

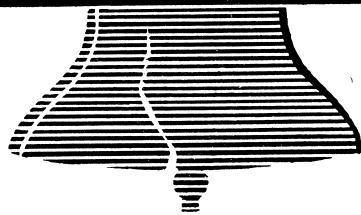
FEBRUARY 14, 1939

15 CENTS

NEW MASS



LINCOLN BRIGADE NUMBER



ERNEST HEMINGWAY

On the American Dead in Spain

The Lincoln Brigade in Pictures

With Comment by Joseph North

FRANZ BOAS

Democracy and Intellectual Freedom



BETWEEN OURSELVES

LAST week we announced the new format. This week you have it. We are eager for your reactions, comments, suggestions.

The physical change, as we announced, will be accompanied by editorial expansion—new contributors, broader subject matter. Here are some of the things we plan for coming weeks.

Martin Anderson Nexö, the Danish author of *Pelle the Conqueror*, contributes an article on Germany, using Dachau, the former Munich picnic ground which is now a concentration camp, as the symbol of Hitler's six years.

Sir Stafford Cripps, on his recent expulsion from the British Labor Party.

Louis Aragon, W. H. Auden, and J. B. S. Haldane will write on their parts in the world struggle for democracy.

Short stories by Erskine Caldwell, Millen Brand, Albert Maltz, and others.

Two articles by C. Day Lewis, one on William Butler Yeats, and another on W. H. Auden's *Oxford Anthology of Light Verse*.

A review of Kenneth Fearing's *Poems*, by Kenneth Burke.

Albert Maltz on Ruth McKenney's *Industrial Valley*.

"Look Out for the Locomotive," by S. J. Perelman.

V. J. Jerome, on a program for the Jews.

Joseph Starobin, in a series of three articles, on "The Federal Arts: Why We Must Save Them."

Tom Davin, the well known Catholic layman whose open letter on the embargo we recently published, will write a series on "The Catholic in Democracy."

Robert Terrall on "What You Read in the Papers."

Two articles by Granville Hicks: an appraisal of the late Robert Hallowell, who painted the famous portrait of John Reed that now hangs in Harvard's Adams House; and an address to Catholics.

A series of three articles on the National Health Program and the American Medical Association, by Richard H. Rovere.

Allen Davids will write a series on American criminology, taking off with an estimate of the work of J. Edgar Hoover and Warden Lewis Lawes of Sing Sing.

This week Joseph North returns to NEW MASSES. An editor when the magazine first became a weekly, North has spent the last two years as NEW MASSES and *Daily Worker* correspondent in Spain and recently returned to New York from a swing around the country, speaking under the auspices of the Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade.

Ruth McKenney's new book, *Industrial Valley*, is the Book Union selection for February.

This Thursday night, February 9, 8:30 p.m., war correspondent Joseph North will mark Lincoln's Birthday speaking at the third Keynote Forum on *Today in Spain*, the situation after Barcelona. On the following Thursday Simon W. Gerson, *cause célèbre*, will say his say on *New York City Politics: 1939*. This will be Mr. Gerson's first public address since his appointment last year as confidential examiner in the office of the Manhattan borough president.

Last week we announced a special membership plan for NEW MASSES' Keynote Club, by which members will have the following special privileges: (1) mailed announcements of club events; (2) priority in getting limited tickets; (3) invitations to special events not open to the public; (4) a dollar's worth of credit on any service of the club. Membership cards at \$1 are now being mailed; since membership is limited, applications should be made now.

Anna Sokolow is working in rehearsal for her second annual NEW MASSES dance concert at the Alvin Theater February 26. With her group she will present as one outstanding number her own composition, *Façade-Esposizione Italiana*, which has not yet been seen by a New York audience. *Façade* has a musical score by Alex North, who will perform it at the piano in accompaniment of Miss Sokolow's dance

unit. The dance is a satire on Italian fascist culture, in four parts. The first, *Belle Arti*, reveals the faded remnants of Greek and Florentine art; *Giovanezza*, the second, is a "hollow cartoon of athletic enthusiasm"; the next, *Prix Femina*, is a comment on the Italian equivalent of the degraded Nazi philosophy of *Kirche, Kuche, Kinder*; and the last part, *Phantasmagoria*, probes the disordered mind of fascism's victims. Miss Sokolow performs the main role of "The Citizen" in this arresting irony. Two weeks remain of ticket sales before the concert: seats may be reserved by calling Tiba Garlin, CAledonia 5-3076.

One of the first groups to respond to the NEW MASSES appeal for funds is the Committee for Democratic Action, which will hold a party and dance Saturday evening, March 4, at the Adelphic Studios, N. Y. C. Scheduled to appear are Harold J. Rome, Eleanor Lynn, Manuel Compinsky, and others. Proceeds will go to NEW MASSES and the Rehabilitation Fund of the Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade.

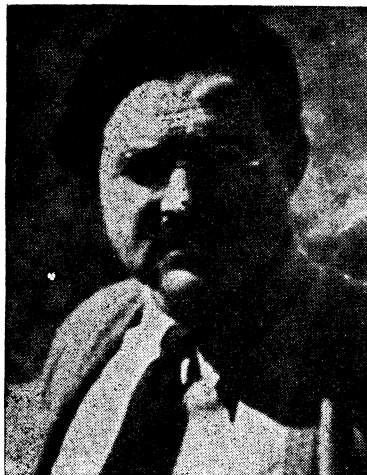
Who's Who

FRANZ BOAS is professor of anthropology at Columbia University. . . . The pictures on pages 4-11 of this issue were made during action by soldier-photographers of the 15th International Brigade, as follows:

Alfred Rippis and Sol Lerner (the latter now a prisoner of the fascists) at Jarama and Brunete; Anthony Drossel and Sol Lerner, at Quinto and Belchite; Sergeant Harry Randall, Anthony Drossel, and Benjamin Katine, at Fuentes de Ebro, Teruel, Seguro de los Baños, and during the Aragon retreat; Harry Randall and Benjamin Katine, during the Ebro offensive; William Oderaka, the dark-room operator, from Quinto through the Ebro offensive. . . . Paul G. McManus is a writer on politics and economics who has frequently contributed to NEW MASSES. . . . Garret Conarty has for the past two weeks been assisting Ruth McKenney in covering the theater while she is recuperating from an illness.

Flashbacks

THE American Federation of Labor's Executive Committee basking in Miami issues a threat to progressive locals of the Teachers Union in New York, thus calling attention to a bit of AFL history. Just fifty years ago, on Feb. 12, 1889, the Socialist-controlled Central Labor Federation of New York received a charter from the AFL. . . . Knowing no actual day on which he could claim to be born, slave-reared Frederick Douglass chose Feb. 12, 1817, as his birthday. . . . Five years earlier on that day Abraham Lincoln had been born.



"Here is the piece" Hemingway wrote us from his home in Key West where he is at work between wars. "I've worked on it for five days . . . this came down from three thousand words."

We believe it is one of the finest tributes yet paid to the boys who won't be coming back. If anybody knew those boys, it was Hemingway, whose room in the Florida Hotel in Madrid, was a hangout for many of these lads when they were on leave. His glowing faith in the ultimate victory of the Spanish people—and of all folk battling for liberty—is a bugle-call for action. No pasaran!

This Week

NEW MASSES, VOL. XXX, NO. 8

February 14, 1939

On the American Dead in Spain, by Ernest Hemingway . . .	3
The Lincoln Battalion in Pictures, with story by Joseph North	4
The Political Commissar in Spain—I by R. Luc	12
What's Happening on the Embargo by Paul G. McManus	14
Jericho A Poem by Alexander F. Bergman	15
Banta Grins by Will Rivers	16
Intellectual Freedom by Franz Boas	17
Editorial Comment	19
Readers' Forum	22

REVIEW AND COMMENT

Old Abe Lincoln in 1939 by Samuel Sillen	23
"Sirocco" by Granville Hicks	25
"Air Raid," by Richard H. Rovere	27
Books and Authors	27

SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

Housing Goes to Town by James Dugan	28
"Jeremiah" by Garret Conarty	30
King Hal by Ruth McKenney	31

Cover design by I. N. Steinberg. Art work by William Gropper, Mischa Richter, S. F. Ramsey, Ad Reinhardt, Scheel.

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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Dunham

On the American Dead in Spain

THE DEAD sleep cold in Spain tonight. Snow blows through the olive groves, sifting against the tree roots. Snow drifts over the mounds with the small headboards. (When there was time for headboards.) The olive trees are thin in the cold wind because their lower branches were once cut to cover tanks, and the dead sleep cold in the small hills above the Jarama River. It was cold that February when they died there and since then the dead have not noticed the changes of the seasons.

It is two years now since the Lincoln Battalion held for four and a half months along the heights of the Jarama, and the first American dead have been a part of the earth of Spain for a long time now.

The dead sleep cold in Spain tonight and they will sleep cold all this winter as the earth sleeps with them. But in the spring the rain will come to make the earth kind again. The wind will blow soft over the hills from the south. The black trees will come to life with small green leaves, and there will be blossoms on the apple trees along the Jarama River. This spring the dead will feel the earth beginning to live again.

For our dead are a part of the earth of Spain now and the earth of Spain can never die. Each winter it will seem to die and each spring it will come alive again. Our dead will live with it forever.

Just as the earth can never die, neither will those who have ever been free return to slavery. The peasants

who work the earth where our dead lie know what these dead died for. There was time during the war for them to learn these things, and there is forever for them to remember them in.

Our dead live in the hearts and the minds of the Spanish peasants, of the Spanish workers, of all the good simple honest people who believed in and fought for the Spanish republic. And as long as all our dead live in the Spanish earth, and they will live as long as the earth lives, no system of tyranny ever will prevail in Spain.

The fascists may spread over the land, blasting their way with weight of metal brought from other countries. They may advance aided by traitors and by cowards. They may destroy cities and villages and try to hold the people in slavery. But you cannot hold any people in slavery.

The Spanish people will rise again as they have always risen before against tyranny.

The dead do not need to rise. They are a part of the earth now and the earth can never be conquered. For the earth endureth forever. It will outlive all systems of tyranny.

Those who have entered it honorably, and no men ever entered earth more honorably than those who died in Spain, already have achieved immortality.

ERNEST HEMINGWAY.

The Lincoln Battalion in Pictures

The 3,800 who sailed to Spain. "Five cracks at a target and into battle." Jarama . . . Brunete . . . Belchite . . . Teruel. The Crossing of the Ebro. Home, to carry on the struggle. No Pasaran! Joseph North tells their story.

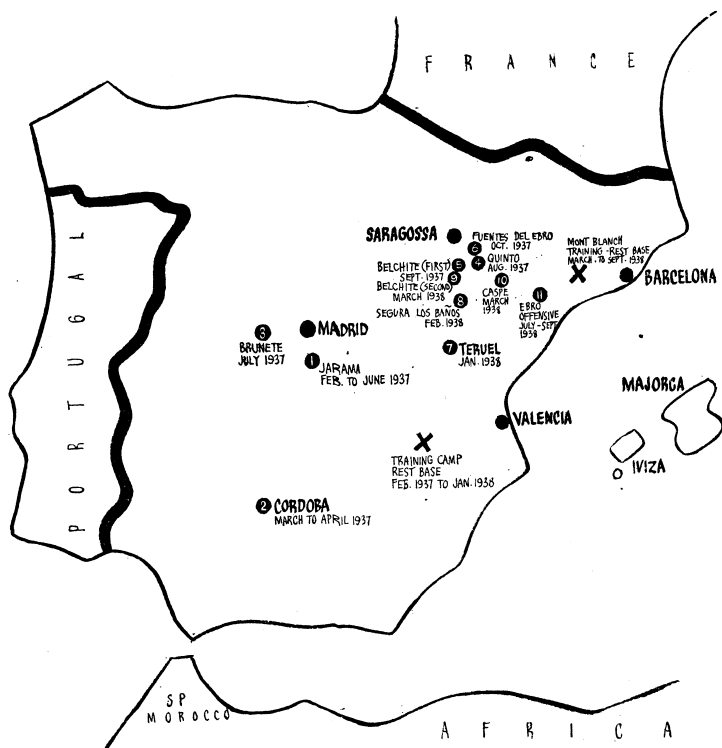
YOU may wonder where they got the idea, those 3,800 American boys who shipped to Spain, trudged over the Pyrenees to the front lines, but you will never get the answer in the newspapers. The idea is here in America, all around us, but you'll never see headlines about it. Lots of things are happening with the people that never get headlines—the millions who make history obscurely, living and dying anonymously and building a better world.

Look through these pictures of the Americans in Spain—the best we could lay hands on—and you'll see the name of one of the rowboats in which they crossed the Ebro River . . . the *Ideal*. Some Catalan fisherman along the Ebro coast contributed it for the crossing, came down the coast road through Barcelona and Tarragona on the truck with it, to help row it across.

If the camera eye was quick as bullets, many of these pictures would be criss-crossed. But the truth of war is hard to catch, either in pictures or in books or in the spoken word. Sometimes it takes years, sometimes centuries, to catch a truth and put it down so people can understand it. That's how it was with Lafayette coming to America and Lord Byron dying in Greece.

The twentieth century moves so fast we want this great truth of Spain to burn its way across the continent. But we don't want to wait centuries. The story of the Americans in Spain will help.

Bells chimed from Trinity Church down on Wall Street that Christmas of 1936 as the first American volunteers went up the gangplank a few blocks away for Spain. They left secretly, no horns no cheers or confetti to men who went to die anonymously across the ocean in a foreign land. They may or may not have read Tom Paine, who said, "Where liberty is not, that is my home." They didn't have to read it. That is the idea of America. They had the right idea.



FIGHTING ITINERARY. Engagements in which American volunteers took part, numbered chronologically.



ON THE MARCH. The Lincoln Washington Battalion marches to the front to face the fascist troops in Spain.



THE TOM MOONEY COMPANY. One aptly named unit of the Lincoln Battalion takes its position on the front before Jarama.



ON THE JARAMA FRONT. A typical fighting scene where the American volunteers held the line from February to May, 1937.



ON THE MARCH. *The Lincoln Washington Battalion marches to the front to face the fascist troops in Spain.*



THE TOM MOONEY COMPANY. *One aptly named unit of the Lincoln Battalion takes its position on the front before Jarama.*



ON THE JARAMA FRONT. *A typical fighting scene where the American volunteers held the line from February to May, 1937.*



FOR DISTINGUISHED ACTION. Sol Zagac receives an award from Commander Copic for bravery before Quinto and Belchite.



AMERICAN ARTILLERY. An American artillery unit in action during the Aragon offensive near Quinto and Belchite.



THE FRONT. This is what the front line looks like during an air bombardment. The brigade front line at Fuentes de Ebro.



WITH A RAIL FOR A PILLOW. Resting Brigadiers catching a nap after a long railroad journey up to the front in November, 1937.



BACK TO REST. International Brigadiers railroading back from the Fuentes de Ebro for a five-week rest from fighting.

“Made in Wilmington”

THE Moors looked at the spires of Madrid as they prayed to Allah; Hitler’s cannon thundered and Mussolini’s airplanes dropped bombs “Made in Wilmington, Del.” When the first boys arrived for Jarama. No time to train; American boys, who never handled a gun before took five cracks at a target on the hillside and went into battle, Bob Merriman once told me. They helped save the road; Madrid is still republican. Bob Merriman is gone but his idea is stronger than ever in America.

Then came Brunete, Quinto, and Belchite, and high Aragon became part of American history. It is, but most Americans won’t know that for some time. History books will tell it, but they don’t say it now. The day will come when our children will know Quinto as well as Bunker Hill, Fuentes de Ebro as well as Concord.

The Americans stormed Belchite—the first brigade to enter. “Napoleon couldn’t take it, and we did,” they exulted that August morning of 1937. I was there and I saw them and the Spanish loyalists help Spanish nuns and rebel wounded to safety after Falangist officers had deserted the field. I heard Spanish nuns say, “Muy bueno,” as loyalist doctors tended the fascist wounded.



