American Federation of Teachers is welcome news to progressive friends of the labor movement. Under the leadership of Professor Davis the teachers' union has greatly increased its membership, unified its ranks, and moved toward a working agreement between the AF of L and the CIO. The twenty-second convention of the union, held last week at Cedar Point, Ohio, reflected the progress of teachers' organization in this critical period. Delegates representing locals in every section of the country supported the campaign for federal aid to education, took a stand in favor of progressive candidates in the fall elections, urged that the Spanish embargo be lifted.

Observers at the convention were impressed by the realism with which the teachers related their professional problems to the problems confronting society at large. Recognizing the fascist threat to culture, the American Federation of Teachers is determined to maintain and extend democratic institutions. At no time in its history has the slogan of the union—"Democracy in Education; Education for Democracy"—expressed such an urgent social need, and at no time have the organized teachers of America made such a concerted effort to meet that need.

Red-Baiters' Field Day

JAMES B. MATTHEWS got the chance he has been waiting for when he appeared before the Dies committee. He made the most of the opportunity to vilify the American League for Peace and Democracy, and his joy at being able to do the league harm was not at all mysterious. For the league and other progressive groups had often criticized Mr. Matthews.

Matthews has not forgotten or forgiven the disapproval expressed by most of his acquaintances and former associates during the strike at Consumers Research in 1935. As vice-president of the organization, Matthews recruited deputies, urged violence, feverishly bought ammunition to be used against the strikers. Since then he has repeatedly opposed all progressive groups (automatically labeled by him "Moscow inspired"). He has publicly attacked the Wagner act, the Wages-and-Hours Bill, and has advocated the elimination of the graduated income tax. Mr. Matthews is a venomous man who once posed as a liberal and has given up that pose, apparently because there was no future in it.

Before and after Matthews paraded other authorities on anti-Americanism. Strange people, like Miss Huffman, who found the Federal Theatre Project a hot-bed of Reds and who organized a committee to fight them (she was the sole member). Or Edward F. Sullivan, the committee's star investigator who called Harry Bridges and others names, and who was discovered to have received his training as a labor spy and stool-pigeon in the employ of the Railway Audit & Inspection Co.

The Dies committee had a good week. Venom and slander flowed unrestrained. No rules of procedure—such as the La Follette Committee on Civil Liberties enforces so rigorously—hampered hand-picked witnesses. Hearsay, rumor, gossip, everything went as

evidence. Unverified affidavits were introduced; spies and grudge-bearers libeled people they disliked with impunity. Mrs. Roosevelt, President McCracken of Vassar, John L. Lewis, most progressive labor-leaders and congressmen were called "dupes," or "Communists," or "innocents." Not to be called Red before the Dies committee meant obscurity indeed. Two deserters from Spain reviled the Spanish government and the Americans in Spain who are fighting for democracy. It was a field day for slander. It was ridiculous. But it was also menacing.

One member of the investigating committee, Rep. Charles D. Healey, remarked that he hoped the investigators "would conduct the hearings in the future in a more judicious manner. . . ." The country as a whole is disgusted with the shoddy, wasteful, stupid performance.

That Convention

THE New York State Constitutional Convention, after laboring for more than four months, has brought forth what seems more like a rat than a mouse. So many of the amendments forced through by the coalition of tory Republicans and Tammany Democrats that controlled the convention are so manifestly bad that if the new constitution is submitted as a whole, there is no alternative for the voters but to reject it. Only by presenting the various proposals separately and giving the citizens of the state the opportunity to accept some and reject others, can there be any assurance that all this expenditure of time, effort, and money will not be wasted as it was in the case of the last Constitutional Convention, whose work the people rejected, in 1915.

The closing hours of the convention witnessed a particularly shabby piece of political skullduggery when the reactionary coalition steam-rollered through a suddenly-sprung amendment to bar proportional representation. If this is allowed to stand, it will mean the overthrow of the system of proportional representation under which the present New York City Council was elected. The fact that the people of the city voted by nearly two to one for PR means nothing, of course, to the Tammany politicians and their upstate Republican allies whose corrupt political machines are threatened by any enlargement of the democratic process. The same coalition was also responsible for the anti-democratic reapportionment amendment passed by the convention. This gives to 60 percent of the state's population, living in New York City, 40 percent of the seats in the legislature.

Characteristic of the type of leadership that dominated the convention were the killing of Justice Poletti's proposals to protect the state's rights to the development of the power sites of the St. Lawrence and Niagara Rivers, and the mutilation of the housing amendment. John T. Dooling, chairman of the Tammany Hall law committee, performed the operation on the Poletti proposal. He introduced a last-minute amendment which not only nullified the whole purpose of the proposal, but even repealed the policy enunciated in the Power Authority Act of 1931 which declared for perpetual state ownership of the power resources of the St. Lawrence River. Under the circumstances the proponents of state control and development of power had no alternative but to vote to kill the entire proposal.

The housing amendment in its final form provides for the expenditure of only $300,000,000 for the next fifty years. No new housing can be built unless it is part of a slum-clearance plan. This means that local authorities will not have the choice of building on vacant land, but must pay large sums to the wealthy slum-owners. As a further concession to the large real-estate interests —who were ably represented on the convention floor by Liberty Leaguer Al Smith— cities will be compelled to raise funds to finance their housing programs through sales taxes and other levies on the masses of the people, and only as a last resort will they be permitted to tax real estate.

Not all the proposals adopted by the Constitutional Convention are objectionable. Among the progressive amendments adopted were those providing a Bill of Rights for labor, barring discrimination in civil rights because of race, color, creed, or religion, and permitting the legislature to establish an integrated welfare system including old-age and health insurance. These deserve the support of all forward-looking citizens.

A Welcome Development

LAST November, Nathaniel Peffer wrote an article for *Amerasia* in which he advocated a complete "hands-off" policy by the United States towards the war in China. There was nothing we could do for China. short of going to war, he argued, and that was unthinkable. At about the same time, Mr. Peffer helped Bruce Bliven to establish an intellectual basis for neutrality on the same war-scare logic in the pages of the *New Republic.*

As reliable a barometer of changing public opinion as any poll is Mr. Peffer's latest contribution to *Amerasia.* In this, summarizing a year of war in China, he begins by reminding readers that he had opposed sanctions and embargoes. He insists that his reasoning was valid then, but argues that America's position is different today. American rights and privileges have been violated, Japan's conduct has been barbarous, and Japan has been greatly weakened. Thus Mr. Peffer has come to believe that active measures for China can now be undertaken, especially civilian relief, boycott of Japanese goods, embargo on war materials to Japan, and credits to China.

Though we cannot agree that Mr. Peffer's three reasons for adopting a new policy are exactly "new," his present position is an extremely welcome and significant development. Last fall, NEW MASSES published an article which made clear our differences with the position then taken by Mr. Peffer. We are more than glad to agree with the concluding sentences in his latest article: "Concretely, America must cease even inferentially assisting Japan to subjugate China. It must do so in the national interest. It should do so out of national decency."

Tammany on Trial

THE Hines trial is unfolding an illuminating study of the underworld in its practical relation to Tammany corruption. Hundreds of thousands of poor people milked of their nickels and dimes, even their pennies, every day; the big-shot racketeer Dutch Schultz turning from the dying industry of bootlegging to draw this vast revenue into an organized business; conferences to map out just what kind and how much protection would be required of Tammany; the sample case of a raid—apparently one of many—with all defendants caught red-handed and a Tammany magistrate promptly freeing all —these and other revelations fill in the picture of what goes on in a great city under capitalism, when the one overmastering dream of millions is for a taste of the good things of life that only money can buy, and the racketeers point the only way to that goal, through gambling. One of the immediate results of the trial is that hundreds of thousands of policy players are learning for the first time that even their one-in-a-thousand chance of winning is chopped down still further by the doctoring of winning numbers.

Whatever the outcome of the trial, whether Hines manages to wiggle out on a technicality or revives the old Tammany custom set by Tweed and winds up in prison, the consequences cannot fail to be disastrous to Tammany. The first week firmly fixed in the people's minds the picture of a Tammany district leader, and the most powerful of them all, charged with being on the payroll of a gangster-racketeer, and the Tammany campaign fund of 1933 being swelled by the collections of Dutch Schultz's gunmen. That is not a picture to be easily erased, whether Jimmy Hines actually goes to prison or not. It really begins to look, at long last, as if Tammany may be through.

COTTON ED'S LAST STAND

A Tory Faces a New Dealer in South Carolina's Primary

LEE COLLER

SOUTH CAROLINA sent Cotton Ed Smith to the United States Senate thirty years ago and has regularly returned him every six years since then. He has held his Senate seat longer than any other senator except William E. Borah, Idaho Republican.

The old man reckons he has only one more term to serve—if he is reelected. And he wants to be reelected, not only because he's "agin the President" but because he wants to get in his last shots against those "damnyankee ideas of political and social equality for niggers" (which seem to be gaining ground even in Dixie these days); against that "nigger lovin' carpetbagger Non-Partisan League"; against the right of labor, especially in the South, to improve its standard of living, and against the movement to aid the landless of the South. If that's okay with high-tariff, Republican Wall Street, he'll take their help, even though he's an "original rockribbed Democrat . . . a tariff-for-revenue Democrat . . . a white-supremacy Democrat."

Cotton Ed first got elected to the Senate via the cotton route. From 1896 to 1900, during the four years he was a member of the South Carolina State Legislature, he was one of the principal organizers of the Southern Cotton Association, an organization that had the earmarks of a marketing cooperative. In 1905, when the organization was set up on a Southwide scale, he was selected as its field agent and general organizer. During those days he talked cotton—cotton on the ground, cotton in the seed, cotton on the stalk, cotton in the warehouses, cotton exports, cotton hedges—and finally as "a friend of the farmer," got himself nominated for United States senator in the primaries of 1908, which meant that he was elected.

For twenty-four years he kept on talking cotton to the folks back home, but he never mentioned the cotton tenant farmers or sharecroppers who were becoming more numerous and more poverty stricken every year.

When election year came around folks in the country would hitch up the old mule and drive in to the county seat to see Cotton Ed put on his show. As soon as the picnic grounds were filled up, Cotton Ed would come racing down the road behind a team of spirited horses, seated on a bale of cotton, a boll of cotton in his lapel, his face streaming with sweat. The political speakings in those years were all-day picnics, sometimes lasting for two and three days. They came in the laying-by season when folks were itching for something to break the monotony of "just settin' " until harvest time. Cotton Ed's stumping was as good as a revival in the old days.

Cotton Ed would roll up his sleeves and shout himself hoarse about what the tariff was doing to the cotton farmer. To fill in time he would reel off one after another from his extraordinary store of slanderous stories about Negroes. Like as not he'd dig up a little distorted Reconstruction history and remind his listeners that they still had to be on their guard about keeping the "nigger" in his place. The time hadn't come yet when they had the situation so completely controlled that they could say once and for all they would never again have to ride in Red Shirts (the organization which succeeded the KKK during Reconstruction days in South Carolina).

Back in those halcyon days he didn't have to harp on the "nigger question" too much. The folks were with him on that. It was cotton that people thought of, ate, drank, dreamed of, and from which they made whatever kind of a living they could. He didn't have to think of industrial workers then; there were so few of them in South Carolina. As for organized labor, you could count on one hand the number of locals in the state. And Cotton Ed had luck, too. During almost every election year (except 1932) cotton prices were better than they were the year before, though they may have been worse than they were the last time he was elected. Cotton Ed never did anything to raise prices even temporarily, but he never missed an opportunity to tell the folks that he personally had gotten those high prices for them.

For twenty-four years you could drop in on the senator at his office in Washington, and if you were lucky enough to catch him in, you'd get a chance to hear part of the best collection of "nigger stories" in Washington. Or you could witness an exhibition of the best marksmanship in tobacco-juice spitting to be seen in the capital. Rumor had it for a long time that Cotton Ed was the only member of the Senate who could hit a cuspidor around a corner. Even Vice-President Garner, no mean marksman himself, was said to have stood in open-mouthed admiration of this feat. Of course you had to take your chances at catching the senator in his office during fishing and hunting seasons.

It was a pleasant twenty-four years—being called the senator by the folks back home. And with a Republican administration in the saddle most of the time there wasn't much he could be expected to do except handle his share of political patronage for one-party South Carolina. But all during that time South Carolina, as the rest of the South and the whole country, was changing. Reconstruction hatreds and fears were fading. Textile mills dotted the state from one end to the other until, today, South Carolina has more cotton spindles than any other Southern state and a good many more than most New England states. Industrial workers became an important factor in the life of the state and the rest of the South. Though cotton remained king, his throne started to wobble. Low prices made planters land-poor, threw ever increasing thousands of people into tenant and sharecropper classes. Those planters who were able to hold on to their land were forced to exact the last ounce of exploitation from their sharecroppers and agricultural workers. Unemployment in the cities and starvation in the countryside sent Roosevelt to the White House in 1933.

