

Paramount's Anti-Labor Movie *by James Dugan*

NEW MASSES

FIFTEEN CENTS

August 8, 1939

The Story of Roy Howard's Man:

Westbrook Pegler

'The House that Venom Built'

by Dale Kramer

Mexico's 1940

by Marc Frank

Herr Trotsky Admits It

by A. B. Magil

CARTOONS BY GROPPER, REA, REDFIELD, HILTON

Between Ourselves

AFTER some months of experimentation our cover typography has been fixed in its present form. The idea of a new type design each week by outstanding contemporary designers was contrived to give the magazine a freshness and eventually to find one worthy of permanency. From this point forward the current design, which was made by I. G. Abrams, will come to you each week.

Readers will be glad to know that we now have in hand Robert Terrall's piece on Capt. Joe Patterson's New York *Daily News*. It will appear in an early issue. Terrall, who writes us from somewhere in Ohio, promises to be off for Chicago soon, where he will gather material on the struck Hearst papers and the *Daily News'* sister paper, Colonel McCormick's Chicago *Tribune*. Then westward, where he will cover still more papers.

William Gropper's cartoon in our July 25 issue, showing two Tories running from an air raid and exulting, "What a blow to Roosevelt," pleased J. B. of Flushing, N. Y., so much that he has framed it and requested

Gropper's signature to add to "one of the best editorial cartoons I have seen in many years." The cartoon has been hung in a prominent place in his home. And one of our Philadelphia readers writes us that he is sending reprints of Crockett Johnson's full page cartoon, "News Item Chamberlain Warns Hitler News Item Chamberlain Warns Hitler (etc.). . . ." (NM, July 18) to all members of the British Parliament.

NM's first venture into double-talk ("A Giagre Nalled Mussotler," August 1 issue) has inspired a comment in kind from I. L. of New York City: "Three cheers for Nilnok. His storticle was the most marverful bit of humiting I have ever sead in myour weekazine. I certively wisire more like it; it was grell."

Camp Followers of the Trail at Buchanan, N. Y., will be visited by Mike Gold Sunday, August 6. Mike will speak at 10 a.m. under the auspices of NM Summer Forums on the subject "A Writer Looks at a Changing World." Last week editor Joseph North spoke at Camp Beacon on "The New Hollywood," an address that was received with great interest. This weekend, August 6, Simon Breines will represent us at Beacon. Mr. Breines is an American consulting architect who was in charge of the erection of the Soviet Pavilion in the World of Tomorrow. He speaks on "World's Fair Architecture." Mike Gold swoops down on Camp Unity, Wingdale, N. Y., on Tuesday, August 8. His subject is "The Contemporary Novel," with particular attention to John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*.

"Absolutely No Time for Comedy" is the title of our back cover text by Arthur Kober, the playwright, who directs it to our vacationing friends who may as well be plugging NM on those long rainy afternoons. H. C. Adamson, our circulation manager, will quickly oblige with special summer subscription forms for this task.

M.G., one of our readers in England, sends the following report:

"We have enormously enjoyed seeing NM week by week for the last few months, and would like to congratulate you warmly on its character. There is a certain quality of liveliness and 'downrightness', which is perhaps American, and which we over here find very refreshing. I, for one, have great hope for the survival of culture (in the sense in which Goering uses the word, 'When I hear the word "Culture," I reach for my revolver') in the United States since I have been reading NM. Your articles read as though the authors all felt themselves marching out to make a new life, as indeed we are."

Who's Who

DALE KRAMER is a native of Iowa now in New York preparing a book on newspaper columnists and completing a novel dealing with farm revolt. He has been active for many years in Midwestern progressive organizations, including the Farm Holiday Association and the Minnesota Farmer-Labor movement. . . . Marc Frank is NM's correspondent in Mexico. . . . Catherine Ridgely, of Washington, D. C., writes us that her story in this issue of NM "was written in spare time, between work and economics classes at George Washington University two years ago, and has been ripening ever since." . . . Maxwell S. Stewart is an associate editor of the *Nation*. . . . Cora MacAlbert, who has written many articles and book reviews for NM, has contributed to the *New Republic*, the *New Yorker*, and *Coronet*. Another of Miss MacAlbert's articles on internes, two of which have already appeared in NM, will be published in a shortly forthcoming issue.

Flashbacks

MEMO to a labor-baiting, evil old man: You are not the only reactionary to hear a piece of John L. Lewis' mind. On Aug. 5, 1936, the

Executive Council of the AFL suspended ten unions holding membership in the CIO. Speaking of this decision Lewis called it "an act of incredible and crass stupidity. An act dictated by personal selfishness and frantic fear. It indicates a total absence of consideration for the wellbeing of the nation's workers and the requirements of an effective labor movement." . . . Memo to the Steel Workers Organizing Committee: The Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers was organized Aug. 3, 1876. . . . In his last published writing, Engels, who died in England Aug. 5, 1895, said: "Above all let the oppressed close up their ranks and reach out their hands to each other across the boundary lines of every nation. Let the international proletariat develop and organize until the beginning of the new century shall lead it on to victory." . . . In the new century, on Aug. 9, 1920, British labor by threat of strike prevented the participation of Great Britain in a war against the Soviet Union, the land where the proletariat already had been victorious. . . . Memo to the liberals whose names are being used by the anti-ism committees: On Aug. 9, 1932, when Hitler's Nazis were reported arming for a march on Berlin, fifteen hundred police raided, not the Nazis, but a Communist meeting in Hamburg.



Jean Starr Untermeyer

Readers of the old "Masses" and the "Liberator" will remember that Jean Starr Untermeyer was among the leading poets of those predecessors of NM—her first poems appeared in their pages. Indeed, Miss Untermeyer was one of the group that started the old "Masses." In a letter that accompanied her article in this issue, she writes, "I remember well the evenings with Piet Vlag and Charlie Winter and Floyd Dell and John Reed and Harry Kemp, Louise Bryant, and many others. It kept me pretty busy making the sandwiches when the meetings were at our house, but I did a lot of listening." Her poetry has since been published in numerous periodicals and books. She is the wife of Louis Untermeyer, poet and anthologist.

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

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NEW MASSES

VOLUME XXXII

AUGUST 8, 1939

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The House that Venom Built

The story of Roy Howard's man—Westbrook Pegler. Dale Kramer gives you one of Sokolsky's running mates. The hardboiled gag man who writes for the boss.

IN AN imitation Bavarian-Alpine chateau atop a knoll in one of Connecticut's literary suburbs sits a man staring out the window at a grove of weeping willow trees. The dour face with its cold eyes above sparrow's egg pouches might be that of a detective, except for the noticeable touch of frustration about the mouth. Finally he commences to punch the keys of the portable typewriter before him, slowly, searching for words, paying more attention to style than to what he is saying. First a long sentence with swinging, sharp-breaking phrases, then a staccato burst of short sentences. After a painful eight hundred words he takes a pencil and begins to revise. Common garden words are weeded out and replaced with rough ones oozing resin and rubbing liniment. The short sentences are tried with commas, the long sentences broken up; petulantly the old pattern is readopted.

This will go on for another two or three hours, for Westbrook Pegler, the American Voltaire, is writing one of those angry, white-heat essays against the tyrants of the land.

The above picture will startle those constant readers who have thought of Pegler as an old-school journalist, a hardboiled don't-give-a-

damn guy who wouldn't allow a minor detail like the freezing of hell to stop him from getting the story, getting it right—and God help the man who tried to buy him off. Here was a guy who drank his liquor straight, slept in his clothes an average of two nights out of the week, and rocked with Homeric laughter at the pomp and pretensions of the world.

Of late years, it was true, an irritating note had crept into his works. The attacks had the same old unbridled fury—but it was noticed that the underdog came in more and more often for assault—with an increasing percentage of the blows going low. Yet the first impulse was to forgive a little confusion—the head wasn't so good, but the heart was right and he'd be back in there swinging for the little fellow after a bit.

Knowledge of the chateau forces a halt, a taking of stock. What manner of man is this who, while professedly a member and official spokesman of "the rabble," lives in a picture-book castle set down in a grove of weeping willow trees? Who while loudly protesting love of the common things of this world spends an uncommon number of weekends on a yacht—which by a coincidence is the prop-

erty of his employer, Mr. Roy Howard.

Pegler was born in Minneapolis, son of Arthur James Pegler, an old-style newspaperman who at the time, in 1894, was a sports-writer for the *Minneapolis News*. The parentage was not altogether fortunate, for the father's tales of journalistic derring-do bred fantasies in the future columnist's mind which caused trouble when they later clashed with the prosaic qualities of which his personality was largely constructed.

The hardest blow to Pegler's early dreams came when his hopes were highest. In 1917, after years as office boy and reporter for the Chicago office of the United Press, he got himself transferred to its London staff where, at twenty-three, he had visions of becoming a famous war correspondent. But two or three excursions into Richard Harding Davis journalism brought only embarrassment and trouble with army officials. He claims later vindication, but at the time he followed a procedure which would hardly have gained Davis' approval—he quit.

After a period of quiet brooding in the navy he returned to America and journalism, again with the United Press, but the will to ad-

Fair Enough

By Westbrook Pegler



There have been complaints of my ability to think things through. These complaints have been placed on file and will receive attention in their regular order, but as a preliminary report on the problem I will say that the difficulty has been stated incorrectly. The fact that I do not think things through is no proof that I am unable to do so, and those who leap to this conclusion are themselves guilty of slapdash thinking. I can think things through, but I don't like to because I always arrive at conclusions very disagreeable to me and find myself in the company of persons and beliefs with whom and with which I would not be found dead.

For example, I see no difference between a Canadian youth of 18 and an American of the same age and insist that it is no more the duty of the Canadian boy to go to Europe and fight for Czechoslovakia than of the American. I hold that the American has no such duty at all and that the British learn a lesson.

So now we come to the point of planning what to do and have no option but to agree with Mr. Chamberlain's declaration in Parliament that we must be prepared for war, especially in the presence of menacing preparations by a nation which is an enemy in all but the formal, declared sense.

Nazi Germany is the enemy of Great Britain and France and of this country, too, because Canada is part of the British Empire, and we stand committed not only by sentiment but by consideration for our own peace and safety to prevent any European enemy of Canada—and this goes for the Japanese, too—from obtaining a foothold in Canada. We have that from paper in the Monroe Doctrine, and we have had affirmation of it recently in a speech by President Roosevelt, and we seem agreed on it.

venture was relegated to fantasy, where it has since remained. Pushing its way into the foreground of his mind was an acquisitive instinct which the closest reading of his columns does not reveal. Looking about for the most lucrative phase of journalism, he noticed that sportswriters drew the biggest money. He decided to become a sportswriter. A clever plan was worked out. As night man for the United Press he rewrote all sorts of stories, but he signed his name only to sports pieces.

HARDBOILED GAG MAN

About that time several practitioners of the art had begun to use a fast-moving, hardboiled style of writing. It suited Pegler well, furnishing a vicarious outlet for his swashbuckling desires. After that it was trial and error. Like a gag man, he noted carefully what went over, what flopped. His style and attitude developed. His income rose. But real proof of his wisdom in choosing sports and the hardboiled style did not come until 1925 when the Chicago *Tribune* Syndicate hired him at more than double his \$125-a-week salary.

A half-dozen years later he got his real break—the one which eventually brought the chateau and a \$65,000 yearly income. Publisher Col. Robert McCormick of the Chicago *Tribune*, then and now one of America's most violent reactionaries, was, in 1932, trying to get Congress to go home before, in its open rebellion against President Hoover, funds were appropriated for relief or some other equally foolish purpose. As a final insult in a calculated campaign of vilification he sent his wrestling writer to report Congress' deliberations. Pegler did so in a manner which caught the eye of another publisher, Roy Howard, who decided to make him a general commentator.

Pegler entered the ranks of the thinkers during the so-called "Roosevelt honeymoon": Walter Lippmann was a professed liberal, Roy Howard's friendship with the President had some years to run, Gen. Hugh Johnson was happy in the "first" New Deal, Dorothy Thompson demanded more socialism in government, and Wall Street itself was daily bowing in the direction of the White House. In this atmosphere it was hardly surprising that his indirect defense of the lynching of two California kidnappers met with an indignant response. It has been said that the column was written as a provocation, a publicity stunt, but the explanation is unlikely. A more logical view is that he was unconsciously writing in his old sports page manner where almost anything went—for example, he had always been able to squeeze out a column on the speculation as to whether wrestlers were members of the human race.

Whatever his reason, the column was clearly out of place in the Scripps-Howard newspapers of the period and he was bundled off to Europe, where some sharp columns on the dictators gave his stuff a liberal tinge. The attitude was maintained for some time after his return to this country. Franklin D. Roosevelt became a sort of personal hero, his satire was directed against social injustice—as true and lasting satire must be—and his personal

support of the Newspaper Guild was not without importance in the early days of the organization.

That approach is a thing of the dim past. Today Pegler stands on the extreme right, his columns the unfairest, most brutal appearing outside the fascist press. It is difficult to understand, for example, how a man can sit in a luxurious country home, fresh from a weekend on a handsome yacht, and compose—not toss off, but carefully think out—the following lines:

Now is the time for all good friends of Mr. Tom Mooney to organize an international society dedicated to the work of keeping Warren K. Billings in prison. As long as Mr. Billings remains behind bars Mr. Mooney will have an excuse to abstain from common toil. . . . For Mr. Mooney's own sake it is to be earnestly hoped that he will not overdo his campaign to free Billings. For if he should use just a half degree too much pressure Mr. Billings also might be turned out as a further vindication of American justice, and Mr. Mooney would be up against a fate which to one so long unacquainted with toil except by hearsay would be hardly preferable to death.

The lines are made more incredible by the fact that Pegler readily admits Mooney's innocence—that he spent twenty years in prison unjustly, of which, incidentally, seven were occupied in the peeling of potatoes, usually considered toil of a not very pleasant sort.

Equally unjustifiable were the tactics he used against the Newspaper Guild and its president, Heywood Broun, in the famous column charging Broun with employment of non-union labor. Learning that the *Connecticut Nutmeg*—edited at the time by several residents of the literary community besides Broun—had engaged as a reporter a young man previously employed on a nearby country newspaper, Pegler thought he saw an opportunity to discredit the guild and also, apparently, Broun, with whom he was supposed to be on friendly terms. Telephoning the *Nutmeg's* new employee, the columnist inquired concerning his guild status. When informed that an application for membership had been sent to guild headquarters, Pegler replied, "I am not interested in whether or not you have made an application for membership; I only want to know whether you were a member of the guild at the time you were hired."

Of course, the *Nutmeg* had violated no guild rule—the organization has never requested that a publisher hire only members of the guild, but merely that the employee join after a given period. Pegler was aware of this, and even if he hadn't been, the column would have been unforgivable. But he knew that the reporter was personally sympathetic with the guild and had taken steps to join.

These are especially flagrant violations of good taste, but the general pattern is little higher in tone. Lately, too, an almost hysterical note has crept into his work. The attacks on President Roosevelt and the New Dealers are becoming increasingly personal, while abuse formerly reserved for the CIO is spewed indiscriminately over organized labor as such. Apparently a mutual admiration exists be-

tween Pegler and Mr. George E. Sokolsky, the *Herald Tribune* columnist and official spokesman for the National Association of Manufacturers (the latter's admiration for his Scripps-Howard colleague was reported by this writer in *NEW MASSES*, July 18), for Pegler has taken over Sokolsky's theory that labor unions cruelly persecute kindly employers. He has even accepted a half interest in the always fascinating J. B. Matthews, a professional former fellow-traveler.

The whole is a curious mixture of Communist-fascist baiting (sometimes the New Deal is one, sometimes the other) first introduced by Dorothy Thompson, but done with an overtone of the peculiar Pegler brutality which renders it the most popular fare of Wall Street. The latter phrase is no epithet, but a cold fact.

WRITING FOR THE BOSS

Recalling a few columns of the past, and aware that he likes to putter about in the garden, that he has been a leader in softball affairs and was sent into ecstasies by the Walt Disney film *Snow White*, it has been customary for writers on the subject to remark that the Westbrook Pegler of the column is a totally different man from the Pegler of real life. They have said that "to hell with everything" had so long been his professional attitude that all perspective was lost, that what other persons were for he automatically opposed. Even Robert Forsythe, starting a column in *NEW MASSES* by calling Pegler a skunk, ended it with the remark that he is "a fundamentally kind man."

I am not prepared to argue that a skunk's peculiar emissions are necessarily the key to his character. But in the higher biological sphere it is not unreasonable to expect a somewhat closer coordination of functions. The conclusion is inescapable that Pegler knows exactly what he is doing. Whether the first paragraph of the column that decorates page 3 was written honestly in a frank moment (he had as well put above his column the lines "This author does not necessarily agree with the views expressed herein") or was inserted as a bit of nonsense to fill up space, there is no doubt as to its accuracy. Pegler is writing for the boss. He knows that those weekends on the yacht are primarily to enable Howard to implant ideas for future columns—that he is a sort of private hatchetman to handle the dirty jobs.

This phase of the Pegler character, while appearing but seldom in the actual columns, has always been discernible to the more practiced eye. When the columnist, concealing his identity, visited Tom Mooney in San Quentin Prison, Mooney took him for a not-too-scrupulous private detective in the employment of unfriendly interests. Again, an Italian official who refused to become angered by his criticism of Mussolini written some years ago during a visit to Italy, suggesting only that he return and get a closer view of fascism, may have had an uncommon sensitivity to a potentially sympathetic mind.

It is distressing, of course, to those who have





admired Pegler's work to note the almost complete victory of the worst side of his nature, and there is reason to believe that he also is unhappy about it—for there is no doubt that his claim of ability to think things through is accurate enough. While this writer has no intention of doing an amateur job of psychoanalysis, it seems obvious that much of the present violence is caused by the clash of his old ideals of fearless journalism with the knowledge that he holds, and cannot loose himself from, the proverbial brass check.