THE "NORTH POLE" CAMPAIGN. *The Lincoln-Washington Battalion marching through the snows to the front north of Teruel. This winter campaign about Altas Celadas was one of the most punishing of the war.*



OFFICERS: *l. to r. front row: Dave Doran, Capt. David Kamy, Lt. Col. Vladimir Copic, Fred Keller, Capt. Malcolm Dunbar, Capt. Phillip Detro.*



TWO HEROES. *Major Robert Merriman of the U. S. A., and Professor J. B. S. Haldane of Great Britain.*



NORTH OF TERUEL. *A light machine-gun emplacement.*



WIND AND SNOW. *The Lincoln-Washington Battalion lines during the "North Pole" fighting near Teruel in January, 1938.*

War in Sneakers

TERUEL was "North Pole." Men froze to death there, fighting in tennis-shoes for there weren't enough hobnailed shoes to go around. Then Seguros de Baño—that "perfect military action," as Commander Vladimir Copic, the Yugoslav exile called it. But all the time fleets carrying the swastika and the fasces hauled cannon and "ammo" and tanks to Franco. Then came the big break-through to the coast in March and April of 1937. Military experts said the war was over—but the Spanish people didn't say that. I was there and saw the Americans and I never got over the feeling that I was looking at Valley Forge. There I met young Jim Lardner, Ring's boy. He came down as a correspondent and stayed on as a soldier and now he will never be coming back. And here young Bob Merriman, bespectacled college professor, got it; and Dave Doran, twenty-seven years old, who never packed a gun before Spain and who organized the stand at Caspe which made military history. Lister's men came up, and dug in, and the war went on.



RIDDLED AMBULANCE. *An International Brigade American ambulance punctured by fascist bullets which respect no cross.*



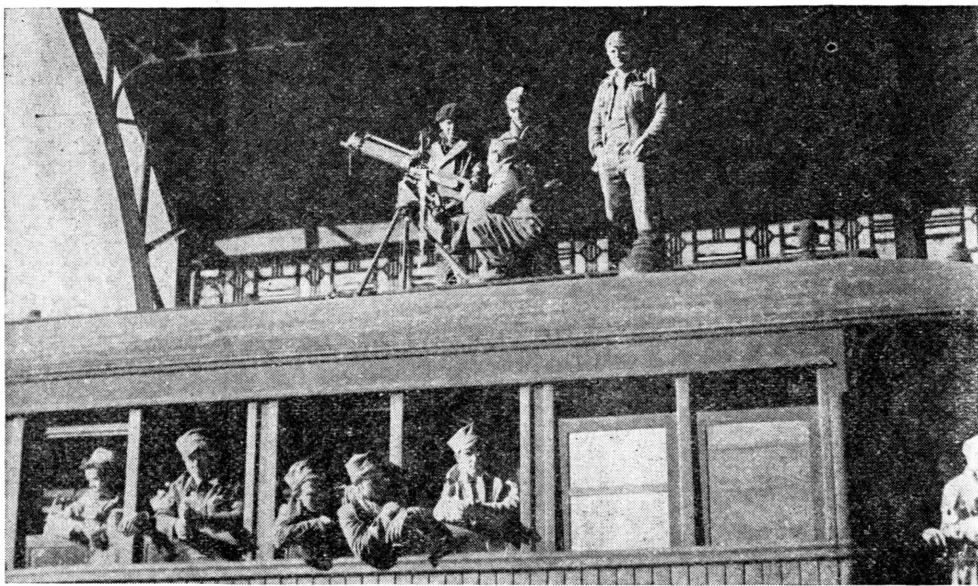
BOMB VICTIM. *The Lincoln Brigaders give first aid assistance to a fascist bomb victim at Segure de los Baños.*



LOUD WORDS FOR PEACE. *A propaganda sound truck, used for telling the soldiers of the enemy about the People's Front.*



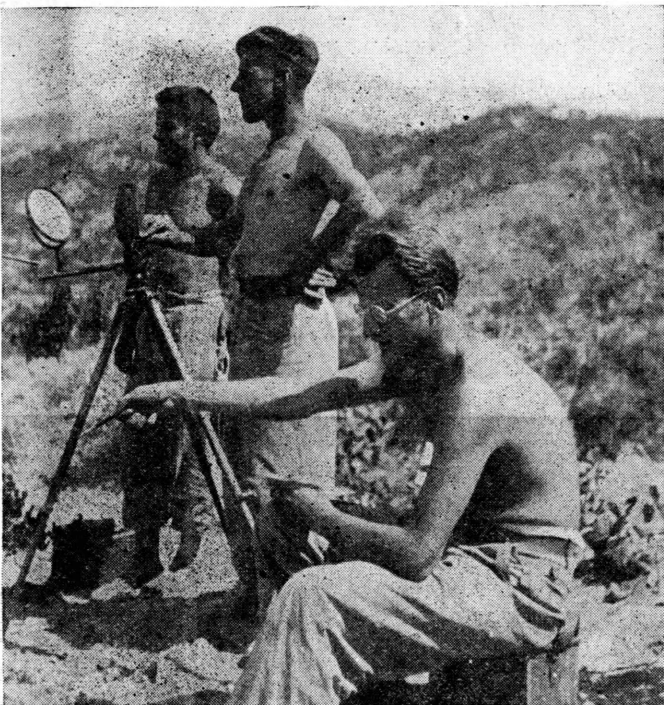
THIS IS WAR. *A dying Spanish soldier of the People's Army.*



OFF TO ARAGON. *The Lincoln Battalion traveling from Ambite to the Aragon front, with a machine gun to ward off bombers.*



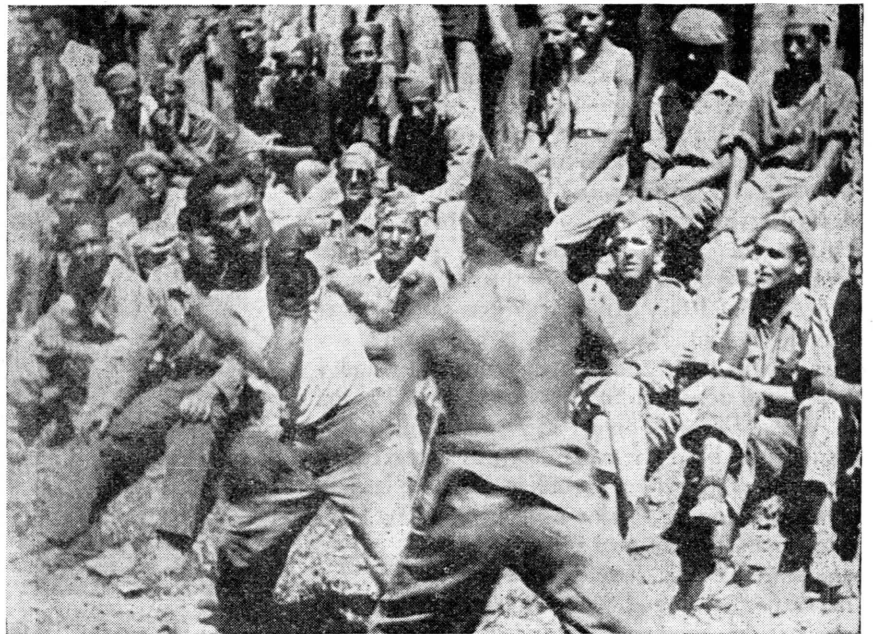
SWIMMIN' HOLE. *Where the Americans snatched a swim between battles during July, 1938.*



HELIOGRAPH SQUAD. *In the Ebro offensive of August, 1938, the sun was used to send signals. Russell Stephens in the foreground.*

Books After Battle

THREE months of "rest"—within earshot of the Ebro, training in ditches, going through the routine of crossing the river. The Americans were steel now; boys hardened into veterans. They trained with guns and in their spare time read the books. Valledor, the Asturian veteran who escaped from Franco's prisons, now commanded the Fifteenth Brigade. Then that morning of July 25 came.



THE MANLY ART. *A boxing match during a rest day. July 18, 1938, which celebrated the second anniversary of the war.*



NEGRO MACHINE GUNNERS. *A Negro machine-gun unit of the battalion including Vaughan Love, Joe Taylor, and Pat Roosevelt.*



HELPING FARMERS. *Members of the brigade lend a hand during the summer cultivation of the vines, while behind the lines.*

Hill 666

IT was my good fortune to be there when they went over and the photos on these pages have snatched at moments of this great action. The scramble down the river-edge with the rowboats, the cool, audacious crossing, that first rush up the hillside about Asco, the startled enemy machine-guns stuttering, the enemy flight. Then the footbridge across the swift stream, then the pontoons. Then the Messerschmidts and Capronis bombing, bombing, bombing; the stuff coming over at night-fall. The advance on to Gandesa, the fighting in the Sierra Pandols, Hill 666—those “eight hours of unadulterated hell.” The rocks of the Sierras, you can’t dig in. Rocks fly as well as shrapnel . . . And the shell that landed in sailor Joe Bianco’s machine-gun nest, and Joe—“the best soldier in the brigade”—saying before the lights went out, “So long, boys, I’ll see you in Sunday school.”



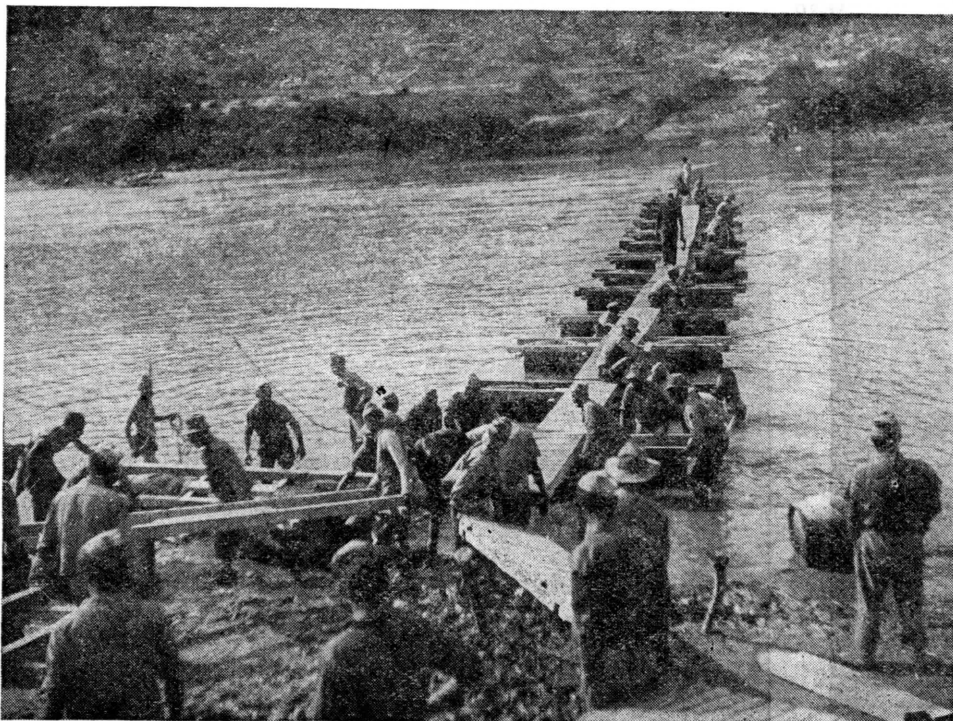
TO THE EBRO. Members of the Lincoln Battalion running under fire to cross the Ebro during their offensive, one of the greatest of the war.



SINKING. One of the pontoons, used to bridge the Ebro during the attack, founders.



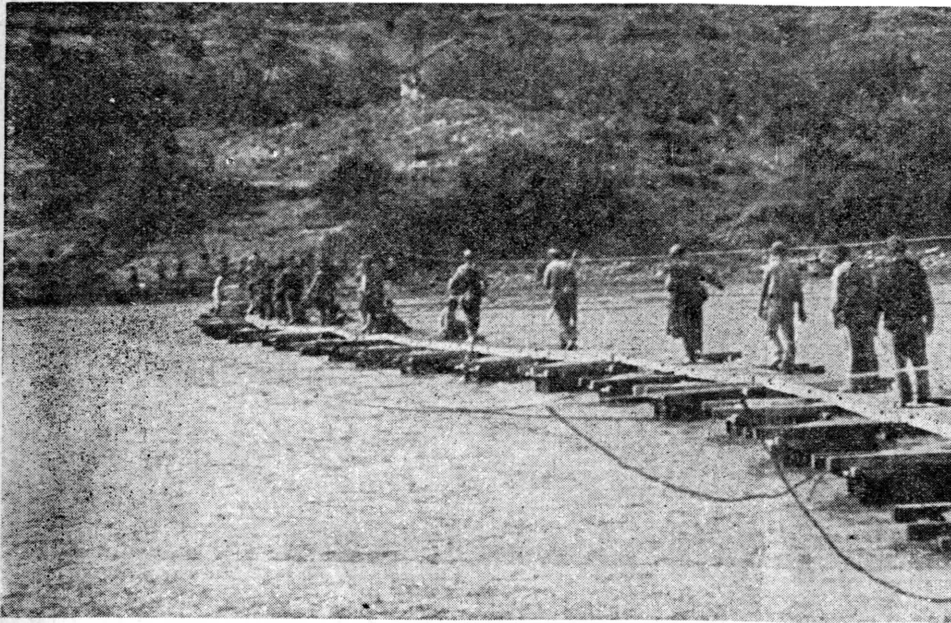
TO WAR IN A BOAT. Every means of crossing the Ebro was used, bridges, pontoons, even rowboats; as Washington crossed the Delaware.



THE BARREL BRIDGE. The famous bridge of casks upon which the Americans crossed the Ebro during the offensive of July, 1938.



CROSSING UNDER FIRE. The Lincoln Battalion starts across.



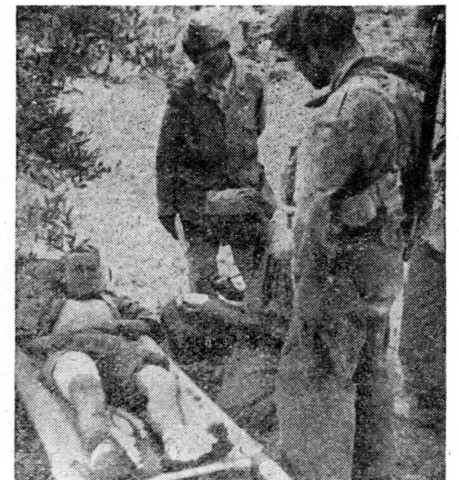
IN FRANCO TERRITORY. *The Lincoln-Washington Battalion joins the Ebro offensive. At the right: Fighting at Sierra Pandols.*



AMERICAN M.G. *A Lincoln-Washington Battalion machine-gun post on the Ebro front. Paul Wendorf, behind the gunsight, was killed in action later the same month, August.*



A WOUNDED COMRADE. *Two soldiers carrying a wounded comrade back to a first aid station.*



FIRST AID. *A Lincoln-Washington Battalion first aid post just behind the lines at the Ebro.*



BEHIND GANDESA. *Major Milton Wolff, Commander of the Lincoln Battalion, and Political Commissar George Watt behind Gandesa. At the right: Americans entrenched on the Gandesa front.*





WOMEN IN WHITE. A group of the heroic American and English nurses who went to Spain and tended the wounded under constant fire.



"FANTASTICO." Luchell McDaniels wrote for "Story" and threw grenades with either hand.



"LARRY." Larry Kleidman, a volunteer who was killed at Teruel in January, 1938.



TWO WRITERS. Alvah C. Bessie, writer and translator, and Edwin Rolfe, poet and editor, fighting in the Ebro offensive. Both are members of the Newspaper Guild.



TWICE OVERS. Jack Steele, Canadian, and Bill Wheeler, American, who served two enlistments.



REPORTER. Joe North, now editing New Masses, at the Ebro.

No Pasaran!

THAT'S the thumbnail history of one of the greatest happenings in history. Most all the boys who'll be coming back are back now. Some scores still wait in Franco's prisons. The boys back here walk the streets, reading the headlines, and there's a quiet, fierce tug they don't talk much about.