Cotton Ed blinked his eyes at the Democratic landslide and found that he had a choice, by virtue of his seniority in the Senate, of becoming chairman of any one of six important Senate committees. He chose to be chairman of the Committee on Agriculture and Forestry. In his heart he was disappointed that F.D.R. hadn't picked him, the only "farmer" in the Senate, a party wheelhorse of tested fealty, to be Secretary of Agriculture. That was when he first fell out with the President. Then he saw that the President meant to do things that challenged the old order of his life. From then on he was never pro-Roosevelt.

Smith was the only "farmer" in the Senate during most of the time he held office. His "farm" consists of 1,500 acres, the major part of which is in cotton, near Lynchburg, S. C. On it he works one hundred tenant and sharecropper families, almost all of whom are Negroes, many of them so deeply in debt they cannot get away from the place. The senator cannot even claim to be what Gene Talmadge calls himself—a successful farmer—a plantation owner who makes money. Smith's place is heavily mortgaged, and despite his tax-exempt $10,000 a year salary as senator, his plantation was saved from foreclosure by government loans. The senator has never been able to resist his hankering for gambling on the stock market and the cotton-futures market. He is so well known throughout the state as a tightfisted get-whatever-he-can-for-nothing that the state highway department recently refused to allow him to pay for a license by check instead of cash.

Awakened from his pleasant reposeful days in the Senate by the Roosevelt administration and the duties of being chairman of the Committee on Agriculture, the senator now claims authorship of some features of the Triple-A acts; the seed-loan bills; joint sponsorship with Senator Byrnes of the three-cents-a-pound subsidy to cotton farmers for their 1937 crop; Federal Government Cotton-Classification Act of 1937; and the 1938 Farm Act. The facts are, the administration held a bludgeon over

his head to get even these measures through his committee and practically all of them help to keep the planter from chaos while they do very little to help the majority of Southern farmers who are either tenants or sharecroppers.

During the special session of Congress in 1937, the administration Farm Bill was a "must." Cotton Ed, when asked in November how soon the bill could be expected to hit the floor, replied that it would probably take weeks for the committee to put it in shape. A few days after he said that, backers of the Anti-Lynching Bill forced its consideration by the Senate. Cotton Ed immediately announced that the Farm Bill would be ready for discussion in two days. And it was. Anything, even a Farm Bill, to kill or at least halt discussion of the Anti-Lynching Bill.

Smith is the prototype of the Southern bourbon, states'-rights, Negro-baiting, political demagogue. Smith personifies dying Southern feudalism, and as such is clay in the hands of Wall Street. When Roosevelt declared in his Gainesville, Ga., speech a few months ago, "there is little difference between feudalism and fascism—if you believe in one, you lean to the other," he might have added, "and Cotton Ed Smith is the outstanding example of what I mean."

Cotton Ed's losing battle for the maintenance of the old order of things in the South has become a fight against all progress. Only in the camp of the worst reactionaries has he been able to find any support. A do-nothing-for-labor policy, a vote against the Wages-and-Hours Bill brought him the individed support of textile millowners, their newspapers, and those whom the millowners can influence. Refusal to throw his support behind a movement to create a little TVA on the Santee Cooper River in South Carolina won for Smith the moral and financial blessings of the power trust. Opposition to reform of the Supreme Court, absence from the Senate when the vote to confirm Hugo Black as Supreme Court Justice was taken, indifference to the South's fight against the freight differential, have brought him Wall Street's hearty approval. Though he was grudging about sponsoring legislation to aid planters, all was forgiven when he voted against the Bankhead-Jones Tenancy Bill.

Wall Street wants to see him back in Congress because his election would mean an important defeat for the New Deal. But more than that, the senator's seniority gives him not only the chairmanship of the Committee on Agriculture but top ranking membership in five other Senate committees, including Interstate Commerce, Manufactures, Naval Affairs, Patents, and Privileges and Elections—where he can be effective in hamstringing progressive legislation.

Cotton Ed's fight this year is a last-stand fight. South Carolinians have had five years of the New Deal, and four of them under a New Deal governor who managed to accomplish some much needed reforms. And that governor, Olin D. Johnston, is running for senator against Cotton Ed. Tenants are remembering that Smith howled, "Why should we run to Washington to settle disputes between tenants and landlords," when the Bankhead-Jones bill was before Congress. This year they saw 116 South Carolina tenants loaned enough money by the federal government to buy their own farms—a drop in the bucket but better than nothing. And over 60 percent of South Carolina's farmers are tenants and sharecroppers. South Carolina's 140,000 textile workers remember that Smith never turned a hand to help them in their general strike in 1934, that he voted against the Wages-and-Hours Bill, and that he believes they can and should live on fifty cents a day, according to his own statement in Congress. They know that Olin Johnston has openly aided organization of the Textile Workers Organizing Committee in the state.

Snow

The old political campaigns of getting the vote with a watermelon (or corn likker) shebang are going fast in South Carolina. Cotton Ed, with twenty-four years of advancing no legislative measures of his own, of opposing all progressive legislation, hasn't much ammunition to counter the bullseye shots Olin Johnston is pounding him with at the political speakings this year. Actually all he has is the wornout cry of Negro domination, and he's using that for all it's worth.

I caught up with what South Carolinians have dubbed their "three-ring circus" at Gaffney, a county seat of about twelve thousand people in the northern part of the state. Three-quarters of its working population are employed by the town's seven textile mills. The remainder are mostly small merchants depending on townspeople and the surrounding farmers for their trade. Picking up the local newspaper, mouthpiece of the millowners, I found a picture and story featuring Cotton Ed on page one which invited the general public, particularly textile workers, to attend a watermelon slicing on the Alma Mills grounds at which Smith would speak. The invitation was issued by the Four Square Club of the Alma Mills, an "employee welfare" outfit. On its editorial page the Gaffney *Ledger* comments, "One of the surest and most important tests of a stateman's democracy today is his record on labor problems. How does Smith meet that test? The answer is: Every responsible labor leader in America has endorsed Senator Smith. Every farm leader of national importance has done the same thing. A voter cannot go far wrong if he follows the chiefs of these two great groups of producers."

South Carolina's three-ring circus is so called because the State Democratic Party's rules force all candidates for state and national offices to stump together. They must appear at the same time at the same place in each of the state's forty-seven counties and take their turns on the same stand, one after the other, in putting their reasons for election before the people. The itinerary of the campaign route is mapped by the State Democratic Committee.

No all-day picnic was this political speaking at Gaffney. About two thousand white men, women, and children gathered in the City Park near the courthouse. I counted about ten Negroes in the crowd. At the far end of the park a small speaker's-stand had been rigged up. The sun was hidden by heavy clouds, but the humidity was high and the thermometer stood at 94. The crowd of farmers, textile workers, and courthouse hangers-on had nearly filled the park a good half-hour before the speakers arrived.

Johnston was the first to speak. Six feet four, sunburned face, alert brown eyes, square shoulders, he looked as though he hadn't been away from the football field very long. He started working in textile mills when he was eleven and kept on until he paid his way through college and law school. He spoke simply, sharply, and to the point. He reviewed the record of his administration during which

Snow

the first state forty-hour week for textile workers was passed. He described such reforms as the state guarantee of an eight-month instead of six-month school term and establishment of a textbook rental system as a forerunner to free schoolbooks, which he sponsored and got passed. He pledged his loyalty to the New Deal—to improve the Wages-and-Hours Act, to aid further the farmers of the South and the whole country, to increase educational facilities for the South. He spoke of living issues of the day—the necessity of raising the living standards of the Southern people. He flayed Cotton Ed for saying the textile workers of South Carolina can live comfortably on fifty cents a day. He told his listeners that Cotton Ed voted against the Women's Suffrage Amendment. He closed his address with the declaration that a "vote for Olin Johnston is a vote for the humanitarian program of Franklin D. Roosevelt." He got a good hand from the crowd.

Then up to the speaker's stand clambered the Democratic dean of the United States Senate. His two hundred pounds on his five-foot-ten frame makes the old boy sweat plenty in the heat. Through his tobacco stained, weeping-willow mustache finally came his lazy, deep-throated drawl.

"My friends, you have sent me to the Senate for thirty years now. Do you mean to tell me that the people of South Carolina who voted for me all during that time were fools? Why it would be an insult to the voters of South Carolina not to return me to the Senate. . . . " The crowd laughs. A farmer, squatting in the grass beside me nudges me. He can't pass up the opportunity to retell the latest political pun. "The name is Ellison DuRant Smith. And how he do rant."

The senator coughs a couple of times and goes on. "Olin Johnston said that I have the cotton exchange and cotton warehousemen behind me more than the farmers. Well, I'd a heap rather have them for me than that nigger-lovin' Non-Partisan League. I want the white race to rule. I'm for white supremacy first and last. I filibustered against that Anti-Lynching Bill. That bill provided that if a wretch who inflicted a blot on the fair home of a white South Carolinian was lynched the sheriff would have to pay a fine of thousands of dollars—and that money would go to the family of the brute who outraged the fair home of a white South Carolinian.

"I'm proud of the fact that I walked out of the 1936 convention of the Democratic Party when that nigger preacher was put up to lead us in prayer." Here his voice starts to quiver and he shows signs of getting all worked up. He'd probably have an apoplectic fit it anyone reminded him that he did not walk out of the State Legislature between 1896 and 1900 when he was a member and when two Negro legislators sat in the same room with him. "I thought to myself, has the religion of Jesus Christ been so prostituted by politics as for the Democratic Party to put up a nigger to lead us in prayer, not that I don't love the nigra race. How well I remember how I was cradled in the arms of old Auntie Lou. And I remember, too, how Uncle Bill would intervene with my father when he would take me out to the bushes for a switching I may have deserved." You expect tears at any moment, but not for long. "But I don't love them enough to let them eat at my table or vote in my ballot box." He pounds the speaker's stand with his fist.

"As for my record, but let me not forget to tell you that a vote against me is a vote for that Labor's Non-Partisan League and the Colored Association for the Advancement of the Colored People. I don't want the vote of you who believe in political equality.

"Before I review my record in Congress I want you to know that I am a friend of the laboring people." He pulls out of his pocket a copy of *Labor,* issued in Washington, D. C. "This paper has endorsed me.

"The farmers know that I am the only farmer in the Senate, the only one who will look out for your interests. I'm not responsible for the drop in cotton prices last year. When the Lord gave the South the greatest cotton crop it ever produced last year, I had nothing to do with that. It was an act of God.

"Now as I was about to tell you about my record in Congress——" At this point, the chairman of the meeting pulls the senator's coat-tail. "I find that my time is up. Remember, folks, a vote for me is a vote against nigger domination."

The crowd laughs and starts to break up. The third candidate for senator from South Carolina, Edgar F. Brown, is about to start speaking, but no one pays very much attention to him. The fight is between Johnston, Southern supporter of most of the progressive features of the New Deal, and Smith, bourbon reactionary.

Smith is banking on his Negro-baiting to carry him back into office. He is also counting heavily on what he hopes will be a conservative farm vote. (No poll-tax payment is required to vote in the Democratic Party's primary in South Carolina, it should be noted.) A vote of about 300,000 is expected, with a good groundwork job being done by Labor's Non-Partisan League. New Dealers believe 85 percent of a probable textile vote of 115,000 will go to Johnston, as well as about ten thousand in other labor votes. The American Legion is expected to support Johnston, an active legionnaire. The real test will be the farm vote of 150,000 or thereabouts. Johnston backers believe at least 50 percent of the farmers will break with the old courthouse gangs to vote for the New Deal. Should these estimates be fairly accurate, Johnston will have a sizable majority.

On August 30, white men and women over twenty-one years of age, who are enrolled members of the Democratic Party in South Carolina, will go to the polls to nominate a senator. Their nomination is tantamount to election in all-Democratic South Carolina. (Negroes are prohibited by law from participating in the Democratic Party's state primaries.) It's better than even money that a majority of the voters will back the New Deal in South Carolina this month.

★ ★ ★

PARTURITION

(" . . . when the class struggle nears
the decisive hour . . . a portion of the
bourgeoisie goes over to the proletariat . . .")

We have been among you at the last suppers: your hand
Sustained by caress no more among us, nor these faces
For the beautiful round eye's sake. Something has expired in the talking rooms,
On the overstuffed chairs, in mouths nightly open and shut.

For the headline you overlooked, the hunger march from the office window,
The miner's face in the rotogravure, Chicago in memoriam;
For Austria, China, Spain, and for the man on horseback,
We break from you bodily; the parturition under his iron shade.

Stripped, alive, unpossessing, we are quiet after the celebrants.
The blood no further bond, nor habit, nor ever again the senses.
The community rolls earthwide from the mind: a new dimension.