The defensive attitude is particularly noticeable in regard to his neighbors—mostly literary folks who live in unpretentious done-over farmhouses. From his mansion on Weeping Willow Hill he hurls at them the epithet "Doubledome Babbitts," and occasionally singles out one for specific attention. Once a neighbor opened a copy of the *World-Telegram* to discover under the familiar head-

ing "Fair Enough" a savage satire on himself. Hurt—the most friendly relations had always exist between them—and angered, the neighbor demanded an explanation. Pegler replied that he had had no idea offense would be taken (if true, an amazing deficiency in human feeling was here revealed), but the incident, together with others of its kind, has resulted in a general antagonism toward the columnist. The wits have tagged his chateau "the House that Malice Built," and when he dug a pond in the backyard they named it "Lake Venom."

But the loss of some old friendships has been canceled by those new ones gained over a highball or two while bouncing around Long Island Sound, and, as in the case of Dorothy Thompson and others, he found purchases of his column on the increase as he adopted the conservative views of the majority of United States publishers. At present 117 papers with

a claimed circulation of 6,125,000 buy his output.

THE MODERN BRISBANE

On the other hand, Pegler will probably suffer more than other conservative columnists for the reason that his style has had an appeal to working people, who are certain to become increasingly irritated by his anti-union outbreaks. Moreover, his rigid method of composition makes variations on the present subjects difficult—he cannot theorize, but must forever attack. The result is simply dullness—like a worn record played over and again.

Ironically, his method and style have developed to the point where he might be parodied much in the manner that he used to satirize Arthur Brisbane and O. O. McIntyre. Perhaps, after all, that is the most efficient way to describe Pegler—the modern Brisbane.

DALE KRAMER.



"My next number is a little folksong I overheard sung in the countryside near Greenwich, Conn.—'The Horst Wessel Song.'"

Notes from Paris

An American observer takes a look around. The people are unfrightened but the bourgeoisie still does the Chamberlain crawl to the tune played across the Channel.

Paris.

I HAVE been sitting around here for three months, adding the political figures up and down, jumbling them sometimes in search of a new combination, but I have not found anything like a simple answer to the question "Where is France going?" Perhaps this lack of sharpness in the situation is really the answer. The reader will have to decide for himself. All that I can pretend to do is to supply some of the figures, with the warning that some important ones have been left out because they are too complex for an article or because they are changing so rapidly that one had better wait and see.

There is no fright. There was a good deal of fright last September, most of it artificially stimulated by the newspapers of the right. It was dinned into the people's ears that France was unprepared, tragically unprepared, for any German push. Of course, General Gamelin, now the supreme commander of all French fighting forces, thought differently, but his report was partially suppressed, or rather falsified, by Herr Bonnet, the foreign minister. The truth came out too late, and a perfectly orchestrated press prepared the surrender by creating a spirit of panic and despair.

That is gone. The first Munich was a cleansing. A little incident, insignificant in itself but symbolic, may help to communicate the sense of things. On the weekend of July 1-2, when it was prematurely announced that Hitler would be in Danzig on July 20, the crisis atmosphere suddenly returned. All that I heard those days was Hitler, Hitler, Hitler. On the evening of July 1, I was eating dinner at my *pension* in one of the suburbs. The waitress handed me a copy of *Paris-Soir* with a big headline about Hitler's projected visit to Danzig. Everybody looked at it in perfect silence. I ventured to suggest that it was very serious. "Yes, it is starting all over again," said another diner. For some reason, I was not very hungry so I didn't have any soup and when the cheese came, I decided to skip that too. The waitress was startled. She said, her voice persuasive: "Eat! Go ahead and eat! It's that Hitler. But you can worry about him after the cheese just as well."

Nothing very profound, you may say, but perhaps reflective of a profound mood. Last September this waitress would have been wondering how to spend the first weeks of the war with a relative in the Midi.

LEFT POLITICS

Two things stick in my mind—first, the Socialists. For the time being, Paul Faure, the party secretary and unregenerate Munichois, is running the show. Blum put up a miserable defense at the recent congress, perhaps be-

Espionage En Masse

A SCANDAL is breaking in France, bigger by far than the Stavisky expose which catapulted M. Daladier from office in February 1934. The French General Staff, according to the *Week*, famous British newsletter, considers it of far greater moment than the revelations of the Moscow trials. M. Bonnet, French foreign minister and architect of the Munich pact, is directly involved. So are MM. Monzie and Pomaret, both Cabinet ministers, and members of the Union Socialiste Republicaine, which cannot be regarded as a political party any longer but a bought agent of the German government.

The General Staff, says the *Week*, has a full list of all those who have been receiving Nazi money. They include a leading gentleman on the staff of *Le Matin*, and the editor of another Right newspaper. As in the case of Aubin and Poirier, French journalists who sold the minutes of the Parliamentary Defense Committee to the Gestapo, the General Staff wants to proceed vigorously but fears sabotage from members of the Cabinet and the Ministry of Justice.

Only two members of the Cabinet, Mandel and Campinchi, seem to be siding with the General Staff. Daladier is wavering. Firm action would wreck his Cabinet, and send one or two ministers to suicide, exile, or jail.

The break may come with arrests of forty to fifty well known political figures in Alsace, where the Gestapo has been active for a long while. *L'Humanite*, French Communist newspaper, in an article by an editor, Lucien Sampaix, on July 18, exposed a certain Otto Abetz, Nazi agent in cahoots with Bonnet. The government prosecuted Sampaix. The issue aroused terrific pressure from many sections of the press and the public. Sampaix was acquitted and the facts are coming out.

One of the Nazis now arrested is a certain Hirsch, wealthy financier who established great influence in the newspapers *Oeuvre* and *Republique* with Hitler money. Another is Jean Amourelle, official stenographer to the Military Affairs Committee, the man who gave the minutes to Aubin and Poirier. Incidentally, Amourelle is a member of the Trotskyist Socialist Workers and Peasants Party. One of the gang organizers who fled to Germany was Elizabeth Buttner, former secretary to Julius Streicher, the Munich anti-Semite, and a close personal friend of Madame Bonnet.

cause he was sick, more probably because he did not want to risk a split and therefore had to pay blackmail. Faure and his followers outmaneuvered Blum at every turn and carried every vote but the one on foreign policy which was a stalemate. Actually, it now turns out, Faure might just as well have won that too.

The split in the Socialist Party is extremely deep. The sides are evenly matched, but Faure holds certain trumps. The party always managed to subdue its internal differences by a sort of trading arrangement. Faure completely controls the party machinery proper; Blum, in return, directs the newspaper, *Le Populaire*, so that he always has more to say about policy. At the recent congress, Faure was determined to win all votes on internal party matters, such as relations with the Communists. The Blumists let him win on that, but in return were determined to decide the party's foreign policy. The Faurists obliged, in part, and that is how unity triumphed. These exchanges could be multiplied almost indefinitely.

Faure, moreover, flushed with victory, again began to write for *Le Populaire*. Recall that the party resolution on foreign policy was a typical "black-white" affair, half of it vowing resistance against aggression, the other half devoted to more appeasement. So, almost any day, Blum can be found on the lefthand side of the paper expressing one viewpoint, Faure or Severac, his assistant secretary, on the righthand side with another. But Faure is belligerent and uncompromising. Blum is timid and weak. The man's mind is extremely subtle but it only makes matters worse when he doesn't know what he wants, which is almost always. Recently the Faurists won a vote prohibiting the Paris Socialists from participating in the July 14 demonstration because the Communists would be in it. Blum voted with the minority. The Faurists are publicly exultant. They care less about the catastrophic drop in party membership than about their Pyrrhic victories in party committees and congresses.

THE COMMUNISTS

There is no shadow of a split in the Communist Party, so there is no need to deal at length with matters of policy, which remain what they were before Munich. What I have sensed is an extremely fortunate return of a morale which was somewhat weakened between September 30 and March 15. It would be idle to think that a party as large as the French Communist Party could not be affected by the general weakening of morale in France. The Communists—and this cannot be too strongly emphasized—are the only

genuine working class party in France, but for that very reason, it cannot fail to feel in its own ranks the shifting moods of the working class. Defeatism has to be fought inside, as well as among the people generally, though the problem will be on a wholly different plane.

May Day in Paris, for example, was extremely disappointing. Compared to the heroic days of three and four years ago, it was depressing. But since then there has been a steady and remarkable recovery of morale. A great fete commemorating the 150th anniversary of the French Revolution was held at the tremendous Buffalo Stadium under Communist auspices. Nobody, I daresay, was sure just how it would turn out. The result was inspiring. Not only was the stadium completely packed, not only was the fete a glorious success, but the spirit of the people there was high, firm, solid. Or another sign: the government forbade the May Day marchers to parade from the Bastille to the Nation, so there was almost no march, but permission was obtained for the July 14 celebration. The authorities, you may be sure, did not change their minds because they flipped a coin and it fell on the other side.

As in the United States, only more so, parties (with the exception of the Communist) do not mean very much because each is hopelessly split into pro-Munichois and anti-Munichois. This is the abiding reality, not labels and not leaders. In essence there are only two parties in France today, the party of resistance and the party of surrender.

Since March 15 more and more people on the right have become either disillusioned or frightened about appeasement. I hasten to add, in order that there should be no illusions, that this change is only relative. *The blood and bones of the French bourgeoisie are still Munichois.* But the blood is thinner and thinner, the bones are weaker and weaker. Among the number disillusioned with appeasement count a figure like Louis Marin, a leader of extreme conservatism, who used to be incredibly venomous about the left. He liked to eat Communists well fried. But Marin now bitterly curses the men of the right for their betrayals of France. Of course, Marin once had a hand in them too.

The Alexandretta affair was a hard one to swallow. In order to get an agreement with Turkey, the French had to give away that very strategic territory, though they could have got a much better alliance in 1935, and again in 1936, for nothing because the Turks were begging for it. Some men of the right did not fail to complain, not against the deal but against the humiliation. England, for example, reached an agreement with Turkey but had to pay nothing, though there are more Turks in Mosul than there are in Alexandretta. Andre Tardieu wailed, "We are no longer in the time of Clemenceau—the English lead and we follow. . . . Only, while England gave nothing to reach an agreement, France gave a territory called the Sanjak of Alexandretta." But Andre Tardieu had a

hand in making this humiliation possible too.

There is only one thing which keeps the French Tories from complete demoralization and that is the British Tories. The point has been reached where the dependence among the French Munichois is really stunning. One has the uncomfortable feeling that political life here is a pale reflection of events and decisions across the Channel. That was so before but it is now appalling. The French press has always been livelier than the British, but not now. Every day the same deadly preoccupation: what has Chamberlain or Halifax or some other Britisher said or done, will say or do, might say or do. It is very dull and very disheartening, because this rotting on the French right cannot fail to affect the country. It is the men on the right who rule.

So it is with the Soviet negotiations. Several times, it looked as though the right was ready to launch a savage campaign against the interminable conversations in Moscow. Indeed, the campaigns were started, but they always stopped short of their objective. The correspondents telephoned from London that the Foreign Office was still optimistic and expected a full agreement any day now, or any hour, etc., etc. So the right has been holding its fire. *But the guns are still there, and that is more important than the temporary caution.* For the guns are still there in London too, and if you look behind the guns for those who man them, you will find exactly the same old sharpshooters who used them, not so long ago, against the Austrians, the Czechs, the Spaniards.

The course of neutrality legislation in the United States has been a bitter disappointment here. The importance of such setbacks cannot be overemphasized. There is so much hope and confidence in the United States and in the American people that victories by the Congressional Munichers cannot fail to have the most unfortunate results.

Nevertheless, there are some elements of tragic humor in it all. Herr Hoover's article in the *American Magazine* got a wide press here, and the comments were maddening. I cite only one, from *Le Matin*, probably one of the three or four worst pro-Munich papers in France. *Le Matin* was very angry with Herr Hoover's idea that the United States would be assured of twenty-five years' peace if Germany swallowed Western Europe. The editor wrote, in the biggest type on the page:

We have already heard this type of reasoning. It came from the Bolsheviki theorists who take the position that Soviet Russia would enjoy so much the greater security if the bourgeois states would kill themselves off and if they would permit them to do so. Thus, once again, we see the great conservatives speaking like men of the Comintern.

Delightful, Hoover as a Communist. But the label need not be taken too seriously. When the editor of *Le Matin* was searching for something really vicious to call Herr Hoover, he naturally hit upon the Communist angle, because that was the worst he could think of.

It only remains to quote a sentence from

the *London Times* on the same subject and the same day:

By those who wish to remove the embargo such a declaration would be regarded as a direct incitement to the aggressor nations to go ahead in Europe; and there are few who can believe that the American continent would long remain safe if resistance in Europe were broken.

Isolationist journals in the United States, I recall, used to run editorials (and may still be doing so) in which Europe was going to the dogs because there was not sufficient will to resist, because nations would not take risks in the cause of their own national security, etc., etc. Then the editorials would conclude that the United States had better keep out of the European mess, it was futile or worse to resist fascist reaction, and nothing was more deplorable than such unnecessary risks, etc., etc. If only the editorialist of *Le Matin* would control the isolationist press in the United States and American isolationists would edit *Le Temps!* What a front of resistance we could organize in practically no time at all!

This brings us into the realm of fantasy. But the essential point is this: the policies of appeasement and isolation are so flimsy that the advocates of both turn into rabid resisters—as long as they have their eyes turned across the ocean. THEODORE DRAPER.

Soviet Farm Fair

Moscow is having a big fair of her own. The All-Union Agricultural Exhibition, which opened August 1, shows the agricultural advancement of the USSR in fifty large pavilions. Groves of palms, banana trees, and citrus orchards, transplanted from the Caucasus a year ago, have survived outdoors the rigorous Northern winter through the ingenuity of Soviet horticulturists. Exposition visitors see luxurious tropical gardens in bloom in Moscow. Of great importance to Soviet economy is the frost-resisting hardy perennial wheat developed by Soviet plant wizards, which makes it possible to grow wheat within the Arctic circle. Some of this wheat, made by crossing with wild tundra grass, is being shown in the Soviet Pavilion at the New York World's Fair. The eleven constituent republics are represented by pavilions styled in the character of the autonomous cultures of the USSR. Uzbekistan and Turkmenia exhibit the progress of cotton planting in Central Asia in halls reminiscent of the Arabian Nights. The exhibition covers 350 acres on the outskirts of Moscow.

Japan Influences Dale

DALE CARNEGIE, having won friends and influenced people on a mass basis here, has quietly sailed for Japan, as an official guest of the Japanese government. With expenses paid he will "gather material" and "study the Far Eastern situation" for lecture and radio engagements after his return.

Mexico's 1940

That land prepares for presidential elections. Progressives unite around Manuel Avila Camacho. Reaction grooms General Almazan, one of Mexico's wealthiest men.

Mexico City.

WHEN the National Council of the Party of the Mexican Revolution (PRM) met recently to choose a successor to Luis I. Rodriguez, its president, who had suddenly resigned, for the first time in Mexican history the president of the republic gave no indication as to whom he would like to see at the head of the "official" party. The National Council was left completely free to name whomever it pleased, and its choice fell on Gen. Heriberto Jara, director of the Military Academy.

President Lazaro Cardenas' silence is disconcerting to old-style Mexican politicians. Hitherto, the bandwagon has got under way well before the elections, or, at any rate, in time for the boys to get aboard. It is true that Cardenas himself was not notably favored by his predecessor, Boss Calles, until well on into the campaign. Calles hesitated between the steady, honest, and undistinguished Cardenas and the far more prominent Perez Trevino, now nominal head of a big section of the anti-Cardenas forces. Cardenas took things into his own hands, made one of the first extended tours of the country ever embarked on by a candidate for the presidency, and obtained the backing of the resurgent labor forces now organized in the militant CTM (Mexican Workers Federation). He took the Six Year Plan seriously and expelled his mentor, Calles, when that gentleman's assiduous reading of *Mein Kampf* put new boss ideas into his head.

But Cardenas had to go slowly, for he had inherited what J. H. Plenn, in his recent book, *Mexico Marches*, calls a "mess of kingfishes," including the late Saturnino Cedillo and a lot of potential Cedillos organized in the old PNR (National Revolutionary Party) who managed to climb on in time.

HOW CANDIDATES ARE CHOSEN

In Calles' time, and long before him, there were only two methods of winning a presidential election in Mexico: the boss' "suggestions" backed by plenty of slush funds, or guns. Since Obregon's time (1920), force never succeeded though it was often tried. But from Dec. 1, 1920, to Dec. 1, 1934, the boss imposed his successor since he could not be reelected himself.

Until the formation of the PRM in April 1938, the "official" party always won the elections. Whoever succeeded in the "official" party's primaries was a certainty. The party was financed by public moneys, "voluntary contributions" from future officeholders, and a levy of one day's pay per month from all civil servants, besides what it could make on the side from big business and finance. Cardenas abolished all that last year. He decided



THE PRESIDENT COMES TO TOWN. Lazaro Cardenas is greeted by a huge labor demonstration on his arrival in Ensenada, in lower California.

to take democracy in Mexico very seriously.

It is a situation which, despite the complete difference of the general setup, is not unfamiliar to the United States. Like Roosevelt, Cardenas cannot ignore the power of the "conservative democrats" in his party. The "malefactors of great wealth" in Mexico still have the choice between using these "conservative democrats" to sabotage Cardenas' "New Deal" or to work through the groups outside the PRM, roughly paralleling the Republican Party but with a more openly fascist tendency and tieup.

The opening of the presidential campaign brought three candidates to the fore: Rafael Sanchez Tapia, military commander of the Federal District, for the right; Francisco Mugica, minister for communications and public works, for what appeared to be the "left"; and Manuel Avila Camacho, for the "middle of the road."