Some of their faces are on this page; there isn't space enough to use all the photos that should be here. I know many of the boys and I know how they feel. They know that in a Europe choked with arms Spain can't buy arms. And the vets can't stand still . . . knowing the fight in Spain is America's fight. They know the bombers over Port Bou today might be the bombers over Washington tomorrow.

They can't stand quiet. . . .

We present these pictures hoping you will feel some of these things more clearly, more the way they feel. These are times when days and hours count. Spain is at Valley Forge now, only the blood is on Pyrenees snow. But the fighting will go on in the South—Madrid and Valencia carry on.

Spain is calling. . . .

JOSEPH NORTH.



ORGANIZER. Joe Gibbons, Chicago steel workers' organizer, a vet.



TEACHER. Capt. Leonard Lamb, New York teacher.



BACK HOME. Lincoln-Washington Battalion Veterans arriving home on board the S.S. Ausonia. l. to r.: Benjamin Levine, Emanuel Hochberg, Joe Gordon, Milton Robertson, Walter Schutrum. They're back to carry on the fight.

The Political Commissar in Spain—I

How the resistance morale of the Spanish People's Army was built to counter the tremendous odds in munitions. That all-important human factor. The necessity for political education during the conflict.

This is the first section of a two-part article upon the institution of the "political commissariat" in the Spanish People's Army. It was written by R. Luc, a Swiss military man and former member of the Staff of the Eleventh International Brigade. He was attached to the Thaelmann Battalion.

The second part of the article, appearing next week, will treat of further duties of the political commissar. Further field incidents will be given.—
THE EDITORS.

TO UNDERSTAND completely the role, the importance, and the necessity of the political commissars of the Spanish Popular Front army, we must examine not only the actual character of this war and army, but also the tremendous importance of *the human factor* in all phases of the struggle, that is, *the political consciousness of the combatants* upon which so seriously depends their morale.

The war in Spain is waged not only against reactionary and fascist Spanish forces but also for the independence of a country menaced by the attacks of German and Italian fascists. The Spanish people are defending the gains made in their popular revolution which is not a Socialist revolution but a bourgeois-democratic revolution, though of very profound social content and conforming to the greatest interests of the working people.

The Spanish people are also fighting against international fascism, for the peace and liberty of the entire world. They are involved, consequently, in a war of national revolutionary character.

WHY THEY FIGHT

This heroic fight of the Spanish republicans against the considerably superior forces of their enemies, their epic resistance against the invasion of their country by powerful Italo-German armaments—all this came about only because of their high political consciousness. This is the secret of a resistance morale which has aroused the admiration of the entire world and has flung stupefaction and incomprehension upon the bourgeois and fascist tacticians who underestimate the importance of the human factor in war. The soldiers of the republican army know why they are fighting; they know the goal of this fight and it is precisely to this that they owe the inexhaustible moral energy which permits them continually to resist the far superior forces opposing them.

They know this thoroughly. They understand the necessity of constantly reenforcing the morale of the fighters and to this end they have created a *special institution devoted to the education and political vigilance of the entire army*. To each military commander is added a political commissar or delegate com-

missar of war, whose duties and powers are important and exact.

THE FIRST COMMISSARS

The first political commissars made their appearance in September 1936 on the Madrid front in the units of the Fifth Regiment. They were first called "political delegates." Practically all the militia of the various parties and unions quickly sanctioned their institution, a direct issue of the necessities and experiences of the civil war and a logical consequence of the character of the militia.

The need for creating a regular army was soon felt. The absence of a unified command and the different political tendencies of the militia provoked conflicts and hindered the effectiveness of the anti-fascist forces. The militia transformed themselves progressively into disciplined military organizations, and the military units which had remained loyal to the government were strengthened. On Oct. 21, 1936, the republican government decreed the incorporation of the militia into the regular army, which had thus become the army of the Popular Front, with a view to the systematic realization of large operations.

The political commissars, who had been the animators of the militia, then became what they are now: the representatives of the Popular Front in the army. It became obvious that their first duties were to support the command



"DAVE." Dave Doran, the political commissar of the 15th Brigade, who was killed in the Aragon retreat, April 1938.



LEADERS. l. to r.; Luigi Gallo, inspector general of the International Brigades; John Gates, political commissar, 15th Brigade; André Marty, founder of the International Brigades.



FIVE COMMISSARS. l. to r.; Frank Rogers, political commissar of the Mac-Pap Battalion; Antonio Gil Cabezas, political commissar of the 59th Battalion; Major Valledor, commander of the 15th International Brigade; Bob Cooney, political commissar of the British Battalion; John Gates, political commissar of the 15th International Brigade; George Watt, political commissar of the Lincoln-Washington Battalion.

of that army; second, to create the political conditions necessary for the execution of military orders and, in a more general manner, the armed fight against reaction and invasion.

To support the command of the army meant seeing that the military orders conformed to the interests of the Popular Front, that the conduct of the commanders was irreproachable, from both the technical and the political and personal points of view, so that the multiple forms of sabotage and treason might be promptly suppressed and the military personnel might be properly utilized and protected in every measure possible.

RIGHTS AND DUTIES

For all this, it is necessary to have a clear notion of the forms of collaboration between military and political authorities in the ranks of the army and to understand the limits of their respective powers. To be able to exercise an effective vigilance, the political commissar should possess almost as extensive military knowledge as the commander himself. However, he must avoid interfering in the functions of the latter. Before an action he has the right and the duty to give advice, particularly concerning the ability of his outfit to realize such an action according to its physical and moral status and the technical means at its disposition. Once the military order is given, the political commissar is responsible for its execution in the same degree as the commander. In the course of the action only the authority of the commander is decisive. The political commissar, meanwhile, remains free

to move about. He has the right to point out mistakes and acts of sabotage affecting the political and military direction of the whole unit.

I saw the following case occur in Aragon. A disguised fascist had succeeded in obtaining the command of a company. He sabotaged the offensive action of his company by giving to his subordinates impossible, inexact, and contradictory orders, and making them run grave and unnecessary dangers. The political commissar, noticing this, did his duty in pointing the case out immediately to the Staff Command of the battalion who, in turn, placed the traitor under arrest and made a rapid and conclusive investigation. This political commissar thus averted a catastrophe. Then, desirous of seeing his company fulfill the action which the staff had assigned to it, he took command on the field and led the men into combat and to victory.

COLLABORATION

Naturally, it is the duty of political commissars to act with particular care so that the authority and independence of the military commander, essential to his prestige and effectiveness, shall suffer no restriction. All political commissars must maintain close and cordial collaboration with the military command to whom they are attached.

The second duty of political commissars is the creation of political conditions necessary for the execution of specific military orders and, more generally, in the entire armed strug-

gle against reaction and invasion. This gives them a far vaster field of activity and a certain number of tasks, the principal of which are the following:

The delegate commissars of war will preoccupy themselves first with inculcating in the higher command and the soldiers the highest spirit of discipline, by showing them how this is the most immediate manifestation of effective duty and responsibility. Consequently this discipline should be freely and firmly agreed upon by all. [First article of the instructions given by the Commissariat of the Land army at Barcelona, Dec. 1, 1937.]

The conception of discipline in the army of the Popular Front is basically different from that of capitalist armies. It is freely consented to and is based on both the political consciousness of the fighters and upon their understanding of its necessity. In this way it becomes stronger than other army disciplines. Only a discipline of this character could be accepted by all the types of workers adhering to the Popular Front, including Anarchists, whose prejudice against all forms of authority has caused many bloody experiences. The Spaniards have learned from the school of war that a badly executed order may cause a catastrophe costing precious human lives. The Spanish army applies an iron discipline, but one which is freely consented to and conforms to human dignity; which is far more than one can say of the discipline which reigns in any other army of Western Europe.

The political commissars are, in addition, charged with guarding the prestige of the commander and establishing between him and the soldiers close relations of confidence and comradeship. This confidence must have for its base the irreproachable conduct of the commander. The comradeship should not be an empty phrase. It never has been in the Spanish republican army. It is easy to encourage, since it has deep roots in the character of the people. Off duty it is completely normal to see soldiers and officers all assembled around the same table at a cafe.

R. LUC.

Add Hitler Lies

“THE National Socialist State has neither closed any church nor prevented any service from being held, nor has it ever influenced the form of a church service. It has neither interfered with the doctrinal teaching nor with the creed of any denomination.”—ADOLF HITLER, *speech to Reichstag, January 30.*

An Associated Press dispatch from Muenster, Germany, February 2, states:

The district governor of Muenster ordered today the limitation of subject matter for religious instruction in schools under his jurisdiction. The order, affecting particularly the teaching of the Old Testament, followed previous restrictions on the number of hours permitted for religious instruction.

At the same time the government of Anhalt Province, which already had forbidden teaching of the Old Testament, extended the ban to cover the Epistles of Paul.

What's Happening on the Embargo

The Tar-Heel Führer and the Fulminating Father vs. the People of the United States. The forces of fascism at work. The position of President Roosevelt. What is to be done.

Washington

GEN. FRANCISCO FRANCO would be lacking in proper Christian gratitude should he fail to acknowledge his everlasting indebtedness to two American patrons—the Tar-Heel Führer and the Fulminating Father. For the Tar-Heel Führer and the Fulminating Father gave Franco Barcelona.

The führer and the Father are symbols. They are also very active individuals, but beside their symbolism their individualism pales. The Tar-Heel Führer is the bombastic, hypocritical, "kiss-the-baby," "I-love-everybody," type of orator and cheap politician who would, and does, sell his vote for a mess—the most lucrative mess—of pottage. The Father is the demagogue, who, under the garb and cloak of a great religious organization, sanctimoniously violates a people's trust by falsely using the aegis of God and Morality.

The führer is red-faced Robert Reynolds, junior senator from North Carolina. The Father is the Rev. Charles E. Coughlin. Between them, as symbols, they have thus far dominated the 76th Congress of the United States.

BACK FROM GERMANY

Reynolds the individual returned last fall from a tour of Hitler's Germany. His discourses since have been one constant encomium, one constant paean of praise for fascism. Not the swastika kind, or the fascist kind, but a new Star-Spangled-Banner kind. He lends new weight to the observation that fascism, if it comes to America, will come under the guise of anti-fascism. Recently, during debate on the Relief Bill, Reynolds asked, and answered, in his own boisterous way:

What is Hitler doing? He is looking after the people of Germany . . . and down there in Italy, Mussolini is looking after the 42,000,000 people constituting the nation of Italy. Mussolini is not sticking his nose into the business of other countries of the world. Mussolini is thinking about the Italians . . . I say it is high time that we find out how they are doing it, and why they are progressing so rapidly, in order that we may start the machines of industry rolling and turning in this country . . .

He followed that up by doing his own bit for the people of America and voting for a \$150,000,000 slash in WPA funds—in return, it is said, for a cloakroom agreement that he be granted a seat on the next Senate Foreign Affairs Committee. His qualifications as a student of foreign affairs consist of several years of globe-trotting and a comprehensive grasp of international problems best typified by this tidbit uttered recently on the Senate floor:

Let us see about Mexico. Let us be fair. Immediately below the Rio Grande is a country called

Mexico. It has twenty million inhabitants. It is blood-red. They destroyed and razed the churches, they murdered priests, they assassinated Christians, they attacked nuns. They raised the red-and-black flag. They have Trotsky down there now. It is Communistic, 100 percent.

Reynolds advises strictest neutrality in European and Asiatic affairs, and the utmost rigor in prosecuting friendship with South America, with the marines as matchmakers, if need be.

THE REACTIONARY "MANDATE"

But the Reynolds that is significant in the 76th Congress is not Reynolds the man, who as an individual can be castigated as the Tar-Heel Führer and laughed to scorn. The Reynolds that matters is Reynolds the symbol—the symbol of a new spirit that stalks the halls of Congress. Self-satisfied congressmen curl a lip and say it is their new-found "independence," that they have a "mandate from the people"—and under the pretext that the people want reaction, they are out to give it to them.

Last week, fresh from their victory against adequate relief appropriations, Republicans and conservative Democrats proved once again that reaction transcends party lines, and with one eye on 1940 and the other on the international scene, they tried to make political fodder of the sale of planes to France.

The fact that planes, munitions, and arms have been on sale to practically every country in the world since the end of the last war, and that since May 1, 1937, the State Department has been issuing regular public statements on all licensed armament sales to foreign countries did not stop them. Nor was it the information that Japan was in 1938 our second largest customer for military and non-military planes (sales have since been unofficially curbed by the administration) that set them on their rampage. No. The cries raised were against sales to France, the proposed next victim of fascist aggression.

THE SMOKESCREEN

In a move designed to aid reaction both at home and abroad, the cry was raised of "secret deals" with foreign powers, a maneuver calculated to discredit the administration by capitalizing upon the average American's intense desire to do his own reasoning with all the cards on the table, while, at the same time, under the dust of the attack, the question of sales of planes to Italy and Germany and of cotton surpluses to Germany, Italy, and Japan was raised.

So obvious was this strategy that Bob La Follette, one of those political anomalies, a liberal isolationist, kept his skirts clear of

the entire attack, while the clamorous spokesmen for "honesty and purity" in international affairs carry their own aura. One need but name them: Johnson of California, Vandenberg of Michigan, Clark of Missouri, Nye of North Dakota, the ineffable Ham Fish and his host of House Republicans, and, lustily blowing from the sidelines, America's un-umbrella'd Patriarch of Peace, Herbert Hoover.

The Tar-Heel Führer spirit is observable, too, in less ostentatious displays—displays of omission rather than commission, of silent bridling against the people's will. It is the spirit that led J. Hamilton Lewis of Illinois to rise in his Senate seat in whiskered solemnity and declare: "Far from removing the embargo, the embargo should be tightened. . . . I protest against any attempt on the part of outside influences to control and dominate the Congress of the United States, either to terrorize or seduce the Congress to the violation of law. . . ."

76 PERCENT PRO-LOYALIST

The venerable senator seems to have forgotten—or perhaps merely overlooked—the Gallup poll that showed 76 percent of the American people supporting loyalist Spain, and the fact that the American people are an "outside influence" well entitled to "control and dominate" the Congress of the United States.

The same spirit is discernible in the sabotage of congressional committees. The Senate Foreign Affairs Committee, for example, has been barraged by thousands of letters—between six thousand and ten thousand daily for the last few weeks—urging lifting of the embargo and reevaluation of our neutrality act. Chairman Pittman has had to add two persons to his staff for the sole purpose of opening mail. Yet, in the face of that deluge, the committee resolved at its last meeting that consideration of the vital and immediate problem of neutrality "be postponed to await the pleasure of the committee."

It is no secret that Representative McReynolds, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and House sponsor of the Neutrality Act, has capitalized upon his illness to stymie any possible action on neutrality in the House; and Ham Fish, an intellectual crony of McReynolds, openly boasted on the House floor that there would be "no change in neutrality legislation this session." And so it was but a new step in an old game when Massachusetts' McCormick raised the battle cry for new attacks on loyalist Spain in a note to Secretary Hull in which he urged recognition of the Franco regime because of its "demonstrated" ability to "exercise political jurisdiction with order and justice, accompanied by constructive and humane policies."

DIES, THE FALSE-FACE

And Martin Dies, the Tar-Heel Führer's false-face, is understood to be ready to do his share for American isolation by prepar-

ing, under his recently renewed authority, to scrutinize the "subversive elements" that are seeking to "involve this country in foreign wars" by the use of embargoes and the lifting of embargoes, boycotts, and popular subscriptions.

There are, above all this, a few rays of light. A small nucleus of representatives and senators are waging a constant uphill fight to revise the neutrality laws. Even Nye, who advocates strengthening neutrality, urges lifting the Spanish embargo. Besides him there are others. They speak, act, work constantly towards that fruition. Still others are sympathetic, but politically intimidated. Some few even stepped outside their official capacities to send a cablegram of support to Edouard Herriot at the time the French Parliament was considering lifting the Spanish embargo. But for all their zeal, they are surrounded and outnumbered. And it is not all due to the Tar-Heel Führer's congressional cohorts.

