Appeasers' Spring Drive in Congress

Behind the lynching bee against labor. A Washington report by Bruce Minton.

NEW MASSES

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BATTLE FOR AUSTRALIA

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THE "DAILY MIRROR" RUMPUS

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By Samuel Sillen

EDWARD KUNTZ
COUNSELOR AT LAW
GUARDIAN LIFE BLDG.
207 FOURTH AVENUE
NEW YORK

ALGONQUIN 4-7575

March 19th, 1942

Mr. Joseph North, Editor
New Masses
461 Fourth Avenue
New York City

Dear Joe:

As a reader and admirer of the New Masses as well as a personal friend of some of those running it (including of course yourself) I have been watching with a great deal of interest the legal entanglements either present or threatened occasioned by Bruce Minton's capable expose of the "Clivedon Set". And frankly I am mentally disturbed over the entire matter. Let me tell you why.

Daily I meet many people who discuss the matter with me. I suppose it is because they know that I have been involved in many libel cases, both civil and criminal, and generally they seek my reaction. Curiosity, you know. And what disturbs me is that invariably these people, all of them sincere friends of the New Masses, take the threats of Mr. Cromwell and others as a joke. As for me, I can visualize the possible consequences and they constitute a menace to you and your publication which cannot be laughed off.

Firstly, in regard to your duty to the American nation. Whatever the facts may be in the case of Mr. Cromwell or any other individual, it seems to me that President Roosevelt issued a clear call to the "reporters" of the nation to follow up on his exposure of the existence of a Clivedon Set. And if you, with your facilities, fail to do this, I would say you would be performing a disservice to the American people and their battle for victory. Therefore, any litigation that comes out of the exposure must be utilized for making public all the facts at your disposal. In such a task, no question of expense can be permitted to enter even if you have to call into partnership your many loyal supporters for further financial assistance. The issue is one in which they are partners anyhow, whether they realize it or not.

Secondly, as to the continued existence of New Masses. Yes, Mr. Cromwell and others have it in their power to sue you to death. I know that you take this seriously, but there may be others who don't. It is no accident that throughout the struggle for the freedom of the press, libel was the one method most effectively used to destroy or hamper that freedom.

You had better remember that a weak or desultory defense would be an invitation to a multitude of suits by your enemies. And thus the converse, a vigorous offensive attack, would discourage any such possibility.

I hope you will not think that I "scare" easily or that I am given to shadow boxing. No, I am realistic in such matters. I have been through too many of them and have studied the historic fight for the freedom of the press too carefully not to realize the extreme danger that you face. Let me urge upon you therefore, to impress upon your friends the immediate dangers that you presently face.

Sincerely,

Edward Kuntz

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NEW MASSES

VOLUME XLII MARCH 31 NUMBER 13

DEAR READER:

I am passing on to you this important letter from the well known labor attorney, Edward Kuntz. This is your magazine and you ought to know what an expert thinks of the seriousness of James H. R. Cromwell's libel suit against New Masses. Apart from your devotion to the magazine, I know that you, in common with millions of other Americans, are concerned about any attack on freedom of the press, any attempt to weaken the fight against the Cliveden set and other enemies of our country.

New Masses is determined to continue that fight as part of the worldwide struggle against the Axis. We are determined that Mr. Cromwell shall not succeed in his avowed aim to close down this magazine. But you alone, who are, as Mr. Kuntz says, our partners, can provide us with the weapons of war: the dollars we need for legal defense and for covering our annual deficit. Without your help, immediate and generous, New Masses cannot survive.

Is this a familiar story? Well, we wish it weren't so familiar to us. The bitter truth is that this year there are two wolves at the door: besides Mr. Cromwell's suit, there are the bills for printing, paper, engraving, cables, etc., greater than ever before because of the rise in prices. Our creditors have been told that this is the time when we would pay up. We made that promise, confident that you would enable us to keep it, as you have in the past.

A minimum of $40,000 is needed to cover the deficit, to enable us to bring you each week those articles by Claude Cockburn, Colonel T., Bruce Minton, and the many other features that make New Masses the kind of magazine for which readers will give the shirts off their backs. So far only a little over $2,000 has come in since the financial drive started. And unfortunately, time does not happen to be on our side: the money must be raised within the next few weeks.

What will you do TODAY to save New Masses? I wish I could talk to every one of you personally. I know what your answer would be. This is the greatest crisis the magazine has ever faced. Let Mr. Cromwell know you mean business. We count on your immediate response.

JOSEPH NORTH

For the Editors

(Please fill out coupon on page 26)

Published weekly by WEEKLY MASSES CO., INC., at 461 Fourth Ave., New York City. Reg. U. S. Patent Office. Washington Office, 945 Pennsylvania Ave., N. W. Drawings and text may not be reprinted without permission. Entered as second-class matter, June 24, 1926, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. Single copies 15 cents. Subscription $5.00 a year in U. S. and Colonies and Mexico. Six months $2.75; three months $1.50; Foreign $6.00 a year; six months $3.25; three months $1.75. In Canada $5.50 a year. $3.00 for six months.

MEET CONGRESSMAN HIJACKER

Tory spring offensive in the House and Senate. Stakes in the anti-labor game. What John L. Lewis is up to.

Washington.

THERE is a growing realization here that it is high time to think and act in terms of the offensive. The war must be fought under conditions chosen by us, rather than on terrain and in the manner selected by the adversary. Furthermore, there is an increasing realization that offensive warfare cannot be limited to the military fronts. Undoubtedly the armed forces will bear the main brunt; their heroism, resourcefulness, and will to victory in the main will determine the war's outcome. But last week brought home the fact that the military is not helped by allowing the initiative at home to rest with those who for so long have impeded every move to prosecute the war, who behind the refuge of wordy "support" snipe at the administration, cut the ground from under the war effort, delay, quibble, disrupt, mislead.

Right now, those in Congress who have continually preached defeatism, and who in some cases have openly taken the well marked road of appeasement, still retain the initiative. Opposition to their strategy of disruption has been defensive—countering their moves, patching up the harm they do. At the moment we need the MacArthur spirit in Congress. The foe at home can be granted no further respite.

For now that congressional enemies of the people, grown bold with success, have started a new offensive against labor, with an utterly false attack on "strikes," on the forty-hour week, on the closed shop, they leave themselves in an extremely vulnerable position. Yet who stood up on the House or Senate floor (Rep. Vito Marcantonio of New York was sick and not in Washington) to ask the simple question that would have sent the attackers hurtling back in confusion? Who challenged Cox and Byrd, Vandenberg and Connally, Tydings and Howard Smith, or any other member of the pack with the simple words: "All right, name one strike that is hampering war production. Name one instance where labor has refused to cooperate fully with the war effort"? Had the challenge been given, the bluff of the diehards would have been exposed for what it is. Their big guns are no more than wooden replicas faked to look like the real thing and given versimilitude by noisy sound effects from the poll-taxers of the South. Yet the question was not asked. Congress retreated before the onslaught, just as a week before the members of the House retreated (with the noble exception of forty-six stalwarts) before the hot-air barrage of Martin Dies. It remained for President Roosevelt to step into the breach; he pointed out at his press conference that no strike problem exists; and that no law forbids American workers to labor more than forty hours a week. The sudden revival of a smear campaign against labor is no more than a smoke-screen behind which a threat is directed at a different objective. The feint to frighten labor and the administration is directed by the generals of reaction to force an appeasement—they will "call off" the anti-labor campaign (for the moment) if they are allowed to pass a stiff sales tax saddling the lowest income groups with a burden beyond their ability to carry.

In NEW MASSES last week A. B. Magil's perceptive article on congressional obstruction laid bare the record of Congress before and since Pearl Harbor. And the record proves that the legislators (with a few—too few—exceptions) had offered no leadership designed to win the war. The reactionaries have enjoyed *carte blanche*—and few indeed have challenged their abuse of power. The result has been invaluable to all those hostile to the war. With increasing bravado the haters of democracy have been intimating slyly that Congress is an outworn institution to be disregarded, eliminated. The enemies of the people have used the disgraceful antics of their allies in Congress to impugn the democratic process itself. The answer, of course, is not to be found in denunciations of the democratic way: rather, democracy must be—and can be—made to work. Congress must be—and can be—refurbished so that it again functions as it is intended to function, expressing the will of the electorate, legislating in the name of the people for the people and not against the people. Between now and November much can be done to clean out the appeasers and the anti-labor reactionaries—the two are becoming virtually indistinguishable.

I had lunch with a United Automobile Workers member from Detroit. "It's important to realize," he said, "that in our region workers are 100 percent all-out on this war. The moment they get a clearcut picture of what is going on, they support the war policy to the hilt. We took a poll of UAW members which we released to the press. On every question—and we didn't have to rig the questions as some of these polls do—the auto workers were completely behind the administration. But toward Congress they expressed only disgust. There is the danger that they will be misled into an anti-Congress attitude, rather than fighting the particular congressmen who are turning the legislature into a rubber stamp for reaction. We have a terrific battle ahead in the coming elections. Unfortunately the workers and their supporters have no political instrument at hand of their own. But if the administration will

The ineffable Smith of Virginia

crack down on those who are throwing sand and wrenches into the war machinery, it will get the support of union members and of the people. The task at the moment is to urge such a crackdown by starting one of our own against the fellows in Congress who are busily wrecking anything and everything they can get their hands on."

JOHN L. LEWIS is not at all dismayed by congressional hijacking. Everyone in labor circles is well aware that Lewis is waiting for his main chance. As one of labor's legislative representatives down here remarked: "I can just see Lewis sitting back and keeping the score. Every time these congressmen snipe at labor, every time one of them tries to make labor the goat and tries to push the unions around, Lewis jots it down in the record. Sooner or later he'll make his resounding speech, full of Shakespeare and the Bible, and trembling with indignation. I can hear him roaring: 'They have beseeched us to die for them while they rob and steal from the plain men and women of this great nation, while they strip us of the last vestiges of our democratic heritage. Have they offered labor a place in the high councils of state?'—that's the line, 'hungry bellies . . . persecution . . . high taxes . . . insecurity . . . the Roosevelt myth . . .' all the rest of it. He'll not attack the war itself, but he'll magnify every instance of failure, every instance of abuse. Lewis knows his demagogy—and he'll use the appeasers' assaults in Congress on labor for his own appeasing ends. He'll pose as a 'progressive,' as the 'defender of the poor, the downtrodden, the disinherited.' That's why labor must attack the bunch who are building up a case for Lewis to use—otherwise, John L. will capitalize on these abuses further to hamper the war and embarrass the administration. Just listen to Denny Lewis going about shaking his head over the Dies committee and failure to pass the bill to help unemployment, and you'll see what I mean."