These terms, however, must be qualified. Sanchez Tapia was undoubtedly a rightist, but was so little in touch with the interests of big business, so little a potential Mussolini, that he soon dropped out of the race. Mugica was pushed about in all directions, even, it

was suspected, toward the road to Coyoacan where Trotsky awaited him. Finally he retired from the race.

PROGRAMS FIRST

Avila Camacho, though undistinguished himself, does represent the consolidation of Cardenas' policies. For this reason he was endorsed fully by the CTM Convention and partially by the Communist Party, which looks forward to the unification of all candidacies in order to build a front against the opponents of the Six Year Plan.

There is no doubt that there must be a pause for consolidation. Cardenas, especially in the oil expropriation, has gone even farther than was originally contemplated in the Six Year Plan. Therefore—for the first time in Mexico—programs are more important than persons, and progressives will support any candidate who sincerely believes that Cardenas has set Mexico on the right road. Hard organizational work, not revolutionary rhetoric, will recommend a candidate to them.

Who are these progressives? First, the million workers organized in or close to the CTM: these include not only industrial work-



THE PRESIDENT COMES TO TOWN. *Lazaro Gardenas* is greeted by a huge labor demonstration on his arrival in Ensenada, in lower California.

ers but schoolteachers, large sections of the Civil Service, and intellectuals, with some students working closely with them.

Second, the peasants of the communal and collective farms are devoted to Cardenas, who made their present standing possible and gave them hope for the future.

Third, the rank and file of the army, wherever Franco-like generals have not been able to influence them. The new schools for the education of soldiers' children have been a big influence in checking pro-fascist propaganda in the army.

Fourth, a wide if miscellaneous grouping of younger intellectuals, students, small merchants oppressed by the ubiquitous Falangist Spanish retailers who have long controlled the basic food and drink industry, and some small independent peasants.

Fifth, a large number of the Indians, who are fighters if not very reliable voters—few are literate.

In the past few months the rightists have become increasingly active and vocal. They have their lunatic fringe, which unfortunately gets the most publicity, thereby hiding the deeper and more sinister movements. Every propaganda trick and every peso, mark, lira, or dollar available is going into this campaign. Parties and groups are formed every day, with anything from five to five hundred members.

The old Calles wheelhorses are trotting out. Perez Trevino, Cardenas' rival for the presidency, heads one group. Gilberto Valenzuela, backer of the 1929 Escobar revolt and founder of anti-Semitism in Mexico, is associated with another. Nazi and Falangist agents honeycomb them all. Trotskyist groups are tactically allied with them. Their slogan, like Representative Dies', is "Against Communism and Fascism." Naturally, their fascism will be described as the upholding of Mexicanism and the constitution, and the repudiation of "exotic ideas." Only, dictatorial totalitarianism is by no means "exotic" in Latin America and never has been during the past century.

Few of these groups are important in themselves. Their very number has meant an uneconomic spreadout of the slush funds risked by Nazi and some Wall Street agents. They will sell themselves to the highest bidder when he appears. He may appear at the PRM Convention.

GENERAL ALMAZAN

Hope of all these forces is Divisional Gen. Juan Andreu Almazan, military commander of the important industrial region around Monterrey, Mexico's biggest manufacturing and most determined open-shop community, the scabs' paradise.

Almazan is now definitely a candidate. He is one of the wealthiest men in Mexico. He has huge interests in Tamaulipas, in the Southeastern Railway, in the rising tourist resort (and possibly a United States naval base) of Acapulco. Almazan and his friends are cunning. His best chance is to pose as the "moderator" ("Neither fascism nor Communism!"). He is still within the PRM. He is by far the

Who's Who

MEXICO has its questionmarks on the 1940 horizon, just like the United States. And, as in the case of her good neighbor to the north, the personalities must measure up to the issues before the campaign itself gets under way. Last week, the reactionary candidate, Juan Andreu Almazan, came forward with a programmatic manifesto. Almazan is a military commander in the province of Monterrey, highly industrialized region and open shop paradise. He is one of Mexico's wealthiest men. While, formally, he is still within the Party of the Mexican Revolution, the government coalition, his manifesto presages the crystallization of issues and men in the Mexican campaign.

Characteristically, Almazan attacked the Cardenas regime as a "hydra strangling the republic." Opposing the Cardenas land distribution program, Almazan proposed that the peasants be given title to their land "so they can pass it on to their heirs." With studied vagueness he spoke of the need for a "racial" policy in Mexico. On the ticklish problem of relations with the United States, he emphasized "scrupulous respect for mutual rights." In view of the support he has been getting from British and American business interests, as well as cagy backing from the Nazis, there is little doubt whose interests he would scruple to respect.

Meanwhile, Manuel Avilo Camacho, former minister of national defense, and leading candidate among the progressives, delivered his maiden speech in Mexico City on July 26. Sixty thousand citizens attended, parading with slogans and banners in his honor. Camacho pledged support to the labor movement and the Cardenas reforms. Lombardo Toledano, leader of the CTM, the Mexican Confederation of Labor, was the only other speaker. He made clear where the Mexican labor movement stands and again warned that reactionary elements "even though they deny it, are preparing an armed rebellion in our country. But the people also know, and we shall smash them once and for all."

most influential of the generals. But, within his limitations, he is no fool. He distrusts the crowd of flatterers and grafters who swarm round him in Monterrey. He is considered merely a lesser evil by American and British business men operating here. He is not entirely trusted by the Nazis. But, with a shove from Wall Street, he can be built up as a "sound man."

There are other candidates or potential candidates. There is Gen. Gildardo Magana, a fairly honest man who has had his finger in every pie since the time of Emiliano Zapata. He is a friend of Cardenas, is now governor of Cardenas' native state, Michoacan, and, according to his friends' electoral propaganda, can actually read, write, and think. There is General Amaro—ex-general now—minister of war under Calles, who can, it is said, neither read, write, nor think, but is handy with a gun.

Amaro's manifesto was hurriedly disclaimed by every rightist, not because they disagreed with its anti-Cardenas opinions but because they were afraid that it might be considered subversive—as indeed it was. The manifesto got completely unwarranted publicity from border Hearst correspondents and papers that remembered Amaro well from the old Calles-days.

Magana, who commanded the Army of the South after the murder of Zapata, favors "small property," like most ex-Zapatistas who have got the land they themselves want and do not give a damn about the country as a whole. They do not appear to know that "small property" is a racket put up by the ex-landowners, by which members of one family or big stockholders of a private bank divide up the land on a purely nominal basis. Hitler in 1933 was very keen on "small property" in order to tie the peasants to the land and thereby control them absolutely.

Cardenas refuses to take any position. He is a democrat. He believes that the Mexican people must decide its own fate. He will certainly not impose a candidate to succeed him, and it may be that one of his reasons for allowing Luis I. Rodriguez to offer his resignation of the presidency of the PRM was the suspicion voiced by the rightists that Rodriguez was attempting to use the party as a means of imposing a candidate.

Cardenas was certainly elected by the popular vote of the vast majority of Mexicans. But he earned that vote by riding, driving, flying, walking thousands of miles to listen to individual grievances and, when he became president, by doing his utmost to remedy them. No one in Mexican history save Benito Juarez had such a knowledge of Mexico, no one so earned the long-deceived Mexicans' confidence. Cardenas himself has approved the slogan "programs not persons." But Mexican voters, accustomed to generations of kingfish, still distrust the grandiloquent "plans" which have been dinned into their ears for centuries. Many are illiterate, many unorganized. Local bosses have bought their votes with the traditional "toston y barbacoa"—the dime and hamburger. And the dimes and hamburgers are already being shipped from Detroit and Hamburg. Roy Zachary of the Silver Shirts, Father Coughlin, and the Fichte Bund may be consulted on this.

Two positive points emerge from the present confusion: (1) Cardenas himself has achieved a popularity which goes far deeper and wider than the usual sycophancy offered to the "Caudillo"; (2) no usurper can come to power in Mexico without the consent of the United States.

The outcome is therefore squarely up to the progressive forces over the border. By their awareness of the issues involved, by their determined stand against their own "fifth columns," whether in Wall Street, Rockefeller Center, Detroit, or the State Department, they can make it impossible for Mexico to produce a Franco or a Casado on the south bank of the Rio Grande. MARC FRANK.

Time to Do Something

Jean Starr Untermeyer says dreaming isn't enough. "I want to begin doing." A poet joins the fighting fascism series.

DEAR EDITORS: A short time ago you placed me in an embarrassing position when you asked me to tell you and the readers of *NEW MASSES* what I had done against fascism. The question threw me into such a panic that I thought the best thing I could do would be to slink into silence. My widow's mite seemed inadequate to the vanishing point. But as I thought about it—and I couldn't help thinking about it—a certain clarity came to me. I saw the reason for my inadequacy and what I might do about it. In disclosing the following scraps of personal history I am not indulging in the luxury of a confession story but sharing an experience in the hope that it will arouse others with a similar background to "take steps" as I plan to do.

Fascism's devices aren't new in the world. I knew some of its effects when I first went to public school at the age of six. One of the earliest memories of school was standing up with other children and shouting out in our happy morning voices words that, if memory serves me, ran something like this: "I pledge allegiance to my flag, and to the republic for which it stands. One nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

Of course I didn't know the full meaning of the words, but I knew that they filled me with joy. I looked about at my companions and my tiny breast swelled with love and pride as I raised my hand toward the flag over the teacher's desk and chanted in unison with the others. I was an impulsive child and eager to make friends. The morning exercises seemed to put the stamp of comradeship and security on the whole day. As I passed through the school yard on the way home I was startled by the strange salutations that came from a small group that had gathered on one side. "Sheeny," called out those voices that had lately sung out with mine. "Christ-killer!" I could not have been more startled had they hurled stones instead of words. I ran home to my mother in tears. She comforted me, but with a certain bitterness. It had always been like this, she said. It is because we are Jews.

As time went on, however, I was not satisfied with this explanation. I loved people and didn't want to be cut off from them. I undertook to read the Bible from cover to cover. Maybe I could discover wherein I was different. I went to the various churches in turn—to the Episcopal Sewing School with a little friend, to the Methodist Church with our "upstairs girl," and to the Catholic Church with a teacher. My mother was acquiescent. Every church, she said, was a House of God. But this didn't clear up the matter. Sunday morning service at the Episcopal

Church was, in its form, very like what my mother had taught us of our own Sabbath ritual. We had no synagogue. The Jewish families in the town were too few to support one. In all the churches I heard the same lovely precepts. And I felt that no one with blood kin to mine could have hounded or harmed the beautiful Christ, the prophet, whose words and acts I loved as I loved other moral heroes, though not with the awe and fear one had been taught to bear an inscrutable God.

When I found among many of my young companions an incomprehension or disparagement of the thoughts and desires that had moved me from earliest childhood, I sought the usual solace. I became a dreamer.

In the Hebrew language there is no word for the dispensing of benefits that we call charity. (The word "zedakah" is used, but it actually means justice.) The only word is "justice." I learned this fact with my mind only a few years ago. I think my blood knew it always. But its opposite, "injustice," was one of the factors that made me a writer and especially a poet. It must have been when I was about twelve years old that I read Israel Zangwill's *Dreamers of the Ghetto*. I scarcely remember anything of the book except one story—that of a child who was born blind because the impoverished mother was starved throughout her pregnancy. To be born blind! Not to be able to see the trees and sky, the flowers, colors, sunlight on a lawn, flowing water, and the faces one loved—oh, most of all, the faces one loved! And just because food was lacking—food that I saw in such abundance about me! This thought started a war in my breast. This called out for action. But I didn't know how to act. Already, at that age, I had been a dreamer too long. But I had to write. It was my first seizure. Nothing in the world seemed important but getting my feelings into thoughts and my thoughts on paper. Literally, "it burned me up."

I wrote an essay called "Dreamers and Doers," trying to decide in my own mind which were the more worthy. I loved my dreams. I needed them for refuge. But I felt something ought to be done. Then as now the disparities of human living were irreconcilable to me. Pleasure in even modest possessions was cankered by conscience, even when reason absolved me from responsibility. It wasn't my fault that the world was as it was. Why couldn't I live happily in my dreams? Why did these great (and, I was told, insoluble) questions nag me? Why couldn't I believe, as I was sometimes told, that they were the will of God?

If only we had had teachers wise enough to relate our different studies to each other

or to life! We were just passing out of the egotism of childhood into puberty. Nature in her always repeated parable could have been translated in a biology lesson to illustrate that adult satisfaction must begin by sharing. The whole core of social happiness is in that. Or a lesson in physics would have warned us that great charges of energy must be carried off by strong and often diffuse transmitters. Too much current along one frail wire burns out the fuse. It took many years to learn those simple lessons and those years have no place here. So, as in the old stories, there follows a string of stars.

* * * * *

Then came the fall of 1936. There was a *Times* Book Fair in Rockefeller Center and there was a war in Spain. I was asked to take part in the former—to read poetry with a few other poets. I like to read poetry, but it is rather bleak to go out from one's house and then come back with the poetry still bubbling in you and no one there to simmer down with you. So I wrote to the other poets on the program and asked them to come back with me for a cup of tea or a more heady drink if they could stand it after the poetry. Some of them I already knew personally, some only through their work. Quite a few came.

Sitting around my table, they talked of many things. They seemed to me so good to look at and to hear that I was moved to share with them a letter. This letter had come from a friend in England who had lately returned from Spain. It was a beautiful letter—clear and bright. Eyes that had learned to see truly had seen; the warm heart throbbed to the plight of an alien people who had come to be familiar through understanding and sympathy and shared hardship.

The next day one of the guests called me on the telephone. She asked me to read the letter again that evening before a group of people meeting in a little downtown hall. I was tired and on the point of refusing, but something told me to go. That night I read my friend's letter to the League of American Writers—an organization that was just getting itself born. Isidor Schneider heard it and asked me to let him print it in *NEW MASSES*. One can't publish a letter from another person just like that. But I felt as he did. It was too good to keep for a few. I said I would cable and ask permission. I did. And that was how Sylvia Townsend Warner's letter came to be published in *NEW MASSES*.

Things began to happen. I was invited to join the league and a few months later was asked to help them organize a congress. Events in the world were beginning to rouse me. I

wanted to help but I was unprepared. It was all new to me but I said I would try. By a sort of miracle everything that I was asked to do succeeded. No one was as astonished as I was.

The congress passed and to my surprise I was elected a member of the national council. This was a new kind of sharing. But I was learning fast. The most important work of the league then, as it is now, was its fight against fascism. I wish I were a natural orator and could make speeches hot from my love and indignation. But I can't. The very force of the emotion makes for incoherence at times.

I wish I had the sort of education that would help me to interpret the present from a profound knowledge of the past, to make me an effective weapon against this modern monster that destroys under two distorted banners—the crooked cross and the bound faggots—which turns the good symbol of strength in unity into an ugly goad. I can't undo a whole wrong education. "That train has left," one of our workers said to me lately with a terse smile. But I can work with others and humbly learn by doing. I have sold tickets and begged for money or manuscripts

I. G. Farbenindustrie Stockholders' Report

	1937	1938	Percent
Capital	RM 1,558,000,000	RM 1,623,000,000	4.2
Gross profits	535,000,000	667,000,000	24.7
Net profits	48,053,329	55,100,000	14.5
Stock sales	18,700,000	19,600,000	4.8
Other income	8,300,000	12,900,000	55.4
Stock earnings	228,600,000	310,100,000	35.5
Salaries, expenses, bonuses, wages	295,900,000	341,400,000	15.5

for sales; I can organize meetings and give my own books or money, when I have it. I can and do try to preserve the values and standards of our inherited culture and pass them on to those I am permitted to teach. I can and will give up the indulgence of reading only for pleasure and will set myself to learn. This, for a dreamer, is the hardest of all. Political speeches confuse me, statistics wear me down. But I'm neither too proud nor too lazy to go to school. I know that this is not an impressive record and I would like to tear up this letter. But that might be a temptation for me to start dreaming again. And I want to begin doing.

JEAN STARR UNTERMEYER.

Profits in Naziland

Why the German chemical trust likes Hitler. U. S. connections.

IF YOU have any jug-headed acquaintances who retail the disguised fascist bilge that Hitler may oppress the workers, but he also has curbed the financial giants of the Reich to make a "Greater Germany," the recent balance sheet of the Nazi chemical trust, I. G. Farbenindustrie, gives a good idea about how the big industrialists are suffering under Nazi rule. It also shows just who are the individuals in Europe and the United States who profit—and profit heavily—from fascism.

On June 8, 1939, the comparative yearly earnings of IGF were published in the German financial newspapers. Since the reign of Hitler, originally financed by this corporation, the autarchic system has boomed the production of *Ersatz* and other chemical substitutes in which the I. G. Farbenindustrie specializes (synthetic gasoline, Buna "rubber," etc.). More, the Nazi annexation of Austria, the Sudetenland, Bohemia, Moravia has given the IGF the Balkan market.

Just run over the figures from their balance sheet in the table above. Typical under fascism is the widening gap between profit and wages, even though this last item includes expenses, bonuses, and executive salaries.

The exported products of IGF had a bit of a boom during 1938 and the report makes particular note of the increase in exportations to the United States. With whom could this big Nazi chemical trust be doing business?

Way back in 1929 the I. G. Farbenindustrie set up an American branch, the American I. G. Chemical Corp., 521 Fifth Ave., New York City. This outfit has three American directors: Walter Teagle, president of the Standard Oil Co. of New Jersey, Edsel Ford, and Charles Mitchell, formerly president of the National City Bank and well known for his income tax violations.

At the same time (1929), I. G. Farbenindustrie and Standard Oil of New Jersey set up a firm called Standard I.G., at 26 Broadway (the S.O. headquarters). The majority of its directors are Americans and it handles the hydrogenization patents of the German firm. For these processes of cracking oil up into gasoline the I. G. Farbenindustrie was paid 446,222 shares of Standard Oil of New Jersey. Thus every time you fill your tank with Esso, you pay a royalty to Herr Hitler's backers and advance the profits of fascist capital.