The Fulminating Father, working adroitly on the outside, has, with the aid of none-too-scrupulous colleagues, made his own noble contributions. No small part of the mail deluging the Foreign Affairs Committees, the senators, the representatives, the State Department, and the President in praise of isolation has been stimulated from "certain central points each Sabbath." It matters not that many of his followers are duped by the suave presentation of non-intervention as neutrality. Their weight is felt. Indeed, so much so, that one liberal congressman, preparing to issue a press statement expressing opposition to the embargo, reneged, under pressure of the Fulminating Father's mail.

FRANCO-HITLER CATHOLICS

Lest some object to the allegation that certain of the Father's colleagues are not scrupulous men, let this story be heard. An unnamed congressman received, in his mail, notice from two friends urging retention of the embargo. Knowing from previous personal conversations that their sympathies were, if anything, with the loyalist government, this congressman wrote inquiring into the matter. Investigation revealed that children attending neighborhood parochial schools had been given postcard forms by the Brothers and Sisters of the schools, with instructions to sign the names of parents and friends. Thus arose the "spontaneous" outcry of the "Franco Catholics." It means as much as the political life of a congressman may be worth thus to remain independent from his Catholic constituents, so the source of this story remains unrevealed, although its parallels exist from New York to California.

COUGHLIN'S COLLEAGUES

The good Father, of course, has many able cronies besides his own immediate colleagues. The American Coalition of Patriotic Societies, with its affiliated Silver Shirts under William Dudley Pelley, the New York State Economic Council, with its own Mer-

win K. Hart, and Fritz Kuhn and his German-American Bund have been capable stimulators of "public opinion," as the full mail bags of too many congressmen can testify. The same alien "shirt" organizations, native Chamber-of-Commerce reactionaries, and demagogic turncoats who fought adequate WPA funds, and suckled the Dies committee, battle now for "isolation" and "neutrality"—and for the same reasons.

The spirits of the führer and the Father get together socially on occasion, too. The evening following the fall of Barcelona was one of them. They met at the home of George Abell, former society editor of the *Washington Daily News*. There they wiped their feet carefully on the face of Joseph Stalin, replacing the customary "welcome" on the doormat, and entered to drink long wassails in celebration of Barcelona's fall. It is rumored that two State Department officials and two high officers of the War Department were among the honored guests, along with a butler recently dismissed from the Spanish embassy for spying.

ROOSEVELT'S DILEMMA

The combined strength of the Father and the führer and the reactionary legions that back them has thus far not only pervaded Congress, but has even given pause to President Roosevelt, who has often indicated his own predilections in the fascist-democratic lineup.

Mrs. Roosevelt summarized her own and the President's sentiments when she told the Fourteenth Conference on the Cause and Cure of War that "it is safe—perhaps—to be neutral, but I am not sure it is always right to be safe."

Roosevelt recently announced that he has a committee of lawyers examining his authority to lift the Spanish embargo. That committee can bring in its report tomorrow, or it can dally for months in extensive "research." Its ultimate findings will reflect the political strength and activity of the lift-the-embargo advocates. No more, no less. Should they be strong enough to warrant the embargo's lifting, the report will be favorable. Should they not be, the report will be adverse.

AWAITING REASSURANCE

Roosevelt has indicated his fervent desire to save democracy from encroachment from either abroad or at home. In his message at the opening of Congress he declared that this country cannot be indifferent to acts of aggression against sister democracies. But the President apparently feels he must have sufficient popular support to guarantee that more positive action for peace will not prove a boomerang in 1940. He is therefore awaiting the reassurance that he has sufficient active political support to weather the storm certain to ensue upon his lifting the gates to Spain.

That leaves it squarely up to every man and woman in the United States. That means you. **PAUL G. McMANUS.**

Shoot the Works

THE famous Skoda Works, Czechoslovakia's mighty arms factory, which formerly assisted French rearmament, are now working day and night for Hitler. Their output is about half that of Nazi death mills and they operate at full capacity, with no exports except to the fascist bloc.

Jericho

We cannot be kept within the walls,
the false barriers will break at the shout
of our anger freed from its long silence.

The builders of high bridges and sweet spires
the quiet people decent in their homes
and all who sing for liberty
will meet the embrace of our shrunken arms.

Out of our beds and our uniform cells,
out of the smelling, serried, crowded wards,
into the clean streets of little towns,
the green fields that never saw our faces—
we shall go—past the homes of the straight
firm walkers, into the cities that banished us.

There are those who will fear our poison
our twisted, sometimes bitter faces
our eyes of lizards strangers in the sun;

There are some who will tremble
when we walk with the hungry hordes,
the marchers with tired feet,
the fighters for peace, for freedom, and the sowers of wheat.

ALEXANDER F. BERGMAN.

Mr. Banta Grins . . .

The star witness of the Dies committee surveys his handiwork.
. . . Balancing the budget with human lives.

THE clock dominates the square where the writers on WPA are signing in on the time sheets.

"Hello," says one of them, a young poet, as he shakes hands, "This is my last day." He looks as if he slept badly last night.

Mr. Edwin Banta, writer and stoolpigeon, is also signing in, gripping a black pencil with his yellow old hand. Hovering next to him is his hefty bodyguard.

A shrieking suddenly rises and flies wildly over the clacking of typewriters. "It's scandalous. I can't let it happen, I tell you. My wife is in Arizona, I've got two kids. It can't happen to me now."

Banta, having signed in, is leaning against the whitewashed wall, is staring at the shrieking writer. (A Doctor of Philosophy, wrote a book, was pink-slipped.) "I can't stand it. I've got an interest in this job. It's my job. I left a lot of things I must do," shrieks the Ph.D..

Banta is grinning in the sly way that malicious old men grin at funerals. Usually he comes in and out. Today he is staying to watch the writers sign in for the last time. He stands there talking to his bodyguard through the side of his mouth. I have never heard what he says to his bodyguard. I have never heard his voice, in fact. Nobody but the scum has come close enough to him to hear what he says, since the day he appeared as star witness for the Dies committee and told them that some 70 or 80 percent of the writers on the project were Communists and that "the understood procedure was that persons sent by the Workers Alliance are to be taken care of."

The 128 pink-slipped writers sign in and hang around the time sheets, standing as though they can't move off, can't leave, can't say this goodbye to the place where they worked, and to the earnings which helped them pay debts, buy a suit, a pair of shoes, hang a curtain on their windows.

Mr. Banta looks on, grinning.

In the papers congressmen are saying: "Cut! . . . 725,000,000 is enough . . . 600,000,000 is enough . . . 300,000,000 is more than enough." Congressman Taber is saying: "Abolish the Writers Project." Senator Harrison: "Take politics out of WPA."

Banta, in his small sly way, I suppose, remembers how he got page one in the New York Times when he lied to the Dies gang: "I paid two dollars to the Workers Alliance toward a Washington Lobby fund. . . . All their leaders, with one exception, are Communist Party members." Banta, therefore, now looks on, smiling.

Meanwhile the 128 writers stay stuck to the pavement around the time sheets and they don't want to move off, on, out to the eleva-

tors around the corner and around the last corner, the ice on the street, the new snow.

The President: "Don't balance the budget with human lives."

An old Jewish storywriter comes in, lifts his arms slowly, and, with a mad look in his eyes: "I don't have to worry any more. Last night my wife died in the hospital. Myself, I'll be able to get along."

A lean-jawed novelist: "Last week my father died. This week my wife left me. Story of my life. Those tough guys in Washington are writing stories all right."

A young girl: "Did you hear about Danny? He's in Bellevue—psychopathic ward. Pink-slipped two weeks ago, you remember. Day before yesterday his wife lost her \$10 job. Cracked up. Kept asking, 'Is Hitler dead?'"

Banta stands there on his flat feet, in his big rubbers, with his big overcoat hanging like an old man's and his pants too hanging like a derelict old man's. Beside him, a head taller than he, stands his bodyguard, without whom Banta never comes to work because, after he got page one in the Times, Banta started shuddering and dreamed "some day he would get his while walking on the street." The detective bodyguard's overcoat is new and, over the thick healthy body, looks good and solid.

A young, dark-haired girl, typist: "My mother died yesterday. She's lying in her grave already and that old man is still walking around."

A tough-guy congressman is saying: "Even 600,000,000 is too much."

A young zoologist: "My wife is in bed. I'm afraid to tell her about my pink slip. She may not want to get out of bed."

A poet (her back is still weak from childbirth): "My husband is threatening divorce. He's demanding the baby, too. What can I do now? The courts will give him the baby, I suppose, since I can't support her."

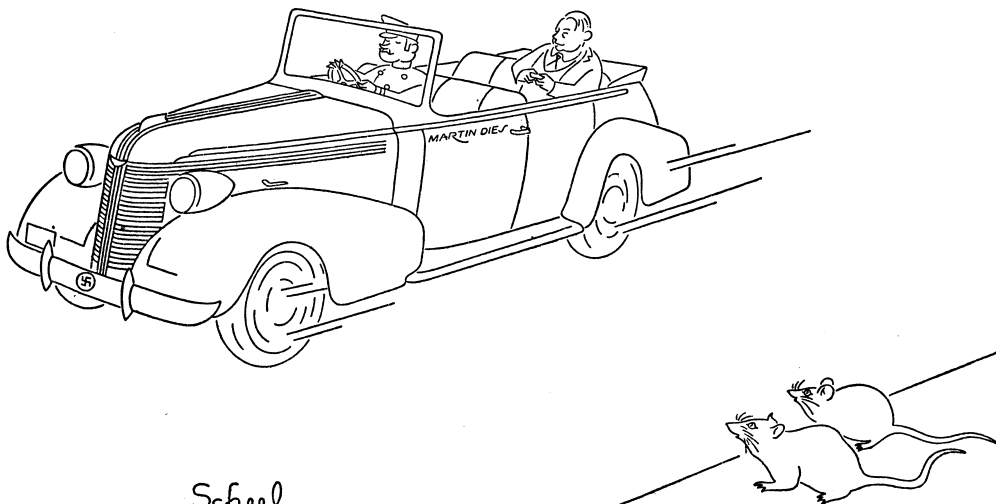
Another girl, journalist (shawl over her pretty head): "I can take it. If only I didn't have to tell my mother about it. Her heart's weak."

A newspaperman: "I've tried everywhere—the newspapers, magazines, publicity, advertising—what am I going to do? Four people depended on my check."

Stoolpigeon Banta stands there, with his old brown hat over his eyes. (He's never yet taken off his hat on this project.) His chin is full of creases and holes and his big false teeth seem about to fall out of his loose old mouth as he grins. Beside him stands the bodyguard, forehead narrow and low and cheekbones large, smoking a cigarette, hat on the back of his head, protecting his client. (Two-word description: stool and tool; spirit and body; brain and brawn; liar and—choose your own.)

The Ph.D. is still shrieking: "It's scandalous. I've got a personal interest in this job. I can't let it happen." The writers, some of them with pink slips in their hats or pinned to their coat lapels, are wandering around the time sheets. They don't want to move off, on, out to the elevators around the corner and around the last corner.

Banta has stopped looking around at the writers. In a panic, the loose skin on his neck creasing as it pivots around, he is looking for the bodyguard who deserted him. All around Banta, almost touching him, are the fired writers whom he betrayed. He's afraid to



"There goes the big cheese."

move and yet he wants to move, his mouth drops, his eyes glaze, he takes bewildered steps in his big rubbers. . . . In relief, he spots the detective at the water fountain. . . . Peaceful again, he shuffles off in the bodyguard's direction, and, like a polyp in a borrowed shell, attaches himself, grinning again, with pleasure, at those writers who, unlike himself, are signing in for the last time.

In the papers tough-guy congressmen are saying: "Cut! . . . Even 600,000,000 is too much."

In the papers headlines are saying: HOUSE VOTES WPA CUT. SENATE VOTES WPA CUT.

In the same papers, Harold Ickes is saying: "Is this the end? Not by a hell of a sight."

Stop grinning, Banta. These writers, maybe, are not signing in for the last time, not going around the last corner.

The clock dominates the square where the writers are signing out. . . . Before the hands of that clock shall have gone around many times more, Banta, these writers are coming back. For out in the streets are millions of plain outraged people who are going to help send them back to their unfinished books—and when they come back they'll bring more writers with them and then it'll be your turn, Banta, to go. Meanwhile, throw away that rented backbone of yours. Nobody, really, is going to hurt you. There are bigger rats than you who are fouling their nests.

WILL RIVERS.

The Vatican Prisoner

THE Rome correspondent of the Belgian Catholic publication *La Libre Belgique* reports:

On the 15th of December, a French prelate was received by the Holy Father, who, contrary to the Vatican protocol, admitted him to his presence in advance of other ecclesiastic dignitaries who had been waiting for some time. This prelate had been charged with the mission of obtaining the aid of the Head of the Church in securing an armistice in Spain. The interview was not long. Pius XI immediately gave Cardinal Pacelli the necessary instructions so that a Christmas Armistice be demanded from Franco, in his name.

Twenty-four hours had not passed when an Italian Note was handed in at the Vatican. In it Il Duce informed the Holy See that if the Pope's order were carried out the Lateran Treaty would be denounced. The note endeavored to justify this menace by recalling Article 24 of the treaty which the Christian action of the Pope would have broken. Article 24 contains a declaration by the Holy See in which it confirmed its intention to have nothing to do with "temporal struggles between two states."

Thus, by invoking this Article 24, Mussolini has again given proof that the war in Spain is not a civil war but a "temporal struggle between two states," i.e., between Italy and the Spanish government.

This sort of interference in the actions of the Vatican by Mussolini has been going on ever since the Vatican was forced into the Lateran Treaty. That "treaty," far from having "liberated" the Pope by giving him a railroad station, has merely made His Holiness and the Vatican itself a prisoner of Rome and the Fascist Party's aggression campaign against democracy.

Franz Boas on Intellectual Freedom

The world-famous anthropologist tells of the duty of science to combat prejudice. The American scientists meet with the public on Lincoln's Birthday.

THE scientists of America have spoken in no uncertain terms. "American scientists, trained in a tradition of intellectual freedom, hold fast to their conviction that science is wholly independent of national boundaries and races and creeds and can flourish only when there is peace and intellectual freedom. If science is to continue to advance and spread more abundantly its benefits to all mankind, then the man of science has a moral obligation to fulfill. He must educate the people against the acceptance of all false and unscientific doctrines which appear before them in the guise of science, regardless of their origin. Only in that way can he insure those conditions of peace and freedom which are essential for him and for the progress of all mankind. We firmly believe that in the present historical epoch democracy alone can preserve intellectual freedom. Any attack upon freedom of thought in one sphere, even a non-political one, is in effect an attack on democracy itself. Scientists must be defended in their right to speak the truth as they understand it. If we American scientists wish to avoid a similar fate, if we wish to see the world continue to progress and prosper, we must bend our efforts to that end now."

SIMILAR MANIFESTOS

This statement has been issued by about fifteen hundred American scientists. It conforms to a similar manifesto issued by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, embodying a membership of nearly twenty thousand; it has been endorsed and amplified by the American Association of Scientific Workers, by the Association of American Professors, by the American Anthropological Association, and by the Society of Social Psychologists.

American scientists have issued these statements and manifestos not only as a protest against what is going on in other parts of the world, but even more so because they are aware of the dangers involved in the mounting spirit of oppression. We do not flatter ourselves that this spirit is absent in our country. We feel its threat and are convinced that we can no longer shut our eyes to what is going on in our own nation.

OPINION AND ACTION

Expressions of opinion are useful, but they are not enough; they must be followed by action. The standpoint of the scientist must be impressed again and again upon the people. We hope that the nationwide meetings on Democracy and Intellectual Freedom which will take place on Lincoln's Birthday will

serve this purpose. In New York a meeting will be held in the Waldorf-Astoria on Sunday, February 12, at 1:30 p.m. In Boston, Philadelphia, Washington, and in many cities in the West similar meetings will be held. They ought to be an impressive reminder of our position. Further action must be taken that will safeguard America against the possibility of any attempt to choke freedom of thought and of expression, of making futile the attempts to influence public opinion by appeals to prejudice, envy, and hate.