There is a nervous awareness about Lewis. It is well known that Lewis' henchmen and thugs are rushing all over the country spreading dissension, magnifying difficulties, trying to twist labor's legitimate grievances into an excuse to let down on the war effort. Recently, in Detroit, two or three union officials who are still hanging onto Lewis' coat tails tried to oppose the setting up of joint management-labor production committees in the automobile shops. They argued that such committees meant "speed-up"—a perversion of the real desire of labor to get the most out of machines, to push ahead with the war. This is a typical Lewis stunt. If joint production committees can be sabotaged, the war effort is damaged. In addition, Lewis can then turn around and rail at the failure of the administration to obtain labor participation as an equal partner in the prosecution of the war. Fortunately Lewis' lieutenants are very much in the minority. And so deep is the antagonism of organized labor to Lewis, and to everything he represents, that his few toadies within CIO unions dare not openly espouse Lewis' position nor openly proclaim their adherence to the United Mine Workers chieftain.

ALARMING information trickles into Washington that the farm program of expanded production is not going too well, and that many small farmers are in danger of falling short of quotas. Such failures can be blamed for the most part on the gobbling up of limited supplies of farm machinery by the largest agricultural producers. Smaller farmers find prices of such equipment too steep; worse, they find it almost impossible to get machinery before it is grabbed off by the big fellows. But increased acreage and more intensive farming cannot be achieved without the aid of farm equipment. The solution to this bottleneck, of course, is government intervention to see to it that small farmers receive their share of necessary machinery; and to force those who have cornered available tractors, harvesters, and the like to rent them out at reasonable rates to farmers who need them.

Lewis: Appeasers' labor pet

Such a maladjustment provides another source of friction which Lewis hopes to exploit. Not enough has been done to educate certain groups of farmers, still inclined to think in isolationist terms, to the meaning of the war and the farmers' stake in it. Once again, John L. Lewis hopes to capitalize on this lack of information. A member of a Middle West cooperative, standing around the lobby of a crowded Washington hotel, remarked: "Don't underestimate Lewis. He knows the ropes. He's busily lining up every dissident he can lay his hands on. If you want to see a precedent for what he's doing, remember the POUM in Spain. Their ranks were open to everyone and anyone—just as long as the recruit was an oppositionist to the government and the anti-fascist war. Lewis' political game is much the same. He's damned dangerous—far too dangerous to overlook or dismiss."

ROBERT R. GUTHRIE'S resignation from the War Production Board raises extremely important problems. The picture is not as yet too clear. Mr. Guthrie had personal difficulties in his job—and they must not become the main issue. It is also true that Donald Nelson, head of WPB, has a legitimate complaint against the way his assistant protested: Mr. Guthrie would probably have been in a stronger position had he remained within WPB and allowed Mr. Nelson to investigate before he dramatically resigned. But there is no question that Mr. Guthrie took an all-out, progressive position toward the war effort, and that his attempts to get production moving quickly and efficiently were impeded by the reluctance of certain business-as-usual holdovers in WPB. The conflict has shown that at least J. S. Knowlson, chief of the Division of Industry Operations, and Philip Reed, head of the Bureau of Industry Branches (and Guthrie's immediate superior in WPB), have been holding things up.

From the beginning, when Mr. Nelson took over, it was apparent that reorganization of the production apparatus must follow from top to bottom. In NEW MASSES of January 27, at the time of Mr. Nelson's appointment, I wrote: "To do the job, Mr. Nelson will undoubtedly be forced into extensive housecleaning." Some changes have been made, but there is a good deal left to be done. Mr. Guthrie's fight is important because it seems certain to hasten the clean-up. As he himself stated, in the last analysis both he and Mr. Nelson undoubtedly see eye to eye on the war effort, and it takes time to accomplish the immense task of bringing order out of chaos. Guthrie's contribution is to spotlight a few more of the men who are lying down on the job. If this controversy is properly handled, it should result in strengthening the whole production effort.

BRUCE MINTON.

BATTLE FOR AUSTRALIA

MacArthur takes over. Joseph Starobin discusses the Continent's resources and the problems of defense.

GENERAL MACARTHUR'S dramatic departure from the Philippines and his assumption of the chief Far Eastern command brings Australia right into the American horizon. That vast continent "down under," as the British say, now becomes uppermost in American thinking about the Pacific.

Australia is clearly a first line of defense for the Americas. If it were lost, only the small islands of Hawaii, plus Alaska, would stand between the Japanese and the American mainland. The West Coast, from Vancouver down past the Panama Canal, would become vulnerable. On the other hand, Australia is a continent which complements China and India in terms of its importance for the great Pacific offensive of the future.

It's a hard continent to conquer for any invader, especially when the Japanese would have to travel such long distances to get at its main centers. But it's also a difficult continent to defend, if the enemy is capable of traveling those distances. On the negative side is the fact that Australia is almost literally an empty continent. It is just about as large as the United States, but from babes to grandpas there are about as many Australians as there are people in the New York metropolitan area. And the trouble is that these 7,000,000 souls live on the fringes of their land; three out of every four are concentrated in a few cities like Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, and Brisbane.

It is as though the United States were being threatened by invasion from Seattle, from Winnipeg up in Canada, and from across the St. Lawrence while our population was concentrated at Miami Beach, New Orleans, and a few tens of thousands over in San Diego, Calif. Rich farms extend a little way out of the coastal cities, then come the ranches and wheat plantations and occasional mines. But for the most part a vast, semi-arid desert lies in the middle: some brush, some telegraph wires, and just sand and stone.

Australian communications complicate her defenses. Traditionally, the sea lanes around the coast have been most important; recently airplane and auto transport have come into their own. But the big trouble is with the railways. They do not extend around the continent, or even across the continent. From Melbourne you go by rail to Alice Springs, and then by highway to Birdum, and then by rail again to the main northern base at Port Darwin. And even worse, the railway system does not have a unified gauge. From Perth in the west a body of troops would have to change five times before reaching Melbourne. It is as though there were five separate rail systems.

BY WAY of compensation, there is Australia's industrial strength. Aside from India, Soviet Siberia, and Japan itself, Australia is the only industrialized region in the Orient. She has some of the biggest steel mills in the world at Newcastle, and her coal is nearby. She supports herself in copper, lead, zinc, manganese, and tungsten, although nickel, rubber, potash, and mercury are scarce. Her chemists are expecting to get aluminum from the alunite deposits and her only really major difficulty is the absence of petroleum.

The loss of the Sumatra oil fields was a heavy blow for Australia, and if the Persian Gulf resources were cut off the entire continent would be dependent on American oil supplies. Australia's manufactures have boomed in the last three years; only a shortage of labor power stands in the way of a further growth. For example, at the outbreak of war, there were only four machine tool plants. Now there are 130. Steel production has almost doubled since September 1939, reaching almost 2,000,000 tons, a third of Japan's production.

As Kate Mitchell explains in her valuable survey in the March issue of *Amerasia,* there were only some 5,000 munitions workers as late as June 1940. Today there are 200,000. And if related industries, especially the vigorous aircraft industry, are included, some 600,000 men and women are devoting their time to war purposes. The significance of this figure will be appreciated when you remember that there are only about 1,500,000 men from the ages of eighteen to forty-five in the whole country. About 500,000 are under arms. Which means that almost everybody else is getting into war service in the factories.

On striking a balance, therefore, we find that Australia has a vigorous, homogeneous population. There are none of the problems of subject and minority peoples which complicated the defense of Malaya or the Dutch East Indies. Australia has a militant labor movement, and a Labor government, which, for the sake of the best possible defense, will have to withdraw its ban on the Communist Party before long. If the cross-conflicts between the substantial British ownership of the chief industries do not cause too many problems with Australia's orientation toward the United States, as highlighted in the rumpus over the shift of Richard Casey from the ministry at Washington to Cairo, it should be possible for Australia to become a real barrier to Japan.

Since she depends on sea communications for her exports and perhaps for petroleum, and certainly for reinforcements, and since she is fighting a foe who is rapidly taking up positions on Australia's flank, the strategy of defense cannot be based on holding onto land positions. It won't matter at all if the Japanese are able to take chunks of the continent, provided they can be cut off from their supply bases and their water reserves. Only a highly mobile, aggressive defense is possible for Australia in which the object must be to husband her own resources and to decimate the enemy's. A carefully organized combination of ships and planes could challenge the Japanese on sea and at their main bases. Small land parties, well equipped,

able to travel long distances and willing to take risks, will have to be developed to cripple the advance Japanese positions. Both sides will face difficulties. Both will have to be very mobile. The airplane becomes a key instrument in such a war; and the decisive battles will represent the cumulative result of countless small engagements.

BUT there is one other factor which may very well determine Australia's fate, provided it is fully understood in Canberra, and especially in Washington and London. The fact is that Japan will determine the next stage of her military expansion by a careful calculation of what her ally Germany is capable of doing this spring and summer. If Hitler, the mainspring of the Axis, were deprived of his initiative and defeated this summer, as Maxim Litvinov has twice assured us is possible, then the whole perspective of Japan's pattern of conquest would be changed.

If Japan were deprived of her ally, Japan's strategy would have to change from the offensive to the defensive; Japan's problem would become one of consolidating and holding onto what she has rather than biting off a chunk of a difficult continent like Australia. In other words, what happens in Europe, and what could be done to Hitler this spring and summer, is just as much of a consideration in defending Australia and the Americas as what has to be done in the Pacific itself.

That is why the current discussion of a "Pacific offensive" is to me, at any rate, a confusing development. If, by such an offensive is meant that we shall defend Australia aggressively, trade punches with Japan, cripple her communications, sock her before she socks us, excellent. But if by an offensive is meant an effort to *gain the decision* over the enemy, to launch vast movements which are intended to knock Japan out of the war presently does not seem realistic. To think of a decision against Japan under present conditions contradicts the far greater chances of a decisive offensive against Hitler this spring and summer, which would in itself have a decisive bearing on Japan's military and political perspectives.

To defend Australia aggressively, yes, by all means. But to project an offensive from Australia of really decisive proportions is meaningless. It is a matter for the future. It presupposes building a much greater arsenal than seems possible in the next months. It presupposes the political and economic mobilization of both India and China. It flies in the face of the fact that whereas in the Pacific, we have *potentially powerful* friends, in the Atlantic and in Europe we have *immediately powerful* friends, friends who are fighting well and who could be fighting much more effectively if their strategies were coordinated.