A. Redfield

"Blame it on the New Deal."

Southern Road

A short story by Catherine Ridgely about sharecroppers in the land of cotton.

CYNTHIA JACKSON squatted between the two rows of cabbages, picking off worms and dropping them into a tin can. Her big lean hands were slow, but she inched along steadily, shuffling first one foot sideways and then the other, pausing to pull up the hem of her black cotton dress, which kept escaping from her knees where she had tucked it and trailing along the ground.

Overhead the May twilight seemed to brighten in the sky, and beyond a field of growing cotton the unclouded west burned with an orange glow that thinly veiled the silver curve of the three-day moon. But the flat countryside was darkening: distant pines and gullied fields were melting into dusk; neighboring shacks and thickets were indistinguishable blots of shadow. On earth only the white, empty, dirt road that slanted close past the cabbages and away westward toward town held as much of brightness as the sky.

In the doorway of a one-room house that had the two cabbage rows for front yard, the bent figure of a man moved stiffly and came out on to the narrow porch, which was nearly filled by a slat-backed rocking chair. With care he lowered himself to the level of the chair, and sat leaning forward with his folded arms on his knees, looking toward the garden patch and the road.

"Cinnie, ain't you been wormin long nuf?"

"Goin finish out this row, Pa."

"Well, then." He eased himself slowly back into the chair and began a slight rocking. Once he held the chair motionless at the end of a forward stroke and looked out at his daughter, pinching at his withered mouth and muttering sibilantly to himself as though he meant to speak, then resumed his rocking.

When Cynthia reached the end of the row, she stayed sitting back on her heels with the can of worms in her hand, looking at the pale dust road with the dark hulk of bushes beyond it, putting off rising because she would meet, halfway up, the sharp clutch of the crick in her back.

"Ain't you done yet, Cinnie?"

"Awright, Pa."

She scooped up a handful of the sandy loam and sifted it through her fingers into the can, down upon the blindly uprearing heads within, sifted until a little mound piled up out of the center of the can. This she pressed flat with the firm heel of her hand. "Well," she said, and began to straighten slowly with fingers spread flat against the small of her back, her face made ready for pain. Twisting sideways to dodge the catching of the muscles along her spine, she bit her underlip, straightened a little more, and walked slowly to the cabin, where she sat down on the edge of the porch, placing her can beside her.

The old man began to chuckle. "Ain't quite a boy, is you, Cinnie? Plow as good as one, maybe, but cain't squash a worm." He leaned forward and rammed a stiff jesting forefinger between her stooped shoulders. "Doan you think the worms ud as liv be squashed as covered up alive an breathin, hey, Cinnie?"

"Likely," she said.

He settled back into his chair, chuckling and repeating, "Covered up alive, heh, heh! Not quite a boy, hey?"

She sat in tired silence, looking down the road where a distant group of lights marked the town. Beside her the can gleamed yellow with the sky, and the old man said, "Th can's bright new, ain't it, Cinnie?"

"Picked up some t'day where Mister Reed's havin the gully filled in by the store."

The old man shook his head in slow surprise, and clucked with his tongue. "Fillin a gully full up of thowed away cans! They must be a many of em, ain't they, Cinnie? Pitchers on em an all, like as not, hey?"

"Some."

He rocked with quickened interest. "What was they of?"

"Oh, diffent things. You've seen em afore, Pa. Beets was one, fruit an things. Calfornya plums."

"Calfornya plums? My, them folks in town, some of em doan mind what they eat. I'll jes take a look at them pitchers come mornin."

Cynthia shifted impatiently, and hugged her arms about her knees. "I tore the papers off an left em on the dump."

"Now ain't that a nice thing!" He gave a lispin cluck with his tongue against his toothless gums. "Didn't yuh reckon I might wanta see em too?"

"What goods pitchers, Pa?"

"Not astin yore Pa, thowin em away!" After a pause he said, "They'd look might fine stuck up on th walls, that's what good." He clucked again with his tongue and resumed his slight rocking. "That little apple tree, though," he said mildly. "We useta git some tasty sauce fum that afore it petered out, didn't we, Cinnie?"

A long stretch of silence spaced with Cynthia's breathing that began to get slow and deep. Southwestward the moon brightened in the fading sky. "An fishin!" the old man said reminiscently. "My, afore all the good spots had private signs an them wardens snoopin, you could git sech fish! An yore ma could cook fish as purty. Why, I seen her cut up an fry as purty a mess of fish!"

Cynthia stirred awake. "I was at the store, an I been meanin to tell you, Pa——"

"You git naught but meal?"

"Got white meat. But Pa, I been meanin

to tell you, I been keepin track this year, everthin I git at the store I put it down when I git home."

"Now, why you wanna go doin at, Cinnie?" He reached forward to shake at one of her shoulders. "That won't do us no good, jes make Mister Reed mad. You better jest stop doin thataway, Cinnie."

"Tain't no harm."

"Tis too, plenny harm. You been listenin to that man was run out from Greenlaw County, that's what."

"I thought of keepin track long afore ever he come aroun."

"You ain't done it afore, though. You can think what yore a mine to. How you know ef it come out right, anyways, an him payin John Clay, an th pickers come fall?"

"I'm gonna ast em what he pays. I ast John Clay aready. He paid him 50 cents a day for the help with plowin an plantin. I set it down. I've kep track right along, this year."

"You gonna take a nigger's word agin a white man's?"

"How's that for a way to talk?" she said, turning around to look at him. "As though you wouldn't believe John Clay any day, yourself."

"Well," he admitted reluctantly. "But anyways, that ain't no way to git anywheres."

Her tanned face lightened with the beginning of a smile, but she said gravely, "Then we'll add th sellin charge he makes for handlin th cotton, an a dollar month he takes care yore burial policy." She checked off items with her blunt fingertips spread around the edge of the earth-filled can. "An you add 15 cents a dollar for lettin us have things ahead of paying for em."

"At's kinda fair, Cinnie. You know he's gotta git th money fum somewhers so's he can credit us."

"I ain't layin everthin to him." With one forefinger she smoothed over and over the dust leveled to the top of her can. "Though it does seem he makes out to do better by himself than you'n me."

The old man grunted and stirred in his chair. "Acourse he makes out to do better, ain't he got . . . An I tell you, Cinnie, it ain't right an kind to lay him up agin yore ole pa."

"Pa!" She turned again in a heavy motion, and looked up into his face with an expression of pain. "You know I never."

"I've figgered it often an often, Cinnie, an I cain't see where twas I went wrong. But I had more when I was wed than ever sence, seems though, an my pa had more afore me, an his pa, why, he had quite a place, he did real well by his folks, he got along real well. But I cain't see where I went wrong, Cinnie, or how I could of done any other but what I done. Excep go away."

She clasped her hands together between her knees and said flatly, "I'm glad you stayed, Pa."

"I doan know bout that."

"If we doan make out one way, we'll make out another."

"Seems like they ain't but one way, an that doan work out to no good for us."

She was silent, looking out over the fields where the thin light of the moon had now conquered lingering daylight and left the earth in shadow but for the white line of road and the far-off lights of town. He looked at her stubborn back, rocked his chair more and more briskly, and then checked it with a jerk. "Now, looka here," he cried, as though answering some meaning in her silence. "You been payin too much mine to whats been goin aroun under cover bout what we could do if we'd a mine. I oughta driv that man from Greenlaw off, at's what. Keepin track an all! Now lemme tell yuh," he said, breathing hard, "lemme tell yuh, now," and he fell silent.

Her heavy silence was her answer as she hunched on the edge of the porch, bent forward, looking at the ground between her worn man's shoes. Far off a hound's excitement broke upon the night, came wildly nearer. Out in the cotton field the dog snuffled and wept with eagerness, then lifted a sudden mighty cry that faded and passed into distance. In the following quiet the "chink-chink, chink-chink, chink-chink" of an insect near the porch came again into hearing.

In the hush the old man spoke more persuasively, "Maybe he does mean well for us, likely he does, Cinnie, but you go rilin up Mister Reed that way, an he won't let us have a place next year, an what'd we do then?"

"If any of yore boys would of lived, they wouldn't set an do nothin, an I'm as good as a boy, I work as good as a boy, an I doan want see my work thowed away no more'n them."

The old man muttered and pinched at his mouth, then broke out suddenly, his voice rough with anger. "I seen yore hand at yore back, yonder in the cabbages. You work like a boy, like a man, an here you are with jes me to look out for you an me ailin now so's I ain't no good, not jes ailin neither, me gittin ole, that's what."

"You ain't ole, you ain't hardly fifty, Pa." She pressed her chin downward in her cupped hands. "You'll git real spry agin, soon," she said.

"Tain't years as count—ole an pretty near wore out, that's what. An yore ma got wore out workin in the fields and havin young uns an sorrowin for em after. An yore twenny-two," he said, his voice rising. "An you'll be wore out too, Cinnie, an what'll happen to you then?"

"I been settin thinkin whilst you was at the cabbages, an all spring I been thinkin, seem you work. That burial policy, now, Cinnie," he lowered his voice coaxingly, "that's what I been wantin to say, you take it in money instead. Now shut up an lissen to me, now. John Clay could dig a place for me right yere as well as not, when my time come. I doan need no cemetairy lot nor no pine box. An then you take the money—mine what I say now." He bent toward her in the shadows.

"You take it an you go away, somewheres. Over to, well, you go somewheres away, Cinnie, diffent fum yere."

He sat cracking the joints of his hands, looking anxiously at the back of her head. Without turning around she whispered, "Doan you never talk like that no more, Pa."

"I reckon I'll talk like I wanta."

"I woan ever do it, so there ain't no use."

The light of the moon dimly shone upon the cotton fields, enclosing them softly and beautifully about. Along the road toward town a cabin door opened and closed, and voices began a friendly distant conversation. Cinnie broke out suddenly, "Not bein buried proper—it'd be a last loss. You gonna be buried longside of Ma like you always meant, in a proper grave, an not for a long time neither."

"I'll be buried where I'm a mine t'be."

"You cain't git cash money for a burial policy, anyways."

"You could ast."

"Ast is' all I could do."

"Well." He began to relax in the darkness behind her. "Well," he said again. Reaching forward with one hand he rubbed a hard thumb slowly up and down the hollow at the back of her neck. "At feel good?"

"Umhmmm."

As the moon lowered, night noises came more purely clear: the insect's intermittent note; the voices talking down the road, the tones wordless with distance, but now sounding in the familiar rhythms of farewell; the hound's distant bay swelling and passing again into silence.

Cynthia stood up slowly, favoring her back.

"G'night, Pa."

"I'm goin set a spell."

She went into the cabin. He heard her steps go back and forth once or twice. Then the corn husks rustled in the corner where her pallet lay, and she drew a long, heavy breath.

"Tired, Cinnie?"

"Some."

"You'd oughta let them cabbages go."

"We'll be glad for em, come they grows."

"Well," he admitted, and stirred in his chair, looking toward the doorway. "Cinnie, you set it down, did you, th meal an fatback?"

"I set everthin down, like I said."

"T'won't do us no good, jes make him mad."

"T'won't hurt him none, bein mad."

"Hurt us, though, you wait an see."

The corn husks rustled as she yawned and stirred. "I reckon it won't hurt us no more'n we been, aready."

He rocked steadily, pinching at his chin with one hand. A nighthawk passed silently beneath the moon and let its harsh sudden cry drift across the fields. The old man's glance was drawn by the call out into the night, where a smudge of figures showed dimly, coming along the white gleam of road from the cabin where the talk had been. Against the shadow of the doorway the old man watched the group come, feet noiseless

in the dust, voices low and eager, crossing each other, interrupting, weaving together a pleasant mingled sound of earnest speech. The moon now dulled toward gold as it went down in the West, and the old man could not be sure: were white and black walking together there, right down the middle of the road? He hushed his rocking to look and listen, and as the figures passed, unhurried but purposeful, close together in their talk, he felt a dim excitement prickle in his mind. After the shadows of their figures had passed along the white road and merged into the night, he heard the warming sound of the friendly voices, and the impact of their united passing had a lingering effect upon his mind.

"Humph," he said, his voice from habit hunting for scorn. "Cinnie, there goes some of yore friends—they's usin the road tonight."

He cocked his head at the open doorway, but the only sound was her quiet breathing. Tired out, that's what she was. "Well, anyways, Cinnie," he said, "you's a good girl." From the cabin's single room came her rich slow breathing. Sleeping already. Well, he'd tell her tomorrow. She was a good girl, anyways.

CATHERINE RIDGELY.

Refugee Camps

Spanish loyalists in France display astonishing morale.

VISITORS to the two thousand concentration camps for Spanish loyalist refugees in France report an astonishing morale among the inmates. At Barcares camp, where sixty thousand refugees were further crowded by sixteen thousand coming in from the Argeles camp, which was closed because Argeles is a populous summer resort, the refugees are in great need for something to do. Many members of the Madrid Philharmonic and opera orchestras are without a single musical instrument. Sculptors have somehow found materials for works which have inspired French visitors to arrange for their exhibition outside, possibly even at the New York Fair. Some of the refugees may be employed in the French vineyards during the harvest, taking the place of the Italians who used to come for the harvest. In the children's colonies in the neighborhood of Perpignan and Bayonne-Biarritz, English observers were met by a parade of children bearing childish crayon-drawn Union Jacks, singing an improvised song which ended with, "The peace of the world is our mission." The monotonous life of the camps is enforced, despite the remarkable energy and enterprise of the refugees, by the lack of things to work with. One camp with two hundred children has no toys and only one rubber ball. There is little to read. These people need any sort of object that would help them pass the time. Relief organizations estimate that one hundred people per day are returning to Spain, while one hundred more a week are struggling over the Pyrenees to France from Franco's jail state.

Trotsky Admits It

The master fink unwittingly reveals his "program" for the Ukraine. It's the same as Hitler's.

RECALL the scene: Moscow, Jan. 24, 1937. Karl Radek is testifying in the second of the great Soviet treason trials. He is discussing the contents of a letter he received from Trotsky in December 1935, containing new secret instructions for securing the defeat of the Soviet Union in a war with fascist Germany and Japan. I quote from the official record of the proceedings:

Radek: Consequently the practicable plan remained that of coming to power as a result of a defeat. And this coming to power as a result of a defeat signified for him that while up to that time Trotsky abroad and we here, in Moscow, had spoken of an economic retreat within the framework of the Soviet state, a radical change was indicated in this letter. For, in the first place, Trotsky considered that as a result of the defeat there would arise the inevitability of making territorial concessions, and he specifically mentioned the Ukraine. [Page 113.]

And a little later Radek said:

It was planned to surrender the Ukraine to Germany and the Maritime Province and the Amur region to Japan. [Page 115.]

The news wires flashed Radek's words to all parts of the world. Liberals were shocked, some incredulous. Trotskyites shouted "frame-up," ridiculed the idea that their leader should have plotted handing over Soviet territory to Germany and Japan. In April Trotsky himself, singing tenor in the opera bouffe staged in Coyoacan, Mexico, with maestro John Dewey directing the orchestra, asked indignantly:

How can I give territorial concessions of territory which I do not have to the Japanese or to the fascists? [The Case of Leon Trotsky, Page 54.]

The Moscow trials are history. Any unbiased person can read the official report, feel the cumulative weight of its evidence, and judge for himself. The Soviet Union requires no vindication. Its record, both before and since the trials, speaks for itself. But who would have expected that two years later there would have been added to the confessions of the Moscow trials another confession—this time from Leon Trotsky himself? Yet there it is in black and white, on the front page of the May 9, 1939, issue of the *Socialist Appeal*, organ of the American Trotskyites. "The Problem of the Ukraine" is the title of Trotsky's "confession."

Trotsky tells us that "It was not for nothing that Hitler noisily raised the question of creating a 'Greater Ukraine,' and likewise it was not for nothing that he dropped this question with such stealthy haste." No, it was not for nothing. Hitler has raised this ques-

tion under the slogan of "self-determination" (shades of Czechoslovakia). And, of course, the creation of a "Greater Ukraine" requires ultimately the "liberation" of that major part of the Ukraine which is one of the federated republics of the USSR, as well as—and more immediately—of the Ukrainian territory that belongs to Poland, not to mention the Ukrainians in Rumania and the Carpatho-Ukraine, a bone carved out of Czechoslovakia and tossed temporarily to Hungary. And if Hitler dropped this question for the present, it is only because, being a realistic politician, he puts no stock in the old-wives' tales about the "weakening" of the USSR as a result of the elimination of his best spies. He knows that before he is in a position to undertake the task of "liberating" the Soviet Ukraine—likewise a dream of the Ukrainian White Guards—he must first do a great deal of "liberating" in the rest of Europe, not excluding the British and French empires.