It is one of the duties of science, too often neglected, to combat prejudice. An insidious tendency has induced men at all times to consider individuals not as individuals but rather as members of a class, racial, denominational, educational, or economic, bearing all the imaginary mental and moral characteristics of the class. The viciousness of this procedure is best illustrated by the policies of Germany, Italy, and rebel Spain. We are certainly not free of the same kinds of prejudice. Even a superficial observer must see that in the times of present economic distress they have increased by bounds. Legally we do not admit them. We protest against them in the very Declaration of Independence. This is one of the fields in which active work is demanded of the scientist.

TEACHERS AND DEMOCRACY

There is little hope of influencing the mind of the prejudiced adult, but our schools must armor the young against the continuance of prejudice. The teachers of our schools should be the shock-troops of an intelligent understanding of the meaning of democracy. It is their task to prepare our youth for an intelligent treatment of public questions, that, so far as attainable, reasonable thought should be substituted for passion. Clear thinking is not possible when symbols are made the center of thought. Intellectual freedom guaranteed by the right of free expression must be the aim of all education.

FRANZ BOAS.

Of All People!

ON FEB. 7, 1939, several tory teeth were broken on slices of breakfast toast as their owners read the following paragraphs in Walter Lippmann's "Today and Tomorrow" column in the *New York Herald Tribune*:

Reduced to the simplest terms the situation would seem to be this: Italy-Germany vs. Britain-France, two against two, no war.

Italy-Germany-Japan vs. Britain-France, three against two, war very likely. Italy-Germany-Japan vs. Britain-France-United States-Russia, no war.



William Gropper

New Masses

ESTABLISHED 1911

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Foreign Policy

THE past two weeks have witnessed the demolition of one of the favorite myths of American political life: that politics stops at the waterline, that whatever differences may exist on domestic questions, where the defense of the United States is concerned, men of all political faiths stand united. The tempest in a teacup that has been stirred up by the congressional Tories over the sale of planes to France and over President Roosevelt's conference with the Senate Military Affairs Committee demonstrates that in foreign, as in domestic, policy, the right-wingers of both parties are aligned with the enemies of American democracy. In Berlin, Rome, Tokyo—and Washington—the language of reaction during these past two weeks has been the same: the language of savage assault on the President's foreign policy, of fascist "pacifism" which brands Roosevelt the warmaker.

First, as to the sale of six hundred planes to France. Under the law American planes may be sold to any country unless it is declared to be at war through the invoking of the Neutrality Act. For months planes and parts were sold to Japan for use against China, and no outcry was raised. But when the government authorizes the sale of planes to France, which may use them for defense against fascist aggression, some sinister design is read into this and Senator Nye goes so far as to charge that this amounts to a military alliance with France.

Second, as to Roosevelt's conference with the Senate Military Affairs Committee. If the President made a mistake, it was in believing that the reactionary isolationists were still possessed of sufficient patriotism to cause them to refrain from making a political football of the crucial questions of national defense and foreign policy—particularly so soon after Hitler's blast at this country in his Reichstag speech. The fact is that the

President almost daily holds conferences with individuals and small groups that are confidential. The difference in this case was that the group was larger, eighteen in all, and that certain individuals betrayed confidences and added distortions and embellishments of their own that fed the fires of the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo propaganda machine.

And finally, as to the "secrecy" of our foreign policy. In his message at the opening of Congress, President Roosevelt announced in unequivocal terms the kind of foreign policy that this country must follow if our democracy is to survive. It is a policy of revising our present neutrality laws which "actually give aid to an aggressor and deny it to the victim"; of using "methods short of war, but stronger and more effective than mere words, of bringing home to aggressor governments the aggregate sentiments of our own people"; of taking "counsel with other nations of the world to the end that aggression among them be terminated"; and of building up national defense in support of this policy.

And the President in his message tied up the question of national security with social security on the domestic front. There's the rub. The debate of the past two weeks has demonstrated that in their hatred of the New Deal's social reforms, which are the life-blood of democracy, the dominant business groups and their congressional stooges are moving on the same path as the Two Hundred Families of France and their loyal Flandins, Lavals, and Dorlots—the path of national treason.

Why Dies Got His Vote

THE debate on the resolution to continue the Dies committee was an exhibition not of the processes of parliamentary democracy but of the technique of gag rule. Only one hour of debate was permitted on an issue which vitally concerns all Americans, and much of that time was taken up by the florid forensics of Representative Dies, to the wild applause of the Republicans, who voted solidly for the resolution. Yet, even allowing for the steam-roller tactics that were used, the large vote by which the resolution passed—344 to 35—must be a bitter disappointment to all progressives. Dies' great advantage, of course, was that he professed to be heading an investigation into un-American activities, and thus managed to cash in on the mounting anti-fascist sentiment throughout the country. The fact is that those who opposed the resolution did so because they favored a genuine investigation of un-American activities—of those fascist forces with whom Dies is allied and whom he has gone out of his way to shield.

Basically, it was the failure of the progres-

sive forces of the country to make the real issue clear that was responsible for the ease with which the resolution passed. For this the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor is in large measure responsible. By its endorsement of the Dies committee, it played directly into the hands of the tory Republicans and Democrats who are using the committee in a farflung program to undermine the New Deal and prepare a reactionary victory in 1940.

Despite his pledge that the committee will "recognize the mistakes that were made and do everything in its power to conduct a fair, fearless investigation," Dies has already indicated that his objectives remain unchanged by issuing a statement that he intends to uncover "foreign propaganda that may get us into war." This is an echo of the Hitler-Hearst-Hoover propaganda that the Roosevelt peace policies are creating the threat of war. The Dies committee must be compelled by the pressure of public opinion to cease its anti-New Deal smear campaign under the guise of combating Communism, and to apply itself to the task for which it was created: the ferreting out of the un-American activities of such outfits as the Bund and the Silver Shirts and such individuals as Father Coughlin and the Rev. Gerald Winrod.

Spain Fights On

THE ratio in materials was ten to one and the torrent of steel forced the loyalists back to the French border. And so Franco got Catalonia. The loyalist retreat was orderly, the haggard men fought brilliantly, worn with furious battle that began last December 21—but they adequately covered their retreat so that the thousands of refugees got across the border into France. Never was courage more obvious—the will to win stronger—even in this great adversity. Consider what the enemy had—thanks to Hitler and Mussolini and "non-intervention": 250,000 invaders and Spanish rebel troops against the loyalist's 120,000 men; three thousand artillery pieces against three hundred artillery pieces; five hundred tanks against fifty tanks; eight hundred planes against fifty planes. The loyalists had a two-week supply of shells to match the unlimited materials poured in from Rome and Berlin. The loyalist army—of Spaniards alone—fought four Italian "mixed" divisions containing almost exclusively Italians, one Moorish corps containing four divisions; the German Condor Legion of aviation units, the Foreign Legion—the Tercero—composed of White-Guard Russians, Portuguese, and others.

The loyalists held for eight days in the Borjas Blancas sector; on the ninth their artillery lacked shells. Borjas Blancas fell,

Artesa de Segre fell, and the battle changed from one of position to one of movement. Exhaustion played its part; the enemy changed troops every three days and kept attacking daily. The enemy aircraft bombed the cities incessantly, harrying the people back home.

And so Franco took Catalonia; a shameful victory.

But most important of all is the fact that the government has declared its intention to keep the fight going in the Central Zone. The world press has, once again, and stronger this time than ever, sung requiem over the Spanish war. But the people have not been consulted; and the people of Spain will make no compromise with Franco. Where Franco has taken territory, the people continue to work silently, underground, against the tyrant. That quarter of Spain which contains ten million people has the possibilities of long resistance—and they will resist, waiting for the progressive peoples of the world to come to their assistance. They realize the interplay of world forces and they know the democracies are battling against their own reactionaries to come to Spain's aid. They know the peace of the world is being decided below the Pyrenees. And they wait for aid to save world peace. Our part in that fight is to lift the embargo—which can immediately swing the balance the other way.

Moving on France

WHILE Hoover and other reactionary isolationists scoff at the danger of war and join with the Nazi and Italian press in accusing President Roosevelt of "warmongering," Europe and the world shudder in the "long peace" that Hitler promised. One aspect of this "long peace" has been the renewed military provocations of the Japanese on the Soviet border. But even more immediately significant are the fresh indications that the next thrust of the fascist axis will be eastward—against France. Furthermore, it becomes clearer that in this conspiracy against France the Chamberlain government, for all its avowals of solidarity with its neighbor across the channel, is playing the same role as it did in the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia.

On January 30 Hitler announced in his speech to the Reichstag that Germany would support Italy in any war she might wage. On February 5 Virginio Gayda, chief Mussolini spokesman, published an article in which he threw overboard Mussolini's—and Chamberlain's—solemn pledges that Italian troops would be withdrawn from Spain as soon as hostilities were over. And he made a clear threat of military action against France in these words:

Franco's victory cannot be considered secure until the arms and armies of the Reds have been totally liquidated in Spain and in neighboring territories where they were organized and where they still find periodical refuge and assistance, and until every other unlawful intervention having any degree of political usefulness has ceased.

Now as for Chamberlain's role. It will be recalled that in December the British prime minister, in reply to a Laborite question in Parliament, made what appeared to be a slip of the tongue when he said that there existed no treaty or understanding that required Britain to give military aid to France in case she was attacked. This was no slip, but a warning to France to make her peace with the axis powers on their terms. Now comes further confirmation of Chamberlain's treacherous role from two totally different sources—Moscow and London. An article in *Izvestia*, Soviet government newspaper, discussing Chamberlain's visit to Rome, charges that backstage discussion in tory circles is developing along the lines of "revision of the status of the Italians in Tunis, granting preferential rights on the Addis Ababa-Jibuti railway to Italy, and establishment of a free port in Jibuti for Italy."

On the same day that extracts from this article appeared in the *Daily Worker*, the *New York Times* published a London dispatch by Ferdinand Kuhn, Jr., which declared that the Chamberlain government is moving toward a second Munich.

For if Mr. Chamberlain had his way now [the dispatch stated], the Italians would come politely to Paris with their hats in their hands and would go home with a free zone in the harbor of Jibuti, a share in the directorship of the Suez Canal, and additional privileges for Italians living in Tunisia.

Clearly the knife in the back known as appeasement is being prepared for France as it was for Czechoslovakia. And indispensable for the success of the thrust is a fascist Spain. The saving of Spanish democracy is thus the first prerequisite for the saving of European and ultimately of world democracy.

Education-Baiter

IT IS a disgrace to American education and to the American labor movement that Matthew Woll should be chairman of the AFL Committee on Education. Woll hates any teacher with a backbone. He has been associated with every Red-baiting attack on academic freedom. When Hearst tried to frame Professor Counts and other liberal educators a few years ago, Woll cooperated with Hearst. Now that Dies prepares his new offensive against intellectual liberties, Woll gives Dies the tipoff. He generously offers his services to the American Federation of Teachers in a drive which he pro-

poses against Communists within its ranks."

It is obvious that under the leadership of Woll and Dies the menace to American education increases. The effort to split the Teachers Union will be intensified. There will be a systematic effort to intimate the teaching profession. Professor Childs of Teachers College will reap the reactionary whirlwind he has sowed. For reaction, as Professor Childs himself was once able to point out, fears no institution more than the institution of free and democratic education. Its pretended drive against Communism is nothing less than a drive against culture, against teacher organization, against academic freedom.

As Professor Boas points out in his article in this issue, the teachers and scientists of America will not take such fascist attacks lying down. The nationwide campaign for democratic rights and intellectual freedom which opens on Lincoln's Birthday is the proper response to Matthew Woll and his education-baiting friends. We are confident that American educators will resist Woll and Dies as effectively as they resisted Woll and Hearst. The issue does not affect the Teachers Union alone. It affects every teacher in America. And in the most profound and immediate sense, it affects the democratic way of life of the entire nation.

Whitewash Job

NEW MASSES, among other publications, recently pointed to a series of events at Columbia University's Teachers College which indicated a steady retreat from liberalism in education. As evidence we pointed to the announced suspension of New College, the most progressive branch, with no semblance of democratic procedure; the formation of the Lay Council, an advisory group composed almost entirely of business men; and the quick-change artistry of TC's Dean William F. Russell, who almost overnight changed from liberal to reactionary.

That the administration and some of the faculty have some sense of guilt about the matter was shown last week when a semi-official statement concerning exactly the policies we mentioned was issued to the press. Signed by a faculty committee, the statement recalls the liberal past of Teachers College, which no one ever denied, and proceeds to write out a clean bill of health for Dean Russell and others of the administration. It points with pride to the fair labor policies of the college—saying nothing of the bitterness of the administration's resistance; it reassures us that New College was closed because funds for its continuance were not forthcoming, but does not say that one estimate of the deficit was only 1/10 of 1 percent of the Teachers College budget and that

even Dean Russell's figure was only 1 percent.

The statement is inadequate and apologetic. If the progressive press attacked Teachers College, it was because it was conscious that a landmark in liberal education was succumbing to reaction and that the public was entitled to know the facts. Teachers College has been an important influence in American life, and it should remain so. That is the task of its progressives.

Victory for TVA

THE Supreme Court decision in the TVA case has been followed by the sale of all Tennessee electrical properties of the Commonwealth & Southern Corp. to the TVA and local public agencies. The relation between these two events may not be one of cause and effect, but certain it is that the Supreme Court ruling greatly strengthens TVA's position and should serve to impress on even the most reactionary business circles the fact that, like it or not, they will have to put up with TVA.

The court's decision is another notable victory for the New Deal and emphasizes the great distance the court has traveled since the days of President Roosevelt's judiciary reform battle which failed to change the size of the supreme tribunal, but succeeded so remarkably in changing its political temper. True, Justice Roberts' opinion straddles by refusing to pass directly on the issue of the constitutionality of TVA. Yet by declaring that the fourteen appellant companies have no legal standing because "neither their charters nor their local franchises involve the grant of a monopoly or render competition illegal," it not only gives the green light to TVA, but greatly broadens the scope of potential federal activity in competition with private enterprise and makes it extremely difficult to challenge the constitutionality of such activity.

Having failed to shake the constitutionality of TVA, the spokesmen of big business—see particularly the *New York Times*—now put forward the specious argument which they advanced when the Supreme Court upheld the National Labor Relations Act: that "it is necessary to guard ourselves against confusing the mere legality of a law or policy with its wisdom." This argument was, of course, never used in the days when the majority of the court, as Justice Stone clearly intimated, were reading their own reactionary class prejudices into the Constitution and demolishing one New Deal law after another. Certainly, the people of the Tennessee Valley, who are receiving the benefits of TVA activities, are at least as competent to judge the wisdom of this law as the private-utility monopolies.

The Supreme Court decision should speed

the New Deal program for the establishment of seven regional TVA's. This program can serve as a lever against the sabotage of the public utilities who have openly boasted that they have been refusing to spend some two and a half billion dollars for needed equip-

ment and plant expansion. There is, in fact, no reason why public utilities, whose gouging of both the small investors and the consuming public has for years been a scandal, should not in truth become *public* utilities—government-owned.

You're Our Angel

IN SPAIN the boys of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade took their weeks-old *NEW MASSES* to the front lines and devoured them as avidly as the food and cigarettes their families and friends sent. It was their weekly picture of America, and what they said of it encouraged us. For one of the important functions of *NEW MASSES* is to guide, inspire, inform, and, yes, amuse fighters on democracy's every front.

The fronts of democracy, however, increase in number and grow in dimension as the struggle goes on. Every time a Dies or a Chamberlain or a Coughlin shows his head above the ramparts the fight becomes more intense, the victory more dear. And *NEW MASSES*, like every other force in the progressive movement, must gather new energy and spend it with more precise and devastating marksmanship.