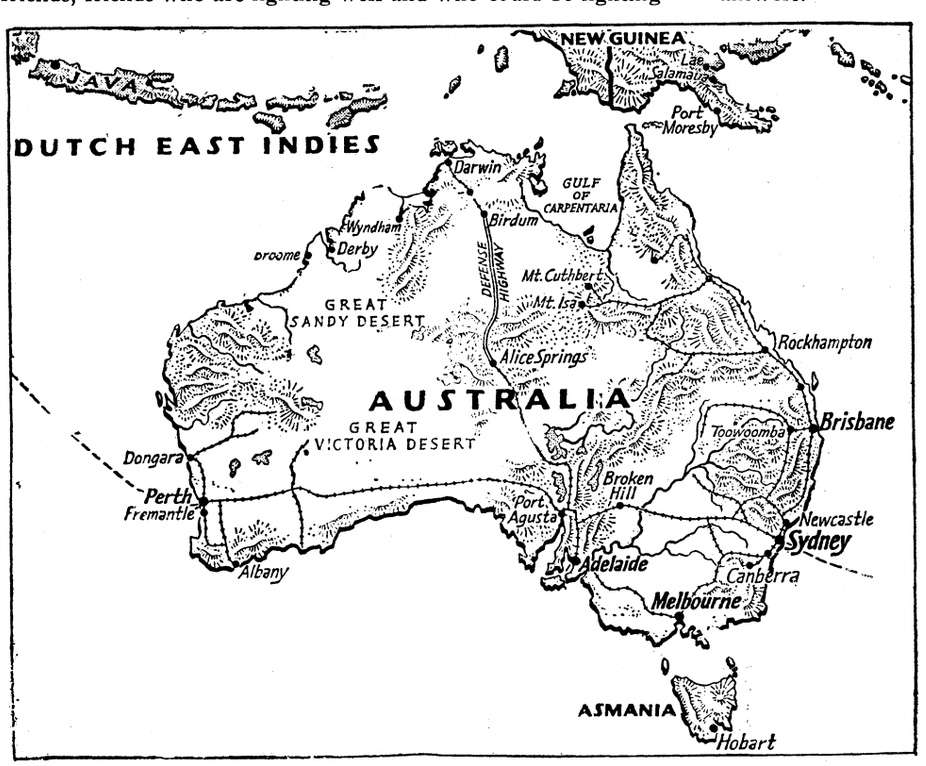
In Europe we have the Red Army facing Hitler and delivering mortal blows. MacArthur himself declared that on the banners of the Red Army rested the hope of civilization. In the British Isles, there is a powerful industrial and military and naval base, much nearer to the heart of the enemy than Australia and much more powerful. Scarcely a day passes but what some high British official, such as Halifax, or Attlee, or Beaverbrook, reminds us that Britain is producing twice as many tanks as she did last summer. A vast shipbuilding program is on the way; planes enough are being built so that 9,000 were exported last year. Although the British ambassador minimizes the number of troops ready for active service, nonetheless it is indisputable that among Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States, there lies the possibility of cracking Hitler this year. No such combination of forces or opportunities exists in the Pacific.

But the peculiarity of an Atlantic and European offensive is that, if successful, it would apply the brakes to the Japanese. It would bring them to a halt. It would not immediately push them back, but it would keep them from going on. And as world initiative passed into the hands of the United Nations, as the potential of China, India, Australia, and America were realized, the days of the Tokyo militarists would be numbered.

IN OTHER words, if the current attention to Australia means that we shall really defend it aggressively, well and good. If it means an offensive calculated to knock Japan out, as though that were our major problem this spring and summer, it can only be interpreted as a concession to the appeasers' propaganda, to those isolationist illusions which ought not be allowed to interfere with the strategy of a global war. But to take the offensive from the British Isles, together with what our Russian friends are doing, means to meet the great challenge of 1942. To do less means to risk defeat this year. Or, if we escape the grand squeeze of the Axis, it means to make this war a much longer, much more difficult affair for all the United Nations than it has to be.

The emphasis on the offensive is therefore all to the good. It is good for morale, and it represents a psychological setback for the appeaser fifth column. But already this emphasis on the offensive, if it remains general and abstract, is inadequate to meet the great crisis of the war which is coming this spring and summer. The question of "where" our offensive must go, and "when"—these are now the questions which require urgent answers.

JOSEPH STAROBIN.



The vast continent "down under." About as large as the United States, Australia has a population of only seven million concentrated in a few large cities. Although her railroad and communications system is poor, she is one of the highly industrialized regions in the Orient.

HOW THE RED ARMY IS DOING

The fourth phase of the counter-offensive.

Blasting the Nazi fortifications.

IN ORDER to understand what the Red Army is doing, it is necessary to examine the stages of the Soviet winter counter-offensive which has now entered the fourth phase. And in order to make the subject clearer, we will take one distinct sector—the Kalinin front—which is one of the most important and most cited in the communiques.

This front represented (and still potentially represents) the left claw of the Moscow pincers. Its "head" was some 150 miles wider—from Klin to Bologoye. Its "tail" stretches back to Velikye Luki, some 250 miles back of the farthest point of the German advance to Korcheva. This front was fed by two main railroad lines: Velikye Luki-Toropetz-Ostashkov-Bologoye and Velikye Luki-Rzhev-Torzhok-Likhoslavl. A third line came up to Rzhev from Vyazma, linking the front to the main trunk line Smolensk-Moscow.

Velikye Luki was captured by the Germans at the end of July and they reached Kalinin in the middle of October, and Korcheva about November 1. At first glance it would seem that it took them almost three months to cover this distance, but actually it took them much less, this push being effected in October. What, then, happened on this front after the Soviet counter-offensive began?

Phase One: The Red Army, early in December, proceeded to push the threatening pincers back. It acted like a man who is being choked, and who first of all batters his assailant's hands and tries to remove them from his throat. This phase lasted, roughly, through December, with Kalinin falling to the Red Army on December 16 and Staritza on January 1. During this period south of the Kalinin front Volokolamsk was recaptured on December 18. The general "push-back" covered about seventy miles.

Phase Two: The Red Army, having shattered the spearheads of the German attacking force and battered its shock divisions (seven tank divisions, two motorized divisions, and ten infantry divisions had been routed *in the Klin-Kalinin spearhead alone*) was now faced with a system of strong points fortified by the Germans in their rear and designed to protect the roads and railroads. Such strong points were in most cases built around junctions. On the Kalinin front the Germans had the following important strong points: Torzhok, Ostashkov, Sychevka, and Rzhev; Toropetz, Toropa, and Kholm; Belyi and Velikye Luki. Of them Velikye Luki and Rzhev are the most important. The first protects the very root of the main lines and communications and Rzhev represents the jumping-off point for a future new stab at Moscow. Furthermore, Rzhev is the junction of two railroads and two main highways.

The second phase involved the Red Army's pushing its prongs deep in between the German strong points. During January the great Valdai breakthrough and the march through the Tolokonski forest took place. Ostashkov fell on January 21, Kholm and Toropetz on January 23. Pushing south from the latter key point, the Red Army cut the main railroad between Velikye Luki and Rzhev—more than a fifty-mile stretch. On the other hand, the capture of Ostashkov and Toropetz deprived the Germans of the Velikye Luki-Bologoye railroad. A great "crowbar" had been thrust deep between the strong key points of Staraya Russa and Rzhev. The latter's communications were thrown back on the only line left—that to Vyazma.

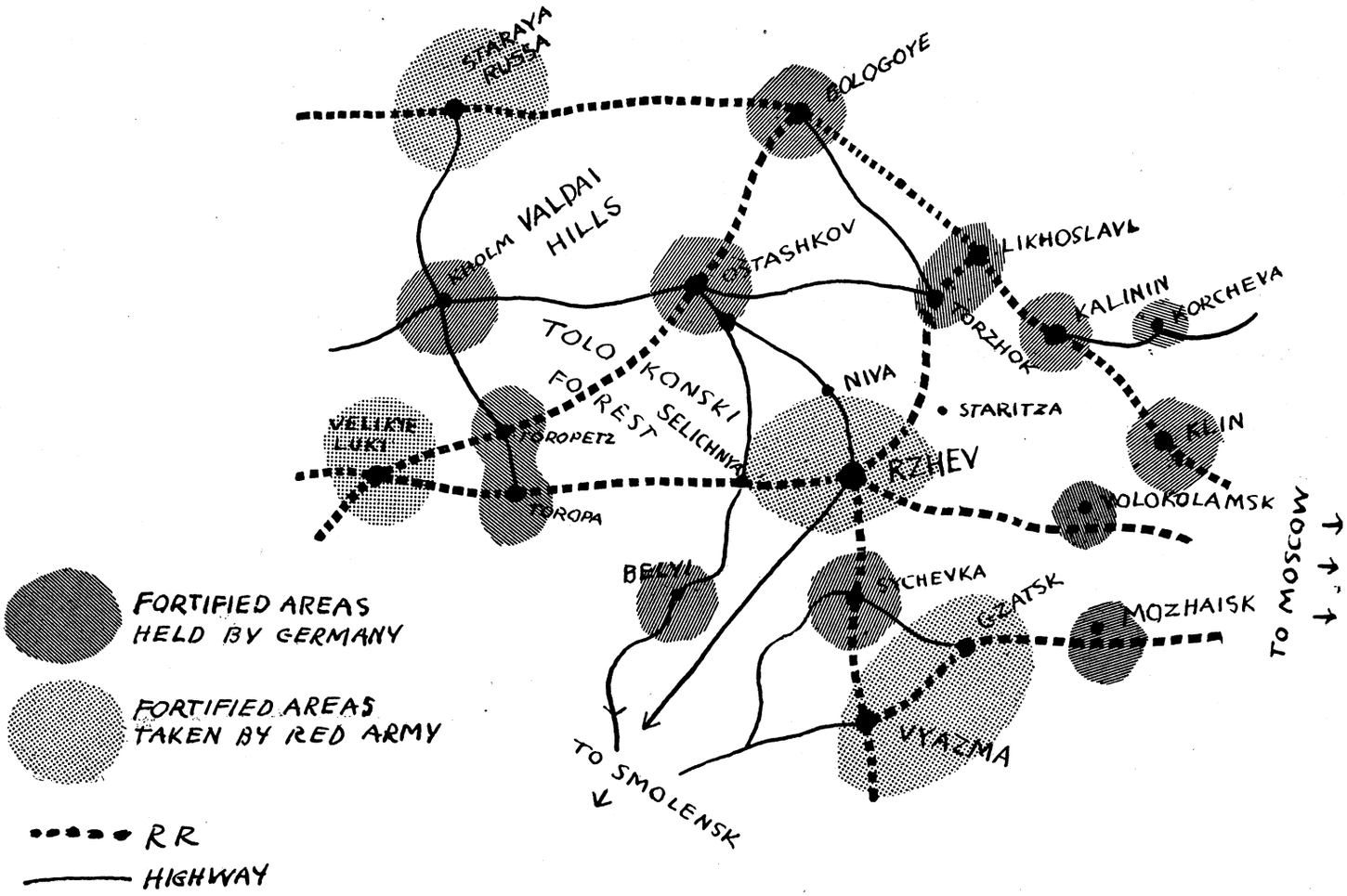
Phase Three: Having thrust crowbars between the strong points held by the Germans (we use the plural because the same type of operation was taking place on most key sectors of the front), the Red Army began to thrust them in deeper and to curve them in order to *envelop and surround* the already *outflanked points.* This took place, roughly, in February and in the beginning of March. As far as Rzhev is concerned, this took the form of a thrust south from Belyi and west from the direction of Volokolamsk toward Sychevka, which was captured on March 8 after a terrific battle which assumed the importance of a real siege and assault.

Thus the Rzhev strong point was isolated as far as the railroads are concerned and its supply line was thrown back (or rather up) into the third dimension, i.e. on the transport branch of the Luftwaffe. We don't know, of course, whether or not the two "crowbars" have pushed in and curved far enough to isolate Rzhev completely. But the break in the steel ring around it cannot be more than a score of miles wide, and that over pretty much open, snowed-in country, without a good road to rely on.