Who is with us is of us, we of them and these only:
The man with leaflets on a Berlin roof; thin shadow
Down the Roman alley; the Osaka nucleus; from Archangel to the East;
This man, this woman, who will not mutely die on the American farm.

The collective is beyond grain in common and the house with two families.
First is the passion, a directed full flood in the artery;
The act and the war from this stem. Burning beneath the word and the weapon,
The concept: unshaken in space in time in death.

DON GORDON.

YOUTH SPEAKS OUT FOR PEACE

A Report on the World Youth Congress

JOSEPH STAROBIN

On the face of it, what could be more dramatic and powerful than a gathering of five hundred young people from fifty-four nations representing the widest cross-section of peace sentiment ever assembled? Where is there more memorable drama than the spectacle of accredited representatives of the most diverse youth organizations overcoming barriers of space, language, custom, and previous conditions of prejudice to discuss the most pressing single problem on the world agenda: peace.

Here were young people whose experience in the two years since the first World Youth Congress is the transfiguring experience of the generation that has come of age in the early thirties.

Here were youngsters from the battlefronts of Spain and China, each a hero, each with the distinctive story of people who have aged a decade within a score of months. Here was a refugee from Austria, under a pseudonym, from the land which Hitler has usurped. Presiding over the Congress was Betty Shields-Collins, of England, international secretary.

Here is Raif Khuri, the Arab, sarcastically withering the argument that Zionism leads to Socialism, calling for a new unity of the Palestine peoples with full minority rights for the Jews. Here are delegates from South America, admitting that the chief danger to their national integrity threatens from the Rome-Tokyo-Berlin axis, but calling America sharply to account lest the good-neighbor policy be sabotaged from within the State Department.

A Hindu rises in national costume to sketch the brutal outline of 180 years of British rule that has "brought disaster to a once prosperous India." He is followed by Gabriel Carritt, of the British Youth Peace Assembly, son of an Oxford professor, who affirms the right of self-determination for the peoples of the British empire.

Olga Schliezova, of Czechoslovakia, insists that the minority problem in her country is largely economic, "part of the effects of the crisis on a highly industrialized area." Kousseff, from Bulgaria, avows support of proposals for reinvigorating the League of Nations but reminds the delegates that the rights of the smaller nations must never again be jeopardized by power politics.

Miss Mary Clarke, of the British Conservatives, develops elaborate sophistries in the defense of Chamberlain's "non-intervention" in Spain. The delegates listen intently through the earphones that carry the halting translation into French and Spanish. They give Miss Clarke a temperate reception, for her bravery rather than logic.

Representatives from Indonesia distribute lengthy mimeographed protocols on the inadequacies of colonial education; delegates from Belgium and Holland deplore the absence of apprenticeship opportunities for the youth of their countries; a South African native attacks misrepresentations of his people in American movies; there are teas, musicales, receptions, mutual information sessions, ice-cream fests on the lawns, special lectures on the status of German youth under Hitler, trips to CCC camps, and religious services in five churches on Sunday morning. Mrs. Roosevelt attends the sessions, nodding as she agrees with some speaker, earphones on her head, knitting in her lap.

There were contrasts of color, light, and sound that marked this Congress, spectacular from the moment the march of nations broke the hushed darkness of Randall's Island stadium to the fireworks prepared by the Chinese delegates, the fantastic rockets spelling out the words *Vive La Chine!* across the elm-bordered shores of Vassar lake.

Among the Puerto Ricans, there was a comic-opera moment, with some serious overtones. It appears that the unpopular Governor Winship attempted to influence the delegation from Puerto Rico by shipping three "stooges" by plane on the third day of the Congress. These unfortunate gentlemen were refused seats and, caught in Poughkeepsie, they ran out of funds, leaving the patrician Nelson House without payment of their bills. The vigilant town police found them hiding in a local bar. After ignominious detention, they were bailed out by funds cabled by the governor himself, and rushed back to New York by cab. Meanwhile the accredited delegation from Puerto Rico asked the Congress to support resolutions for Winship's removal, restoration of civil liberties on the island, and requested that the Dies committee investigate fascist activities among insular officials.

The delegates from Czechoslovakia wire their consul for more information on alarming rumors of Nazi mobilization. A group of British conservatives accompany a local dowager in her limousine to her Poughkeepsie news offices to deny that the Congress is "Red." In the face of unremitting attacks from the Catholic Church, William Walsh, of the Irish League of Nations Association, insists that the church in Ireland brought no pressure against his participation in the Congress. In a strong brogue, he declares that he has come to a free country to express his opinion, and he is satisfied there are no hidden forces using him as a "front." Thirty-five delegates attend the local Catholic church and argue it out with the priest who has attacked the Congress on orders from above. Raymond Guyot, the mild and kindly Frenchman, devotes much of his time to the commission on the religious and philosophical bases of peace. He is the one who took Paul Vaillant-Couturier's place in the French Chamber. He occupies a position in the Young Communist International analogous to that of Dmitrov in the Communist International.

This is the pattern, developing in four commissions and a dozen delegation meetings. Impassioned, dramatic, remarkably articulate, this Congress is completely aware of the deeper drama of its background, aware of the importance of its deliberations. If the lights have not yet gone out in Europe, at least they flicker.

No delegates attended from Italy, Germany, Japan. The story is told that the decision was referred to Hitler himself. He put forward four conditions: (1) that German be a spoken language; (2) that no German exiles be present; (3) that there be no interference with internal affairs of Germany; (4) that no Communists be present, except representatives of the Soviet Union.

The Congress arrangements committee in Europe unanimously accepted the first three conditions, and with equal unanimity rejected the fourth. No delegates came from Italy and Japan, according to the terms of the axis. But there were eight young Japanese from their Student Christian Association in America, who participated as observers, exercising the greatest of discretion in what must have been for them an extremely embarrassing experience. The absence of Soviet delegates was universally deplored, since it was thought until the last moment that they were coming.

The dominant sentiment of the Congress is anti-fascist. For the delegates from Spain, China, and Central Europe, the contrary would be surprising. But behind the general opposition to aggression, and militant sympathy for China and Spain, there lies an intricate latticework of contrasts and interests in the work of this Congress. First of all, this was the first major international affair with such an excellent representation from the colonial and semi-colonial peoples. From Latin and South America, and the Caribbean, there were almost two hundred.

The whole trend of the debate runs in the direction of implementing collective security. Young people of every denomination desire that nations shall abide by their international treaties, shall renounce war as an instrument of national policy and favor regional pacts of mutual assistance. The immediate problem, the large majority of the delegates feel, is to

restore international peace through the defeat of the fascists in Spain and China. The youth can assure that defeat by enforcing boycotts, demanding governmental embargoes on the aggressors and economic assistance to the invaded. Such action, they know, will discourage potential aggression in Europe, and can be realized only through the cooperative effort of the democratic nations.

The colonial delegates, from India, from Palestine, South Africa, Indonesia, and Latin America are all quick to point out the unsavory history of the great capitalist democracies with respect to the colonial peoples. They have come to pose this problem squarely. Every one of these dark-skinned young people flashes a fiery eye at the mention of the word "imperialism," whose brutalities are unmistakably part of their personal experience.

The representatives of England, France, the United States, and others sense this trend and assert unreservedly that "collective action against the aggressor nations, necessary to defend universal peace, embraces the defense of the smaller and colonial peoples."

A joint statement by delegates from England, Ireland, the Dominions, and the British colonies expressly declares in favor "of full equality for the peoples of our countries," maintaining that "the policy of the British national government, as instanced in its departure from League obligations to Ethiopia, Spain, and China, and its refusal to take decisive steps to prevent aggression, has prejudiced the security of our countries and of all peoples."

The Americans make similar statements, notably Joe Lash, of the American Student Union, who attacks the State Department position with reference to Mexico as a perversion of the good-neighbor policy. And these are followed, of course, by representatives of the colonial peoples, whose understanding of the broad orbit of collective security needs no enlargement.

The same problem emerged at the Congress in a different though analogous form. There are many representatives here from conservative organizations in such countries as Poland, Eire, Bulgaria, Rumania, and Yugoslavia. These delegates were not at all anti-fascist with reference to internal policy in their own countries. Among the Poles, for instance, there were many who were ready to make elaborate defense of Polish anti-Semitism. From Chile, one delegate declared against "class war," attacking Communism as the internal complement of the external fascist danger.

This cross-current of national interests made the Congress the real thing it was. And its merit and lesson lie precisely in the fact that the delegates came to understand, in terms of their own interests, the deeper meaning of collective security as the safeguard of all the smaller nations and weaker peoples against fascist aggression.

What I have described is contemporaneous with the muted drama that proceeded behind the scenes.

Clearly this was not a Communist Congress. (Joe Cadden, of the Americans, apologized to the delegates for the "rude and stupid" actions of the "lunatic fringe" of American reactionaries.) Even the newspapers of the strongly Catholic town of Poughkeepsie, after four days of Red-baiting streamers, admitted editorially the lack of substance to the "Red" charge. Nor was it a Socialist Congress, although the word "Socialist" after much bending has become an extremely elastic term. But there were in every delegation members of the official Socialist youth movements of their respective countries and they held their caucus soon after the Congress convened.

The American Socialists, influenced by Trotskyism, came before this international caucus to plead the case for isolation as the road to peace. In the person of Al Hamilton, of the YPSL, and the Keep America Out of War Committee, the Socialists wanted the caucus to expose the "fallacies" of collective security and denounce the good-neighbor policy. The international Socialists were polite, but firm. The American isolationists were themselves isolated.

Hamilton later appealed to the Congress as a whole to support his position, demagogically playing towards the colonial delegates. He was received more coolly than an iceberg among the Eskimos. André Genot, of Belgium, speaking for the international Socialists, arose and put him in his place.

This development was refracted in the debate among the American delegates. It must be remembered that the American youth movement has been sharply divided these three years on a peace program. The Socialists have maintained considerable influence among Methodist, Baptist, and Quaker groups, and in any case, there are wide sections of American youth who sympathize strongly with Spain and China but still fear collective security as a new form of "power politics." For a multitude of well defined historical reasons, they still seek the Grail of a quixotic isolation. The YPSL has played cleverly on these sentiments, and these conflicts among the American delegation broke sharply as representatives from every American youth organization but the Catholics and the Boy Scouts assembled at Vassar to consider their position. Within a short time, two blocs emerged: forty-six for collective security, fourteen for whatever alternative. After two days of deadlock, a compromise emerged embodying the principles of Secretary Hull's speech of August 16. Under the pressure of the Congress, and in view of the stand of the Socialist International caucus, schisms appeared among the minority bloc. For the first time, Hamilton and his friends were forced into support of a declaration of the American government.

After another day of debate, the American delegation united around the seven-point program, permitting each bloc to make separate statements on the implementation of the compromise proposal, not more than a partial departure from the embattled positions of a previous day. With this it is still too soon to declare that the American youth movement is again united, or that the meaning of collective security has been made completely clear to the pacifist and other groups.

But it is accurate and essential to say that isolationism was seriously undermined by the impact of the international gathering, that the force and power of a World Youth Congress must profoundly affect the American Youth movement in the near future.

One question remains, a question that troubles the serious observer as well as those citizens who saw the more ominous headlines of impending world war, alongside the excellent reception which the Congress received. Just what, it is asked in conclusion, has this gathering accomplished, just what can its effect be in the future? A fair question, for whose answer we cannot rely alone upon the enthusiasm, the will to struggle, the stand against panic and pessimism of the delegates themselves.

It seems to me, first of all, that this Congress achieved a rare level of understanding among the leading youth forces of the world. It focused the problem of world peace, bringing the spotlight to bear where it must. It showed to each delegation the broader margins of a world problem and revealed the potential human material that stands ready for action.

Above all, there is work to be done, to bring the message of this gathering to the masses of youth who are hungry for it, to extend the message to the Catholics. There is room for the consideration of many problems that pertain to the economic and cultural conditions of young people. And above all, there is the difficult job of reaching the youth in fascist countries. There is the possibility of developing a well defined tradition, such as the April actions against war, in America, that can bring the weight of the Congress decisions into the balance of world politics in a concrete and dramatic form.

Of course, these are long-term perspectives, but maybe not so long term at that—certainly, deeper perspectives, yet such as may come to the surface of international life more quickly than is often supposed.

But for all countries, large and small, the impact of this Congress cannot be denied. For when the delegates return, they will tell their story. The decisions of the Congress will be referred to in innumerable publications, in speeches, addresses, rallies, debates. They will filter down into the consciousness of broader masses than are here represented. They will become part of the fiber of youth experience, integral with the marrow of youth aspirations. They will contribute to the growing reserve of understanding among broad masses of the people. This understanding may lie dormant for months, or even years, may not be clearly distilled into immediate action.

But it will, in the lightning moment of crisis, emerge as the decisive factor, the yeast that makes the bread rise and wine quicken. In this the Second World Youth Congress will have fulfilled its promise.