NEW MASSES, mind you, can do it. For twenty-seven tough years we have led the Lincoln Brigade of progressive professional and middle-class Americans. On every issue we have enrolled a fighting corps of artists and writers and readers. Through the imperialist war, through the twenty-two years of Tom Mooney's incarceration, through the crazy, illusive twenties, through the depression thirties—*NEW MASSES* led in sanity and realism.

On page 2 we tell you something of what we plan. That, together with more plans to come, is our answer to the defeats, our applause for the victories. The articles, the information, the ideas—all are needed, desperately. By you who are already fighters and by ten or twelve millions of your class who must be involved. The times have given the challenge, and we want to say, "Yes, we accept; we will fight."

You know the struggle; you are part of it. And you know our problem, too. That's why we have no hesitation in coming to you. When we talk of the ten or twelve million, the middle-middle-class, we're serious; we want as many of them as possible, as quickly as possible. We want *NEW MASSES* to reach out and bring those people into camp—our camp.

We need \$30,000. We need \$30,000 to continue this magazine. For today, as on every previous occasion on which we have asked your help, the magazine faces immediate suspension. To continue to publish and to extend our influence is imperative. The latter, however, is our problem. You guarantee a year's publication with \$30,000, and we'll take care of broadening and deepening our influence. You keep us going and we'll keep moving forward. We ask you without hesitation, with no embarrassment, for we know that the tragedy of failure would weigh as heavily upon you as upon us. You're a senior partner in the business of the democratic front, and *NEW MASSES* is your voice. Send your contribution to *NEW MASSES* at 31 E. 27 St., New York City.

\$30,000 for *NEW MASSES*. Now. You're our angel.

Reader's Forum

Margaret Larkin on Forsythe and the Theater

TO NEW MASSES: A chain of anti-fascist theaters across America! If it really existed today; if a burning lift-the-embargo play were rehearsing in two hundred cities and towns in America, what a weapon we should have in our hands! We can have it, and very shortly, if we can develop in large what now exists in little: a national chain of serious amateur theaters, rooted in the trade unions and progressive sentiment of their communities; consciously attached to the people's front.

About fifty such groups are gathered closely around the New Theater League, which celebrates the beginning of its fifth year of activity this week by producing scenes from four of its prize-winning plays, *Waiting for Lefty*, *Bury the Dead*, *Plant in the Sun*, and *The Cradle Will Rock*. Another hundred or so, scattered from New York to Australia, acknowledge its leadership and use its services without being full affiliates.

Skeptical Robert Forsythe damned the American theater in these pages recently because it does not reach masses of people, but is confined to an ever-narrowing circuit of cities. He overlooked amateur theaters (which, incidentally, furnish even the commercial playwright with his biggest market!) and he never got around to analyzing the Federal Theater Project, which has taken drama to the byways.

But very few WPA plays, considering the total number produced by the project, have had even a tinge of social content, and there have been plenty of cases of outright censorship. The militant *Cradle Will Rock* was shut down on its opening night by direct orders from Washington. A real People's Theater will not be a gift from the government. The people must make it themselves.

In a few cities, the possibility of professional social theaters exists. The Theater Arts Committee, in New York and other places, has produced brilliant variety programs with professional actors. But since the demise of the Theater Union of New York, no professional group, devoted solely to producing militant social plays, has found a way to solve its financial problems. In most of America, People's Theaters must be amateur for some time to come.

Because their aim is something beyond "self-expression," these amateurs carry an air of seriousness that was absent, for the most part, in the Little Theater movement. They give up *all* of their leisure time to the theater. New Theater of Philadelphia reports that "rehearsals are held every night we do not perform and all day Sundays, during the theater season." The same Unity Theater mentioned above has a unique practice: since its actors work at other jobs in the daytime, all plays have duplicate, interchangeable casts, and no actor's name is printed on the program. Even when Paul Robeson starred in *Plant in the Sun*, the rule was kept.

High artistic standards are part of the code of serious theater everywhere; the social theaters are no exception. About a third of them maintain some kind of theater school or study group. San Francisco Theater Union's school "has been recognized as the best dramatic school in the city by a local adult education investigating committee." New Theater League itself maintains a national school in New York with an enrollment of 125.

The really new thing about the new theaters is their audience. In one season (October to May) the Chicago Repertory Theater played before 36,000 people, including sixteen thousand members of 102 unions. In a similar period Detroit Contemporary Theater performed for eighteen of the great Automobile Workers Union locals, eleven other unions, eight progressive organizations, and produced a full evening program in the local Arts Institute for an

extended run. The previous year it played to the sitdown strikers in the plants, and broadcast a radio series for the UAW on a local station, besides continuing its full-length productions. One of the San Francisco Theater Union's early triumphs was a performance of *Peace on Earth* sponsored by every waterfront union on the Pacific Coast, as well as a good many other unions.

Some New Theater League plays have reached the mass audience that Robert Forsythe is sighing for. *Waiting for Lefty* and *Bury the Dead* had an audience of a million people. They were produced in Canada, England, Scotland, South Africa, and Australia, as well as all over America in the social theaters under discussion, in colleges, Little Theaters, and miscellaneous dramatic groups.

The New Theater League is the national and international leader of this movement. Its many-sided task is little recognized outside its own field. Perhaps the best known is its successful discovery and sponsorship of the outstanding social plays that have been so basic in the development of the movement. It celebrated this part of its work in a "Cavalcade of New Theater" at Labor Stage on February 5. *Waiting for Lefty*, *Bury the Dead*, *Plant in the Sun*, and *The Cradle Will Rock* were done in part by the original casts from the Group Theater, Actors Repertory Company, Plant in the Sun Company, and the Mercury Theater. Developing a large repertory of good plays through contests, through personal work with playwrights, and through sponsoring New York productions in "New Theater Nights" is an extremely valuable department.

Next to good scripts, the new theaters need organizational and business leadership. Painfully, through many conventions, through discussions in its press (*New Theater Magazine*, *Theater Workshop*, *New Theater News*) and through a Herculean correspondence, the national office of the league has struggled with these problems. There were few precedents for the kind of theaters that have emerged. The traditions of the Little Theaters, whose ideas, members, and finances came exclusively from the middle class, haunted the new theaters. Curious and erroneous ideas of collectivism proved equally destructive. When and how to become "professional" to the extent of paying a few executives a few dollars a week agitated the theaters. Some groups came to a dead end when they tried to water down their social program with occasional Broadway successes, or period pieces from the classics. Others could not find sufficient stability in traveling from union hall to union hall with short skits and plays. Misunderstanding of the "community theater" and the "People's Theater" as slogans had to be cleared up. The problems of financing unsubsidized theaters, that must charge low admission prices or fail in their first object, have been a major concern.

Today the typical, well developed People's Theater has found its way through many a slough of despond to fairly stable ground, artistically, financially, and politically. If the reader were to visit one of the New Theater League affiliates in New Haven, Washington, Boston, Minneapolis, Cleveland, Detroit, Dallas, Montreal, Philadelphia, Chicago, San Francisco, he would hear this tune, with variations: The "theater" has been in existence three or four years and has fifty members—only a half-dozen from the original group. Its members are almost a cross-section of the population. In Toronto, for instance, they include a priest of the High Anglican Church, a steel worker, a radio announcer, a social worker, a German refugee, the daughter of a

famous surgeon, etc. The members devote five or six evenings a week to the theater, and have classes in theater crafts on Sunday, under a teacher-director sent out from New Theater School. The theater maintains its own headquarters, and has an auditorium seating less than three hundred people, for which it pays \$100 a month rent. Two or three times during its season the typical theater produces full-length plays in its auditorium and performs them for some months on weekend evenings, supported by the familiar "benefit" system. (The Chicago Repertory Theater has been playing *The Cradle Will Rock* since October and is sold out through March.) At the same time there are several short pieces in the typical theater's repertory, one or two of them written around local events. In its audience work the theater has advanced from that discouraging day when some trade-union official told its representative that he was too busy running his union to bother with a theater. Today the theater has endorsements from many unions, and perhaps even from a Central Trades and Labor Council. It tries to get recognition from the AFL, although it finds its greatest support in the CIO.

The weaknesses of this typical theater are many and glaring. It is on such a precarious financial basis that one unpopular play piles up a crushing debt. Its business department lags far behind the efficiency and energy of its acting company. Its audience policy, while correct, has not yet attracted full trade-union support. The scale of its operation is miniature. Although the local newspapers now give it excellent reviews and publicity space, it reaches about 1 percent of the population.

Not all of the fifty theaters affiliated to, and close to, the New Theater League fit this pattern. The New York groups have special problems which have affected their form and their activities. The Negro theaters work under severe handicaps. Many out-of-town groups fall below the standard of the "typical" theater, although all are aiming for it. But it is a fair picture of the new theater movement, by and large. In its gallant achievements and its challenging inadequacies will be found the seed from which the real, the necessary People's Theater will grow.

New York City.

MARGARET LARKIN.

Theater Audiences

DEAR MR. FORSYTHE: You're mistaken about the theater's power of reaching *numbers*. You're correct in saying that it ought to reach more. That is because the poor old institution is largely in the hands of unimaginative men who don't know how or don't want to reach more.

You compare *Abe Lincoln in Illinois* with *It Can't Happen Here*. What are the figures on that book's sales? Let us assume they reached 150,000. Shall we say that each book was read by three persons? Give it a half-million readers all told.

As for the play, it has already been witnessed by 125,000 persons at least. A second company is in process of formation for the West Coast, and that company will probably play to at least 125,000. Before the Massey company is finished with its tour of the key spots, and its New York run, it will, I suspect, play to 600,000 more people. Thus a total of 850,000 persons will have seen the play.

That is a respectable figure, and in excess of a fair guess on the readership of any but the cheapest, most popular novels or non-fiction books. A play that is easy to carry about on a tour, such as *You Can't Take It With You* or *Three Men on a Horse*, usually is toured by as many as three companies at a time. It is the heaviness of a big physical production that stops great duplication of companies on successful plays like *Abe Lincoln*. The insignificance of *You Can't Take It With You* or *Three Men on a Horse* is beside the point.

The people can't buy books either at the usual rate of \$2.50 or \$3 a copy. . . . But there are balcony seats in most theaters.

New York City.

BERNARD SIMON.

Old Abe Lincoln in 1939

Three new books add to the towering literary movement of the Great Emancipator. How Lincoln lives today.

IT IS "no child's play," Lincoln wrote in 1859, "to save the principles of Jefferson from total overthrow in this nation." His words, written on the eve of a fateful national crisis, are a trumpet and a prophecy for our day. Listen:

The principles of Jefferson are the principles and axioms of free society. And yet they are denied and evaded, with no small show of success. One dashing calls them "glittering generalities." Another bluntly calls them "self-evident lies!" And others insidiously argue that they apply to "superior races." These expressions, differing in form, are identical in object and effect—the supplanting of the principles of free government, and restoring those of classification, caste, and legitimacy. . . . They are the vanguard, the miners and sappers of returning despotism. We must repulse them, or they will subjugate us.

The attack on Jefferson's axioms of free society by the Democrats of Lincoln's day

finds its parallel in the attack on Lincoln's vision of a free society by the reactionary Republicans of our day. We know, and all the more profoundly after Lincoln's experience, that those who argue insidiously about "superior races" are indeed the miners and sappers not merely of returning despotism but of a new tyranny which we call fascism. And in the face of this threat which torments more than a nation—a world—we return to Lincoln to discover the source of our confident affirmation: "We must repulse them, or they will subjugate us."

A GREAT FOLK HERO

Small wonder that Lincoln should be the great folk hero of American literature, a literature whose Great Tradition, as Granville Hicks clearly showed in his book, is the tradi-

tion of a militant and creative democracy. For Lincoln is our noblest symbol of a quest, at first hesitant and groping, and then increasingly conscious and determined, a quest of the common people for a life free from greed and hate and oppression. Robust Whitman could speak of Lincoln only in hushed and reverent tones. Carl Sandburg, in *The People, Yes*, quoted long sections of Lincoln's utterances on the great destiny of the working class, and these "prose" utterances could only strengthen the vigorous accents of his verse. The great American writers respected the man and not the myth, for the real man is a greater legend than any lie.

Robert E. Sherwood's *Abe Lincoln in Illinois* (Charles Scribner's Sons, \$2) is, as Ruth McKenney pointed out in her stirring review, an inspiring play because it deals with the man Lincoln, and because it frankly deals with him from the point of view of a modern person who wants to say, as boldly as Lincoln learned to say, "We must repulse them, or they will subjugate us." In his foreword to the published play, Carl Sandburg pays tribute to its success. One goes away from the play, Sandburg says, "haunted by some reality of Lincoln's



"... that madman in the White House!"



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presence, of his sobriety and wit, of his somber broodings over the Family of Man on the earth and the strange prices of devotion and discipline paid for the getting and keeping of freedom." Lincoln's somber broodings were painful. The decisions which he had to make were very difficult indeed, and he could not make them speedily. There are moments, as Sandburg says, when the lines of Sherwood "achieve an involved, baffling Hamlet of democracy." But decisions he made, the greatest ones, and in time. Lincoln is not at all the sort of Hamlet who justifies those of our contemporary liberals who swing from one shaky limb to another until it is much, much too late to learn the difficult art of walking on the solid earth. He is, rather, a challenge, and Sherwood has portrayed him as a challenge, to indecisiveness.

MARX'S COMMENT

There are times when one feels impatient with Lincoln. Billy Herndon, his Abolitionist law partner, is so terribly right when he insists that the emancipation of the slaves is the necessary condition for the victory of democracy. Why doesn't Lincoln see that? we ask. Why? Wendell Phillips was impatient too, and he spoke harshly about him, even after Lincoln was elected President. But when the time came, Lincoln did not fail. The Abolitionists, despite other disagreements, could recognize in Lincoln the great instrument in the cause to which they had devoted their lives. Across the Atlantic, Karl Marx commented on Lincoln's slowness; but he added, significantly, that "once 'old Abe' has convinced himself that such a turning point has been reached, he then surprises friend and foe alike by a sudden operation executed as noiselessly as possible." And after the war, on behalf of the International Workingmen's Association, Marx wrote to Lincoln that the workingmen of Europe "consider it an earnest of the epoch to come that it fell to the lot of Abraham Lincoln, the single-minded son of the working class, to lead the country through the matchless struggle for the rescue of an enchained race and the reconstruction of a social world."

That the sense of internationalism which Marx here expressed was shared by Lincoln is indicated by Mr. Sherwood in his notes to the play. Lincoln once wrote that "The strongest bond of human sympathy, outside of the family relation, should be one of uniting all working people, of all nations, and tongues, and kindreds." This spirit of a fraternalism which transcends national frontiers, a spirit so pregnant with meaning for our day, is further illustrated in the reply which Lincoln gave, through Charles Francis Adams, our minister in London, to the International Workingmen's Association. Thanking "the friends of humanity and progress throughout the world," the reply stated that "Nations do not exist for themselves alone, but to promote the welfare and happiness of mankind by benevolent intercourse and example." As Sherwood points out: "The reason that Lincoln lives today, and still inspires so many men

everywhere with the will to shake off their chains and find freedom and opportunity in the brotherhood of life, is that he was essentially a citizen of the world. . . . He was forever conscious of the obligation of all Americans to their brethren in all other lands—to 'the Liberal party throughout the world'—to make the democratic spirit live and grow."