Phase Four: It is perfectly clear that the Germans were not going to sit idly by and watch their strong points being snatched from them either through assault or attrition. At the risk of squandering "spring reserves," they rushed in division after division to break the rings forged by the Red Army around these strong points. These reserves were partly (and a small part at that) flown to the strong points in transport planes, but their main body came up by rail, truck, and even on foot to strike at the ring from the outside. Here are the obstinate German counter-attacks of which we have heard so much lately. The Soviet communiques for the past several days have been saying, "No change of position has occurred at the front." This means that the ring is still there and that the Germans have failed to breach it.

Remember that in this phase of the operations around the strong points (and this does *not* necessarily apply to the space between them) the Red Army is strategically on the offensive, but tactically on the defensive. The Germans who are trying to relieve their strong points are strategically on the defensive, but tactically on the offensive. "No change," therefore, means that the Red Army is achieving its immediate objective in maintaining the rings around Rzhev and the other strong points and that the Germans are so far failing to achieve theirs—breaking the rings.

Such is the essence of the fourth phase of the operation which is now developing on almost the entire front. Actually the Soviet troops are fighting on two fronts around each strong



Map of the Kalinin sector. From Bologoye (top, center) southeast to Klin is the "head." The "tail" stretches back westward to Velikye Luki. The two main railroad lines feeding the front run from Velikye Luki to Bologoye and from Velikye Luki through Rzhev to Likhoslavl. A third line from Rzhev south to Vyazma links the front to the main trunk line between Moscow and Smolensk.

point—inward, battering down the defenses of the strong point, outward, repelling the relief troops the Germans are pouring in. This perforce is a battle at a standstill. Hence the absence of spectacular Red Army advances since the capture of Sychevka (Kalinin front) on March 3, Dorogobuzh (Smolensk front) on February 23, and the advance of Timoshenko toward Poltava last week.

How long will this phase last? This question is, of course, very difficult to answer. But it is safe to say that it will last quite some time because the strong points are very powerful. Take Rzhev, for instance. It has been in German hands for five months. It is a town of some 50,000 people, lying on both sides of the Volga. Two railroads converge here, as well as two important highways. As we showed before, it is of the greatest importance to the Germans, because it is the summit of the triangle Rzhev-Vyazma-Gzhatsk which still faces Moscow. There is no doubt that the Germans have at least an army corps in this strong point, as well as great stores, air fields, and the like. In order to protect all this from artillery fire (the average range being, say, twelve miles), bastions around the city must have been built at a distance of not less than fifteen miles. In such a case, the periphery of the entrenched camp (*camp retranche*) is at least 100 miles and its area 250 square miles.

However, winter warfare, especially for the Nazi Army which was not well prepared for it, is tightly bound up with shelter, with houses. This means that the choice of defensive position is not influenced by topography only, but by the presence or absence of buildings. Thus, such a winter strong point has to be built around a whole cluster of inhabited localities. In the case of Rzhev it stretches along the "spokes" of the roads and railroads to Staritza, Zubtzov, Kuznetsova, Niva, and Selishnya—the latter thirty-five miles west of Rzhev.

The whole area is studded with land mines and woven tight with barbed wire. Scores of villages actually represent so many forts and bastions, with houses whose windows and doors are blocked and with embrasures cut in the walls. Cellars have been transformed into shelters and dugouts. Roads and paths between these villages are covered with snow-and-ice forts. All these forts and bastions are linked together by the invisible lines of cross-fire. They communicate by radio.

Imagine the storming of such an entrenched camp. Its periphery (or circumference) is about 100 miles. Assuming that on the average a ten-mile sector can be given to a division, one would still have to throw ten divisions against such a strong point. And still there would be terrific loss of life. It is better to batter all this down with artillery and dive bombers, even if it takes longer. Dry roads will not lead into Rzhev for another five or six weeks.

So we see that each one of these strong points is another "Verdun." Between the front and the Soviet border there are about seven score such key points. Of course, it is most probable that the first are the hardest. But patience is in order, nevertheless.

COLONEL T.

THEY STILL KEEP COMING

Carey McWilliams, California State Commissioner of Immigration and Housing, surveys the continued westward trek of thousands in search of jobs. War industries and manpower.

THE profound impact of the war effort upon American industry finds dramatic illustration in the regrouping and reshifting of population which it has occasioned. The national war program has not only greatly increased internal migration, and altered most aspects of the problem, but it will also probably result in important changes in our immigration policies in the near future if the shortage of manpower increases. All of these developments are strikingly apparent in California —a state which has always afforded an excellent barometer of migration pressures.

Contrary to popular belief, the so-called dustbowl influx to California, which began in 1935, has steadily increased since 1939. It might have been assumed that an improved agricultural situation, conscription, and the development of war industries in the South and Middle West, would have served to check this important shift in population. But the facts point to the contrary. During 1941 some 110,333 migrants entered the state in search of employment—a sharp increase over 1940 and a still greater increase over 1939. These figures, moreover, represent merely automobile migrants (they do not include those who travel by train or by bus). The Bureau of Agricultural Economics, for example, has estimated that the population of the state has increased by 500,000 since the 1940 census. The migrants of 1940 and 1941 come from the same areas which were the source of the spectacular migration of an earlier period: forty-five percent are from Oklahoma, Texas, and Arkansas.

During the period from 1935 to 1938 there was a considerable "backwash" to this movement (impossible to estimate but noticeable to all observers); nowadays, however, fewer migrants are returning to the states of origin. Wide publicity has been given to the theory that the Okies have left the state en masse since December 7—in fear of bombings, so the story goes. While there was a minor exodus from the state in December (approximately 3,000 migrants left), this may be largely explained as a seasonal movement having little, if any, relation to the attack on Pearl Harbor. In any case, the movement westward into California has once again been resumed and gives every indication of continuing.

ALTHOUGH California has long been characterized by a rapid population growth through interstate migration (the birth rate is among the lowest in the nation), the new influx differs, in several respects, from that of prior years. In the past, California could absorb more and more migrants largely because many of the newcomers were either self-supporting or self-employed. Thousands of people came to California to retire. They brought capital with them which was invested in real estate, stocks, oil leases, new business ventures, and other types of investment. Increasing population stimulated industry and an expanding economy, in turn, invited still more migrants. The current migration, however, is largely made up of people in search of industrial employment. The four chief centers of war activity in California have drawn almost 170,000 migrants since August 1940. Half of these have come from outside the state and almost 100,000 have been placed in war jobs. A sample study made in four aircraft plants in San Diego, in February 1942, indicated that seventeen percent of all employes had been in California one week or less; twenty-seven percent had resided in the state less than a month; while only thirty-five percent had resided in the state for more than one year. The same study indicated the chief sources of this influx of workers as follows: sixteen percent from the Middle West; twenty-four percent from the Deep South; eight percent from the Inter-Mountain western states; thirty-two percent from Oregon, Washington, and other parts of California. The consequences of this shift in the type of migrant and the motives for migration are of major importance.

As late as 1939 Kaiser & Co., an investment bond house, in summarizing the economy of California, could state with entire accuracy that its urban communities were chiefly commercial and financial centers for the rich agricultural and mining regions. Agriculture was even then the chief industry of the state and such manufacturing as existed consisted largely of processing farm products and petroleum and producing consumer goods for the surrounding farm districts.

Overnight this situation has changed and the state has become highly industrialized. Unfilled government orders in the seven major aircraft factories amounted, a few months ago, to $2,600,000,000. Aircraft and engine plants in the state are employing more than 150,000 workers; shipyards are employing around 70,000. By the peak of the war program, in 1943, some 340,000 war workers will be employed in Los Angeles County alone. Of more than 600,000 factory workers in the state in 1941, some 342,000 wage and salary employes were engaged in war manufacturing industries. Plant expansion in Los Angeles County alone created over 100,000 new jobs in 1941, and new war construction has only just begun. Seldom in our national history has the economy of a state been so swiftly transformed.

There is no doubt that the war industries are largely responsible for the great increase in population since 1940; most of the new migrants are coming to California for war jobs. As late as March 23, 1940 (San Francisco *News* of that date), the State Chamber of Commerce was "discouraging the migration of farm workers to California." The interests who control the state's highly industrialized agriculture were, even then, complaining bitterly over the influx of migrants and the surplus of agricultural workers (for the first time in seventy years they had more workers than they wanted).

But, as the war industries began to expand, workers moved from rural to urban areas within the state and the surplus rapidly dwindled. Had it not been for the great migrant influx of previous years, California agriculture would probably have experienced an actual labor shortage. Ironically, the despised Okies have become, overnight, the heroes of the situation. Of the earlier migrants, those still remaining in rural areas are, for the most part, the older members of the families. This force has been constantly augmented by the continuing influx of migrants from the southern plains areas, most of whom, as always, have drifted first into the agricultural districts. As a result of this continuing influx, no actual labor shortage developed in 1941—a fact conceded by all interests involved. But in 1942 a shortage may develop as a result of still additional factors which have arisen.

In the first place, more migrants are now going directly to war centers rather than to agricultural districts upon their arrival in the state. Also, some of the new migrants have shown a tendency to take the positions vacated by earlier migrants, in service industries for example, as the earlier migrants have moved into better paid war jobs.

Then, too, inroads have been made upon certain specialized

THE FLOWERS THAT BLOOM IN THE SPRING —

THE FLOWERS THAT BLOOM IN THE SPRING —

labor groups in agriculture. There are, for example, some 35,000 Filipinos in California, most of whom, a year ago, could be regarded as farm workers. Since most of them, however, are of draft age and have few, if any, dependents, they are rapidly being called into the armed services. They have also shown a marked tendency to drift into one or two war centers. Although discriminatory employment practices keep them out of the aircraft plants, some 3,000 Filipinos have left the asparagus farms of the Sacramento Delta district and moved into the shipyards of Vallejo where they are accepted as employes. As a consequence of this development, some asparagus growers have already begun to import Negroes from the South to take the place of the Filipinos who have already left or who are rapidly leaving the district (Sacramento *Bee,* March 3, 1942). Also, the forthcoming evacuation of the Japanese will create a vacuum in the agricultural labor market, particularly in certain crops such as berries, vegetables, and grapes. As a consequence, agriculture in California is once again clamoring for farm workers.

ON OCT. 3, 1941, an official of one of the farm organizations announced that an effort would be made to induce the federal government to relax the immigration laws so as to permit the importation of some 50,000 Mexican contract laborers to be distributed in Texas, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, and California. Arizona cotton growers made a similar request in 1941 which was, fortunately, denied (in part as a consequence of vigorous protests by the CTM on Aug. 12, 1941).

In default of any clearly established federal policy on migration, it is interesting to note that the County of Los Angeles on Dec. 10, 1941, sent a representative to Mexico to arrange for the repatriation of some 1,197 alien Mexican families now on relief. To support these families, the county has been spending about $479,200 a year. On the one hand, agricultural interests clamor for more Mexican workers as in 1918; and, at the same time, the county proposes to resume the repatriation program of 1932. It is probably true that the alien Mexican families on relief are only technically employable. They represent the lame, the halt, and the blind of prior Mexican migration to the state. Nevertheless the inconsistency remains and is further proof of the failure of agricultural interests to rationalize employment practices and to exhaust the local labor market before stimulating further migration. Actually, if full utilization were made of all sources of local labor, there would probably not be a shortage of farm labor this year. The clamor now being raised in California about a shortage simply means that no surplus will exist in 1942 and that, therefore, farm wages will probably increase. It is primarily to offset this possibility that agricultural interests will intensify their pressure for Mexican labor.