WHAT CAN I DO?

More Answers to Questions about *I Like America*

GRANVILLE HICKS

SOME reviewers have complained because *I Like America* offers no detailed plan for the remedying of the conditions it describes. I can see why the reviewers are disturbed. If I had laid down such a program, they could have spent their time in picking it to pieces, and thus pleasantly distracted themselves and their readers from the real problem the book raises. The book, however, is intended as a challenge, not a blueprint. It is all too easy for some people, if they have found what they regard as a flaw in this program or that, to convince themselves that they don't have to do anything. What I wanted to do, if I could, was to make my readers feel the need for change so urgently that, if they turned down one program, they would immediately start hunting for a better one. More than that I wanted them to do certain immediately possible and practical things and to keep on doing them while they made up their minds about the next steps.

Because of all this, I am not troubled when critics rebuke me for not laying down a program of action. But when readers take the trouble to sit down and write me letters, I realize that I must answer their questions as best I can. "Your book has got under my skin," one writes. "Tell me what I can do." "What can I do?" asks another. "Don't tell me to join the Communist Party. I'm not ready for that. Maybe I ought to be. Maybe some day I will be. But right now I'm not. There must be hundreds of thousands of people who, for good reasons or bad, feel as I do, and yet agree with your account of what is wrong with the United States today and want the kind of America you want. What are we to do?"

Any regular reader of NEW MASSES knows the right answers, and yet I have found that they are not so easy to put into words. One thing is clear: We all ought to be educating ourselves so that we can find our way round in this complicated world of ours. I shall, therefore, deal in another article with the subject of getting a Marxian education. But in this article I shall try to outline a program of action.

It is a program for the kind of people who have been writing me letters; so let us see what they do believe and what they don't. They believe that a large proportion of people in America are badly fed, badly clothed, badly housed. They believe that the majority of Americans have no security. And they believe that poverty and insecurity are unnecessary. In short, they see that our economic system is functioning badly. Some of them, however, are not sure that the system cannot be patched up, and others, who are willing to admit that it is a failure, have only the vaguest idea of what should take its place.

Is there any program that will satisfy those who have a lingering faith in capitalism as well as those who have varied ideas about supplanting it? And is this program specific enough to give my correspondents something to do?

Such a program is at least hinted at in *I Like America*. We must insist that capitalism serve the interests of all the people. We know that the United States can produce enough for everybody. We believe, therefore, that the private individuals who own the productive resources of the country have a responsibility. What we propose to do is to see that they fulfill their social obligations.

How can this be done? Well, there is one way that has proved successful. It is obvious that, from my point of view and that of my correspondents, an employer who pays inadequate wages is not fulfilling his social obligations. When, therefore, his workers get together, form a union, and use their united strength to raise wages and improve conditions, they are not merely serving their personal interests. Labor unions are instruments for forcing private capitalists to fulfill public obligations.

The first thing, then, that we can say to the kind of individual who has been writing me is, "Join a trade union. If there is no union in your field, then join whatever organization most closely corresponds to a union—the Lawyers Guild, say, or the Authors League. But don't stop there; don't content yourself with signing your name and paying your dues. Give the union your best support. And if it happens, as it might, to be a rather ineffectual, or even a rather corrupt type of organization, don't withdraw in disgust, but do your best to make it serve the purposes it ought to serve."

There is another thing. I am shocked to find people who call themselves liberals calmly walking through picket lines. If you admit what I have been saying about the role of unions in the capitalist system, the success of all unions is important to you. The losing of a strike is your loss.

Soriano

The whole job, however, cannot be left to the unions; the government, which is supposed to be our government, must help. Experience shows us that the capitalists resist all attempts to raise the standard of living, and the capitalists are very powerful. When they can, they use the government to serve their purpose. We all know, for example, how local and state police and national guards have been used to break strikes. So have courts, through the abuse of their power of issuing injunctions.

The federal government at the present time does not propose to be used for such purposes. It has, moreover, created machinery—the National Labor Relations Board—to protect the rights of workers to organize. And it has also adopted a wages-and-hours law, which, though the standards it sets are very low, indicates one way of making capitalists do their duty to society.

Anyone can see that it makes a great deal of difference what kind of government we have in our city, state, and nation. The government may help us in our attempt to secure abundance for all, or it may thwart us. The progressive individual, therefore, must look for a progressive government. The capitalists prefer profits for a few rather than plenty for everyone, and they are aided by many short-sighted persons who ought to know better. These reactionaries would like to get rid of whatever progressive measures the Roosevelt administration has adopted, and they will therefore seek to elect their candidates this fall. They can be defeated if the progressives are united and energetic, but, as the defeat of Maury Maverick shows, we must not lie down on the job.

There are other types of essential political action. For many years now there have been millions of men who could not get jobs. We say, "If the capitalist system cannot give these men work, then the government must do so, and it must raise the money by taxing the capitalists." The reactionaries would give the unemployed the smallest possible amount of relief, would let them starve if they dared. We, on the other hand, propose not only to give these people the means of subsistence but also to use their strength and skill for the benefit of society. The administration of relief today is often inadequate, but it is on the right track, and it is up to us to keep it there. Nothing is more important in our program than the raising of relief standards, for, if they go down, the whole standard of living suffers.

I have dwelt on the fact that there is a group of people—I call them reactionaries—who are working, consciously or unconsciously, for a program of scarcity rather than a program of plenty. These people know that they are in a minority, and they therefore try to divide the majority by skillful propaganda in the newspapers they control. They also stand

ready to use violence to check the majority.

We have seen exactly this done in Jersey City, in Johnstown, Massillon, and many other communities. My correspondents, I am sure, think that freedom of speech is a good thing in itself, and so do I. But there is an added reason for working for the liberties of the masses of the people, and that is that they are a guarantee of the maintenance of the American standard of living. If our civil liberties are taken away from us, we cannot hope that the American people will secure the abundance that is their birthright.

This is so obviously true that many reactionaries desire above all else to destroy the freedom of the masses. They see that in Germany and Italy, under fascism, labor unions have been destroyed, the leaders of the people have been murdered or imprisoned, and all democratic rights have been abolished. They see that in those countries it has been possible to drive the standard of living lower and lower. And they would be glad to see fascism established here. The progressive citizen, who hates fascism, is quick to oppose those organizations that are openly fascist, but he does not always realize that any successful attack on democracy is a step towards the hated dictatorship. Whenever a Mayor Hague gets away with his anti-democratic misrule, it emboldens those who would like to see the total destruction of democracy.

The threat of fascism at home cannot be separated from the threat of fascism abroad. The progressive citizen wants peace, and he usually knows well enough that fascism constitutes the great danger of war. There are three ways in which he can combat that danger. First, he can fight every manifestation of fascism at home. Second, he can give practical assistance to the people of Spain and China, who are at war with fascism. Third, he can work constantly for the adoption by his own government of a policy—such as that outlined by President Roosevelt in his Chicago speech—that will unite peace-loving nations against the fascist aggressors.

I wrote something like this to one of my correspondents, and he replied, "But what do *I* do?" So I recapitulated: "Join a union and work in it. Take part in the campaign for progressive candidates this fall. If there is a local group that protects civil liberties, work with it; if there isn't start one. Organize meetings for Spanish relief, get people to boycott Japanese goods, and join the American League for Peace and Democracy."

But, somebody wants to know, what has all this to do with Communism? Just this: If we Communists are right in believing that capitalism is going to decline further and further, then it will become clear in time that the only way to protect the American standard of living is for the people to take over the means of production. In other words, we believe that these very measures will lead to the establishment of Socialism, which is our goal. If we are wrong, if abundance for all is compatible with the continuance of the capitalist system, then you win. In fact, as I see it, you win either way.

THE ALPINE SWASTIKA

Nazi Espionage and Propaganda in Switzerland

MICHAEL WILSON

IN THIS crucial time, when the eyes of the world are set upon the arm of the swastika that swings east and south into Czechoslovakia and the Balkans, it is well not to forget the other arm that swings south and west—into Switzerland and France. No longer can Switzerland remain with Olympian—or Alpine—indifference to the struggle for power in Europe; for not only does Hitler hope to absorb the Northern German-speaking Swiss cantons, but he plans also to use Swiss valleys as his gateway into France. He must use them in conquest because, in spite of the fact that Germany rearms more rapidly than France, the present German heavy artillery cannot break the French Maginot line of fortifications. The French-Belgian line, too, is well prepared to withstand the invader. Hitler needs another passageway and he has a passable one in Switzerland, which is doubly weak because the Italian army can also enter this relatively unfortified country—the two armies thus forming a fascist spearhead into the canton of Vaud, the Rhone, and France.

As in Austria before *Anschluss,* and as in Czechoslovakia now, the Nazis are doing all in their power to disrupt a stable, democratic government and disrupt the independent spirit of the people. The absence of a common nationality in Switzerland (of the twenty-five cantons, nineteen have German-speaking majorities, five have French, and one Italian) has given the fascists false hopes; for the German-speaking Swiss consider themselves Swiss, not German; and Mussolini, who has long had his eye on the Italian-speaking canton of Tessin, has had little success with his propaganda. The chief internal factors that aid the fascists in their work are two: the "confederation" type of government, which gives the cantons relative freedom from the central government; and the meandering nature of the Swiss-German frontier. It is proverbial that what bothers an Argovian is no concern of an inhabitant of Vaud. And it is true that scandals in Nazi espionage sometimes must be settled wholly by the canton in which the espionage occurs.

But it is along the crazy, arbitrary Swiss-German frontier that Nazi propaganda is reaping its most sinister results. Contrary to popular belief, the Rhine is not the invariable boundary line: there are often Swiss towns on its north bank and German towns on its south bank. The German city of Constance, for example, lies on the Swiss side of Lake Constance, and the border runs through the outskirts of that city, separating a continuity of houses from the Swiss city of Kreutzlingen. In other towns, too, a street is the boundary line. Before 1933, these frontiers were unimportant; inhabitants within the forty kilometer border zone traveled back and forth across the border unmolested. Now it is not so. Full freedom of movement has been taken from the frontier dwellers (especially the Jews) and the guarded line has become the handiest tool of Gestapo agents.

In Kreutzlingen there is a wealthy pro-Nazi factory owner who supplies his son with the money and boats necessary to entertain other wealthy young Aryans on Lake Constance. The entertainment is political; the trips aim to show the value of Nazi organization and methods to Switzerland's industrial heirs. It is all in line with previous Nazi coup tactics—get the men who hold the whip hand and get them young—then if you can't get the people it doesn't matter.

Nazi kidnapings along the border are reminiscent of American gangland in its heyday—only that in Germany the kidnapings are always political. It is easy for Gestapo police to cross the border on a dark night at one of its many arbitrary points, enter a man's house, and take him back into Germany before his neighbors have even awakened. A more common scheme is to lure a man across the border on the pretext of business and arrest him upon arrival. An editor of a Swiss anti-Nazi labor newspaper escaped such a trap only by the chance of mistaken identity—the Gestapo agents arrested the wrong man. The Gestapo also plays its hand on the railroad, because certain trains traveling from one Swiss city to another must cross German territory; and German officials have been known to enter these trains and arrest political enemies.

Jean Richard-Bloch, the noted French writer, has already retold to his countrymen the story of the abduction of a Swiss named Mallaun. Mallaun was illegally arrested in Germany after his double refusal to participate in the Nazi kidnaping of a fellow Swiss and to surrender the military defense plans for his district. He was committed to a concentration camp without trial. Later, however, he escaped and returned to his native frontier village to expose the Nazi sympathizers who had betrayed him.

The borderland has its personal tragedies as well as its melodramas. I know of a Jewish family divided by that border by only three hundred yards: the mother lives in German

Constance, the daughter in Swiss Kreutzlingen. The daughter is seriously ill but cannot return to Germany because she is an expatriated Jewess who married a Swiss citizen; the mother cannot go to her daughter because she is a Jewess and has no passport.

The point of greatest intensity for Nazi propaganda is the canton of Argovia, particularly the village of Zurzach, which is the bridgehead at the confluence of the rivers Rhine and Aar. The first Nazi paper appeared at Zurzach. The mayor of Zurzach, whose name is Keusch, is a Gestapo agent—and what is worse, a Swiss army officer who knows too much about the defense plans of this district. Zurzach's most prominent architect, von Senger, and a prominent lawyer, Ursprung, were two of the founders of the Schweizerische Heimatwehr, the first Swiss fascist party.

The reason for the importance of Zurzach is purely military: there is no other good bridgehead within fifty miles to east or west; and the valley of the Aar River, draining from southwest to northeast, joins (1) the Saane in the South, leading into the canton of Vaud and Geneva—in other words, it connects the system of the German Rhine with the French Rhone; (2) the lakes of Bienne and Neuchatel, beyond which are the valleys that descend to Lake Leman above Geneva, the best, least protected gateway into France.