HAY'S DIARIES

We are not surprised, then, to read in the diary of John Hay, his youthful secretary, that Lincoln, at a musical matinee by the members of the 12th New York, "begged for the *Marseillaise*." (*Lincoln and the Civil War in the Diaries and Letters of John Hay*, selected by Tyler Dennett; Dodd, Mead & Co., \$4.) Nor are we surprised to find in this diary, which Hay began to keep in April 1861, abundant and dramatic testimony to the humanity of "the Ancient," as the private secretary affectionately called the President. When the wounded soldiers from Massachusetts come to see Lincoln in the White House, they enter "confused and flushed." They go out "easy, proud and happy." Lincoln could discuss his dreams with other men, just as he could tell a yarn, when there was a neat point to be made. Once he dreamed that he was in a company of plain people who began to comment on his appearance when they recognized him. One of them said, "He is a very common-looking man." And the President replied, "Common-looking people are the best in the world: that is the reason the Lord makes so many of them." Lincoln did not allow ceremony to interfere with enthusiasm. He could burst into the office of Nicolay and Hay, after midnight, to show them a funny caricature in a volume of Hood's works, entirely unconscious of the fact that "his short shirt hanging above his long legs and setting out behind him like the tail feathers of an enormous ostrich" was funnier than anything in the book. He could read *Henry VI* and *Richard III* to young Hay until the secretary's heavy eyelids caught his considerate notice and he sent him off to bed. And he could celebrate his reelection by going "awkwardly and hospitably to work shoveling out the fried oysters" at a midnight supper. In a lull of dispatches, he might take the Nasby papers from his pocket and read several chapters about Petroleum V., *con amore*, to Stanton and Dana. Or he might argue, after the theater, about Hackett's reading of one of Falstaff's lines. These are not the pointless anecdotes of eccentricity; they are the irrepensible phases of a personality which, in the most trying and momentous times, does not detach itself from what Hay called its "wealth of simple *bonhomie* and good fellowship." In fighting for humanity, Lincoln remained a human being.

The stories about Lincoln are legion. More than a thousand have been compiled by Emanuel Hertz in *Lincoln Talks: A Biography in Anecdote* (Viking Press, \$3). Gathered from contemporary accounts, from

newspaper files, magazines, government documents, out-of-print books, and unpublished manuscripts, these stories give a kaleidoscopic picture of the man Lincoln. Not every story is accurate. But that is not important. The legend of which these stories are figments is a true legend. For most of the stories that have clustered about the name Lincoln express the best in American life and thought: they are plain, realistic, humorous; their democratic spirit is reflected not so much in what they say formally about democracy as it is in the tone and mood in which they are written. They are a testament to the American Dream, and it is appropriate that the first page should include the passage in which Lincoln speaks of his ancestry: "I don't know who my grandfather was, and I am much more concerned to know what his grandson will be."

THE TRUE LINCOLN

Lincoln's life, Mr. Sherwood has reminded us, "was a work of art, forming a veritable allegory of the growth of the democratic spirit, with its humble origins, its inward struggles, its seemingly timid policy of 'live and let live' and 'mind your own business,' its slow awakening to the dreadful problems of reality, its battles with and conquests of those problems, its death at the hands of a crazed assassin, and its perpetual renewal caused by the perpetual human need for it." Whether one reads Mr. Sherwood's own play, or the journals of John Hay, or the anonymous anecdotes in *Lincoln Talks*, this is the truth that shines forth. It is a truth that we dare not ignore on this hundred-and-thirtieth anniversary of Lincoln's birth. SAMUEL SILLEN.

"Sirocco"

Granville Hicks reviews Ralph Bates' new stories

IN THIS moment of Spain's agony, in this moment of dedication to unceasing struggle, Ralph Bates' *Sirocco and Other Stories* (Random House, \$2.50) appears as appropriately as *The Olive Field* did, in the first month of the rebellion. As *The Olive Field*, written before the electoral success of the People's Front, helped us to understand that democratic victory and the peril in which it stood, so *Sirocco* moves with the spirit of the people's battle. Bates gives us here the invincible Spain.

NO BITTERNESS

Though most of its stories concern revolution and war, and though it is certainly born of the long struggle of loyalist Spain, *Sirocco* is an impressively impartial book. I can find in it no trace of bitterness. The earlier stories show the exploitation of the peasants, as the later give us glimpses of fascist cruelty, but Bates never piles up an indictment or even underscores an accusation. He has consciously avoided sensationalism, even when sensationalism would be absolutely truthful. He is looking for something in the lives of the Span-

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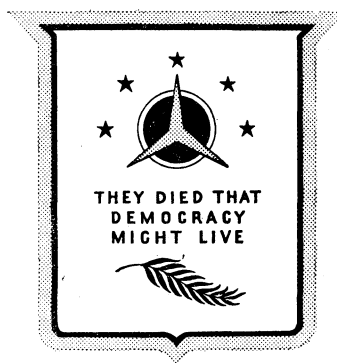
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ish people more fundamental than their sufferings, and for something deeper in the revolutionary movement than the mere righting of wrongs.

I wonder if a lesser writer than Bates could afford to give such an impression of impartiality, and if a writer who had not fought in Spain would dare to do it. Bates does not have to prove his partisanship in books. His years in the Spanish labor movement and months in the Spanish army have taught the world where he stands. When, as in "The Yoke," he portrays fascists, he does not have to hate them and make a show of his hatred, for he has given proof of his resistance to them and their ways. He has won the right to understand them and even to pity them a little. Pity is dangerous only when it weakens the will, and who does not know that the will of Ralph Bates cannot be weakened?

WRITERS IN ACTION

Sirocco suggests, as Malraux's *Man's Hope* has already suggested, that in our time great literature is most likely to be given us by writers who have learned to act or by men of action who have learned to write. The problem of the writer is always to find a vantage point from which he can see clearly, and today that vantage point seems to be in the midst of the battle. On the surface it appears that Bates and Malraux can write so well of the Spanish war because they know what they are talking about, and to a certain extent that is true. But they have gained a psychological advantage as well by their participation. They know what they believe because they have put their beliefs to the test, and they do not have to argue about them. They have no need for apologetics or polemics. They can let experience speak for itself, for their kind of experience—and perhaps only their kind of experience today—speaks convincingly.

In other ways, of course, they are quite unlike. Malraux is interested in the revolutionary spirit, whether he finds it in China, in Germany, or in Spain, for he sees that spirit as the noblest and truest manifestation of human nature in the contemporary world. Bates, on the other hand, looks for the roots of the revolutionary movement, the basic human aspirations out of which it springs. The difference is suggested in their attitudes towards comradeship. To Malraux it is a difficult and infinitely valuable achievement. Bates finds it just as valuable, but sees it as quite natural, something that has been made difficult, perhaps, but that can be and should be easy. Malraux finds in revolution a flowering of the human spirit. Bates sees in the daily lives of simple people the possibilities that sanctify revolt.

THE SENSE OF LOCALITY

For Malraux the revolutionary spirit transcends national boundaries. Bates would not deny this, but he is always concerned with its appearance in a particular locality. "A good revolutionary," says Andreu in the title

story, "must have a sense of locality; I mean that he should know and love the country he works in, the *little* country. The valley he tills, he must sing in it and listen to its peculiar echoes; the village whose gardens he tends, he must be concerned not only for its material welfare, but its decorum, its dignity; he should resent vulgarization of its tales, of its music, or even of the cry of its night watchmen. He must, in fishing a coast, know more than the reefs, the depths of the sea's bottom, and the mysterious currents, but the habits of mind and the hearts of the men who fish there. By such a love a man may be lifted above mere obstinacy in opinion, or dry, crackling fanaticism, and revolutionary passion will not be egotism with him. For him, revolutionary creation will be the unfolding and the nourishing, the bringing to perfection, of what good the past has created, or as near to perfection as carters, weavers, melon growers, and fishers can hope to arrive."

Bates found his little country in Spain many years ago. He could have found it as well, I think, in Mexico or the United States or even in his native England. His impulse is always to identify himself with men in their daily lives, and his success in this gives his tales their beauty. Malraux went to Spain because there was the revolution. Bates was in Spain, and as soon as the civil war began fought side by side with his people. And he writes about them as he fought beside them, without self-consciousness and with complete integrity.

SIMPLE FOLK

His tales are mostly of fishermen and peasants, of how a boat was launched or a field planted, of how a prostitute longed for her home or a woman died in childbirth. Of the three long stories, one tells about a revolutionary hiding away in a Catalonian village, the second describes a Catholic doctor in Franco's territory, the third is the tale of an undisciplined scout in the Pyrenees. Bates knows them all, knows them intimately, and his knowledge is a marvel. In "43rd Division," for example, the account of Pere's climbing the mountain is a fine piece of writing, so tense that it becomes almost unbearable, but even more remarkable is the utter rightness of what goes on in the man as he carries on his single-handed campaign. This is the work of a great artist, and of a man who has seen much and been no small part of what he has seen.

Bates, as even my brief quotation shows, is not a careful writer. On the good side, it may be pointed out that he suffers from none of the inhibitions that have so many of his contemporaries tied up in knots. He knows what he wants to say, and says it without embarrassment or difficulty. On the other hand, though he often writes with great beauty, he sometimes writes awkwardly or even obscurely. It would be pointless, however, to recommend critical revision. What one feels, watching the growth of his work, is that

he will mend his faults in his own way. His flow, which—fortunately and amazingly in this age of crabbed and stammering authorship—does not diminish, does become purer.

BATES, THE MAN AND ARTIST

I could go on, exploring this aspect and that of Bates's work, but I should always come back to the man himself. I went to meet him for the first time in a railroad station, and asked how I should recognize him. A friend said, "Watch for the man who looks least like a novelist and least like an officer in the International Brigade, and that will be Ralph." It was. And as, in the days that followed, to the author and the soldier was added the musician, the student of Joyce and Proust, the labor organizer, the authority on art, and, above all else, the warm-hearted companion, the wonder grew. But at the heart of every new manifestation of Ralph Bates was his devotion to the cause for which he had fought in Spain and was ready to fight for anywhere in the world. And at the heart of that devotion was the wisest understanding of men and the sincerest participation in their hopes I have ever met. These are the qualities of *Sirocco*. GRANVILLE HICKS.

"Air Raid"

MacLeish's Second Radio Verse-Play

"STAY as you are: stay with the sunlight on your hair," says a young man to his lover in the morning hours before the bombers come. "Harry, Harry, be quick, Harry," calls a young boy to a friend, eager to be off to school or play. The old men mumble and drone, and the women chatter over clotheslines and back fences—a little self-pity, some small talk.

The town is near the border, any border. The country on the other side has issued an ultimatum that expires in the morning. Territory must be given, rights ceded, *Anschluss*—or else. And the amazing point—the point that seems to conflict with the newspaper files of the past two years—is that most of the townspeople don't believe a word of it. Those over twenty know what war is, but they think of it as involving only paid soldiers and diplomats, on fields and in paneled offices somewhere—but not in their village. "Show them our skirts," say the old women. "No one's making war on women." They soon find out.

The technique of *Air Raid*, MacLeish's second radio play (Harcourt, Brace & Co. \$.75), is similar to *Fall of the City*, his first. The studio director and the announcer carry the burden of the narrative. In *Air Raid*, however, the announcer's part stands out more by the intensity of the lines that are his than by the importance of his role. His job is to describe the coming of the bombers, and MacLeish's writing of the

announcer's lines is simple and direct. Scarcely an adjective is used, rarely a metaphor:

Their flight is from the sun.
They might be low: they might be
Well down—three thousand.
They might be less.
There are many:
Hard to guess how many . . .

The coming of the planes is described exactly as someone whose interest is in the geometry of flight might describe them:

They swing: the wing dips:
There's the signal: the dip: they'll
Dive: they're ready to dive:
They're steady: they're heading down:
They're dead on the town: they're nosing
They're easing over: they're over.

The writing is lean, almost bare. *Air Raid* was written for the radio audience, the audience used to hearing blow-by-blow accounts of prize fights. It is an audience more interested in left jabs than in the announcer's prose. And MacLeish, it seems to me, must have calculated something of that in writing *Air Raid*. All his figures are visual, quick, designed for people who must get his meaning immediately or not at all. This puts a tough problem before the poet, but if he masters it, as MacLeish does, the result is eminently satisfying. One can take the book of *Air Raid* to a quiet place and sense the coming of the bombers with the immediacy the people of Barcelona knew three weeks ago.

RICHARD H. ROVERE.

Books and Authors

THE 1939 volume of *Best Short Stories*, edited by Edward J. O'Brien, will contain Richard Wright's "Bright and Morning Star," which first appeared in *NEW MASSES*. Wright's "Fire and Cloud," it will be remembered, won second prize in the O. Henry Memorial volume edited by Harry Hansen. . . . Another sweep for a *NEW MASSES* writer: Albert Maltz' "The Happiest Man on Earth," which won the first O. Henry prize, will also appear in the O'Brien collection. . . . The book will be published by Houghton Mifflin in May. It will include stories by Meridel LeSueur, Albert Halper, and Robert M. Coates. . . . In January 1938 we published a memorable story about Spain by Ted Allan called "A Gun Is Watered." Allan, a young Canadian journalist, had just returned from Spain, where he spent eight months covering the war for the Federated Press and the Toronto *Daily Clarion*. His first novel, *This Time a Better Earth*, is a story about American volunteers in the Abraham Lincoln Battalion. It will be issued very shortly by Morrow. . . . And Gustav Regler, who helped organize the International Brigade and fought as a political commissar with the loyalists, will appear on the spring fiction list with *The Great Example*, the first of his novels to be published in English. Regler was raised as a Catholic in the Rhineland. Several of his novels appeared in Germany before the burning of the books. Severe wounds suffered at Huesca caused Regler to be invalidated out. He was made a Spanish citizen. During the winter of 1937-38, Regler lectured to wide and eager audiences in America. His book will be published by Longmans. . . . John L. Spivak will tell plenty in his *Secret Armies: The New Technique of Nazi Warfare*, which *Modern Age* will bring out this season.

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Housing Goes to Town

"One Third of A Nation" on the screen is a dramatic film of the cause and cure of slums . . . "Idiot's Delight" flunks James Dugan's examination

LET me be the first to congratulate Mr. Harold Orlob and Paramount Pictures for the rare feat of making a picture in which the hero is a house. Of course the movie version of *One Third of a Nation* (Rivoli Theater, N. Y. C.) has Sylvia Sidney and Leif Erikson working out the boy-gets-girl finale in a winning way, but the happiest ending is that people get houses. Mr. Orlob is the gentleman who blew the cobwebs out of the Eastern Service studios at Astoria, Long Island, to roll the first feature picture made in the East since Hecht & McArthur composed their gruesome whimsies hereabouts some years ago. *One Third of a Nation* is a thrilling picture: a hard-hitting, intensely dramatic, and serious picture, a landmark in the American film.

With title by Idea Man F. D. Roosevelt of Washington, D. C., and a previous embodiment as a WPA Living Newspaper hit, this trail-blazing movie is the most highly developed social film yet made in our country. The villain is an old-law tenement in New York City, one of those crepuscular monsters of urban poverty, a glowering, inanimate Fagin twisting and warping the lives of the city's workers. Personalizing one of these houses and giving him a whining old man's voice provides one of the gripping sequences in the picture. He speaks to a boy he has crippled and robbed of hope; he taunts the idealist who would tear him down and build houses amid sun and trees, and the evil old slum nearly wins in the end. He is also the voice of the rural slum, the company houses, the unending rows of dreary brick Knickerbocker dwellings that make the American factory town hideous: he is the villainous fact of life for one-third of our people who live in his embrace.

PLENTY OF PUNCH

The movie adaptation by Oliver H. P. Garrett and the director, Dudley Murphy, differs from the WPA kaleidoscope, in the addition of a love story between the rich young owner of the tenements and a girl of the slums. At the outset my reaction to this idea is: phooey. But it has been managed with a maximum of taste and the love story is successfully fused into the bigger idea. A straight documentary treatment of the subject would seriously mar its reception by the public: we have had Hollywood and love too long and too thoroughly to be ready for a film that tells its story with the factual punch of the WPA play. But punch there is, and plenty of it, in *One Third of a Nation*.

The rich young man, played by Mr. Erikson, happens to witness a fire disaster in the

slums and he takes an injured boy to the hospital in his big roadster. The sister of the lad, Miss Sidney, accompanies him, and from her the young man learns a few things about how the other one-third lives. He agrees that the owner of the tenement is the criminal. When he learns that he is himself the owner he is considerably shaken and he resolves to make amends by razing his roach-ridden real estate and erecting decent houses. How obstacles present themselves and how they are surmounted is the substance of the drama, packed with facts and acute observations of slum life. There is more sober and accusing realism in this film than I have ever seen in an American commercial feature. One scene in which Miss Sidney protests against conditions which require her to change her clothes in the same room with her father and her boy friend is a poignant example.