INHERENT in this developing situation are a number of dangerous possibilities. California has already received something in the neighborhood of twelve percent of the total of national war contracts and, as a consequence, has attracted more than its share of war migration. The industrialization that has taken place has developed almost exclusively around what the State Chamber of Commerce has called the "mushroom growth of the booming centers of war industries," some of which may or may not be permanent in character. Not only will war industries continue to attract industrial migrants throughout 1942 and 1943—for the expansion of plant facilities has only begun—but agricultural interests, eager to maintain their own labor reserve (earmarked, so to speak, for exclusive employment in agriculture), will stimulate additional agricultural migration. If they do not succeed in obtaining Mexican contract labor, they will import still more migrants from the southern plains and begin to tap the pool of Negro labor in the South.

As long as migrants continue to move westward, agriculture can probably escape the necessity of competing with urban industry for the same labor supply (this has been the central policy of California agriculturalists for the last three decades). But already a measure of such competition has been reflected in a general increase in agricultural wage rates. As the surplus of agricultural workers has dwindled, organizational activities among farm workers have not only increased but have, even in Imperial Valley, been meeting with considerable success. The problem, however, will be additionally complicated in 1942 because of the modification or relaxation of the crop control program. The sugar beet acreage will unquestionably be expanded, as well as other crops, so that the demand for agricultural labor will be steadily increased. Because of the importance of maintaining excellent Latin-American relations, moreover, it will not be as easy today as it was in 1918 to import Mexican labor. Also the problem of transportation due to tire rationing will necessarily complicate any recruitment campaigns.

In other words, California, unlike some other states which are experiencing sharp population growth as a result of the war program, is building up two labor pools: one in industry and one in agriculture. Much of this increased migration has resulted from a failure to make the maximum utilization of available local labor. As a result of wartime priorities, many workers are unemployed, particularly in the automobile assembly plants. But, rather than employ these workers (most of whom are trade unionists), the aircraft plants prefer to recruit unskilled workers from out of state, thereby stimulating migration and all of its attendant problems (housing, health, education, and so forth).

AS A RESULT of this complex of forces, California will probably have a population, not of 7,000,000, but of nine or 10,000,000 people by 1944. The dangerous aspects of this situation are fully appreciated by the State Chamber of Commerce which has recently announced that it takes a "sober view" of the rapid expansion of defense industries. If and when the war program begins to be curtailed (and when agricultural production concurrently slackens) California is certain to be one of the states where some exciting socio-economic developments may be anticipated. A state that, in a few brief years, gave birth to the Epic Plan, the Townsend Plan, and the Ham and Eggs Plan (Thirty Dollars Every Thursday), may confidently be expected to resist any attempt to curtail present employment opportunities. For the new migrants—the thousands and tens of thousands of war migrants—who are moving westward to California, are coming here to stay; of this there can be no doubt.

CAREY MCWILLIAMS.

Jamison

THE FOX TRAP

A short story by Ben Field. Illustrated by Soriano.

HIDDEN in the willows, Piper Doggity peered across the river. He was a thin-faced, wiry boy, tall for his thirteen years. He wore a hunting cap with a faded red crown, and on the peak of the cap like headlights were a couple of old hunting licenses. Over his shoulder he carried a sack with his spoon, sprinkler, and some new traps. He moved among the trees, his flat mouth working.

If he crossed over the bridge, he was dead sure he'd be spotted. Fording the river by using the rocks might also trap him. But he knew the rocks well, having clambered over them during the summer looking for bait. It was here, digging among the rocks when the water had been high, that he had spotted the little fox on the opposite shore. It had holed up, and he had lain all day watching for it, trying to lure it out by sucking the back of his hand to imitate the squeak of a mouse.

Furs were high because of the war. His father was crippled up by another attack of the rheumatism picked up in France in the trenches of the first war, and so for the first time Piper was out trapping alone. He must get his fox. He must show Jim Doggity that he was ready to fill a grown man's boots.

Piper had caught rabbits and woodchucks. Trapping foxes was a hell of a lot different. The grays and reds were darn smart. The reds could put up a battle before you tapped them on the snoot so they wouldn't bleed, and then put your heel carefully on the chest to snap the heart strings. Silvers were the ones to get. He was sure the fox cub that he had seen was a silver. It had flashed before him into its hole months ago, and since then the vision of that fox had grown in his imagination, and day and night it had belled in his ears.

Slowly, making sure that the river was clear on both sides, Piper set out, hopping from sandbank to sandbank, clambering over the rocks covered with a light snow fallen during the night. When he reached the opposite shore, he got his bearings quickly. Not a sign of life anywhere. He listened. The world seemed to be holding its breath.

The first of his traps had been laid close by in a small cove. He had placed a dead hen on a rock about three feet from shore, and halfway between the bait and the water's edge, he had built an island of mud and stones for the trap which he had covered with sod. How he had labored over the trap under cover of night and how triumphant he had been when on his return his father had listened to his account without comment. No word from the old man was praise indeed: Jim Doggity had no use for gab.

The cove was behind the boy. He backed up, and then glanced in its direction as if by accident. The dead hen lay on her side; the sod had not been disturbed.

Disappointed, the boy jerked his head away. Raising his sack, he plunged into the mountain laurel which grew thick down to the shore. Overshadowing the laurel were the big trees, many of which were crumbling, hunks of rot like plug tobacco around them. Where there was a clearing and the sun came through, he could see the frost spin off them in flakes and crystals.

Now the boy slowed down. He must approach the second trap warily. This was set in a hollow at the edge of a foxhole where the wind could not strike, and where he was sure the bitch had raised her litter, one of which was the cub he had laid siege to through the slow hours of a summer's day.

Piper's heart beat wildly. He tightened his grip on his sack, tried to still the clinking stuff inside. He stopped, squinted up at a tree ahead of him as if he had spotted a squirrel, then casting a swift glance around, scrambled into the hollow. There was a crackle behind him. He whirled around. A big man with a slouch hat and a sheepskin coat stepped toward him. It was the game warden.

The warden kicked at the trap. "Where's your tag, boy?"

"Don't need none. Everybody knows Doggity." Then, remembering his father's warning, Piper decided to sit on his tongue. Instead of arguing, he dropped to the ground. There were scuffle marks and scratches in the snow. He bent lower—the marks were ovals, larger, but strikingly like those of the cub he had seen. The silver!

"You can't trap without a tag on those traps," said the warden harshly.

Piper looked at that bag of guts, but he kept his mouth hooked.

"What's the matter?" cried the warden, kicking the trap again. "Swallowed your tongue this mornin'?"

Piper's face quivered. He shot out his tongue. Controlling himself with difficulty, he eyed the warden narrowly. His voice was low. "Let go my trap."

The warden studied him with a mocking grin. "So you found that tongue of yourn? Ain't had it for breakfast?"

"No, and you ain't havin' my fox neither."

The warden laughed. "We'll see about that. One thing, young fella, you stay on the other side of the river."

Piper felt his rage mastering him. His throat ached as he burst out, "This is a free country."

"It's been too free for you billies. It'll be a good thing when the law stops fishin' and huntin' around these parts. First thing, your guns'll be marked and registered, then taken."

Ignoring him, Piper raised himself on his toes. On the road above the river stood the warden's car. The stolen fox must be in the car.

"Now scoot to your side of the river, and make it in marchin' time."

Piper brought his fist to his mouth and blared through it. Then he hurled himself forward toward the car. The warden caught him by the back of the neck. Piper dropped his sack, twisted, and landed the warden one in the mug with a fist as sharp as a burr. The warden fell back. Piper squared off and danced around, stabbing out with his fists. "Come on, fat guts." The warden jumped toward him as if to bull him. Leaping to one side with a hoot, Piper slipped behind a tree.

The game warden turned, grabbed the sack with its traps, and swinging it by its neck, pitched it into the river. "That'll teach you," he shouted. Holding his jaw, he went to the car.

Wild with rage, Piper rushed to the river. The sack had sunk out of sight. He lunged after the warden. The man had started the car when he leaped on the running board. The motion of the car staggered the boy. He grabbed the door handle and was dragged down the road, and as the car shot into high, he was flung against a tree. He lay motionless on the road. When he sat up, the car was gone. A whip of smoke hung in the air.

Piper limped to the river. He clambered among the rocks,

"Swallowed your tongue this mornin'?" the warden asked.

splashed and fished, but could not find the sack. He forded the river, his overalls wet to his thighs.

Great wadded clouds were in the north above the bend in the river—some indigo, some golden. A bunch of junco birds whirled out of the willows and started picking for their living. A rabbit darted into the road to scatter before him. In places its footprints showed like small Indian clubs. A quail had also been by, leaving its Y-shaped tracks which looked as though it had beaten its way over the snow with a twig. Piper saw none of this: his eyes were full of tears, and when he finally raised his head, the sun was under a runner of clouds and all the color was blacked out over the world.

WHEN he got home, he found that his kid brothers had already left for the mountain school. He sat down at the table, and his tall, gaunt mother pushed him his pancakes and coffee.

Jim Doggity had his back to the boy. His leg with its hot sandbags was stretched to the stove.

Piper chewed heavily, keeping his eyes lowered.

His father stirred and turned his lean, hard face toward him.

The boy remained silent.

"Well," said Doggity, "got your big mouth hooked today?"

Piper refused another helping of cakes, something unusual with him. "Game warden stopped me. Said it ain't our country."

"What?"

"Said we're poor billies, and it ain't our country no more."

Doggity twisted into an S as if he were going to strike. His face had been broken in the woods, and the scar turned white. "Where's the traps?"

Piper sniffed. "There was a fox, little fella, and—"

"Where's those traps?"

"The fox musta been the same—"

"Did you let that wafflebelly take those traps?" cried Doggity, rearing.

Piper hung his head.

Jim Doggity cursed and hobbled across the room to his boots. He put them on, and then, white-faced, turned to Piper. "You comin' with me. No school for you."

As the boy dragged himself out of his chair, his mother said, "What ails you?"

"Aw, nathin'."

The man and the boy got into the old truck. North into the mountain they headed, chugging over the corduroy road and the old logging trail to the woodlot which Jim Doggity and a neighbor had rented for firewood to sell in the valley. They parked the truck, and then Doggity took the crosscut and wedge and stalked into the timber, casting an impatient look at the boy who stumbled after with a couple of axes. Jim chose a big red oak, notched it while Piper set out to make stakes and strippers to measure the cordwood. After Jim had decided where he wanted to fell the tree, he and the boy got at each end of the crosscut.

"What you ridin' the saw for?" cried Jim after several draws.

Piper loosened his grip on the handle.

Doggity growled, "Looks like more'll git away from you than the fox you been battin' about."

The boy pulled the peak of his hunting cap over his reddening face.