This district has never been extensively fortified. But after the Nazi coup in Germany, the Swiss government realized the new danger in the North and made plans to construct a "little Maginot line" on the French model. These plans were opposed by certain reactionaries in the Swiss General Staff, one of whom, a Colonel Wille, had previously paid an unauthorized visit to Hitler, Goering, and von Blomberg. He has a lot to explain.

By such sabotage the work of defense has been slowed up but not stopped. Schaffhausen, which lies on the north bank of the Rhine, has strong fortifications and new, heavy guns. As for the army itself, long-term universal conscription has given wide field experience to the average citizen: Swiss engineers rank with the German, and Swiss Alpine troops are the best mountain troops in the world. To these people, especially those of the Northern cantons, war does not seem so distant as it once did; they are conscious of it every day they walk the streets of their frontier towns, such as Kreutzlingen, and see the roadways prepared for the insertion of iron posts and grill work—to halt German tanks.

The German army maneuvers are of no less importance. Following its political agents as a wartime battalion follows its scouting patrols, the German Bavarian army headquarters has moved twenty kilometers nearer the border, to Donaueschingen, and is now reenforced by an Alpine brigade. As for the air force, its increased efficiency and strength is common knowledge. But not all of that new strength is concentrated on the French and Czechoslovakian borders. A friend of mine was recently cycling through Southern Bavaria, watching a German plane land on a nearby field, when suddenly it disappeared from sight! He wondered—not knowing of the new subterranean hangars on the Swiss border.

What has been the effect of this propaganda, espionage, and mobilization on the Swiss people? In a few cases, it has achieved some success. Certain Swiss citizens have become too frightened to oppose the Nazis openly; others have followed old class lines into the Nazi ideology. A German Jew living in Swiss Kreutzlingen told me not long ago that the proprietor of his favorite restaurant had begun to "disapprove" of his Jewish refugee friends sitting together at dinner, although he did not actually "protest." But for the most part, the Swiss are either loudly anti-Nazi or stolidly and silently isolationist. And the isolationists are dwindling in number. Those who were not at first excited by the Austrian *Anschluss* came to a sudden awakening when they saw Austrian troops come up Lake Constance and land at their doorsteps. Add to the dangers on the North and South that of the East, and it is no wonder that Switzerland is losing faith in "absolute neutrality" and now threatens to quit the League of Nations unless guaranteed support in case her borders are invaded. France will probably extend that support—for to do so is to protect her own only unfortified border.

★

PEERLESS

It was called the Hotel Peerless, but a better mark of identification was its roster of rates, posted in the window on a hand-inscribed placard: Beds, 25 cents, rooms, 35 cents, showers free. Then as an optimistic afterthought, special rates by the week.

Rarely did a guest engage a room for a week, because that meant full payment in advance. It also implied great confidence in the future, and the Peerless dwellers were realists who lived in the present. They knew that a man who can slam down two silver dollars in advance for a week's lodging also has an unpunched meal ticket in his pocket, a folded dollar bill sewed in a frayed coat lining, some jangling coins for spiked beer, a haircut, and, heaven be with us, even a change of linen. Where was this man?

In the past, longshoremen, sailors, and loggers in for a spree, would pay up a week in advance just to be certain of a place to sleep off a drunk. But lately these workers, in addition to lack of money, had more serious things to think about. And exciting, too. Strikes, lockouts, union meetings, speeches by organizers, and picket duty.

In the lobby of the Hotel Peerless were two rows of wooden chairs. Some had one arm rest left and these were occupied first. Between every pair of chairs, there was a space in which bloomed a moldy cuspidor, into which those who chewed tobacco spat regularly and meditatively. Thus, each man had a spittoon to the right or left of him, and conversation would be interrupted by heads turning in opposite directions for a great brown squirt.

In one of these chairs sat a man of about fifty, turning the leaves of an old magazine. He seemed to have been rolled in dirt, poverty, and despair, and these clung to him like flour to a fallen doughnut. He had a dead-gray mustache which drooped down in lines parallel to the furrows on his face, a pock-marked nose, and his eyes stared from behind a film. His hat was on backwards and you could see a piece of the dirt-soaked sweatband protruding from the seam and marking his forehead. His coat, vest, shirt, and trousers seemed all of one color. He had no necktie and the collar band was open at the throat, but curiously enough, like a lone ornament, there was a shining collar-button in the hole.

The man's name was William, and he was thinking. For years now, he had had occasion to use his name only when asking for relief from some charity organization, or when he submitted to voluntary arrest for thirty days of police bed and board.

The man was not a regular guest at the Hotel Peerless, but each morning, after he had had black coffee and a roll at the mission relief window, a fatiguing three-hour breakfast wait, he would come to the hotel, sit down in a chair, and read the magazine which now lay in his hands.

It was an old issue of a scientific monthly devoted to pictures and descriptions of new mechanical marvels and fantastic discoveries to advance the human race. William was thinking about modern science. Sometimes his lips moved with the difficult words, and he tasted the dirty grit in his mustache.

William was thinking. Here was an inventor who had perfected a rocket ship which could safely project a man to the moon. Not only the man, but a case full of instruments to record time and space. That was wonderful.

He turned a page and gazed at another invention. As you are driving at great speed along the highway, and you desire to flick the ash off your cigar, you press a button and the window of your car flies down. Think of it, you no longer have to roll the pane down. William tried to puzzle out the practical advantages of this mechanical step forward, but it was difficult. It had been many years since he had ridden in an automobile. And as he had never owned one the problem of a side window, flying up or gliding down, was purely academic with him. But just the same, the improvement was wonderful.

And here was another brilliant invention. You crossed a light beam and the door flew open by itself. The human hand would never have to touch a doorknob. Push and pull were eliminated from human problems. That, undoubtedly, was very wonderful.

And thinking about all the vast improvements in science and mechanics, flights around the world, rockets to the moon, sawdust into trees, plants into stone, refuse into gold, old age into youth, ugliness into beauty, man into God, William wondered why nobody had invented a process which would prevent him from sitting his life away in that chair, tired, dirty, hungry, and homeless.—ABEN KANDEL.

Readers' Forum

No "Isolationist"

To New Masses: You print an excerpt from a letter, and make it the occasion for pinning a label on me—"isolationist." Tut, tut—editors, gentlemen, friends!—I can't let you get away with that. Labels are the bastards of theories, and theories are the cretins born of lazy minds. I've been fighting both since 1908, when your predecessors, the Socialists of those days, used them as excuses for declining to join with me, and better men, in opposing the traction trust's larcenies.

For more than thirty years I've fought for the Washington-Jefferson principle of "no entangling alliances" because the only invitation to entanglement came from the English imperialists. I'm still fighting that entanglement now that the Communist Party of the United States is its loudest proponent. But I will do anything possible, work for any possible policy, that might put the might of America on the side of the Soviet Union in its coming fight for life. I join the demand that the embargo against the Spanish people's government be lifted. I have publicly proposed a policy which would probably put us at war with Japan and thereby certainly save the Soviet Union. Do these things make me an "isolationist"?

Like Stalin—in that letter much publicized a few months ago, in which moreover he quoted Lenin—I see the whole European and Asiatic capitalist world ganging up on the Soviets because the masters of capitalism know that capitalism must perish unless they crush Socialism in the Soviet Union. And the headquarters of capitalism are in London. The British imperial government is capitalism's No. 1 gunman. Hitler and Mussolini and Japan are merely its paid thugs. Two years ago when the blow was struck at the people of Spain—not by Franco, but by Sanjurjo, who died as he started from the British satrapy called Portugal—Tony Eden "put it over" on Litvinov, persuaded Moscow that if it would refrain from aggressive aid to Spain, the British government would organize "collective action" by the "democracies." And it organized "collective action," all right—"non-intervention," resulting in the crucifixion of Spain. This affords the opportunity for a fraudulent appearance of belligerency between John Bull on the one hand and Mussolini, Hitler, and the Japs on the other, which stage-play has two objects: to fool Moscow and theorists like you, and to grind into all the peoples, especially the British, that fear out of which war hysteria grows. When the proper pitch is reached, the English rulers will have no trouble turning their people's anger away from the fascists and against the terrible Bolshevists.

You think that up to some months ago there was a chance that the British government would stand with the Soviets against the fascists. I say that from the beginning the British government has been the chief instrument of international capitalism's plot against the Soviets. You think that if Eden, who gave Litvinov the poisoned cup, or Lloyd George, "the worst scoundrel in Europe," or the insanely anti-Communist Churchill, should replace Chamberlain, the Soviets would be saved; I, the inheritor of seven hundred years of Irish experience with the English rulers, say you would simply be worse betrayed. Therefore I oppose handing over control of American policy to the English government precisely because that would be the direct road to our association in the great crusade to "save the world from Bolshevism." In proposing to build a "democratic front" on an English cornerstone, you are actually proposing to find safety in the arms of your chief enemy. And in trying to range America on the side of the Soviets *via* an English alliance, you are wasting the time and dissipating the energies of your followers; it is the one policy that is anathema to an overwhelming majority of Americans.

Eighteen months ago, while you were promising your readers a Soviet-French-British-American lineup, I began publicly to predict a British-French-Italian-German lineup against the Soviets. Can you deny that every single occurrence since then has tended to verify my prediction?

New Masses is a wonderful paper. Too bad that for a year you have refused me a hearing in your pages, and then play the childish trick of pinning a label on me. "Isolationist" my eye! When the British-led gang attacks the Soviets, I shall be

American volunteer number one
In Soviet defense with a gun—

Red Hook, N. Y. Shaemas O'Sheel.

The Editors Reply

New Masses had no desire to offend our good friend Shaemas O'Sheel by calling him an isolationist. We thought we were accurately describing his point of view. The letter he refers to was published in the Between Ourselves department of our July 26 issue. In it Mr. O'Sheel, after praising the first two articles of A. B. Magil's series on the New Deal, expressed the hope that the third would not advocate collective security in the realm of foreign policy. It did. We are happy, nevertheless, to learn that so vigorous and intransigeant an opponent of collective security as Mr. O'Sheel is not an isolationist. But in that case what is he?

We share with Mr. O'Sheel his fine Irish hatred of British imperialism, but feel that he has permitted his Anglophobia to get the better of him. As a result, he regards any proposal for joint action of the peoples and governments of the democratic countries to curb the fascist aggressors as a Chamberlain plot—though Chamberlain happens to be pursuing a diametrically opposite policy. Mr. O'Sheel is mistaken if he thinks we have any illusions about the tory government; even a casual reading of New Masses should have made that clear. Nor have we at any time promised our readers a Soviet-French-British-American lineup. To advocate such a lineup on the basis of a policy of cooperative action for peace is quite different from promising it. What we don't understand is why Mr. O'Sheel should object to the people of England throwing overboard the Chamberlain policy, which he rightly excoriates, and adopting, in concert with the peoples of the United States, France, the Soviet Union, and other democracies, a policy which will check fascist aggression, save world peace, and defend the USSR from capitalist attack. Mr. O'Sheel greatly oversimplifies this proposal when he conceives it as a question of Eden or Lloyd George replacing Chamberlain. We have always made clear that we regard the Labor Party and the trade unions and the masses of the English people as a whole as the driving force in any change of British policy. But this does not mean that they should refuse to utilize in the interests of peace the real conflicts that exist within the British ruling class or reject in advance possible allies, no matter how temporary or unstable. Lenin in *Left-Wing Communism* lashed out at the sectarians who advocated any such "purist" attitude. The present "neutrality" policy of the American government, which is presumably a policy of "no entangling alliances" and isolation from world affairs, actually results in collaboration with the Chamberlain government. The infamous embargo on Spain is the fruit of that policy. Mr. O'Sheel, while opposing the embargo, objects to collective security which would end the embargo and make the United States a powerful factor for world peace. Just what he does propose in the present situation is a mystery. Incidentally, he has managed to convert R. Palme Dutt, who is one of the leaders of the British Communist Party, and Stalin into supporters of his thesis and hence opponents of collective security!—The Editors.

Against Partition

To New Masses: Partition is the intensification of the ghetto-izing of Palestine which began in the early twenties. The Zionists have been building their economic and cultural ghettos on the fringe of a densely populated Arabic world. Their nationalism was unwittingly taught to the Arabs, who now like Zionism for themselves. They have come to look upon the Zionist settlements as luxurious cankers on the body of their land. No Mufti or agitator taught them such wisdom. The Zionist higher standard of living taught them. Zionism was doomed when the Jews first began to reconstruct Palestine for themselves. There can be no security for a Jew in Palestine until the Arab has a corresponding economic security. This does mean lowering the standard of living of Jewish workers, but which is better—to be hungry with the Arab cousin for some years so that both may rise together, or to live in a ghetto, behind British bayonets?