But what has Trotsky to say on the subject? He writes:

Nowhere did restrictions, purges, repressions, and in general all forms of bureaucratic hooliganism assume such murderous sweep as they did in the Ukraine in the struggle against the powerful, deeply

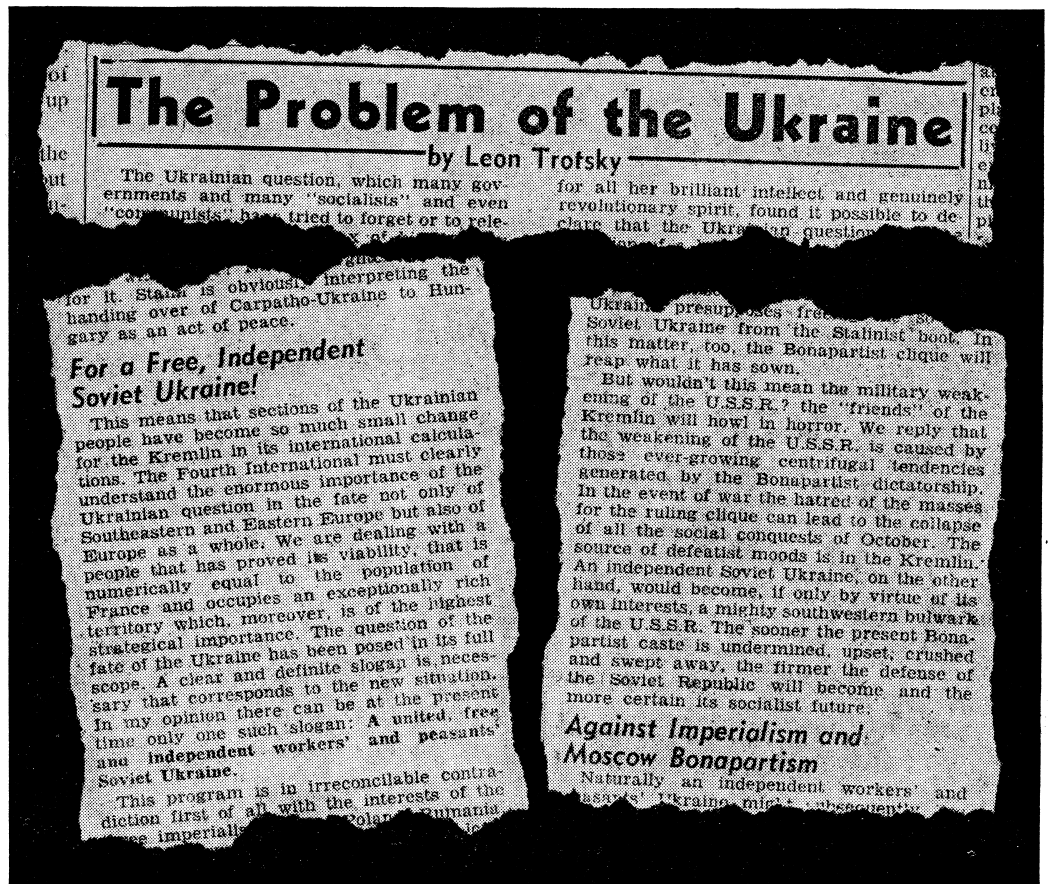
rooted longings of the Ukrainian masses for greater freedom and independence. To the totalitarian bureaucracy, Soviet Ukraine became an administrative division of an economic unit and a military base of the USSR.

Substitute Sudetenland for Ukraine and Czechoslovakia for USSR—it all sounds familiar, doesn't it? And then the payoff:

The question of the fate of the Ukraine has been posed in its full scope. A clear and definite slogan is necessary that corresponds to the new situation. In my opinion there can be at the present time only one such slogan: *A united, free, and independent workers' and peasants' Soviet Ukraine.* [Trotsky's italics.—A.B.M.]

That, too, has a familiar ring. Scrape off the camouflage—"workers' and peasants' Soviet"—and you have Hitler's slogan. And if Trotsky desires the separation of the Ukraine from the USSR, who is so naive as to believe that he contents himself merely with writing articles in the *Socialist Appeal*? Furthermore, since Trotsky and Hitler have essentially the same objective in regard to the Ukraine, what is to prevent them from joining forces?

"This program," continues Trotsky, "is in irreconcilable contradiction first of all with the interests of the three imperialist powers, Poland, Rumania, and Hungary." He is right. Look at the map of Eastern Europe. Trotsky's anti-Soviet "Soviet" Ukraine, formed with the blessing of Hitler and as a result of the dismemberment not only of the USSR, but of



THE ADMISSION. Here is the article, that appeared in the "Socialist Appeal," in which Trotsky reiterates his line on the Ukraine. It adds up to Hitler's line.

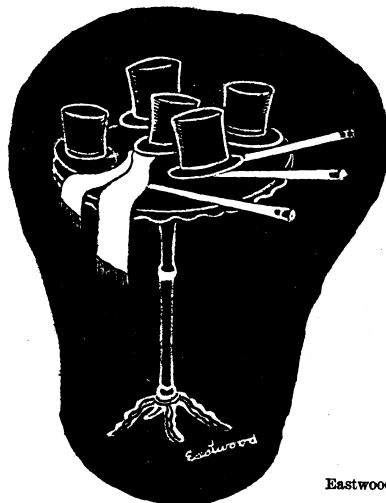
Poland, Rumania, and Hungary as well, would deal a death blow to the independence of those three countries. His program is, therefore, in contradiction with their *national* interests. But there is one significant omission from Trotsky's list of imperialist powers: Germany. Is it because his program is in complete harmony with the interests of German fascist imperialism? Trotsky, of course, finds it necessary to justify his crassly fascist proposal. And he does it with demagoguery worthy of the assassins of Czechoslovakia. He writes:

But the independence of a United Ukraine would mean the separation of Soviet Ukraine from the USSR, the "friends" of the Kremlin will exclaim in chorus. What is so terrible about that? we reply. The fervid worship of state boundaries is alien to us. We do not hold the position of a "united and indivisible" whole. After all, even the constitution of the USSR acknowledges the right of its component federated peoples to self-determination, that is, to separation. Thus, not even the incumbent Kremlin oligarchy dares to deny this principle. To be sure, it remains only on paper. The slightest attempt to raise the question of an independent Ukraine openly would mean immediate execution on the charge of treason. But it is precisely this despicable equivocation, it is precisely this ruthless hounding of all free national thought that has led the toiling masses of the Ukraine, to an even greater degree than the masses of Great Russia, to look upon the rule of the Kremlin as monstrously oppressive. In the face of such an internal situation it is naturally impossible even to talk of Western Ukraine voluntarily joining the USSR as it is at present constituted. Consequently, the unification of the Ukraine presupposes freeing the so-called Soviet Ukraine from the Stalinist boot.

I have given Trotsky's argument at such length in order that the reader might appreciate its mendacity to the full. "The fervid worship of state boundaries is alien to us." Trotsky should have added, "and to Hitler." There is more than one way of killing a cat. Hitler, too, prepares his bandit raids on other nations in the guise of opposition to the capitalist status quo. And like Hitler, Trotsky tries to sanctify this with the hypocritical slogan of "self-determination." The devil cites Scripture, and Trotsky cites the Soviet constitution. But "the right freely to secede from the USSR," granted by the Soviet constitution to every union republic, does not necessarily mean that secession is desirable. Lenin wrote in 1915, in an article on "The Revolutionary Proletariat and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination":

We demand the freedom of self-determination, i.e., independence, i.e., the freedom of separation for the oppressed nations, not because we dream of an economically atomized world, nor because we cherish the ideal of small states, but, on the contrary, because we are for large states and for a coming closer, even a fusion of nations, but on a truly democratic, truly internationalist basis, which is *unthinkable* without the freedom of separation. [*The Imperialist War*, Page 373.]

And at the famous April 1917 conference of the Bolsheviks, Lenin declared in the reso-



"Tell Mr. Trotsky a delegation of workers and peasants is waiting out here to see him."

lution which he wrote on the national question:

The question of the right of nations freely to secede must not be confused with the question of whether it would be expedient for any given nation to secede at any given moment. This latter question must be settled by the party of the proletariat in each particular case independently, from the point of view of the interests of social development as a whole and the class struggle of the proletariat for socialism.

Incidentally, it was Stalin who delivered the official report on the national question at this conference and defended Lenin's resolution, while Pyatakov, later a Trotskyite and co-defendant of Radek, opposed recognition of the right to secession.

Trotsky speaks of an "independent workers' and peasants' Soviet Ukraine." But he knows that in the present state of European affairs it would be impossible for the Ukraine to maintain an independent existence and the Soviet character of its government. As far back as March 1921 the Tenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party, in a resolution on the national question which was adopted following a report by Stalin, declared that "under the conditions of a capitalist encirclement, not a single Soviet republic taken alone can regard itself as secure against economic exhaustion and military destruction on the part of world imperialism." The resolution maintained that the joint interests of the Soviet republics "imperatively dictate the political union of the various Soviet republics as the only means of escaping imperialist bondage and national oppression."

Capitalist encirclement of the land of socialism is still a fact and it has assumed an even more menacing form with the rise of fascist aggression. When Trotsky, therefore, calls for separation of the Ukraine, what he is advocating is the subjection of the Ukraine to "imperialist bondage and national oppression." If this isn't confirmation of one of the charges made against him at the Moscow

trials, then language has lost all meaning. That he decorates his reactionary platform with radical bunting—"workers' and peasants' Soviet"—makes it no less reactionary. Does German fascism smell sweeter because it calls itself National Socialism?

And Trotsky senses his own vulnerability when he writes:

But wouldn't this mean the military weakening of the USSR? the "friends" of the Kremlin will howl in horror. We reply that the weakening of the USSR is caused by those ever growing centrifugal tendencies generated by the Bonapartist dictatorship.

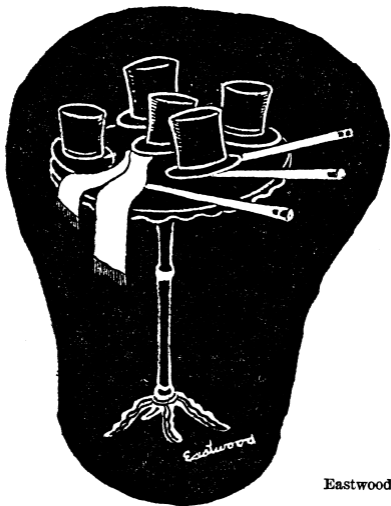
Note that Trotsky evades a direct answer to the question of whether the separation of the Ukraine would mean the military weakening of the USSR. He replies—by heaping abuse on the Soviet government. This type of *ad hominem* polemic is only too transparent. One may declaim, as Trotsky does: "Not the slightest compromise with imperialism, either fascist or democratic! Not the slightest concession to the Ukrainian nationalists, either clerical-reactionary or liberal-pacifist!" But this cannot hide the fact that his program for the Ukraine is in substance identical with the program of Hitler and the clerical-reactionary Ukrainian nationalists. And the "through the looking glass" trick employed by Trotsky and his obedient "Krivitskys," of charging Stalin with seeking an alliance with Hitler, cannot cover up the real alliance that has been formed between the two chief proponents of an "independent" Ukraine, Hitler and Trotsky. There is only one small correction that should be added. An alliance implies an approximate equality of partnership. But Trotsky's plaintive "How can I give territorial concessions of territory which I do not have to the Japanese or to the fascists?" has a certain justification. Trotsky cannot give that which is firmly held by the 170,000,000 people of the Soviet Union. What he can do is help Hitler and the Mikado get or try to get it. But a fink, even a clever, skillful, "Marxist" fink, can hardly be dignified with the title "ally."

A. B. MAGIL.

"Special" Undeclared War

AFTER Japanese flyers had shot down near Hongkong a Chinese passenger plane, plainly marked "Passengers and Mail," killing fourteen civilians, including two babies, foreign correspondents brought the matter up at a Japanese press conference in Peiping. The Japanese military spokesman defended the action of the five Japanese naval pursuit planes by saying they were "merely carrying out orders." "But are you technically at war, Colonel?" asked a correspondent. "Why is the war always referred to by the Japanese as an incident?"

The Japanese officer, pale with anger, replied, "Foreigners who don't know China cannot understand. This is a *special* undeclared war."



Eastwood

“Tell Mr. Trotsky a delegation of workers and peasants is waiting out here to see him.”

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Unfinished Business

AS WE go to press, the Seventy-sixth Congress is preparing its ignominious close, but progressives throughout America are exerting all possible pressures to avert adjournment until the job-loan program and the housing measures are passed. True, the original aspects of the former have been altered until they are hardly recognizable: three billion dollars to create jobs has been whittled to \$1,690,000,000. But even that amount is all to the good.

Indications aplenty are at hand to prove that the reaction of the American people to the tory sabotage is being felt in Washington. Senate passage of the Murray amendment to the Relief Act was the immediate result of indignation over the WPA cuts.

The tories are straining at the leash. Their goal for adjournment was August 5. But New Dealers want to retrieve anything possible out of the wreckage. Consider what the tories have done. The Garner-Vandenberg-Taft "economy" axmen have been able to hack away at economic recovery and have been only too successful in preventing the construction of a positive American peace policy. July was indeed a black month. The tories passed the Woodrum-Taber hunger bill; they blocked neutrality revision and an embargo on Japan. They passed the dangerous Hatch bill; the House set into motion the Smith Anti-Alien Bill, as pernicious a measure as has been thrown into the hopper for many a year. They have played politics with everything that America needs. There is no progressive thing that they have not gunned for, that they do not aim to destroy, if possible: the Wages-and-Hours Act, Social Security—in fact, anything that a democratic people deem important to their welfare.

But as the congressmen prepare to rush to the railway stations for their homes (households not menaced, you may be sure, by unemployment and low wages) talk everywhere is heard of the necessity to convene a special session of Congress.

The reason, of course, is clear. The tories may think they have completed their labors, but most of America's business is unfinished. On this twenty-fifth anniversary of the World

War, the alarms sound louder than any time since August 1914. And our indigenous fascists are on the move. The saboteurs of welfare will learn a few things when they go home—they will find that America is not revolving about the Garner-Vandenberg-Taft axis.

Serving Notice on Japan

THE State Department's six months' notice on Japan for the abrogation of the 1911 trade treaty serves as a prism in which all factors and forces, both at home and abroad, are revealed in their true lights and colors. It will be remembered that the resolution for action against Japan under the 1911 treaty was originally conceived by Mr. Vandenberg, senator from Michigan and leading contender for the Republican nomination. Last week NEW MASSES characterized Vandenberg's move as "nothing more than a stall against the Pittman resolution" which would have placed the embargo upon Japan. Even the New York *Herald Tribune*, we pointed out, considered the Michigan senator's proposal "comfort to the Japanese Army in China."

But the administration called the Vandenberg bluff. When the Senate Foreign Relations Committee refused to take action on the Republican maneuver, the State Department suddenly called the cards. Mr. Vandenberg, taken unawares, was quoted by a Japanese Foreign Office spokesman as declaring that "new conditions exist calling for the appraisal of those conditions, and the writing of a new treaty under them." That phrase "new conditions" is familiar. It is part of the formula whereby Chamberlain backed down before the Japanese militarists. What he got for that were renewed insults, further demonstrations before British consulates, and proposals for smashing the Chinese dollar, all of which have little to do with the Tientsin incident. The Anglo-Japanese negotiations follow the traditional Munich ritual: the Japanese save face; the British get slapped; Chamberlain turns the other cheek.

The State Department's initiative, which the New York *Times* called the "most important diplomatic move by the United States since the war in China started," reveals the great power that lies in economic action against the aggressors. In this case, merely a *gesture* in the *direction* of economic action has already given the Japanese pause. There are huddled consultations in Osaka and Tokyo. There is chagrin among the appeasement experts at Whitehall. There is caution in Berlin and the ravings of frustration from Virginio Gayda in Rome.

On the other hand, the Chinese people have taken renewed hope. The news of American action was broadcast to all fighting fronts. For the first time, the Japanese people have come to know the ruinous impasse toward which their leaders are driving.

But it would be an excess of caution were the administration to wait six months before taking the next logical steps. Six months is a

long time. The Japanese could store up reserves of oil, cotton, scrap iron, and place further orders for heavy manufacturing machinery. Shipping interests, cotton producers, and others may suffer temporarily by the restriction of Japanese commerce. But in the larger, national interest of the United States, and the people's interest in peace and the restoration of international law, lies a much larger, longer-range stake than even a quarter of a billion dollars in trade.

Short of bringing the Pittman resolution out of the cupboard, the United States can impose countervailing duties against Japan under the 1930 tariff law. Purchase of silver from Japanese sources should be discontinued. Credits to China, through the Import-Export Bank, are in order. If democracy shall keep its advantage, that advantage must be followed up.

Ripping the Homespun

TWO weeks ago John Nance Garner was being sedulously sold to the American people as a gruff, kindly, sunparched old Texan who toddled off to bed at nine o'clock every evening. He had all the virtues and sound instincts of the empire builders of the last century, of which he was one, and, like them, he was fittingly modest about his great deeds. It was said that when the pressure of his important work eased up a bit, he liked nothing better than to retire to Uvalde, where he would cast flies in a quiet stream or think great thoughts from the porch of his home in the purple sage.

As the country now knows, *that* Garner never lived, save in the minds of those who had fallen for the Garner boom. The men who wrote it knew it was a fake. People who observed Washington affairs knew that the Vice President was no homespun statesman, but a quickwitted politician who could swap horses and roll logs with the best of them. Garner himself, bending elbows with the boys in the back room, must have laughed like little Audrey when he read the press buildups of the last few months.

Whatever else John L. Lewis' statement may have done, it has sent the tories back to a second line of defense. With Garner no longer the greatest Democrat since Andrew Jackson but merely the greatest Vice President since Aaron Burr, they are forced to try to make of the CIO leader's blast something that will aid their man, or at the very least damage Lewis. Personal attack, they whine, has no place in American politics. Moreover, the office Garner holds should command a respect that prohibits comment on extra-curricular activity. And, finally, millions of Americans enjoy an occasional drink, like to plunge a spare nickel in a poker game. Look at what they did to prohibition.

What millions of Americans will remember, however, is that Garner is a labor-hater who plots against the plain people behind closed doors, and with associates whose names are seldom coupled with his. They will remember, too, that their President has suffered

personal attack beside which Lewis' speech was measured and mild. Rep. Dewey Short of Missouri called Roosevelt an "egocentric megalomaniac" from the House floor. Lewis did not attack Garner's august office, but he did tell the whole truth about the man whose mantle it does not fit. Americans are not prudes, but it is unlikely that they would want a toper for President—and it is certain that they will have no part of a labor-hater. Lewis spoke no more than the truth about an American whose private business is the public's business.