The sun scaled the mountain. It became warmer. Yellow jackets swarmed over the freshly sawed wood. But the boy shivered, and that quick tongue of his stuck to his mouth heavy as a rasp.

The saw pinched. Doggity used his wedge, and then both continued grimly sawing until the oak gave a little start.

In a daze the boy stumbled back, crying, "Timber, timber!"

With a hard grin, Doggity muttered, "Wake up." He took his axe, and swinging it lightly as if it were a catstick, over one shoulder and then the other, sent the oak crashing down to its chosen place.

With the measuring rod the boy marked off the trunk. They

resumed their sawing. But Piper found it hard to get set. The laurel and arbutus, scattered all over the woods, caught between the teeth of the saw and bound it, and as he tried to pull them away, his hands felt as weak as if they had been boned.

Doggity pushed him aside, ripped out the laurel by the root, and they finished the trunk. Jim split the lengths, and the boy piled the cordwood between the stakes.

As they were working, their neighbor drove up. He was a young hefty fellow, who had been making wood with them all winter. The three got the buzz rig off the truck, unhooked the muffler, and lined the truck and the rig, jacking up the truck so that a rear wheel supplied the power. They braced the rig and slipped the belt over the rear tire and the wheel of the rig.

Doggity was sawyer, the young farmer brought up the logs, and Piper saw to the truck, filling the radiator when it steamed, giving it more gas when the saw hit a knot, and then running back to throw away the cut pieces.

As he worked, his head seemed to be swelling, and he carried it under a low ceiling. Weights hung to his arms and legs. He stepped behind the cab of the truck and poured a pail of water over his head.

The men were fast and powerful, his father feeding the saw, the young farmer hefting the trunks and big boughs called the lagging. Piper gritted his teeth to keep up with them. His legs buckled underneath him, and the rough edges of the cut pieces caught his wrists and ripped them. He filled his chest with air and drove himself harder. Reaching for a length of wood, he stumbled. A voice roared behind him, and a terrific wallop in the chest sent him flying backward. He rolled on the ground, gasping. Through his tears he saw his father standing over him.

The young farmer leaped over the woodpile. "Great Christ, Jim, that was quick thinkin'! The kid coulda been slashed to pieces. Damn those buzz saws without guards."

Doggity limped over to the truck and cut the ignition. He watched the boy ignore the proffered hand of the farmer. He squinted at the sun. "Jest as well eat now." He took their lunchbox, handed the boy a sandwich and the bottle of coffee.

The men sat on a log and ate. The young farmer looked across at Piper. "Looks like Buckshot is under the weather today."

"If he can't take it," said Doggity, "he kin beat it home."

The men started talking about the war, about the long-snooted game wardens who seemed to think the fighting was against the common people, and both spoke out about the new laws that would register guns and stop fishing and hunting along the river.

Doggity had been a soldier for ten years, enlisting after he had jacked in a lumbercamp in Canada. He had served his country well with the cavalry in the Southwest, with Funston in Mexico, and across with the AEF, and he could handle a gun from either shoulder. Doggity said to his friend, the farmer, "By God, fellas like them wardens can't forget they always been tailin' us. While we're gettin' our sights trained for the fightin' across, they sneak up to knife us."

Piper sat on a stump some distance off, holding his sandwich in his numb hands. He forced himself to eat: he didn't want the men to think there was anything wrong with him, and he tried hard to hear what they were saying. Faintly their voices came to him from a long funnel.

Then the saw started its hoarse, wild singing again, and in spite of weakness, he did not fall behind the men.

THE woodcutters knocked off work at dusk. Under the cold stars Doggity and his boy chugged back to the farm. When they got into the yard, Piper went to the barn without a word. He did his chores, cut pumpkins for the cow, milked her, and came into the house with the full pail.

His mother was at the stove slicing potatoes into the frying pan. She must have been talking about him because she said, "You shoulda let him come home, Jim."

Doggity was putting hot sandbags on his leg. "No one was stoppin' him."

She put her hand on the boy's brow. "You got wet, and you shoulda changed and stayed home."

The kid brothers, who were doing their school work at the table, watched their mother handle him. Their jaws dropped in amazement. Piper never allowed any one to touch him. Even Jim Doggity had never had to—one word from their father was always enough for the boys.

"You take your supper and git to bed," said their mother to Piper.

"I ain't eatin'," he said, finally pushing her hand away.

"A little hot milk."

"I ain't eatin', I said!" His voice was as harsh and final as a Doggity's should be.

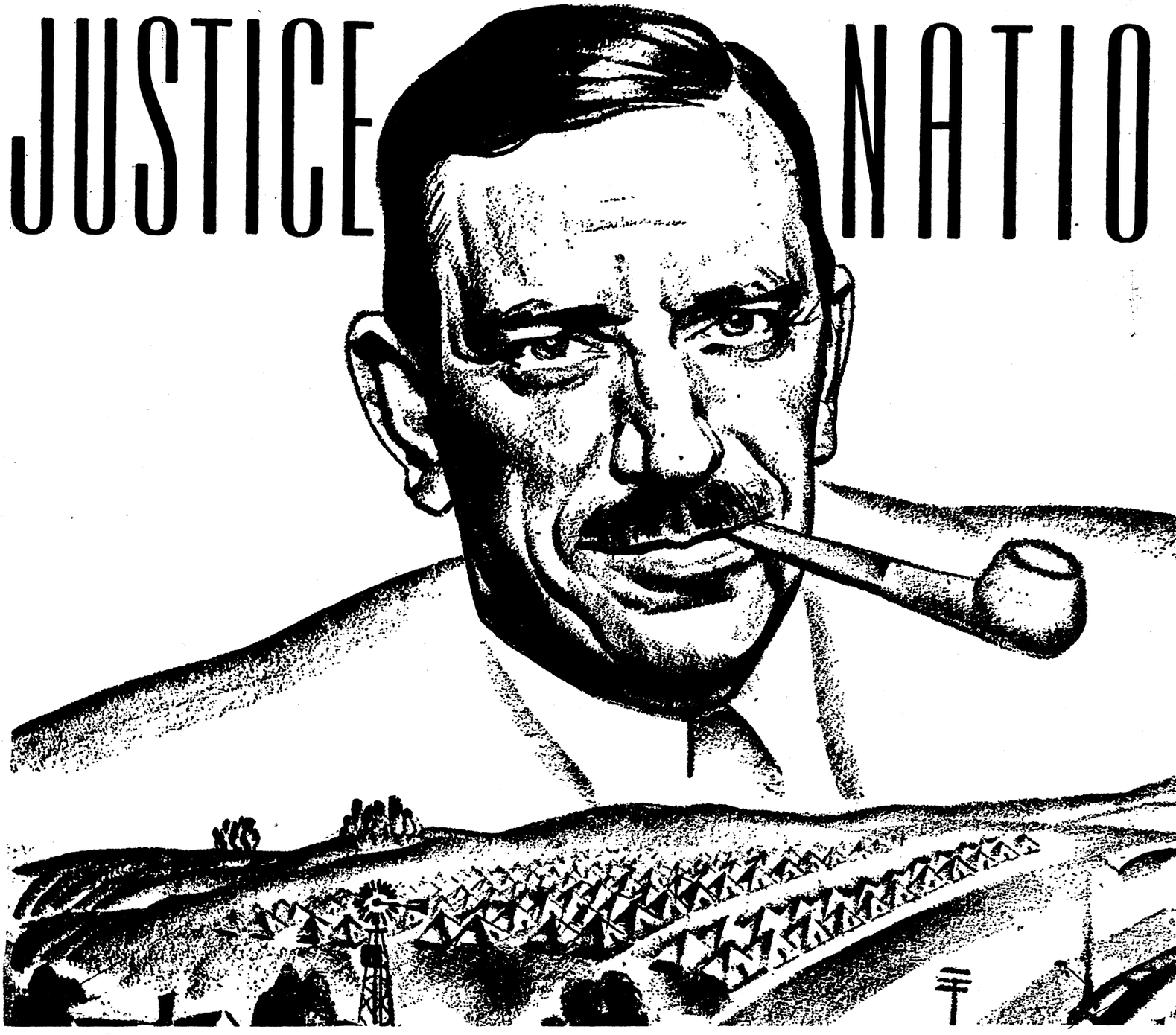
Silently he went into the corner and rummaged around until he found the box of salts. Getting a spoon and mug, he prepared a large dose and downed it heroically. Then he climbed upstairs, followed by the bright admiring eyes of the kids.

Jim Doggity, soldier, farmer, lumberjack, had been places in his time. He had once said there were two things a man must do in a hard country: keep his mouth shut and his bowels open. And as Piper got into bed he felt that if he had done the first, he would have brought his fox home triumphantly by now.

Piper crept under the blankets. Forgotten was the warden, forgotten the pain in the chest where his father had struck him to keep him from falling across the saw. In his fever, he saw himself lying again in the summer sun trying to lure the little fox from its hole. He put his hot hands to his mouth, and there, there was the little fox coming up on its belly toward him. He caught it. Hugging it fiercely, he let it lie there gnawing away at his heart.

BEN FIELD.