The Histadruth neglected to organize Arabs into the same unions with Jews, because it was nationalistically greedy for more immigrants. It further claimed that the Histadruth had to build capitalism first, so that it could be overthrown in favor of Socialism. The central Asiatic republics in the USSR, however, have demonstrated that a feudal economy can be transferred into a Socialist economy—if the workers and farmers so will it. A Zionist who is a nationalist foremost and a Socialist thereafter is no model for any neighbor, except the Nazis who live in Sarona (suburb of Tel-Aviv). There will be no peace in Palestine until Arab and Jewish workers and farmers create a joint economy, and, if need be, a joint nationalism (as in the Crimea with the Tartars). Is it not significant that there have been no Zionist skirmishes against the Tommies, while Arabs constantly battle British imperialism? This fact helps explain the nature of Zionism. The initiative for cooperation and peace must come from the Histadruth. Otherwise the fears Dr. Chaim Weizmann expressed to me in Jerusalem in 1934 will be fulfilled. The Zionists "will be pushed into the Mediterranean."

Escanaba, Mich. Robert Gessner.

Welsh Writers

To New Masses: I notice in Joseph Frank's review of Glyn Jones' *The Blue Bed and Other Stories* [New Masses, June 7] one or two errors which I think are serious enough to merit your attention. It is true that Glyn Jones and other young Welsh writers like Dylan Thomas and myself are associated with a Swansea Group and with the little magazine *Wales,* but you are quite incorrect in linking our work in imagery, etc., to that of Gavin Ewart, who is English. Again, you are wrong in talking about the "primitiveness" of this particular collection. Hasn't Mr. Frank the textbook ideas about the work of other Welsh writers such as Caradoc Evans and Rhys Davies at the back of his head? Glyn Jones was born in a mining valley; surely it is Caradoc Evans, in his early stories, written around the peasants of Cardiganshire, published in 1915, who tackles the "land proletariat" and the sexual-religious aspect.

Keidrych Rhys.

Llangadock,
Carmarthenshire, Wales.

REVIEW AND COMMENT

Democracy in Crisis

NO BOOK concerned with practical politics could be more timely than this *(The Peril of Fascism: The Crisis of American Democracy,* by A. B. Magil and Henry Stevens. International Publishers. $2). The primaries now being held and the elections in the fall will determine the complexion of the next Congress, and it is a commonplace of American politics that these midterm elections forecast the outcome of the next presidential contest. The New Deal has been hard pressed already. The statesmanship of President Roosevelt throughout the last session of Congress enabled him to recover some of the ground lost during its predecessor. The general rejection of the National Recovery Act has been compensated by growing popular confidence in the National Labor Relations Act. But as a result of what has been termed the President's turn to the left, the conservative attacks on the New Deal have become more open, more widespread, and more bitter. When conservative Democrats like Representative O'Connor of New York openly appeal for Republican support, liberals ought no longer close their eyes to the fact that the future of the New Deal is at stake.

The central purpose of Magil's and Stevens' book is to make Americans conscious that these assaults by reactionaries on the New Deal represent the emergence of incipient American fascism. Finance capital in the United States, finding the old forms of popular control inefficient to maintain its profits under new conditions of economic crisis, is in process of experimenting with new types of control suitable to American conditions. The sporadic appearance of vigilante groups, such as the Black Legion and the Silver Shirts, which have been financed by business interests, is evidence that the experiment is going on, although their local character and their disappearance seem to testify that the right formula has not yet been found. But meanwhile big business is becoming more convinced that the New Deal must go. For those who believe in democracy and in the prosperity of the people the times are critical but the cause is not yet lost. There is still the certainty that fascism cannot reduce America to the shambles it has made of half of Europe, if only the democratic forces become united in opposition, and realize that their immediate political task is support of common candidates and a common program.

The great bulk of our population is predisposed to hate and defy fascism. The danger we face is failure to recognize its existence. We know its European forms. We know also the particular hypocrisies it assumed to win public support and pave its way to power. But we may not recognize the novelties of disguise it will assume to fit our peculiar national traditions. For with the exception of a handful of cranks, like the Rev. Gerald Winrod of Kansas, all our budding fascists pretend to be anti-fascist. Mr. Hugh Johnson detests fascism, but he is equally savage against the New Deal and the CIO. Mr. Tom Girdler believes in the American way; but he understands the American way to justify lying before a congressional investigating committee, labeling the shooting of strikers the restoration of law and order, and defying the decisions of labor boards and federal courts. Mr. Henry Ford has just been decorated by Hitler; yet no one is more devoted to the horse and buggy of American tradition than he. Clearly the very gentlemen in this country who are acting in a manner that most closely approximates that of European fascism, in their verbal confessions of faith pretend to be its most bitter opponents. The particular form of American fascism will probably be as anti-fascist in appearance as the platform of the Liberty League. We must learn to test every movement by its immediate and specific acts. And one of the most important tests is its attitude toward that program for the material well-being of the people which is loosely called the New Deal.

The value of *The Peril of Fascism: The Crisis of American Democracy* is that it gives the first comprehensive picture of these trends toward fascism in the United States, that it shows them to be growing in number and desperation, and that it enlightens the reader as to ways of fighting them. Mr. Magil, who is now one of the editors of NEW MASSES, has for more than ten years been active in the labor movement. While he was still on the staff of the *Daily Worker,* he published in its columns many exposures of fascist activities in this country. He wrote *The Truth about Father Coughlin,* a pamphlet which had a circulation of 300,000 within six months of publication. If some of the material in this book has a familiar ring, it is that it has passed into general circulation among liberals after first appearing in the Communist press. But knit together by Marxian analysis, these separate histories of the Hearsts and the Huey Longs, of the Black Legions and the Silver Shirts, take on compelling and dramatic form, as the reader follows the sinister growth of fascist tendency.

The first four chapters of the book, particularly, are in my opinion a model of the Marxian method in the writing of history, and should be studied not simply for their challenging reinterpretation of recent political history in this country, but as an example of dialectic interpretation of historical fact. They are every whit as brilliant as R. Palme Dutt, and leave the reader in a state of excitement over the possibilities of the method when more American historians become qualified to utilize it with a comparable insight.

After a narrative of the proto-fascist tendencies on the part of business during our era of industrial expansion in the latter nineteenth century, the Haymarket trial, the Homestead strike, and so on, the authors turn to a brief survey of the Coolidge and Hoover administrations. They point out that though there was widespread talk of the "new era" of capitalism and the two-car garage, at least 30 percent of the productive capacity of our industrial plants was idle, small enterprises and independent farmers were being thrown into bankruptcy, unemployment had reached four millions, and under the guidance of Secretary of the Treasury Mellon control of the country passed into the hands of the Sixty Families. The crisis of 1929 punctured the popular delusion of a general prosperity and created widespread opposition to the foreclosure of farm mortgages and demands for popular relief. But the Hoover administration was content to set up the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to aid the banks and railroads through government loans, many of which were never repaid. And by contrast, where the average citizen was concerned, it proceeded to deport the foreign-born and to set the precedent of terrorism for the instruction of private business by officially driving the bonus marchers out of Washington with tear gas and bayonets.

Such was the clearly fascist trend which the first Roosevelt administration inherited from the Republican regime. The New Deal continued to aid the wealthy owners of industry, but it was wise enough also to palliate popular discontent by instituting a program of relief and by gestures of sympathy for the principle of labor organization. The NRA was its most notable effort to promote the recovery

The SUB SELLER

CONFIDENTIAL!

At last, fellow Sub Sellers, I've hit on THE IDEA for boosting the circulation and influence of *New Masses!* Let's make it confidential, and hard to get. Let's call it a service, or a letter, and make every reader promise he won't tell even his best friend what it says.

I borrowed the idea from Wall Street, by way of a big handsome redheaded business man who rode and read in the seat ahead of me way up into the Adirondacks last weekend. By the time he left the train he had discarded a neat little pile of bulletin sheets on the floor at my feet. An assortment of Whaley-Eaton, Kiplinger, and other confidential services that tell business men things they want to hear but which they mustn't tell others who don't subscribe.

Aha, I thought—here's opportunity dropped right in my lap. Shamelessly I read on and on—

"Even with the Spanish situation worse," the "standard Washington authority" continued, "the diplomats are still confident of 'no war this summer.'" (What do they mean "worse"? Their subscribers should follow Joseph North's remarkable from-the-front dispatches in *New Masses.* Does that Loyalist victory on the Ebro sound like anything "worse" to you?)

"Railroad crisis . . . is still impending," said the Kiplinger letter." Government advisers are still trying to find a remedy." (How about nationalizing them, as *New Masses* has been suggesting for some time?)

President's Roosevelt's attempt to rehabilitate the "backward South" may precipitate an open split in the Democratic Party "Sooner than was expected," I read. (But hasn't *New Masses* foreseen such a split for many months?)

So this is the "inside stuff" business men pay good money for, when they could get ten times as much real dope in one issue of *New Masses.* This mess of "confidential" services only proves to me what Corliss Lamont once wrote in a letter telling how indispensable was *New Masses* viewpoint to an intelligent understanding of the world today. "As a matter of fact," he wrote, "those who would derive the most benefit from reading it are the 'economic royalists' whose minds, according to President Roosevelt, are about one inch wide."

Now, if you know any business men or would-be b.m., be sure to tell them that for the real lowdown on America and the world the best investment they could possibly make is a year's subscription to *New Masses,* with a free copy of Granville Hicks straight-shooting book *I Like America.*

But be sure to tell them all this is *strictly confidential!*

Charline Crawford

Sub Editor

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of business. Magil and Stevens show that the NRA program contained within it certain fascist elements, since it turned over control to the monopolies and permitted them in many instances to nullify the collective-bargaining section of the National Industrial Recovery Act. With a gravity befitting the accuracy of sound history, the authors point out that the Socialists under Norman Thomas ecstatically swallowed the NRA while the Communists were open in their hostility. But our shortsighted business men began to object to the increased relief expenditures and to the encouragement which they believed the New Deal was giving to labor organization. Whereas at the beginning of the crisis they had demanded a dictator in their own behalf, now the President, despite many vacillations, was proving responsive to other interests as well as their own, the charge of dictatorship with quite a different connotation was raised by Alfred Smith.

Nevertheless, the people reelected Roosevelt, and it is the opinion of the authors of this book that their confidence was not misplaced. For Roosevelt turned more and more away from the capitalists who had failed to appreciate his efforts in their behalf, and began to put into practice the statements of policy in behalf of the masses that had largely, until his second term, remained misleading vote-getting propaganda. In place of the defunct NRA, the National Labor Relations Board was established, under which labor's right to collective bargaining was clearly written into the law and, to the general amazement, began actually to be practiced. When the Supreme Court started to impair the efficacy of this act, Roosevelt retaliated with a demand for reform of the judiciary, and, by his threat as well as his appointments, brought the Court into the frame of mind to approve this bulwark against fascism and safeguard of the rights and prosperity of the masses. But the book proceeds to show that big business has not hesitated to defy the law in many instances: through open violence as in the Republic Steel strike, and through the less overt mechanism of the Mohawk Valley formula which the president of Remington-Rand worked out in order to give vigilante action the cloak of local bourgeois approval. In these critical circumstances, Norman Thomas and his band of Socialists grew hoarse accusing the President of cowardice, while the Communists, who had sensed the importance of the Labor Relations Act, preferred to throw their support to the President and to attack the defiant corporations. Both parties of the left had reversed their attitudes toward the President: the one with its usual cavalier perversity, the other for the dialectic reason that the President himself had changed to a position essentially consonant with the interests of the majority of the people.

After the first four chapters, the authors turn to a more categorical method. Under such titles as "Apostles of Liberty," "Demagogues of Fascism," "Terror Incorporated," and "Professional Patriots," they discuss the rise and fall of groups with different attacks upon liberalism, from the purveyors of misleading publicity to White Guard terrorists. I should have preferred the continuance of the earlier method, according to which facts become living forces whose conflict or relationship is determining the change in the social fabric. But obviously no sound historian could treat of this later material in such a fashion. It is too early yet to determine the historical significance, the actual effective impact, of many of these groups upon American society. It is only possible at present to describe them as sporadic experiments of the fascist-minded; the testing out, so to speak, of the popular enemy by guerrilla attacks in the hope that the weak spot and the right tactic may be pragmatically determined. For, fortunately, fascism full-grown is not yet here, and so its rise cannot be thus graphically charted. In the very flux lies our safety.

The change of method, furthermore, has one conspicuous justification. It has rewarded us with the fairest account of the American Legion I have read. The authors do not blink the facts about the origin of the legion any more than Professor Gellerman does. They admit that it was formed to direct the restlessness and the joblessness of returned soldiers into harmless channels. They grant that the legion has often been further misguided into vigilante activities of positive aid to a representative capitalism. But they are at pains at the same time to point out the growing number of occasions where the rank and file have repudiated the recommendations of their opportunistic leaders and expressed sympathy with progressive movements and a conscious opposition to the curtailment of American liberties. The fact that the legion has not been bodily transformed into the military advance-guard of fascism, as happened in Germany, is, indeed, one of the more hopeful aspects of our present situation.