SUPERIOR ACTING

I think more stress should have been put on federal housing plans. The rich boy cooperates with the city in his scheme but it would have been more accurate to have also brought in the bigger housing builder, the federal government.

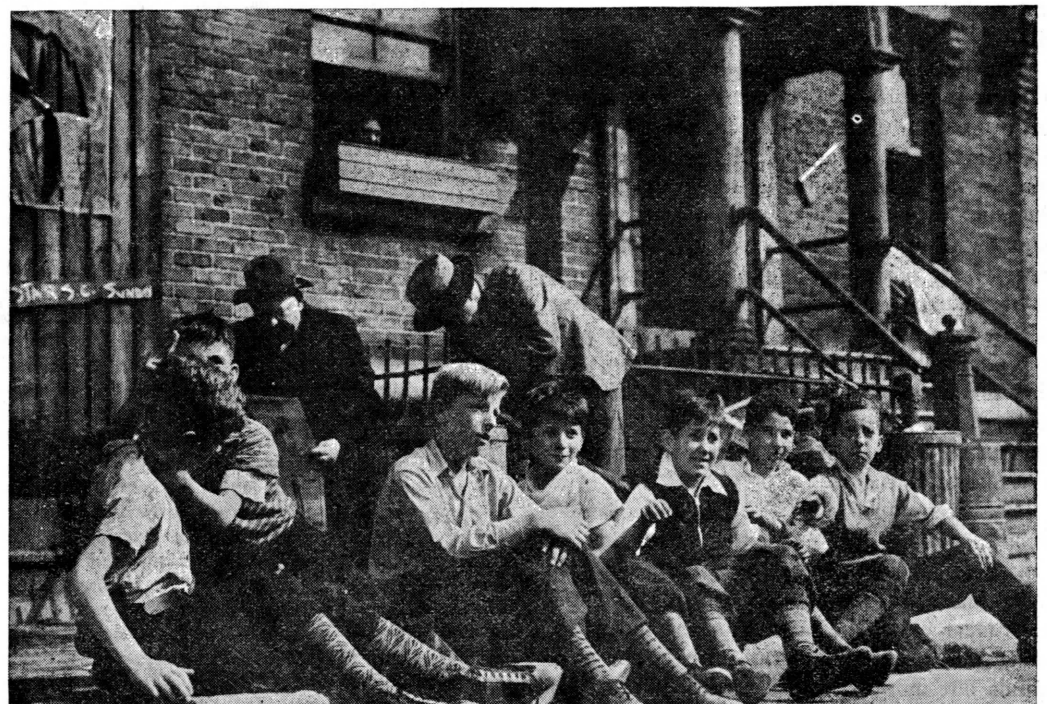
The acting, enriched by the availability around New York of superb character players, is far superior to the average film. Miss Sidney, Mr. Erikson, Myron McCormick who plays a sympathetically portrayed Red; Sidney

Lumet, a ten-year-old boy who is miles ahead of the Hollywood moppet; Hiram Sherman, as Erikson's witty crony; and a keen cast of city types, make up this superiority. The kids of the slums are the most convincing bunch of small boys since the French film *Generals without Buttons*. Young Mr. Lumet, a product of the Jewish theater, should be snatched up by Warner Brothers immediately—to be featured in John Garfield's next picture. The camera work is good, with a happy minimum of process shots. Dudley Murphy's direction could be more pointed for my taste. No one can afford to miss this thrilling evidence that the films are growing up in America.

"IDIOT'S DELIGHT"

When a doctor encounters a man who has broken his leg on an icy pavement, does the doctor lecture the sufferer for an hour on the pain of a broken leg? Or does he take the man to a hospital and set the limb? I wish Hollywood would say something straight on the subject of war instead of endlessly repeating to us that war is hell. Really, fellows, we were convinced long ago. Hearst had gruesome war spreads five years ago. You could send Dr. Gallup's survey safari galluping into every homestead in the land and not find a citizen who would declare for a good bloody war.

Perhaps I've stumbled upon the reason MGM sat on the script of *Idiot's Delight* all these years. The front office was waiting until the last obdurate moviegoer was tracked down with his ticket money in his hand and convinced that war is hell. Then the front office gave the signal and the boys ground out a picture that for cowardice, confusion, and commercialism is not worth the common variety of red cent. Hollywood, the daring pioneer in popularizing a goofy hat



REAL SLUM KIDS. A shot from Paramount's film "One Third of a Nation," with Sylvia Sidney, Leif Erikson, Hiram Sherman, and a new juvenile sensation, Sidney Lumet.

style or a revolutionary new lip makeup, is ten years behind the political opinions of the general public. Producers waited until the urban landscape was littered with gangsters wearing dotted lines before they got around to making anti-gang films. The glamour of journalism was dead as a copy nail when Hollywood began to inspire youth with the romance of reportage. In what other industry would they put up with an office boy like Will Hays who has been sabotaging the earning power of the business for a decade?

KISSES FOR HIT AND MUSS

The net effect of *Idiot's Delight* on the topical interests of plain Americans, if I may judge from the comments of a few of them in the Capitol Theater (N. Y. C.) lobby, is nil. The scene is the cocktail lounge of an Alpine hotel in a mythical country which we will call Ruritania. The hotel overlooks a Ruritanian military airdrome and the time is the first day of a world war. An American vaudevillist, a phony Russian princess traveling with a munitions merchant, a German scientist, a mysterious man named Quillery, six dancing blondes, assorted Ruritanian officers, peasants, and minnesingers make up the cast. Bombers take off from the airdrome, which is within flying distance of "Paris, Berlin, and Rome" and apparently bomb large civilian centers. Berlin and Rome attacked by Ruritania! There's a laugh for you. The picture mentions nothing favorable or unfavorable about any European country—except the USSR. The phony Russian, played by Norma Shearer, three or four times repeats stories about her harrowing escape from the Soviets. Hitler and Mussolini make the producers quail and the only unreservedly friendly nation in Europe, the USSR, is handed this kind of innuendo. War, the film hints softly, is due to human nature and maybe munitions merchants. Munitions merchants are the kind of straw men Hollywood sails right into; when there's a dead dog to be whipped, the producers are there with cat-o'-nine-tails.

The character Quillery, who was in the play a Communist, introduces himself in the film as a "preacher" against war. He is the only one who dares to name the Ruritanians as aggressors, for which he is summarily shot. Burgess Meredith draws from these few lines the only punch in the film. The love story between Clark Gable as Harry Van, and Miss Shearer as the Russian, gets the main emphasis. If this boring episode had any symbolical value against the real events of the story, it might have been worth including, but certainly not in the inane and overblown handling it gets from Miss Shearer. Gable's role is kinder to his dramatic limitations.

THE GAGGEROO END

The ending is incredible. Miss Shearer, deserted by the munitions king, is joined by Mr. Gable in the abandoned cocktail lounge as the enemy bombers counter-attack the air base. Amidst the falling timbers and masonry

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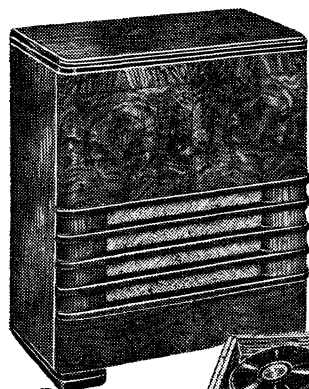
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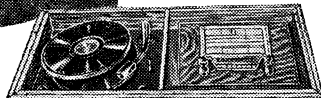
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the two happen to occupy the ten square feet of space that is not damaged, as they rehearse a mind-reading act they plan to present at Piccadilly Circus.

HOPE SPRINGS ETERNAL

Mr. and Mrs. America have been jobbed again. But I do not lose hope in Hollywood. When the fascist bombers set their sights on the MGM studios they may be fortunate enough to interrupt the production of a picture which points out that fascism caused the war.

JAMES DUGAN.

"Jeremiah"

Prophet of Doom
for the Theater Guild?

LATE last week on the stage of its Lown theater the skeleton of the once mighty Theater Guild made another attempt to prove that it had not yet departed this life. For two and a half hours sixty actors, including such competent performers as Kent Smith, Effie Shannon, and Arthur Byron, struggled desperately to negate the rumors of death by stalking through Stefan Zweig's twenty-three-year-old biblical text, *Jeremiah*. The effort was futile, for not even sixty actors, carloads of scenery, or a warehouse full of whiskers could conceal the sound of rattling bones.

Stefan Zweig wrote *Jeremiah* in 1916 while living in wartorn Germany. Sickened by the wasteful struggle, he attempted to record his reaction to it by turning to the tale of the prophet of doom, Jeremiah. Zweig tried to record his conviction that war in any form, for whatever purpose, is inexcusable and useless. In the biblical story of the Hebrew prophet who foresaw the fall of Jerusalem to the army of Nebuchadnezzar and whose impassioned pleas for peace failed to move King Zedekiah until death and destruction were already upon the people of Jerusalem, Zweig thought he saw a parable analogous to Europe of 1916. The Theater Guild in 1939, in turn, thought it saw in Zweig's script a parable analogous to the world of today. Counting upon the intense interest manifest in the plight of minorities today, the Guild scheduled the twenty-three-year-old play for production.

However worthy Stefan Zweig's intentions might have been, he has not succeeded in translating them into play form. The script, reworked by John Gassner and Worthington Minor, is still a crude narrative text bereft of the least sign of dramatic conception. Under Mr. Minor's earnest direction it unrolls as a grotesque, prolix charade that drove Guild subscribers as well as newspaper critics out of the theater long before the final curtain rang down.

WHY DEFEATISM?

Were it not for the unfortunate actors and technicians whose time and effort have been wasted through four weeks of rehearsal, one might even rejoice that *Jeremiah* and its fallacious theme of defeatism came a cropper.

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GOINGS ON

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ENLIST!

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It is impossible to understand why the management of the Theater Guild should choose to present a theme of defeatism at a time when even a high-school boy knows the minorities of the world must stand up and fight lest they be swept from the earth. One can only wonder whether the Guild management elected to preach defeatism at this time out of loyalty to treacherous reactionary principles, or simple ignorance. At any event it is sad to know that the destiny of the Theater Guild, in this precarious stage of its existence, is in the hands of those responsible for presenting *Jeremiah*.
GARRET CONARTY.

Prince Hal

Ruth McKenney on Evans' "Henry IV"

SHAKESPEARE created his Falstaff for good, honest belly-laughs. But jokes don't last for three hundred years—even the greatest of earthy humor takes on a slightly literary tone in the end.

So the audience doesn't roll in the aisles at Maurice Evans' Falstaff, currently on view on Broadway. But that doesn't matter much. Falstaff remains one of the great characters of our literature, a figure before whom (I think, anyway) even Pantagruel fades. Mr. Evans, one of the great actors of this decade, makes Falstaff live and breathe and once again walk the lanes of Merrie England. He takes Shakespeare's robust character out of the annotated editions and gives him back to the theater.

Margaret Webster has done an expert job in recreating *Henry IV* (Part I), for the modern theater. Under her direction the old, unwieldy play comes to life. The battle scenes still creak a bit but no battle with both sides using pikestuffs can ever mean much to audiences who read about air bombings in the evening newspapers. Shakespeare never bothered about realistic battle scenes anyway—some of his best poetry is recited by gentlemen pausing between bloody blows.

Henry IV, either Part I or Part II, has never been my favorite Shakespearean play. I went to see the new Maurice Evans show with loud misgivings.

But I was very wrong. The new production is rousing, exciting, rich theater for Shakespeare scholars or mere laymen.

RUTH MCKENNEY.



S. F. Ramsey



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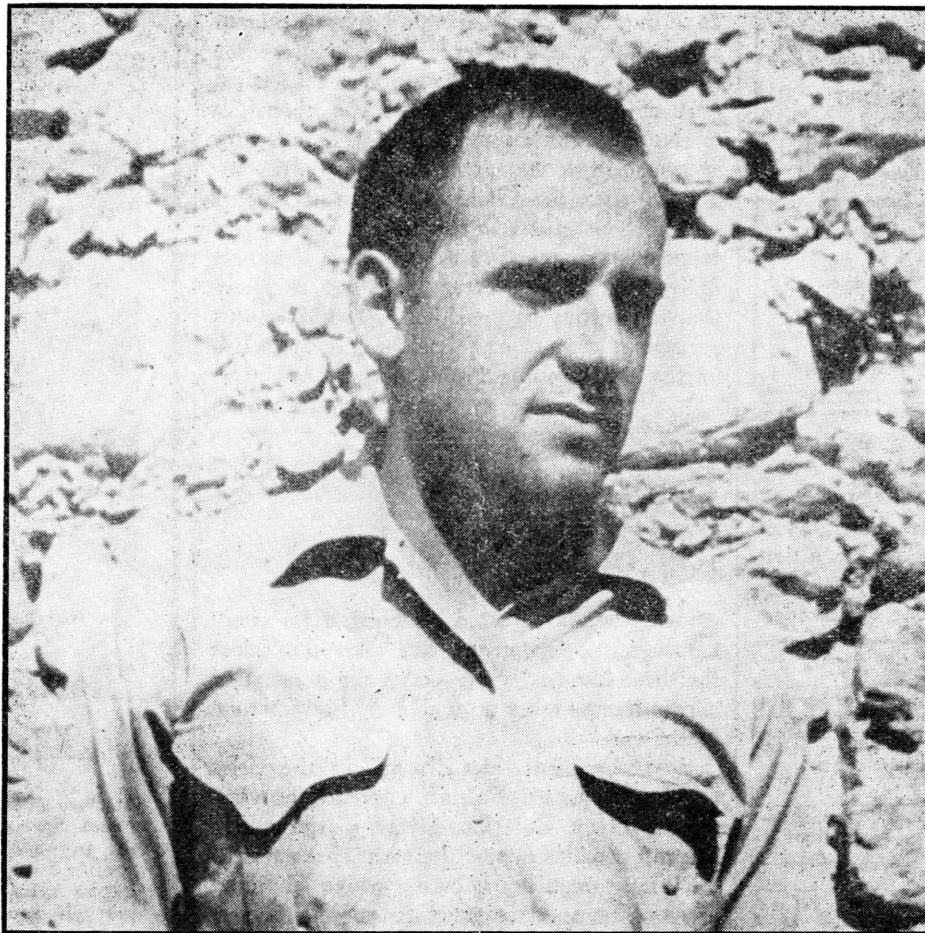
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Arnold Reid, editor of New Masses, killed in Spain

ENLIST!

OFTEN," Joseph North wrote in his dispatches from Spain, "I would come up to the lines and find the men lying in the insecure shade of an olive tree as Capronis and Messerschmidts passed overhead, seeking the battalion. That was the time to lie still. But the men weren't wasting time. More than often I found them lying there reading—*New Masses*. There, while the bombs were landing over in the next valley, or a few fields away, one lad was chuckling over a piece that Robert Forsythe or Ruth McKenney had written. They hung Gropper cartoons in their dugouts. Granville Hicks was a favorite at the frontlines. *New Masses* passed from hand to hand and it never finished its job until it was worn out with the endless reading of fighting men."

We are proud of that; proud too that so many men associated with the *New Masses* served in Spain. One

of our editors died there—brilliant young Arnold Reid. Edwin Rolfe, another editor, worked closely with Ralph Bates and fought through the Ebro actions. Alvah Bessie, whose stirring short story you read two weeks ago, proved one of the best soldiers in the International Brigades. Joseph North, who has now returned to our editorial staff, covered the fronts fourteen months for our magazine. Not only our editors and writers, but Jack Bjoze, of our circulation department, served for nearly two years.

These are *New Masses* men; not only warriors of the pen, but soldiering men in the frontlines.

That is *New Masses*—your magazine. It is a front-line magazine soldiering for a better today and a glorious tomorrow.

Enlist for progress—with *New Masses*.

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