JUSTICE NATIO

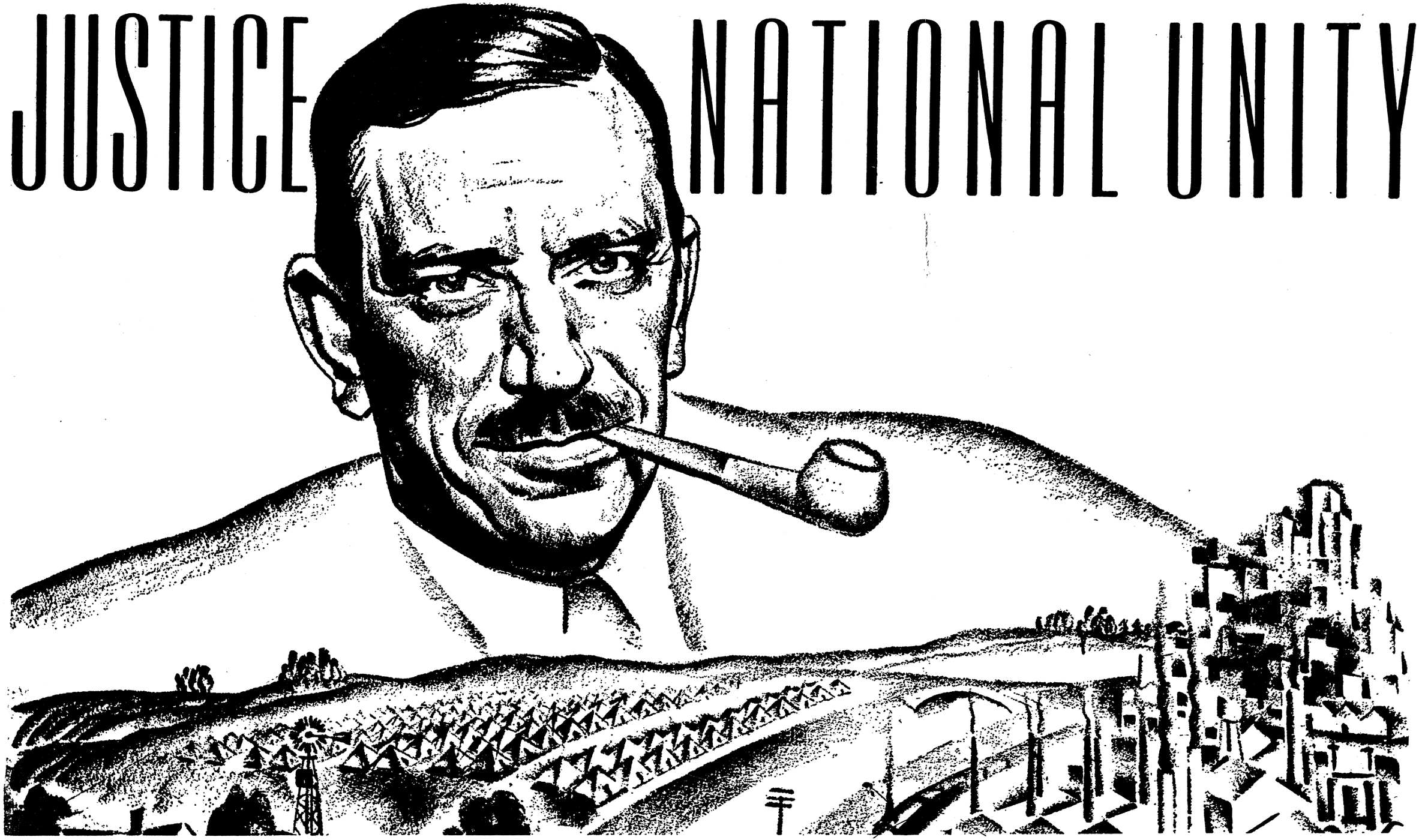


ONE year is a very short time in the calendar of history. But it is a long time when measured in the blood of the hundreds of thousands who have given their lives in the past year in the war against fascism. It is a long time when measured in the sufferings of millions under the Nazi and Japanese heel. It is a long time in terms of the changes that have taken place and of our country's peril.

And one year is a long time for a man who sits behind the bars of the federal prison at Atlanta, Ga., eager to give his work, his leadership, his very life, if necessary, for victory over the fascist barbarians. Three million Americans say it is long enough; they ask that not another day pass to compound the wrong already done. In the name of justice, in the name of national unity, in the name of all the things this country is fighting for, they ask that President Roosevelt use his executive powers to free this great American, Earl Browder. These 3,000,000, the overwhelming majority of them non-Communists, are the articulate vanguard; there are many millions more who would welcome Browder's release. Only a handful, appeasers and pro-fascists, would demur.

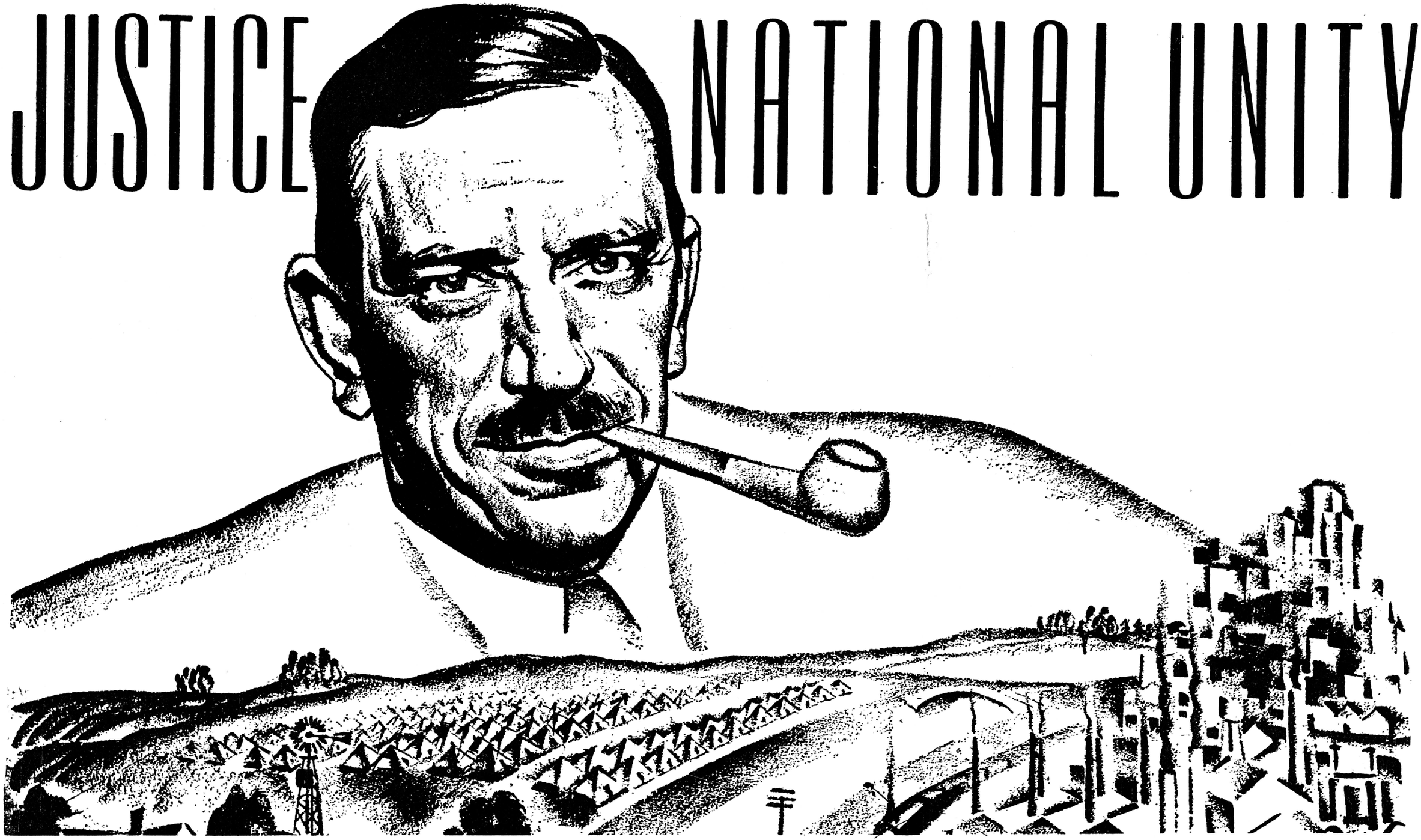
This weekend (March 28-29) a National Free Browder Congress is being held in New York. Hundreds of delegates will be present from AFL and CIO unions, from other organizations throughout the country, from the thinking, patriotic men and women of America. Consider the kind of people who are speaking up for Browder; unionists in the thick of the battle for production, the crews of ninety-three ships who are risking their lives to deliver what it takes to defeat the Axis, farmers and pro-

JUSTICE NATIONAL UNITY



Hugo Gellert

JUSTICE NATIONAL UNITY



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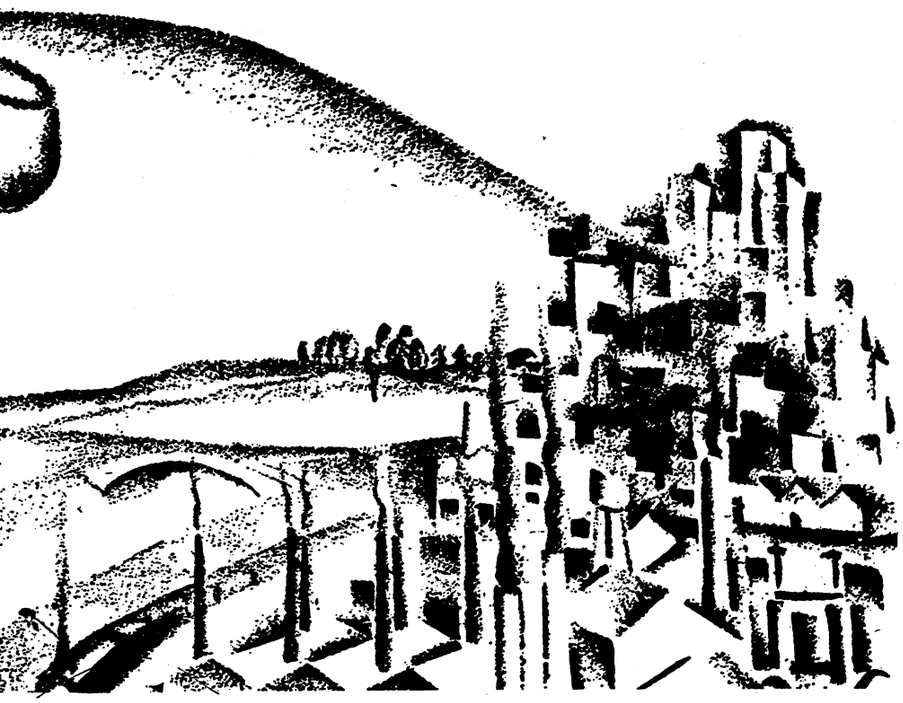


Hugo Gellert

fessional people, and such distinguished Americans (to mention only a few) as Prof. Ellsworth Huntington of Yale University; Philip M. Connelly, president, and Louis Goldblatt, secretary of the California State Industrial Union Council; Dr. John P. Peters of Yale Medical School; Prof. Franz Boas; Dr. Alexander Meiklejohn; Dr. Max Lerner; Saul Mills, secretary of the Greater New York Industrial Union Council; Bishop Edward Lamb Parsons; Councilman A. Clayton Powell; Francis Fisher Kane, former US attorney; Arthur Upham Pope, chairman of the Committee for National Morale; Prof. Vida D. Scudder of Wellesley College; Dr. W. E. DuBois of Atlanta University; Paul Robeson; Robert Travis, vice-president of the Illinois Industrial Union Council; Rep. Vito Marcantonio; Theodore Dreiser; Warren K. Billings; Hugh DeLacy, president of the Washington Commonwealth Federation; Gerald J. Duffy, secretary of the New York Hotel Trades Council (AFL); Dudley Nichols and John Wexley, writers; Judge John Beardsley of the Los Angeles Superior Court; Kenneth Leslie, editor of the *Protestant Digest,* and many others. And Tom Mooney's last activity in the labor movement was to serve as chairman of the Citizens' Committee to Free Earl Browder.

These people, the salt of America, characterize the cause with which they have linked their names. And now the *New Republic* has joined the fighters for Browder's freedom. In an editorial in its March 23 issue the magazine writes:

"We conclude therefore that Browder's penalty was for his political offense in being the leader of the Communist Party at a time when the party line was at variance with American foreign policy. Such a political sentence is strongly antithetical to the American principle of the competition of ideas. Today, when America is at war, all considerations of national policy point in the direction of releasing Browder. The Communist Party is staunchly supporting an all-out war effort. Hundreds of thousands of trade unionists who regard the Browder case as a test of the genuineness with which we mean our democratic principles would be heartened by his release. Russia, moreover, is today the strongest ally we have in our war against the fascist powers. Surely the release of Browder would be an elementary act by which we could reassure the Russian people that we are fighting on their side and are not at war with them. And such reassurance is needed from a government that is allowing the Coughlinites and the Christian Front to carry on the strongest fascist propaganda while it keeps Browder in prison for a technical offense.