But the interests subversive of democracy in the United States are growing more dangerous precisely because they are so far at present from controlling the country. Magil and Stevens do not permit us to forget that eternal vigilance, in our traditional phrase, is necessary if our democratic direction is not to be reversed by some sudden outbreak of fascist activity in a country that is as yet so far from an understanding and an acceptance of the democratic front. We have been saved so far by the sheer buoyancy of inherited emotional attitudes in favor of democracy. These must be transformed into an intelligent perception of the machinery required for their perpetuation under present economic circumstances. Magil and Stevens assert that such a perception must recognize three specific types of activity: (1) The wide layers of the middle and the working class, now responsive to reactionary influence, must be won for a program more consonant with their real interests. (2) The labor movement must not continue weakened through disunity such as is at present being promoted by the leaders of the American Federation of Labor, to the huge satis-

faction of the business world. (3) And finally we must realize that, as capitalism is now international, dependent upon world trade and responsive to world movements, its reactionary and fascist tendencies can be successfully counteracted only by a united popular movement which recognizes these facts, seeks to meet them by organizing its efforts on an international scale, and therefore rejects the mirage of isolation. The working class, with the aid of the CIO and the liberals of the present national government, and, as the book would not have us overlook, with the invaluable participation of the Communists, has begun to move in the direction profitable to the masses of our people. Magil and Stevens bid us remain aware of the dangers that lie ahead. The open gathering of democratic forces is being accompanied by what is probably an equally impressive and what is certainly an amalgamation of incipient fascist elements. According to David Saposs, government economist, the chief employer-organizations are already coordinated for a systematic nationwide campaign to put a stop to unionization. The hatreds that have stimulated this activity are symbolized in the open threat, already several times repeated, by a leader of the Silver Shirts, that President Roosevelt ought to be shot. Although reported in the *Daily Worker* some six months ago, and only the other day in testimony before the La Follette committee, this remark has not yet broken into the headlines of the press which prints the news that's fit to print. The respectable newspapers prefer not to warn their readers of the state of mind in Park Avenue clubs and the gangster hirelings of their members. But the evidence stands exposed in Magil's and Stevens' excellent book to warn the masses of democratic America that the future will be theirs only if they never relax vigilant cooperative action to make it theirs.

EDWIN BERRY BURGUM.

No Middle Ground

THE LIBERALS, *by John Hyde Preston. The John Day Co. $2.50.*

MR. PRESTON'S splendid novel is the first real surprise of the year. To be sure, the author had already given an indication of his ability in his historical study, *Revolution 1776,* in his magazine articles, in his editorship of *Direction,* and in his work in the American League for Peace and Democracy. But he never gave us fair warning that he would open the fall season in fiction with a bang.

It is no mere coincidence, I think, that *The Liberals* should appear almost simultaneously with Leane Zugsmith's *The Summer Soldier* [which will be reviewed in an early issue]. Both novels deal with middle-class liberals

whose inherited attitudes are put to a stern test by contemporary events. Some survive the test by developing toward an alliance or even an identification with the working class. Others move to the right, though they may be quite unwilling to give up the illusion concealed in such a mellow term as liberalism. But in neither case does the liberal stand still, and nothing of "detachment" and "impartiality" remains under the impact of situations with which he is confronted in life. The theme has been treated before, but never has it seemed so urgent to explore the contradictory beliefs of the middle-class man of good will, never has it seemed so important to examine the validity of his premises and to clarify the direction in which he must travel to adjust an old creed to new conditions.

The Marston family, both in its individual members and in its character as a group, mirrors the social cleavages of our time. In this respect it bears an interesting resemblance to the middle-class family of Clifford Odets' *Paradise Lost*. As in the play, the father is a pathetic figure. Charles Marston is the part owner of a factory which is the main industrial unit of the small Connecticut town where most of the action takes place. One of the "liberals" of the story, he takes a paternalistic interest in his employees. Social progress for him meant "individual gratuity multiplied as many times as possible over the whole world; it meant the good man acting freely in a good way; but it was impossible for Marston to view progress realistically as a mass force, as the mass demand of men whose needs and human dignity require that they win or lose rather than accept." His is a philosophy of personal benevolence which, in a strike situation, develops consequences opposite to the original intention. He illustrates the brutal irony of history that the evil done by "good men" who fail to think clearly sometimes outweighs that done by outright villains.

Mr. Marston is perhaps the most successfully drawn character in the book. It is a measure of the author's skill that he makes him human and personally likable while at the same time he persuades us that Mr. Marston's old-line liberalism represents an attitude which plays directly into the hands of the reactionaries whom he himself despises. Marston cannot understand why his men strike, why they want to affiliate with the CIO. Is he not willing to raise their wages? Is he not ready to set up a cooperative community which will restore a sense of security and peace to the men? Because he seeks to reduce his relations with his workers to a personal transaction, he is outraged by their "ingratitude." The sitdown strike in his factory seems like an invasion of his own home. He hires guards to keep food from getting to the strikers. And when his daughter, heading a group of women who try to get food to the strikers, is shot by armed guards, he is again faced with the realization that there is something wrong with his philosophy, that under any practical test it is self-defeating.

This is clearly realized by both his sons. Will Marston, Roosevelt-hater and Red-baiter, despises his father because he is a softie. Will would like to see his father copy Girdler. He is stupid and vicious, but knows at least that opposition to the CIO means opposition to every progressive idea; he carries out to the inevitable conclusion of fascism all that is false in Mr. Marston's attitude. Greg, on the other hand, is a Communist. Youthful, enthusiastic, talented, he sides openly with the workers. He engages the reader's sympathy by his confident idealism, and by the courage with which he fights for progress.

The Marston family is seen through the eyes of Philip Whitlock, an old acquaintance of Will's. Philip is a playwright whose talent has temporarily run dry. He is the other leading liberal of the story, an intellectual who has always assumed that the writer should be above the battle. His painful growth toward the realization that there is a direct connection between his artistic sterility and his social aloofness is traced by Mr. Preston with considerable subtlety. Together with Ann Marston, sister of Greg and Will, Philip learns to renounce the vacation ideal of life.

Apart from its insight into the contradictions of liberalism, *The Liberals* is impressive for the literary versatility which it reflects. The treatment of the love affair between Philip and Ann, for example, is just about as *healthy* as anything I have read in recent fiction. What a relief, after the inverted sentimentalism of the hard-boiled writers and the tortured complexes of the psychologists, to read an author who gives the normal man and woman a break. Sex is treated here as a source of comradeship and lyricism and superb fun. These young people, representative of their generation, have gotten away from that extremity of seriousness which is deadly and that flippancy which is sterile. The old gang of bohemians, Freud-faddists, and literary alcoholists is pulled to pieces by the author in his study of the group around Benton Davies and his wife. Just as intelligent is Mr. Preston's treatment of the Obilitch's, a family of immigrant workers, who combine a folk humor with their proletarian militancy.

The freshness and vigor of the style should

Carl Sandelin

Carl Sandelin

ensure a good audience for this novel. If there is a little too much schematism in the arrangement of the Marston group, if there is something shadowy and unfinished in the portrait of Ann, these defects are overcome by the steady pace of the novel, which mounts upon climax after climax to a conclusive indictment of reaction and of those liberals who willy-nilly abet reaction. *The Liberals* is a highly interesting contribution to the social literature of our day. SAMUEL SILLEN.

American Dream

SEEK-NO-FURTHER, *by Constance Robertson. Farrar & Rinehart. $2.50.*

CONCURRENT with the rise of American industrialism was the inception of hundreds of little communities expressing by complete withdrawal their opposition to the new society in formation. The almost simultaneous birth of these manifold little communes, abortive as they all proved to be, was like a murmur of protest against the betrayal of the "American dream." A novel which attempted to weld all these groups into one symbolic whole, explaining in terms of living people, their origin, their relation to nineteenth-century thought, their problems, and their final failure, would be an absorbing piece of historical analysis. The author of *Seek-No-Further* holds out the promise of such a book and then, in a prolonged series of evasions, consistently refuses to face the implications of her material.

In creating her picture of a composite commune, she has narrowed the focus down to those groups which were primarily spiritualistic in inspiration and thus swings her book away from social study towards an exposition of religious eccentricity. In the first chapters, Miss Robertson sketches out a situation of some interest. The Temple Commune's prophet and leader, Father Swann, has sent his son away to Yale; the son returns, having lost his "faith," but with a passionate attachment to the basic principles of the commune. What experience of the "world outside" made Isaiah believe more fervently than ever in the commune's social and economic principles? Could they be upheld bereft of their religious trappings? A host of questions spring to the reader's mind, but the author avoids resolving or even discussing the situation she has invented. Instead, she brings on the scene a purely gratuitous Villain, another spiritualist leader named Prince, a fanatic of such sinister variety that Isaiah is kept too busy for the rest of the book rescuing the commune and the girl he loves from the newcomer's evil machinations to worry much about his faith or the future of the community principles. Why was Father Swann less of a faker than Prince? Because he conformed to outside prejudices in condemning free love or because his followers emphasized work and cooperative living more than mass hysteria? Miss Robertson does not even hint at an answer. Prince arouses the wrath of neighboring people, there are riots, and in the end Isaiah saves his girl and, it is implied, the commune.

The book is good in its delineation of the simple, earnest folk who were the misled majority in such Utopias, and the historical research, as far as it goes, seems to be painstaking and accurate. Most successful are the detailed descriptions of the nineteenth-century mind attempting to digest science along with religion, an effort which stimulated such extravagant absurdities as virgins, hypnotized by the true Chosen Vehicle, giving birth to Perpetual Motion machines. For a reader who is able to supply the sociological background and connotations much of this book provides fascinating if candied information. Such a reader may also learn from the ideology of these hopeless little bands of rebels that salvation is not to be achieved by groups alienated from the mass of society, by isolation, or by a "change of heart." It seems a pity that Miss Robertson was so unambitious as to confine herself to painting a careful but trivial little period piece, and to drain it of all its possible wide significance.

MARJORIE BRACE.

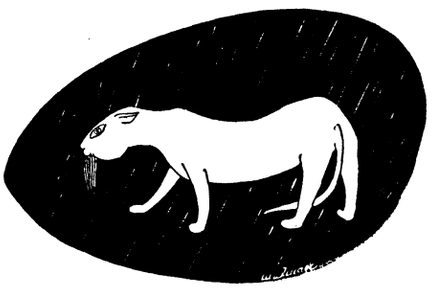
★

BRIEF REVIEW

THE PROBLEMS OF A CHANGING POPULATION, *by the National Resources Committee. Government Printing Office. 75 cents.*

I cannot begin to describe the richness and the encyclopedic sweep of this government document. Suffice it to say that no historiographer, economist, or sociologist will be bold enough to overlook the significant data collected by a diligent committee of experts probing trends of national population.

For those with a Marxian schooling and the patience to scale the pyramids of facts, the report will have added meaning. It will cast light on some of the baffling problems of the future that have their seed in a population which will give rise, because of declining fertility, to a disproportionate increase of 69 percent by 1975 of those past middle life while the numbers between twenty and forty-four will climb only 6 percent. The social consequences of such unbalanced age groups should give Washington nightmares. The industrial consequences of these computations, particularly in a system that increasingly discards older workers to the junk heap after they have reached the climax of productivity, raises problems of social security, occupational retraining, and renewed economic opportunities, the solutions to which must be found now. The report, in sifting our population shifts and their effects on our intellectual and physical vitality, brings forth searching discussions on our medical equipment, our educational shortcomings, our cultural heritage—even down to an interesting section on regionalism in American literature. JOHN STUART.



Malman

Malman

DANCE

FOR the fifth summer the modern dancers assembled in Bennington, Vt. This year's festivities were intended to be especially gala, four of the major dancers and three selected Fellows participating in a rather elaborate program of solo and group compositions, all new.

Gala it was, judging by the large turnout, the tremendous enthusiasm, the indiscriminately buoyant reception given the dancers, and the simulated beer-drinking "old-world" atmospheric pressure concluding each evening's celebration. However, behind, beyond, and beneath all its trappings, Bennington presented a rather tense internal struggle in the dance field. On the old revolutionary battlegrounds, where the Yankees turned back the British in 1776, dance for the people met dance for the esoteric, dance for the masses met dance for the dance—and, as might be expected, dance for dance's sake was a fairly bloodless affair which was happily forgotten in the energetic and vital dance for the people.