General Johnson's Echo

EUGENE LYONS, editor of the *American Mercury* and one of the chief ornaments of the anti-Soviet hate brigade, likes to keep up the pretense of being a liberal. Just where Eugene Lyons ends and Isaac Don Levine begins may be hard to tell with the naked eye, but there is no more fervent burner of verbal incense on democracy's altar than the *Mercury's* head man. And it is, of course, out of purest love for democracy that Lyons, in the August issue of his magazine, adds his cackle to the reactionary barnyard chorus against a third term for President Roosevelt.

Lyons has picked up Gen. Hugh Johnson's phrase, "third termites," and most of the general's ideas. Concerning the Roosevelt administration this Trotskyist "liberal" writes: "Never before in American history has that bureaucracy been larger, more influential, or more determined to hold on to its places and privileges." This is the way he characterizes the millions who are today urging that President Roosevelt run again: "Termites which bore into wood make it at once their home and their sustenance. For the third termites, similarly, the government is both home and daily bread. The most compelling force in their lives is the need to protect the jobs they have dug into." And he delivers himself of the contemptible Republican canard that in foreign affairs "the New Deal hangerson" are trying to deepen the emergency in order to assure a third term.

The Lyons article coincided with the publication of a lengthy editorial attack on the third-term idea in the *Saturday Evening Post*. Politically, however, this is no coincidence. It illustrates once again what NEW MASSES has frequently emphasized: that Trotskyism is no mere "Russian issue." Everywhere the Trotskyites work against democracy, providing the pseudo-radical sauce for the reactionary stew. As NEW MASSES pointed out editorially in its July 11 issue: "The issue in 1940 is not a third term for President Roosevelt; it is a third term for the New Deal." That may require that Roosevelt run again in order that the substance of democracy may be saved from destruction at the hands of those who hypocritically worship the form. Eugene Lyons may say that "even a change for the worse is better than no change at all in the upper reaches of its democratic system," but millions of average Americans don't think so.

The Coughlin Network

LIKE Hitler, Father Coughlin claims that his enemies constantly threaten his life. The man whose followers never fail to take the initiative in violence likes to cover his own terrorism with the mantles of martyrdom and self-defense. It is not the persecution mania of dementia præcox, but a smooth and effective bit of fascist methodology. "I am not important, nor is this battle between individuals," he says. "Carry out your threats if you dare." The whole technique of inciting violence to counter the imagined violence of the opposition is there.

Coughlin has used this tactic before, but it was the central theme of his speech last Sunday. The speech, from all accounts, was one of his most flagrant pieces of misrepresentation and demagoguery. Aware of the many documented descriptions of the way his group has been working, he attacked the whole progressive press, classing NEW MASSES, the *Nation*, the *Daily Worker*, and *Equality* all as "Bolshevik literature."

Incitation to violence is one part of the Coughlin fascist strategy, but after last week's broadcast NEW MASSES learned of another. Noticing his mention of our publication in the *New York Times* account, and thinking that there might have been more references, we tried to obtain the full text and the full list of stations carrying it. We called the *Times* information bureau, radio agencies and trade journals, the Coughlin organization, and other offices, but apparently in all New York it was impossible either to get Coughlin's full text or to find out what stations broadcast his talk.

The stations that broadcast Father Coughlin are apparently eager to conceal their identity and steer clear of mass protest. For the most part they are small fly-by-night outfits,

and the roster is constantly changing. Major networks shying away from him, Coughlin has resorted to a hookup of his own making. If this semi-anonymous sponsorship is allowed to continue, the possibilities for Nazi and fascist propaganda from many sources is immediately apparent. It is a first duty of progressives to learn where and from what stations Coughlin is broadcasting, and to make their feelings immediately known to the owners.

Milk Prices Up

THE latest half-cent increase in the price of New York milk sustains NEW MASSES' prediction that, once the Milk Trust had the farmers tied up in a bargaining agency, they would apply the squeeze to consumers, labor, and the small business man.

During the recent price war, prices to the consumer went down—but not as much as prices to the farmer. Now prices to the farmer are going up slightly—far too slightly to compensate him for his drought losses—and consumer prices are going up even more.

All indications point to another attempt in the near future to raise the price another half-cent. The trust is now negotiating with the Milk Wagon Drivers for a new union contract, at increased wages. Last time a contract was negotiated the trust took occasion to increase the price of milk, despite the fact that the wage increase only cost them one-tenth of a cent per quart, according to the attorney general's investigation. If the trust concedes any wage increase, they will undoubtedly not only try to make the public pay for it again, but pay for it five times over.

Small business men are feeling the squeeze of a new ruling, under which unsold milk or cream may no longer be returned for a rebate. The storekeeper is instructed to palm off his



"Everywhere I go it keeps bouncing in front of me."

ninety-six-hour-old cream on his customers—failing which he can feed it to the store cat. A militant statement by the influential Independent Grocers' Association recognized that this latest increase is an unjustified assault on their customers' pocketbooks.

Dairy farmers, labor, the consumer, and the small business man thus have an immediate and direct interest in curbing the milk monopoly and cutting down the spread between what the farmer gets and what the consumer pays. This can be most effectively expressed through demands on Albany. All these groups must receive genuine representation on the new bargaining agency to be set up to control milk prices. The new federal order must incorporate real restrictions on trust power, and eliminate provisions discriminating in favor of the trust and in favor of trust-dominated or influenced cooperatives.

Medical Monopoly

LATE in 1937 a group of government employees in Washington borrowed \$40,000 from the Home Owners Loan Corporation and set up what was later known as the Group Health Association. Through the association the federal workers and their families bought their medical care at prices that could not be touched in individual practice.

The American Medical Association and its Washington subsidiary didn't like the GHA. The local medical society held a meeting to decide what to do about it, and though they did little, they allowed this amazingly open statement to slip into a resolution: "... the Medical Society of the District of Columbia has an apparent means of hindering the operation of the Group Health Association, Inc., if it can prevent patients of physicians in its employ from being received in the local private hospitals." The medical society did just this. In several Washington hospitals GHA patients were refused entry, even when their cases needed immediate attention. After several cases whose flagrancy could not be ignored, Assistant Attorney General Arnold drew up an indictment of the AMA, the District Medical Society, and several other groups and individuals. They were charged with violating federal anti-trust laws.

Last week the federal court in Washington dismissed the indictment. The case, read the court ruling of Justice James M. Proctor, did not come within the province of anti-trust action, because medicine is not a "trade" by the law's definition. Disregarding the fact that the AMA functions as a monopoly, the court issued pages on legal semantics and left it to the government to appeal the case in higher courts.

The AMA is a monopoly. It restricts the free operation of physicians who want their work on a more advanced economic plane, although it has no legal authority. It is not a trade union. When it cannot convince, it coerces by boycott and restraint, if not of "trade," of a practice that may mean life and death. The fight against it will be a difficult one, but it must be forced. If the AMA is

allowed a free hand, the difficulty of inaugurating a group health plan that will embody the entire nation, the Wagner Health Bill, will be immeasurably increased.

Good Men to Elect

ISRAEL AMTER is a name which means a great deal to thousands of progressives. It is associated with every good fight on behalf of the people of New York. That name was known well before those stirring days of March 6, 1930, when the unemployed demonstrated that they refused to eat Hoover's apples, and wanted jobs and unemployment relief. Amter was one of those arrested and imprisoned by reaction for his splendid efforts. He ranks with the leading progressives in America.

For that reason his candidacy for City Council will be welcomed by the most farsighted of New York's seven million. He would be a bulwark in that important body, for the biggest city in the world has obligations that reach beyond its confines. Advances here in housing, relief, health, labor and all fundamental social questions set the pace for the rest of America.

Tory domination of the City Council means a setback in all fundamental social questions. Men like Amter mean that the people will have champions who will not rest unless their needs are met. The Tories have been able to stymie the many courageous battles put up by the American Labor Party-Fusion minority. All honest political students know that in the past councilmanic campaign the Communists gave sterling support to all progressive candidates while presenting their own candidates and program. Unity within labor and progressive organizations was furthered. This year, unity being even more urgent, finds the Communists continuing that policy. Their candidates are Mr. Amter, for Manhattan, Peter Cacchione, for Brooklyn, Isidore Begun, for the Bronx, and Paul Crosbie, for Queens. Thousands of signatures are being collected for the purpose of putting the candidates' names on the ballot. These are good names, men who have been tried. They must be presented to the voters in the coming crucial elections.

Negro Diamond Stars

FOR several years Lester Rodney, able sports editor of the *Daily Worker*, has been campaigning for the admission of Negro baseball players to the major leagues. He asked Joe Di Maggio and a dozen other stars what they thought of the Jim Crow bars and the unanimous report was, down with them! Now Rodney's poll of the major league managers shows that they too have no objection to strengthening their teams with such fabulous players as Satchel Paige the great pitcher; Josh Gibson, the Babe Ruth of Negro baseball; Ray Brown, the pitcher who beat Bill Terry's Giants in a Cuban exhibition game; and Buck Leonard, an astonishing first baseman. Bill McKechnie, manager of the Cin-

cinnati Reds, says there are at least twenty-five Negro players of big league caliber and he would like to have some of them on his team. Fred Haney, new manager of the St. Louis Browns, from the only town in the big leagues which still segregates Negro fans in the stands, could not risk an open approval of the idea but paid high tribute to the ability of the Negro players.

The Young Communist League is circulating a petition directed to officials of organized baseball, asking the end of race discrimination in the national pastime. Thousands have signed the paper at each ball park the YCL has canvassed. The fans, the players, and the managers overwhelmingly favor the democratization of baseball. Even in St. Louis, Henry Armstrong has fought a white man in the ring and last year University of Missouri students revolted against their chauvinistic track coach who asked that Wisconsin's team withdraw a Negro athlete in a dual meet. The time is ripe. Only Judge Landis and the presidents of the American and National Leagues refuse to act. Baseball lovers can turn the tide by letting these men know they stand in the way of revitalizing the great American game.

The "Purge" Racket

ON FRIDAY, July 28, the *New York Times* ran a front page, Associated Press story from Moscow headed "Russian General among Eighty in Purge." The story stated flatly that Gen. Grigory Stern of the Far Eastern army had been removed. It went on with complete assurance to name his "successor." And the *Times*, not content with puffing up the Associated Press dispatch, editorialized that "Purge Continues Trend." The impression which the *Times* attempted to create in its comment was that the Red Army has been weakened by "repeated purges."

On Monday, July 31, the *Times* carried another story by Harold Denny, its own correspondent in Moscow. The story appeared on page 7. It cited "conclusive disproof" of the July 28 story. The whole thing was a fake, not only with respect to General Stern, but the other seventy-nine men "formerly high in Soviet military and diplomatic life."

The fake story, Mr. Denny tells us, emanated from Japan! And he adds that it was timed to coincide with a critical moment in the Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations. "Such reports," says Mr. Denny, "would not affect official opinion in France and Britain, but might well raise doubt in the minds of the public on the advisability of making a military alliance with the Soviet Union." In playing up Japanese-inspired rumors, the American press is playing the game of the fascist axis. It is gratifying to find Harold Denny warning the readers of the *Times* to be on their guard against the kind of distortions which he himself has on occasion circulated. There would have been further cause for gratification had the *Times* given its true story the front-page prominence it gave the Japanese rumor.

Readers' Forum

"Caucasians Only"

TO NEW MASSES: I have seen clippings allegedly from a report by the Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York, proposing that only Caucasians be admitted to residence and citizenship in the United States. Such barbarous "race" ideas are of course to be found in America and in all other nations, even among all the savages. But it is a bit interesting to find them invading the "report" of so-called hardheaded business men.

Let us see: "Caucasian" is a conventional term, usually applied without discrimination to all the paler peoples, who are low in the under-skin pigmentation. These peoples do not belong to the same "race" at all, in the loose sense of that word, and the paucity of pigmentation is often all that they have in common. Most of our United States population has come from Europe, and the next largest descent is from Africa. But all Southern Europe is plainly Negroid. Don't be shocked: that all began to happen many generations before Caesar met Cleopatra, and has gone on for ages. The Negroid element is often very visible, even in the color, as you journey southward in Italy and in Spain and in the Balkans. That is the reason why our tongue sought our cheek when Mussolini joined the "Aryan" parade. The Mediterranean was once a valley, not a sea, and the best science of man has it that the Nordics are only bleached-out black people from Africa—which accounts for Nordic curly hair and long heads and other physical traits. Our present North American population is only incidentally Eurafrikan: because the European discovered and exploited the continent and because the African was brought here to work it. And now the New York Chamber of Commerce would have us shut out not only all the rest of the world but also the relatives of these Aframericans, who have done more than their proportionate share of the hard work here.

When Senator Bilbo of Mississippi says something just like that (Let us send the Negro "back" to Africa!), we laugh and say, "What a silly man!" But when such ideas emanate from a business report of our most cosmopolitan state, it calls for a different response. Of course, only thoughtless people could ever advocate sending anything "back" where it has never been: practically all the fifteen million "Negroes" of America were born here and none of them has been to Africa even on a visit.

Let us look at the morals of this exclusion idea—not that morality had anything to do with its conception: There is the American Indian, whom we all found here. No one knows when he came here, or from what other part of the world. Most likely he came from Asia, as he has color and characteristics that point toward such an origin. But this Bilboistic idea would even shut out all Mexicans, who are nine-tenths Indian, and practically all the other Central and South American peoples, who are largely mixtures of African, Indian, and European, often with much Oriental blood.

And look at the Negro in relation to the morals of this idea: There is much evidence that the blacks of Africa, who, by the way, were civilized at least ten thousand years before any European was civilized, had come to this Western Hemisphere long before Columbus or the Norsemen. They had crossed the Atlantic, or some now lost Atlantis, and they

have left their marks most clearly in the civilizations and the monuments from Mexico to Peru.

But suppose we do not try to go so far back but just take up with this Negro who is here now: As a group he is the oldest of all the immigrant Americans. His immigration into the United States closed at the opening of the Civil War, so that the Negro is American for eighty years on back to over three hundred years. On the other hand, most of our whites have come to America, in one ancestor or another, since the Civil War closed—*since the Negro quit coming!* Consequently the blacks, who were nearly half the total (non-Indian) population in many of the colonies (more than half in some), and who were nearly 14 percent of the total population, Indians and all, at the time of the Civil War, are now only 10 percent of the total. Under the rawest of raw deals he has made the very best of our loyal citizens: although not in the history books, he was in the Revolutionary War. He was a Minute Man and a soldier of George Washington. I did not know until after I had graduated from Yale University, long after, that Negro soldiers stood about five thousand strong with George Washington at Yorktown, when he overcame Cornwallis—and the DAR does not know that yet—and if I had stayed at Yale I would not now know it. The American Negro has done his share of the pioneering work, of the fighting and dying, and of all the building of the country. Certainly there can be no more morals in wanting to shut out him and his kind than in wanting to shut out the aboriginal Indian.

The few "foreign Negroes" in the United States are only from British America—from Canada, Bermuda, and Jamaica—and they are about all in New York City. But these are the people who worked and died and built our Panama Canal for us, and who are now guiding our ships safely through it. (Go and look for yourself.)

Besides, there is no statesmanship in these narrow proposals. They create in all the colored peoples a sympathy for Japan—for a stand against "white" arrogance. For there can be no more sense in trying to make the Western world white than in trying to make all the world white—and perhaps there could be no less success in it.

New York City. WILLIAM PICKENS.
(Director of Branches, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.)

In Puerto Rico

TO NEW MASSES: Yesterday in San Juan was St. John's Day—the patron saint of the city. At dawn the cannons were fired and I heard a lot about it all day. That night we went to the Louis Munoz Riveara Park where the "fiesta" was being held and it was the most depressing evening I ever spent. It was like a poor imitation of Coney Island; cheap American ferris wheels, merry-go-rounds, and all that, fireworks and cold drinks and hot dog stands—the cold drinks *all* bottled and imported stuff—I could not find one of the delicious native drinks of coconut milk or Spanish barley. Everybody wandering around dressed in cheap American clothes and no music or singing.

In spite of forty years of schools in English, Spanish is militantly the language. They are thoroughly Spanish—Puerto Rican. Think what it means to the people for the schools to be taught in English! The children have to learn reading, writing, and arithmetic in English—geography and history, everything from American textbooks. Spanish is given only in high school as a "language" fifty minutes a day. All their culture has to be compressed into that time. I wonder if that is what makes them love their poetry so defiantly?

In the interior of the island much more of the native culture has been able to live—music, dancing, and handicrafts—but in general, except for the beautiful mountains, flowers, and sea, which imperialism still has not found a way to spoil, the country has been raped. Even the birds for which it was famous are gone. The remaining industries here are mattress making (kapok), rum, beer, etc., and a lovely herb-smelling rubbing alcohol, cigarettes, embroidery, straw weaving, mahogany furniture, beautiful tiles, and fruit candy. What else I don't know yet. It's mostly sold in tourist stores with all kinds of bric-a-brac—nothing sold on a large scale. "Yankee" products have taken over everywhere. Not just that the people are poor and starving and disease-ridden, but even all that is fine and beautiful about a nation has been consistently destroyed for forty years. In the country where we went the other day to see some sugarcane workers—very similar to our sharecroppers—the house was made of imported wood, the roof of imported corrugated iron; they ate food out of American cans and wore American-made overalls.

I do not need to tell you that wages are low. The stenographer in the office who works both in English and Spanish gets \$2 a week. The white-collar workers in the beautiful new Populare Bank get \$25 a month, and printers and linotypists \$4 to \$6 a week.

One thing has not been Americanized, and that is the housing. The city of San Juan is really and truly a nightmare of filth. Tiny, narrow streets with houses like rabbit warrens, only much dirtier, and crowded beyond imagination.

I wish I could tell you about the inconceivable beauty of the island, but it is hopeless even to try. I want everyone to see this beautiful and tragic island and do something about it. *The New Deal must be brought to Puerto Rico!*

San Juan, P. R.

JANE ANDREU.

Hollywood: 1900-1920

TO NEW MASSES: I have made a close study of the American movies between 1900 and 1920 and I sharply disagree with a paragraph in Joseph North's first article on Hollywood (NEW MASSES, July 4) in which it is said the movies of the period "did much to break down chauvinistic attitudes toward recent immigrant peoples." I find that the movies of the period did much to *build up* such attitudes. I have carefully examined the texts of a thousand or more of these early productions and found the progressive films too few in number to have any appreciable effect on the public. From the evidence I have gathered I would say the social films were irretrievably lost, not "under custard-pie and cop-chasing-tramp comedies and Westerns," but in the greater fog of chauvinistic and reactionary productions. [The writer here lists over a hundred titles and descriptions of reactionary films on these subjects.—ED.] Anti-labor films were so numerous in the years 1909 and 1910 that the AFL was forced in 1910 to instruct its central bodies and local unions to "enter protest against unwarranted misrepresentations in moving pictures of occurrences in strikes."

New York City.

DAVID PLATT.

Mr. Platt, film critic of the *Daily Worker*, has made an argument to which there is no rebuttal, except to say that the social films of the early period were greater in number and more outspoken than in the period of the twenties. Few as they were, and those lost under reactionary pictures, the opening of the era of monopoly banished pro-labor films almost entirely.—THE EDITORS.

The Steinbeck Country

Carey McWilliams' "Factories in the Field" analyzes the social background of "The Grapes of Wrath." Migratory workers versus monopoly in California.

A MACMILLAN ad in the August issue of the *Retail Bookseller* urges the trade to remember that "All summer book buyers aren't hammock dwellers." This is sound business advice. The traditional practice of featuring "vacation fiction" doesn't make much sense this summer, even from a hardboiled commercial point of view. A few seasons ago the publishers were burning up with envy because Macmillan had scooped them with Margaret Mitchell's *Gone With the Wind*. Today they would be willing to mortgage their last font of type to buy *The Grapes of Wrath* away from Viking.

Steinbeck's great novel about migratory workers is averaging close to ten thousand copies a week during a season when people are supposed to crave complete escape from reality. It is renting 50 percent better than *All This, and Heaven Too*, the runnerup. Until a few weeks ago, New Orleans was the only large city in the country where *The Grapes of Wrath* did not head the best seller list, but New Orleans has at last made it unanimous.

When the book appeared, some people attributed its immediate success to the reputation which Steinbeck had gained through *Of Mice and Men*. That did help, of course. But certainly the sustained interest in the book can be accounted for only in terms of its own overpowering force. Even more significant than the circulation figures, I believe, is the

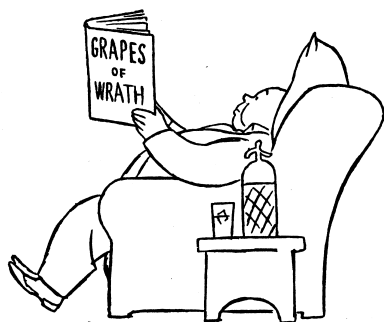
intensity of the readers' response to the book. It leaves a dent no matter how carefully we have armored our emotions. And because it has stirred people profoundly through its imaginative appeal, it has inevitably focused the attention of hundreds of thousands on a momentous social problem of which they had hitherto been almost entirely ignorant.

In the past few weeks I have had occasion, in the course of a lecture tour, to discuss the book with several "vacation" groups. *The Grapes of Wrath* has awakened an interest in agricultural workers which amounts to a sense of discovery on the part of urban readers. This is one of the many important contributions of the book. People are asking: "But how about these migratory workers that Steinbeck writes about? We never heard much about them before. Is it true that the Joads are part of an army of hundreds of thousands? Is Steinbeck's picture accurate, or is he exaggerating for artistic effect?"

Fortunately, a book has just appeared which gives a historical and analytical treatment of the subject that Steinbeck treated so beautifully in imaginative terms. The book is *Factories in the Field* (Little, Brown & Co., \$2.50). The author is Carey McWilliams, who was appointed commissioner of immigration and housing in California by Governor Olson early this year. Mr. McWilliams' study was forwarded to his publishers before the

appearance of *The Grapes of Wrath*. It is a vigorous, dramatic, scientific account which no reader of Steinbeck's novel can afford to miss.

The title expresses the main thesis of the book. In California, farming has been replaced by industrialized agriculture, the farm by the factory in the field. The self-sufficing "family farm," still characteristic of other sections of the country, is a disappearing phenomenon on the Coast. As early as 1880, Mr. McWilliams points out, Karl Marx wrote to Friedrich Sorge, his correspondent in America, that "I should be very much pleased if you could find me something good (meaty) on economic conditions in California. California is very important for me because nowhere else has the upheaval most shamelessly caused by capitalist centralization taken place with such speed." The process of land monopolization began very early in California. By 1860 the good lands were preempted. The Mexican grants, the expropriation by the railroads (by 1870 they held twenty million acres), the frenzied period of land speculation accelerated the pace of monopoly control. One five-hundredth of the California population owned one-half or more of the available agricultural lands in 1870. The land was obtained by robbery, violence, and fraud. Henry George described the process as "a history of greed, of perjury, of corruption, of spoliation and high-handed rob-



"Damn that fellow Roosevelt!"

Ned Hilton

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bery for which it will be difficult to find a parallel." And Mr. McWilliams adds that the statement is conservative.

The penetration of monopoly capital into agriculture created a need for a vast labor supply. For the past fifty years, the chief objective of the growers has been the maintenance of "cheap, skilled, mobile, and temporary labor." They have resorted to every dirty trick in the deck in order to ensure such a supply. Successive waves of racial and minority groups have been exploited and then discarded. Chinese, Japanese, Hindus, Armenians, Mexicans, and Filipinos have in turn reaped profits for the monopolists. When each group, unable for long to endure merciless wages and hours, attempted to organize, or to set up small independent farms, ways and means were found, with the help of the courts and the vigilantes, to throw them off the land. One national group has been played off against another. The history of organized brigandage as told by Mr. McWilliams would be incredible, if it were not so solidly supported by evidence.

The latest wave of migratory workers has consisted of native whites from Oklahoma, Texas, and Arkansas. Tractored out of the dust bowl, lured on by false offers of employment, these people, like the Joads of Steinbeck's novel, have come to California in their ancient jalopies. Mr. McWilliams points out that this latest influx is qualitatively different from any of the previous ones. The end of a cycle has been reached: "With the arrival of the dust bowl refugees a day of reckoning approaches for the California farm industrialists. The jig, in other words, is about up." Here is a permanent population that cannot be deported. The false issue of "race" cannot easily be exploited. The dust bowl refugees are going to fight.

The conditions among migratory workers are frightful. In 1936 the State Relief Administration discovered a two-room cabin inhabited by *forty-one* people from southeastern Oklahoma. An investigator found a one-room shack in which fifteen men, women, and children lived in "unimaginable filth." Workers bathe in and drink from irrigation ditches. They make shacks of linoleum and cardboard cartons. Most ranch camps have no baths, showers, or plumbing. And one that did had a single shower for four hundred people. In February 1937 six thousand cases of influenza broke out in one county. Prenatal care is almost unheard of, and many women report that they have lost babies for three or four successive years. The State Relief Administration estimates that average yearly earnings *per family* group dropped from \$381 in 1930 to \$289 in 1935. The SRA estimates that the bare minimum needed for mere existence is \$780 per family. Is it any wonder that the Joads are restless?

But the growers refuse to yield an inch. It is the growers, for example, who are behind the Barden amendment to the Wages and Hours Bill, at present pending in Congress, an amendment which would deprive two million workers of minimum wage standards on



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the ground that they are not "industrial workers" but "farmers." The growers are organized and they are powerful. The Bank of America, a pro-fascist outfit, owns 50 percent of the farm lands in central and northern California! Associated Farmers "has many points of similarity with organizations of a like character in Nazi Germany." Mr. McWilliams believes that in California "the mechanism of fascist control has been carried to further lengths than elsewhere in America." The growers have established concentration camps. They conduct "trial mobilizations." They sponsored the California Cavaliers, a semi-military organization. They burn crosses on the California hills. They kidnap and kill union organizers.

The organization of California's 250,000 factory-farm workers has been difficult not only because the owners resort to intimidation and violence, but also because the seasonal, migratory nature of the work tends to keep the workers apart. In addition, the AFL top leadership has discouraged organization. The IWW made some headway before the war. The Trade Union Unity League made important gains. But the real period of organization has just begun, and it is heartening to note that just the other day the NLRB ordered the Grower-Shipper Vegetable Association of central California to bargain with the CIO shed workers' union in Salinas. Salinas (John Steinbeck's native city, by the way) was the scene of police brutality during the lettuce strike of 1936. The United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing, and Allied Workers, affiliated with the CIO, has made other important gains since its organization two years ago. Mr. McWilliams feels that "the Associated Farmers, and their allies, will wage civil war in the farm counties to prevent the organization of farm labor under the CIO. It is for this reason that farm labor in California is a matter of national importance. And it is precisely for this reason that the drive toward fascist control has probably been carried further in California than in any other state in the Union." It is apparent that a setback for the New Deal in 1940 would release the floodgates of fascism in California. Mr. McWilliams concludes:

There is no longer any equivocation in California. . . . The real solution involves the substitution of collective agriculture for the present monopolistically owned and controlled system. As a first step in the direction of collectivization, agricultural workers must be organized. Once they are organized, they can work out the solutions for most of their immediate problems. They can, for example, regulate employment through hiring halls similar in operation to those used on the waterfront with such great success. With public encouragement and assistance, they can solve most of the immediate problems of housing, education, and health conditions. A partial solution will be achieved when subsistence homesteads have grown up about the migratory camps. . . . But the final solution will come only when the present wasteful, vicious, undemocratic, and thoroughly anti-social system of agricultural ownership in California is abolished. . . . The dust bowl refugees, unlike the pioneers of



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HERE ARE THE RULES

1. Everyone but NM staff members and their relatives is eligible.
2. The contest opens June 22 and closes September 4 (Labor Day).
3. Slogans must not exceed five words but may be less.
4. Here's how to qualify for the contest: Go to your friends, relatives, and professional acquaintances and convince them to become regular NEW MASSES readers. While you are showing them the magazine and talking about its fine points you will find yourself expressing its qualities in terms your listeners are interested in. This is what will make up the grand prize slogan—a sharp, terse, and dramatic description of the usefulness of the magazine to progressive people.
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5. The first contest winner will be announced in the issue of NEW MASSES that appears July 6. In that issue and in each of the next nine issues we will reprint the winning slogan and award the weekly prize of \$10.00. One month after the closing date of the contest, we will announce the winner of the grand prize of \$100.00.
6. All slogans submitted, whether winners or not, become the property of NEW MASSES, and cannot be returned. In the event of a tie for weekly or grand prize the full amount of the prize will be awarded to each tying contestant.
7. Judges of the contest will be three editors of NEW MASSES—Joseph North, A. B. Magill, Samuel Sillen. Their decisions are final.

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'49, have made the long trek West to find not gold but labor camps and improvised shantytowns. It is just possible that these latest recruits for the farm factories may be the last, and that out of their struggle for a decent life in California may issue a new type of agricultural economy for the West and for America.

This passage helps to define the tremendous historical theme which underlies *The Grapes of Wrath*. In dealing with it, Steinbeck has made a great contribution toward our understanding of the basic forces at present operating in American life. Carey McWilliams' *Factories in the Field* is an enormously valuable supplement to that contribution.

SAMUEL SILLEN.

USSR Foreign Policy

Collection of Litvinov's speeches reviewed by Maxwell S. Stewart.

FOR those who are uncertain regarding Soviet foreign policy—and there are still many such—there can be no better text than this collection of the speeches of Maxim Litvinov between April 4, 1934, and Sept. 21, 1938. (*Against Aggression*, International Publishers, \$1.50.) It is an amazing demonstration of the consistency of that policy. Each speech, each paragraph, and each sentence reads as if it were written today. Leafing through the book, one comes on quotable sections on every page. Take, for example, the following sentences from the speech delivered on April 4, 1934, on the signing of the protocols for the prolongation of the pacts of non-aggression between the USSR and the Baltic states:

The threats of war in Europe today are caused by disputes between neighboring states arising out of the transfer of . . . territory from one state to another . . . or are caused by dissatisfaction with the treaties implementing these territorial transfers. The Soviet state is stranger to such disputes; it has never demanded the revision of existing treaties, and never intends to demand it. The Soviet state, which is a stranger to chauvinism, nationalism, or racial or national prejudice, perceives its state duties to lie not in conquest, not in expansion; . . . it considers that the honor of the nation demands . . . fulfillment of the ideal for which the Soviet state was brought into existence, namely the building of a socialist society.

Even more striking is a section from Litvinov's speech before the Eighth Congress of the Soviets, Nov. 28, 1936—nearly three years ago:

The Soviet Union . . . does not beg to be invited to any unions, any blocs, any combinations. She will calmly let other states weigh and evaluate the advantages which can be derived for peace from close cooperation with the Soviet Union, and understand that the Soviet Union can give more than receive. . . . Our security does not depend upon paper documents or upon foreign policy combinations.

It is interesting also to trace through the

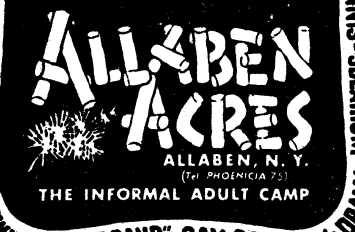
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book Litvinov's various pronouncements on the Spanish, Chinese, and Czech crises, and note how clearly he called the turn of events long before they occurred. The following, for instance, from the Nov. 28, 1936, speech has only within recent weeks been subject to irrefutable proof through German and Italian admissions:

The insurgent [Spanish] generals would not have dared to have risen against [the] government had they not been promised in advance the support of German or Italian fascism, or both.

The final speech in the series, Litvinov's address before the Assembly of the League of Nations, Sept. 21, 1938—a few days before Munich—makes the best reading of all. For here, on the eve of one of the greatest disasters of modern times, the Soviet foreign minister made an inspired appeal for a return to collective security before it was too late. He insisted, with ample justification, that it was still possible to resort to sanctions in defense of peace and to revitalize the League's collective system. Then he proceeded to issue a grave warning against appeasement, declaring that "it has had as its consequence three wars and threatens to bring down on us a fourth. Four nations have already been sacrificed, and a fifth is next on the list." And finally, Litvinov reviewed with unmistakable clarity each of the occasions on which the Soviet Union had made an unmistakable pledge of assistance to Czechoslovakia, and reiterated its pledge for the world to hear. But the world had already embarked on the blind journey to Munich and it paid no heed.

In addition to Litvinov's speeches, which argue the case for collective security from every conceivable angle, the book contains the texts of all the recent treaties between the Soviet Union and foreign countries, showing collective security in practice. Included also is the Covenant of the League of Nations, which is the foundation stone of this policy. A more useful handbook in international relations would be difficult to compile.

MAXWELL S. STEWART.

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Cora MacAlbert reviews three books written by physicians.

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Today the Red Cross is known everywhere, but its founder is a legend. Martin Gumpert, a German poet, biographer, and physician, now in New York City, has resuscitated Henri Dunant. (*Dunant: The Story of the Red Cross*. Translated by Whittaker Chambers. Oxford University Press. \$2.50.) Against a panorama of the nineteenth century, vivid with camera-eye movement and socio-historical detail, he presents the ever en-

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grossing picture of a man's development from self-interest to social responsibility. When Henri Dunant, a young banker from Geneva, sought out Napoleon III to sell him an African stock company, he ran into the aftermath of the Battle of Solferino—wounded thousands suffering unto death without nursing or medical care—and he was forever deflected from his banker's course and turned toward founding the Red Cross. The success of the Red Cross idea, and its first convention in 1863, were the direct result of his organization and his widely read book, *Recollections of Solferino*. But Dunant's bold idealism frightened the prudent Genevese aristocracy, who took control of the Red Cross. Dunant disappeared. He was not heard from for fifteen years, when he was found in a Swiss almshouse and awarded the first Nobel Peace Prize.

Dr. Gumpert links Dunant's personal tragedy with the failure of nineteenth-century humanitarianism. Both lacked the essentials of effective humanitarianism which, he says, "must be bold, well thought out, unsentimental, politically alert, radical in morality and scientific in method." At the same time, Dr. Gumpert believes that the whole spirit of humanitarianism has died out in our time, and he fails to see that it does exist today with these very qualities which it lacked fifty years ago. Nineteenth-century humanitarianism, as he himself points out, was the attempt of an enlightened aristocratic few to quell the social unrest of the people and to scotch the advance of the capitalist middle class. Today's humanitarianism flourishes on a broader and truly humanitarian base, where mass organizations assist the victims of industrial strife and war.

In his critical survey of the history of the Red Cross, Dr. Gumpert has unaccountably neglected one very interesting phase—the use of its forces as a political weapon. Some reference might have been made to the organization's post-war policy of "saving Europe from Bolshevism"—how it starved out the Hungarian Soviet, supported the Kolchak forces, swindled the Russian Soviet with its belated aid. Worthy of comment, too, would have been the role of the American Red Cross as strikebreaker, its notorious performances in the Kentucky, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia strikes of 1931, when it withheld assistance from the starving miners.

Dr. David Riesman, a celebrated Philadelphia physician, has written *Medicine in Modern Society* (Princeton University Press, \$2.50), for laymen because "the history of medicine is in reality an epitome of civilization and should form a part of every man's culture." In a readily understandable form, but without oversimplification or talking down, Dr. Riesman analyzes the peak accomplishments in medical history, from the first use of opium through the development of precision instruments. On the unsolved problems of medicine, such as the "incurable" diseases, cancer, leukemia, etc., he presents provocative theories. Dr. Riesman discusses



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the "bitterly fought issue" of socialization of medicine, and answers effectively the cap- tious objections of its opponents.