Specifically, Doris Humphrey, Hanya Holm, and Charles Weidman, hiding behind such titles as *Passacaglia in C Minor, Dance Sonata,* and *Opus 51* produced at best patterns in varied moods, created emotional images of a rather vague and amorphous character; while Martha Graham in her *American Document* went into the history of our people, read from our Declaration of Independence, danced to the Emancipation Proclamation, reminded her audience of Sacco and Vanzetti, the Scottsboro boys, the sharecroppers, the hunger of her people, and called upon man to exercise his rights, through his strength, for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—to preserve, to deepen and develop his heritage, his hard-won democracy.

Can there be any question of the relative strength, power, meaning, importance of these compositions? On the one hand, unquestionably well-wrought choreographic developments, refined and restrained to the point of dullness; on the other, a no less finely finished and exciting study in movement but with all the added vigor and intensity of a profoundly moving statement on what is so vitally the concern of the great masses of American people, its revolutionary tradition, its tradition of struggle for freedom, liberty, the right to live.

In order of their appearance: Doris Humphrey's *Passacaglia in C Minor,* danced by Doris Humphrey, Charles Weidman, and group, was built rather closely on the pattern of the music of Bach (musicians were horrified), and, while it did not attempt to translate the music into body movement, except in a general way, the dance choreography was largely influenced by the music, deriving a great deal of its pleasant lyric strength and militant buoyancy from the musical score. If Doris

Humphrey wished to convey any more specific idea, it was not evident, could not have been evident in the completely abstract patterns of her work.

Much of the same criticism falls to *Dance Sonata,* done by Hanya Holm and her group to Harrison Kerr's difficult but interesting music. *Maestoso, Grazioso, Andante Moderato,* and *Allegro Vivace,* the four sections of the dance offer very little by way of idea intelligence to a people's audience. And an audience of closeted devotees is an indulgence at best which is hardly to be considered by any artist of merit in times like these anyway.

Dance of Work and Play, music by Norman Lloyd, the other of Hanya Holm's two compositions presented, while more concerned with the actualities of the contemporary scene, still falls into the vague and general patterns which might mean almost anything. It seems a bit of a shame that Hanya Holm, who has the technique and knowledge which make for mass dancing for the masses of people should have slipped into this blind alley of a retreat from the actualities of life. While there is evidence of much concern with good and evil, with "The Empty Handed" and "The Driven" in her *Dance of Work and Play,* the direction of her concern developing out of a most general concept can be only most general and equivocal. And this is no time for equivocation. The artist, because of his responsibilities to the people, to be accepted by the people, must be forthright in his statement.

Charles Weidman in his *Opus 51,* music by Vivian Fine, falls into precisely the same error. *Opus 51* is the typical Weidman mimicking buffoonery. This time it is a loosely knit satire on the bourgeoisie in general and nothing in particular. The dance is a general thumbing of the nose—at the audience. Now this might have been well enough in 1924 for the provincial "culture-loving" salon audiences, but 1938 should find a profounder, more important satire. Charles Weidman is generally recognized as the satirist par excellence of the modern dance. He has a reputation to live up to—and he can do it—but *Opus 51* pokes a satiric finger at much that is fairly well dead. It is the sort of satire that has very little life in a very much alive society. An audience expects much more from a completely capable and authentic dancer.

Martha Graham's *American Document,* music by Ray Green, is a document indeed, a dance document that must produce wide repercussions in the dance world. Not only new and striking in content, it breaks through established forms in the modern dance and opens the doors to new fields in the art that will not soon be exhausted. Episodic in character, it opens with the Declaration of Independence, moves into an Indian lament for the land, goes forward to the great emancipation of the Negro people, includes a lyric Puritan passage, suggests episodes not included—Sacco and Vanzetti, Scottsboro, among others—skips to an indication of the awakening of the men and the women of these current days, and ends on a declaration of faith in mankind.

Hurried because of the shortness of time allotted to the creation and production of the composition, the work is nevertheless a tremendously vital commentary on the role of the American people in the light of their revolutionary traditions. At present there is somewhat of a lack of balance; the role of the working people in America's struggle for democracy is a bit neglected in the broader ideological structure of the work. This would be corrected with the inclusion, as is undoubtedly intended, of John Brown, Andrew Jackson perhaps, certainly Haymarket, Sacco and Vanzetti, the Scottsboro boys, sharecroppers, Chicago massacre episodes. Nonetheless, *American Document* blares forth as a trumpet call and a challenge not only to the dance world but to the American people to rise to the knowledge, the preservation, and the broadening and deepening of their traditions of liberty and democracy.

As to the form of the composition, there is a new directness in the work of Graham that might well be imitated not only by the older dancers, stemming from the bourgeoisie, but also and particularly by the younger dancers who are earnestly seeking broad audiences among the trade unions and other mass organizations. Titles and program notes are not enough for Graham; she seeks an immediate rapport with her audiences by introducing for the first time in contemporary dance an actor (Houseley Stevens, Jr.), a speaker, who simply and directly defines the characters in the dance composition, announces the intention of the composition, its sections as well as the whole, and furnishes words where words will add to an understanding of the movement. And the Graham composition, always pitched to a great intensity of emotion, always artistically beautiful and exciting, gains this most essential quality of immediacy of intelligibility that our contemporary dancers have been wanting. That final fusing of words and movement cannot yet be expected, but Graham has gone a long way in the correct direction. *American Document* is a dance that broad masses of people will understand, and understand profoundly, a dance that merits and should be given the widest of possible audiences.

The composition was brilliantly performed. Outstanding among the dancers, in addition to Martha Graham, were Erick Hawkins, Anita Alvarez, Thelma Babitz, May O'Donnell, and Sophie Maslow. The costumes by Edythe Gilfond were especially fresh and apt.

The three Fellows, young choreographers, were a little disappointing. Eleanor King did an *Ode to Freedom,* to an ode taken from the literature of the American Revolution, but her choreography completely missed the revolutionary ardor of the song and fell into abstract patterns of very little courage. Louise Kloepper, who is a dancer of exceeding sensitivity in movement, appeared only once to advantage, in her *Statement of Dissent,* to Gregory Tucker's music; but her dissent had an indefinite direction and all of the young dancer's fine quality was hidden in an inability to make full contact with her audience.

Marian Van Tuyl has a good sense of composition, but here, too, an unwillingness to allow her audience a more specific understanding of her thematic materials hampered her work and destroyed its full intention.

All in all, the Bennington Festival was hardly a happy affair, and except that Martha Graham's *American Document* far overshadowed the rest of the turnout, Bennington might well have been considered a very sad retreat for the modern dance. It is to be hoped, however, that the retreat, a very definite retreat on the part of the majority of the dancers, was only a temporary one; that the *American Document* will prove a keynote for the modern dance, ideologically as well as structurally. The dance must move to the people. Otherwise, it must be buried.

OWEN BURKE.

MOVIES

WELL, citizens, I read in the papers that the movie reviewers had given *Marie Antoinette* a "royal welcome." I hitched up dobbin to my critical tumbril and made off to the Astor, stopping on the way to pick up Madame Lafarge, who is pretty good around people when they lose their heads.

As we entered the sumptuous movie-parlor where the picture is being unwound at $2.20 a wallop, the madame bristled her mustaches and remarked that guillotine crowds are getting higher class every year. "Nothing like the mob that turned out the day Sidney Carton was bumped off," she opined, fixing her stare on the quality who have taken the sport to their hearts.

MGM's posthumous obsequies to the frivolous lady from Austria are in the best manner of *noblesse oblige*. The characterization of Marie by Miss Norma Shearer has not been matched for sheer tearmaking since Molly Picon was last seen in *Yiddle and his Fiddle*. Although the lady is best known to history for her gay advice to the masses, "Let 'em eat cake," the nobility at MGM has prudently dropped the line from the movie. It may be just as well, because the only cakes in sight are the ones Miss Shearer wears on her head. No hairdresser could be responsible for the confectionery whorls the star totes through her tears. The tears come with such volume during the dungeon scenes that it seemed drowning would take her before the guillotine.

At any rate there are 152 speaking parts and the program note records without any attempt at satire that "this production involved more people directly and indirectly than participated in the Paris riots which led to the French Revolution and a new era in world history." The new era mentioned was all a mistake, according to the film. If the achievement of liberty, equality, and fraternity in Europe cost poor Marie all of these tears and finally her head, it wasn't worth it, says the picture.

The Hollywood business of playing toady in the courts of dead royalty reaches its climax in the picture. It is the most deeply reactionary and, at the same time, fatuous tribute ever spoken in the hushed and reverential tones of Hollywood. The revolutionary crowds are seen through the eyes of the Queen herself: Robespierre and Danton are shown as tools of the Duke d'Orleans, who, the picture implies, cooked up the Revolution because the Queen wouldn't go beddy byes with him. I was ready any minute for the duke to burst into Marie's cell and exclaim, "Kiss me, my Queen, and I'll call off the Revolution."

This is not the half of it. In addition to the medieval darkness of its philosophy, *Marie Antoinette* is a bleak, shuddering, cataclysmic bore. It causes audience silences in which you could hear a head drop; in fact, many a head does fall upon many a bosom and blissful, plebian snores respond to the royal salute. The only audience reaction during the picture came from Madame Lafarge, who looked up from her flying needles during one of the suspenseful scenes, to remark, "Look, she's changed her dress." There was another impressionable gentleman behind us who once said, "Cheez" during one of the ballroom scenes. At the end of the picture there was not a handclap; in fact, some scattered hissing was heard. The New York newspaper critics whose adjectives adorn the ads must have certainly been represented by proxies—possibly some of the adolescent autograph hounds outside the Astor turned out their copy.

MADAME LAFARGE: Young man, you've given the impression that *Marie Antoinette* is pretty lousy.

YOUNG MAN: That is my point, citizeness. I am quite sure the American public will smell this for the phony it is. However, to the small minority of folk who may swallow this historical lie, I can't make the point too strong. Do you think many will be misled? I mean the handful of trusting ones—what about them?

MADAME LAFARGE: Let 'em eat fake.

MORE EVIDENCE that a series of family pictures is succeeding the whimsy cycle as Hollywood's newest preoccupation comes with two new films, *Rich Man, Poor Girl,* by MGM, and *Four Daughters,* which Jack Warner of the producing brothers feels is the best picture he has ever sponsored.

The argumentative burden of *Rich Man, Poor Girl* is that great wealth should not be spurned and that radicals are full of fine talk but don't try to put their dreams in practice. Lew Ayres is the dreamer with the disordered hair, ill-fitting suit, and floral neckties who complains so eloquently of the plight of the "great middle class" that millionaire Robert Young is moved to give all his money toward establishing non-profit medical clinics for the

neglected petty bourgeoisie. At this point the family of Young's fiancée—the tribe which has been squeamish about accepting his money—realizes that the dough's the thing, after all. The Ayres caricature is a little more suave than the hirsute Reds of a Nelson Harding cartoon, the favorite conception of rebels in the films up to now, but the characterization is a travesty for all of that. But, step by step, the movies advance toward literacy, and I suppose we should be thankful for each new gain.

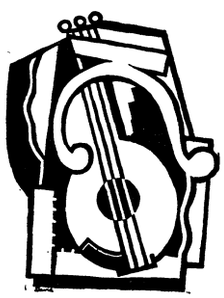
Although its time is the present, *Four Daughters* has the aura of a mezzotint, a nosegay, a parlor concert on a Sunday afternoon in the nineties. The four sweet Lemp girls; Priscilla Lane, violin; Rosemary Lane, piano; Gale Page, harp; and Lola Lane, voice, led in fireside recitals by father Claude Rains, might have been just too sticky if it were not for the witty lines of Julius Epstein and Lenore Coffee, and the presence of John (formerly Jules) Garfield in his first picture since he left the Group Theatre.

Garfield plays Mickey Borden, an arranger from the city who comes into the Lemp idyll with the defensive *hauteur* of the subway, smoky taverns, lonely rooms—a wry, inward stranger who is convinced the fates have his number, who asks nothing of life because he never had anything. Garfield in the most notable debut of the year captures the imagination of the audience completely as this dark orphan of the metropolis. It might not have been such a debut if it were not for the penetrating and sympathetic characterization provided by the authors, Mr. Epstein and Miss Coffee.

Priscilla Lane, who admirably holds up her end in the scenes with Garfield, has the feminine lead. The other Lemps and Aunt May Robson, as well as a new juvenile, Geoffrey Lynn, are more than satisfactory. *Four Daughters* is essentially frail stuff but the atmospheric grace, the puckishness of the dialogue, and the important presence of John Garfield make it the picture you should see this week.

By the by, the fatuous producer-practice of changing actors' names is reevaled in all its absurdity in the magical transition from Jules to John Garfield. Every single review I read stressed the fact that his name used to be Jules; with that name he made his theatrical reputation. The comic high point of this genteel practice was reached when Stella Adler became Ardler. Now will some expert on public relations kindly point out to me what is the cosmic difference between John and Jules?

JACQUES DU GAN.
(formerly JAMES DUGAN.)



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