A pioneer in the reform of medical practice is Dr. Michael A. Shadid, the founder of America's first cooperative hospital. (*A Doctor for the People*, Vanguard Press, \$2.50.) The opening of the Community Hospital of Elk City, Okla., in 1931, was the result of Dr. Shadid's long cherished desire to give the people the best medical care at costs they could afford. During years of private practice, and door-to-door jewelry peddling to support himself through school, he had seen farmers mortgage and lose their farms to pay for unnecessary operations by incompe- tent men. Today at the Community Hospital two thousand families receive complete medi- cal, surgical, and dental care from a staff of specialists for \$5 a year per family.

The Community Hospital has flourished because of the wholehearted support of the Farmers Union which sponsored it, and in spite of the continuous persecution of organ- ized medicine. The American Medical Association and AMA-controlled groups have used every device to destroy it. Doctors from other states wishing to work at the Community Hos- pital were failed on their state board exams. The farmers supporting the hospital were called a bunch of dangerous radicals. Nasty innuendoes were circulated about Dr. Shadid's private life, and attempts were made to de- prive him of his license.

Dr. Shadid does in his book what very few doctors dare to do: he boldly criticizes the shortcomings of his profession in public. Too many medical reformers confine their criticism to professional meetings while presenting a united front to the public. "It happens," Dr. Shadid says, "that I am a great believer in the wisdom and the power of the people; in other words, a great believer in true democ- racy. And consequently I think the people should have all the facts, enter into the dis- cussion, and have some say in determining the kind of medical care they should receive."

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An Ozark Goebbels

Paramount's new Bob Burns picture, "Our Leading Citizen," outlines a homespun fascism. The film as a weapon in the anti-labor drive.

LABOR-BAITING is an old thing in the movies but a fully crystallized fascist demagoguery is something new. *Our Leading Citizen*, a forthcoming Paramount picture, is the most cunning reactionary film yet made in Hollywood. It has the annihilating power of a Hitler lie, which begins with the real needs, questions, and aspirations of the people, and by playing on previously planted prejudices, converts these aspirations into a complete defeat for the people. Mixed with the established prejudices against Communists, aliens, and city slickers, the script admits several real enemies of the people—the bad capitalist and the strikebreaker. Just as the early Hitler promised justice against the scabs and exploiters in order to destroy *only* the Communists, the labor movement, and the Jews, this film includes the real villains to sweeten the fascist pill.

Bob Burns is Lem Scofield, a smalltown lawyer, who has been hired as a corporation lawyer by one Tapley, a bad, ambitious steel magnate. Tapley plans to expand his mill to take care of anticipated war orders. To finance the expansion he orders a 10 percent wage cut for all his workers. The workers begin muttering at the order and indignation rises. One of the workers, Tonia (get the foreign name), invades a lavish party thrown by Tapley and denounces him as an exploiter. Lawyer Scofield, played up as an old-fashioned Lincoln liberal, advises Tapley to rescind the wage cut before there is trouble. Tapley refuses. The workers go out on strike, a confused, spontaneous action, and begin picketing, led by Jim Hanna, an elderly worker with a foreign accent. In this day of streamlined CIO organization in steel, there is no union and no issue other than the wage cut.

Tapley tells his board of directors he is going to break the strike by importing professional scabs. Several directors protest but are overruled, and Lawyer Scofield resigns in disgust. The finks come to town in trucks, armed to the teeth, and advance on the picketline. Then a train brings to town a newcomer, a mean, scowling man, dressed in black; the part is played by Paul Guilfoyle, who played the weakling gangster in *Winterset*. A porter reaches for the newcomer's bag. "Why should you carry any man's bag, *Comrade!*" snarls the stranger. He arrives at the picketline just as the scabs' trucks approach. The strikers confer and Tonia calls for a sitdown strike; let's go into the plant and hold it. Jim Hanna says no, that is illegal, it would be like stealing another man's property. The finks attack, there is a violent melee and Tonia is clubbed unconscious. The Communist, who has been

watching the scene analytically, rushes to her side and he and Jim Hanna carry her away.

Now a scene in strike headquarters with Tonia, Hanna, and the Red seated on the rostrum. The crowd is divided on strategy. The Communist gets up and makes a bitter, snarling speech, calling for the use of violence. Jim Hanna rises in distress and makes a long speech. He begins by saying the strikers want nothing more than the restoration of the pay cut; asking for more would be like demanding more than their "share." "What would we do if there were no rich men?" he asks. Who built the railroads, the industries,

and gave everyone decent employment and the highest standard of living in the world? Who but the all-wise, enterprising capitalist? Everything would be chaos without the capitalist. He has a sacred right to his profits as long as he pays us what he has always paid us, no more, no less. (Paramount doesn't like propaganda.) The Communist gets up again. He pulls out his watch and announces there is no use of further idle talk; in one minute the strikers will have answered. There is a terrific explosion and Tapley's plant goes up in flames.

Jim Hanna rushes in to help the firemen. The head strikebreaker shoots him down from



MAJOR NERTZ OF THE FASCIST SHIRTS
"A representative cross-section of the factory just voted me a 'stinkaroo.'"

Gardner Rea

a ladder. Lem Scofield calls a vigilante meeting to protect the town from violence. Tapley calls on the murderous strikebreaker, played by Charles Bickford, to disown responsibility for Hanna's death. Bickford is too smart and he tells Tapley there is no evading his complicity. The thoroughly scared Tapley accompanies the finkherder to the vigilante meeting.

The vigilante meeting is closely modeled after the civic strikebreaking meetings made popular in Johnstown and the Little Steel strikes. Lem Scofield speaks, denouncing "alien isms" as the cause of the town's troubles. As he talks the camera shifts to closeups of Tapley, the head scab, and the Communist. The closeups are repeated and fixed in the audience's mind. Three culprits—the strikebreaker, the "bad" capitalist, and the Communist. Hero—the provincial sage. Here is the essence of the fascist lie of *Our Leading Citizen*.

Then the lie is redoubled. Tapley comes to the rostrum and promises to restore the pay cuts. When he does this the strikebreaker and the Communist exchange winks! In practical symbolism the most effective reactionary falsehood is stressed—Communism and fascism are in league!

The bad capitalist has become good. The Red and the strikebreaker meet with the tool, Tonia, to keep disorder alive in the now happy plant. Tonia refuses to be the troublemaker. She denounces the Communist. "You call us comrade," she says sarcastically, "but we will be 'comrade' only until you have us in your power, then we will be slaves." When we next see Tonia, who has been badly beaten, she has run to Lem Scofield to tell him of the plot. The lawyer listens to her dying speech, a mawkish propaganda lesson ending with, "neither right nor left . . . the middle way for us." Lem gathers the vigilantes and invades the strikebreakers' camp. He gives Bickford a beating and turns him over to the law. The Communist is captured in the railway station, protesting, "I am an American citizen! You can't do this to me!" Lem is nominated for United States senator and, as the picture closes, he sits alone in his shabby office, talking to a bust of Lincoln.

The bust of Lincoln is used in several nauseating soliloquies. In technique *Our Leading Citizen* is a laughable thing; Burns, minus bazooka, comes up almost to the level of Will Rogers' shoe sole. The story was written by Irvin S. Cobb, who will make a lecture tour apologizing for the film. The screenplay is by John C. Moffitt; director, Al Santell; producer, George K. Arthur.

The underlying falsehoods of the film are cleverly brought off by the inclusion of several progressive lines, one a wisecrack against Chamberlain. The assumption of the guilt of the "bad" capitalist at the outset creates a remarkable receptivity on the part of the audience. When the film recognizes, in its snide way, the right to strike, the sympathy of the audience is completely captured. Nothing like this has been said in Hollywood films since Griffith's *Intolerance*. A little truth helps make a big lie.

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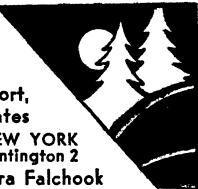
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Our Leading Citizen is an important cog in the big anti-New Deal drive, which is first being directed against West Coast labor in the Bridges deportation hearings. Everything the bosses level at Bridges is dramatized in the "Communist" role—an "outside alien" coming into a town, causing violence and unrest toward his own fell ends. The pattern of the Johnstown "Citizens Committee" technique of strikebreaking is adapted in the film. Coupled with a terrific anti-Soviet film, *Ninotchka*, now being made by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, the reactionary clique in Hollywood is heading into the big anti-labor drive timed to reach the maximum screen audience in the crucial weeks leading up to the September 30 maritime contract negotiations on the Coast. During the same period the Dies committee will descend on "subversive activities" in West Coast labor; and Congressional frameups of the NLRB and the WPA will begin. That this film takes such a definite fascist form, with its companion piece, *Ninotchka*, slandering the Soviet Union, indicates how far the domestic Nazi plot has progressed.

Paramount has already held forty-eight simultaneous previews for state governors and a fanfare premiere will be held in Bob Burns' hometown, Van Buren, Ark., on August 7, with an important list of state governors and Midwest public figures present. The literary flink, Irvin S. Cobb, will dress it up with patriotism on his lecture tour. The picture will have no normal reviewers' premieres but will open nationally in about two weeks.

Our Leading Citizen could be shown with a few minor cuts in Nazi Germany and Italy; in fact, Paramount may regain its slipping fascist market with this ingratiating film. People who underestimate the social power of the screen will get an object lesson if democratic America does not rise up against *Our Leading Citizen*; it serves as a propaganda basis for the general onslaught of reaction.

The screen is involved in politics up to its ears. Paramount is the company which, with the exception of *One-third of a Nation*, has remained aloof from democratic themes on the grounds that it does not want to produce propaganda. An anti-fascist script, *Heil America!* was shelved. Now Adolph Zukor's firm delivers a piece of Hitler propaganda against national progress. Joseph North's recent Hollywood articles in *NEW MASSES* warned:

The cinema is far too potent an instrument to ignore. It can be of invaluable good; its potentialities for evil are just as great. It depends on the moviegoers. The American audience will have a bigger say in the kind of pictures it wants—if it will say it. That is the big job today. The moral is clear: organize!

The CIO has already taken the initiative against the film. John L. Lewis, William Green, and Frances Perkins have refused to endorse it. The *CIO News* describes it as "the most vicious anti-labor script that has ever been turned out in Hollywood." Associated Film Audiences warned the producer that "at-

tacks on the labor movement are an aid to fascism and an insult to our democracy." There are two weeks left before the national release of *Our Leading Citizen*. In two weeks progressive America must answer this Nazi lie with a protest that Paramount can hear in the silence of the boxoffice cash register. Let Mr. Zukor clean up his German market with this film. American democracy doesn't want it.

JAMES DUGAN.

Maverick on the Air

The Texas progressive enlivens "Information Please."

RADIO's exciting brain-busting program, *Information Please*, with Clifton Fadiman posing enigmas before various guest oracles on Tuesday nights at 8:30 over NBC, had as its guest last week the People's Paladin, the Texas Vesuvius, His Honor Maury Maverick, mayor of San Antonio. Mr. Maverick proceeded swimmingly, even in the awesome company of Oscar Levant, F.P.A., and John Kieran, the man who knows everything, until he was presented with some catch questions from one Fiorello LaGuardia, a bright New York boy.

After the broadcast the doughty Texan told *NEW MASSES* of his experience with radio in his successful mayoralty campaign. Station WOAI of San Antonio put every obstacle in his way. Mr. Maverick had the lowdown on the previous police administration, and the exploitation of pecan workers, among other things, and WOAI would have none of it. The candidate asked for five minutes of air time daily but the station could sell nothing less than fifteen. Later, his reactionary opponent got five-minute shots featuring a "news commentator," all of whose flashes concerned Maverick, from the viewpoint of the oil company interested in Maverick's defeat.

After his victory the mayor began a series of weekly fireside talks over KTSA of San Antonio, explaining the workings of civic government and the citizens' committees he has set up on health, culture, safety, and parks. The station also broadcasts City Council meetings. "People like to know what the chief executive thinks on these matters and what the committees are doing," he said. . . . "Although at times I pound the gavel too hard and that's confusing."

During the week of October 12, the mayor's pet idea, San Antonio Week, will hold the stage. Radio will bring San Antonians bits of their history and the ceremonial aspects of the festival. "I am inviting the Mexican government to participate," says Maverick, "because there should be a sort of unwritten constitution between us and Mexico. I want good will. There should be the same unwritten constitution between all countries in North and South America, not to build forts, not to change boundaries, but to further democracy. If an army is maintained it should only be to preserve democracy and peace."

He was asked if he favored a Roosevelt

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third term. "Well, I don't think I'd favor a fourth term, and I'm against a fifth. But I'm for Roosevelt and no one else."

What about Father Coughlin? Maverick smiled. "Well, I regret that Elliott Roosevelt has been criticized for the only sensible remark he ever made."

And Cactus Jack Garner? His Honor answered quickly, "I think he ought to be President. President of the Pecan Growers Association."

Maverick is the champion of the pecan workers; he fought for their right to organize and bargain collectively. But even though the Wages-and-Hours Act guaranteed them a minimum of 25 cents an hour, the law was openly violated. "They were making 4 cents an hour and now they average 12 cents. Still under the law."

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"The growers have their own way of doing it," said Maverick. "You see, they figure the pecan shellers should average about forty pounds a day, during an eight-hour day. As a matter of fact, only one or two workers in a gang can hit the average. So the growers pay by the pound." These were some of the facts Maverick could not broadcast over WOAI.

JOHN VERNON.

In the Vanguard

A witty, waggish revue in New York's Greenwich Village.

THE five young people at the Village Vanguard calling themselves the Revuers are by this time one of the minor rages of the town. Two girls—Judith Tuvim and Betty Comden—and three boys, Al Hammer, Adolph Green, and John Frank, with Roger Vaughn at the piano and Julian Claman on lights, do a brilliant series of sketches written by themselves, and carried off with verve and professional timing. They are no amateurs but the informal stage and the audience intimacy lend the high jinks a direct, warm touch. Their method is a daring compound of many theatrical effects, dance, song, patter and off-stage sounds, and the material springs lightly from their observations of the press, movies, drama, and other phenomena. A sketch called *Critics* is enough to burn the ears of George Jean Nathan, Burns Mantle, and Brooks Atkinson; and *Young Man With a Kazoo* remarks on the hot jazz cult. They have in their repertory a magazine show, a night life directory, a movie evening, and a newspaper potpourri, and on Wednesday nights they scramble choice bits from all.

The young Revuers achieve the satirical snap and intimacy of the European political cabaret show like Erika Mann's *Peppermill*, the *Wienerkleinkunstbuehne*, or Praha's popular *Voscovec* and *Werich*. For the present they haven't launched into larger political subjects but their saucy havoc with journalistic matters bodes well for future social lampoons. The Revuers put on a new show every month or so.

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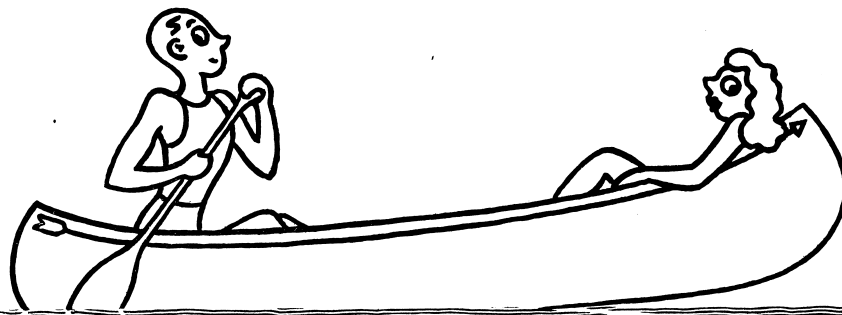
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ABSOLUTELY NO TIME FOR COMEDY

By ARTHUR "Having Wonderful Time" KOBER

Scene: Lake Kare-Free in the Berkshires
Time: This Very Minute

Gee, it's simply grand just sitting here in the canoe and paddling along this way, taking it easy. And just lookit the lake —how calm and tranquil it is. You know what I wish? I wish our lives could be just as calm and tranquil like this lake. Honestly, when I think of the state of this world at the present minute, I — well, I don't know what.

Wait a minute! You think I like this here kinda heavy talk? I don't! It's no pleasure to discuss such gloomy matters when I deliberately came up here to get away from that kinda talk. Me, I'd rather sit here with you drinking in this gorgeous scenery than get into one of these here moods. But I simply can't help it. I feel here I am, taking a two weeks' vacation, enjoying myself, eating heartily, having a wonderful time, and yet I know that the Fascists and the anti-Semites are not taking a vacation. They're not resting up, no, sir — not for one little minute. They're more active than ever in spreading their disgusting propaganda and doing everything in their power to wreck democracy.

Aw right, I know I, personally, can't save the world. But still I can do something. Look. You and me, we're readers of the NEW MASSES. We belong to a union — you do, but my outfit is still trying to get recognition. The NEW MASSES strongly supports labor. We're shocked and horrified at the spread of anti-Semitism, at the mad Hitler in Germany, and the carbon copy called Coughlin here. The NEW MASSES fights them both. We loathe and despise Fascism. The NEW MASSES expresses our sentiments. We believe in the principles of the New Deal. So does the NEW MASSES.

So this is what I have in mind. While we're here enjoying ourselves, why can't we try to get the NEW MASSES some readers who maybe don't know about the magazine? Let them be made aware of what's going on so that they can take an active part in combating the spread of Fascism. Here's my suggestion — see at least five (5) of your new-found friends in your vacation spot. Get them to be regular NEW MASSES subscribers. Cement your summer friendships with America's Indispensable Weekly — NEW MASSES.

On page 31 please find a summer sub coupon (special introductory offer of 12 weeks for \$1 and 52 weeks — \$4.50). Happy vacation to you.

Arthur Kober