"In 1917, when America entered the first World War, President Wilson appealed to the governor of California to free Tom Mooney on the ground that it would reassure the American labor movement and help the conduct of the war. President Roosevelt need, in the case of Browder, appeal to no one but himself."

The opposition to Browder's release comes from the same sources as the opposition to our country's war of liberation. The Dies-Hearst-Coughlin-Cliveden axis, the disrupters of national unity and spreaders of the poisonous Goebbels line, demand that the President continue to keep in jail the man who pioneered in advocating collective action to halt the fascist warmakers, who risked his life to help the people of China and Spain, who tirelessly urged collaboration between the United States and the Soviet Union against the Nazi and Japanese gunmen. *They hate justice for Browder because they hate America.*

But we, the millions who love America, who love it not only as our home, but as the land where the democratic idea has greatly flourished and nurtured the whole of mankind, must speak from our hearts. If the appeasers and fifth columnists can keep Browder in jail, they have won an important battle in their war against America. Not only considerations of justice and fair play, but, as the *New Republic* points out, of success in the war itself urgently require Browder's freedom. Let the voice of the people be heard in the White House. We ask that you sit down this very moment and wire or write the President. Out of the Free Browder Congress must come in irresistible flood that faith and energy and determination that can move mountains and open prison doors.

THE EDITORS.

THE WEEK in LONDON by CLAUDE COCKBURN

THE "DAILY MIRROR" INCIDENT

What lay behind the threat to suspend the newspaper. The growing movement among the unions to lift the ban on the "Daily Worker."

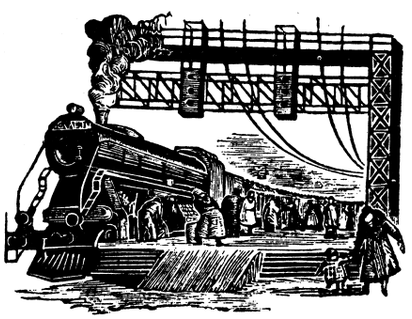
London (by cable).

DEPLORABLY, at this moment when a bloody spring is bursting out of winter, the whole political situation here has suddenly been dominated by the case of the London *Daily Mirror*. The government has willed it so. It has willed it in the same way that it has insisted on the perpetuation of the fourteen months' ban on the London *Daily Worker*. And it has thus turned the *Daily Worker* issue into a major one in the factories and workshops of Britain. It would be futile in face of the editorials that greeted the threat of a ban on the *Mirror* to try to pretend that in this case Herbert Morrison, Minister of Home Security, has not—for reasons best known to himself—brought about an open head-on clash between the actively thinking majority of the population and the mealy-mouthed apologists. He has produced at least the germs of a very serious government crisis. And he has, in the eyes of large numbers of people, succeeded in placing himself and the government in the position of appearing to be against the honest critics, the men and women who want to strengthen this government and to cut a way forward for it through the tangle of impediments that beset its feet.

I HAVE SEARCHED as far and as thoroughly as possible for the motives of the government action. I must state right away that there is at the moment absolutely no support for the suggestion that those responsible for the new threat to British press freedom are consciously actuated by the same sort of political or diplomatic aims as provided the magnet and motive power for the defeatists and appeasers of the Paris government in 1939 and 1940. It would be a gross mistake to deduce from this behavior, as from the government's behavior toward the *Daily Worker,* that some "sell-out" is in preparation. I am quite aware of the analogy with France. I am aware that such a construction can be put upon the government's action. That is why I think it important to state that in my view the government is not consciously so acting; and that there is not in existence at this moment any large or influential public group which openly or consciously is actuated by such a motive in its desire to muzzle the popular press.

That being said, in all fairness it has to be said further that the government has certainly torn the political situation here wide open. Going back a bit to get the matter in some perspective, we can note the following. After the last Cabinet changes there was certainly rather less general "appeasement" of the critics in the Commons than the government might perhaps reasonably have expected. There was an atmosphere of expectation of something more to come. That was a fairly healthy atmosphere. For all the "expectations" were of further moves to strengthen and invigorate the government. The strange speech of Brendan Bracken, Minister of Information, at the Guildhall, seemed once again to be attacking in the most indiscriminate fashion all those who criticized present British policies, and above all those who rightly or wrongly have suggested that there could be some improvements in the methods and thought processes of the British High Command.

Now it is a fact that the greater part of the serious criticisms of the British High Command have been directed to one point and one point only: the question of an offensive in Europe. It is equally true, as I have already reported, that in recent weeks all indications have been that the realization of the second front as the least risky and most hopeful means of regaining the initiative on a vital sector and finishing off the German end of the Axis before the autumn of this year, was beginning to be a fact in circles which previously had rejected any such notion. Therefore, there was the suggestion in the air that when the government took exception to criticism of the High Command, this must somehow be the result of pressure from some group or groups who objected to the criticism of the failure of the High Command to organize an effective second front on the continent of Europe.



ALMOST SIMULTANEOUSLY with the Brendan Bracken speech, a large group—at least fifty strong—of the parliamentary Labor Party was in fact meeting to draw up a short statement on essential war-winning points, of which number one was the establishment of a second front in Europe. The announcement of Morrison's threat to the *Daily Mirror,* quickly "heated up" the atmosphere of the House and the uneasiness and fighting spirit of the critical groups. It was at just this moment that Lloyd George rather significantly announced that he would send a public message of support to the conference organized for March 21 by the *Daily Worker* to demand the lifting of the ban. At that conference—with a liberal member of Parliament in the chair—were represented the executive committees of some of the greatest unions in Britain. Among them were the executives of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, key union in the war industries, and the executive of the Miners Federation of Great Britain. Also represented was virtually every important war factory in the London area. And this conference was held in the very middle of the crisis which had been precipitated by the Morrison threat to the *Daily Mirror.*

Thus it has happened that the "latent" crisis that continued—in a very wholesome and positive way—after the last government changes, has been forced into the open a good deal sooner than most people anticipated. It can be stated that this development has certainly hastened, increased, and strengthened the development of that all-party group of "critics for victory" which extends from Emanuel Shinwell and Jack Tanner to Lord Winterton and Sir John Wardlaw Milne. As I write there are those among these critics who believe—and perhaps are even hopeful—that the government will debate the issue and that if it does so the government will be severely reprimanded.

CLAUDE COCKBURN.

NEW MASSES

ESTABLISHED 1911

Editors

BARBARA GILES, A. B. MAGIL, RUTH McKENNEY, JOSEPH NORTH, JOSEPH STAROBIN, JOHN STUART

Washington Editor

BRUCE MINTON

Business Manager

CARL BRISTEL

★

Eyes on Cripps

SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS has arrived in India, and the discussions which the whole world is watching are under way. Every Hindu and Moslem group has been meeting these past two weeks to formulate policy and tactics; so have the Sikh minority, the Untouchables, and the native princes. The latter held a special congress last week, and as might have been expected, they urged that whatever arrangement Cripps may reach must not affect their special treaty relations with the British Crown. But the major problem will not come over the princes. Nehru recently declared that the status of the princes can wait until the main issues of India-empire relations have been settled.

The Moslem League, under Ali Jinnah, has restated its truculent position, insisting upon "Pakistan," a plan for the partition of India. But a most encouraging development was the decision of Sir Sikander Hyat Khan, the premier of Punjab, to resign from the Moslem League and its working council and to cooperate with the All-India National Congress. This is of great importance because Punjab is a major Moslem stronghold. It highlights the fact that the so-called Moslem League is not really representative of Moslem opinion, as Tory propaganda so often claims.

One thing seems to be clear, and that is that Nehru is not simply bargaining when he insists on full political power for India as, for example, in his article in the current issue of *Fortune*. The crisis in India has passed the stage of small bargaining; if nothing should come of the negotiations, it would represent a major defeat for the United Nations.

At such a moment, therefore, the United States could be of great service to the cause of all the United Nations by taking the initiative in the formulation of a Pacific Charter of Freedom, such as Sun Fo of the Kuomintang urged last week. Pledging freedom for all the peoples of Asia, beginning with Korea through to the Philippines, such an initiative from Washington would be a great step forward at this critical moment. It might make the difference between losing India or converting it into a mighty barrier to Japanese and Axis aggression.

The Bigger the Lie

THE old Hitler trick of "the bigger the lie" is being worked to death (literally) by a regiment of generals who have opened their spring blitz against American labor and America's war drive. Simply to speak the truth is to answer them. Thus:

There is no law limiting the working week to forty hours. Average hours per week in war industries are—for example—fifty-five in machine tools; 51.1 in engines and turbines; 48.7 in aircraft; 44.9 in explosives; 45.9 *in aluminum. In some plants workers put in as much as seventy-seven hours weekly.*

Over eighty percent of the aircraft plants are working 120 hours or more a week; chemical plants are working 100 or more; four-fifths of all war plants surveyed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics are operating more than 160 hours a week.

During this past January the time lost through strikes was FOUR-THOUSANDTHS OF ONE PERCENT *of the time worked. In the first two and a half months of 1942, time lost through strikes was less than one percent of that lost during the same period last year.*

These facts are on record—the President cited many of them at his press conference on March 20; others have been given by federal officials during the past several days. They are unpretentious, black-and-white figures but they add up to an exciting indication of labor's zeal in war output. You should know them, memorize them, broadcast them to others. For against this immovable phalanx of truths Rep. Howard Smith and his allies are trying to batter through their lie that the "forty-hour-week law" is silencing our factories and strikes are withering production. Around this total falsehood Congressman Smith (Poll Tax, Virginia) has written his bill to abolish the Wage-Hour Act and all other labor legislation for the past fifty years. But Smith is only the most conspicuous general in his regiment. No one has quite put his finger on the chief commander, although L. Metcalfe Walling, Wage-Hour administrator, came closest to it when he said that Nazi propaganda was "behind this whole movement to do away with wage and hour standards." Certainly there is some directing head, and some deeper purpose, when, simultaneously with the introduction of the Smith bill, every leading labor-hater lets go at once, with a radio, press, and telegram barrage designed to sustain Mr. Smith's gruesome bedtime tale that we are about to be devoured by an ogre in overalls.

Most of the telegrams have come out of the South, and there's a reason. Associated Industries of Oklahoma, a major force in the wire-your-congressman campaign, is an affiliate of the National Association of Manufacturers, which tries to guard profiteering by fighting overtime pay. All members of Associated Industries were urged to demand immediate congressional action against unions. Telegrams coming to Congress from Oklahoma were on Postal Telegraph "forms"—like birthday greetings—with about four variations of the same message.

Perhaps the most shameless performance was Thurman Arnold's. The Assistant Attorney General, who not so long ago was prosecuting trade unions under the Sherman Anti-Trust Act, might well have been pinch-hitting for Westbrook Pegler, who was on vacation—so violent was Arnold's denunciation of unions. He actually told the House Judiciary Committee that organized labor was unscrupulous enough to keep most of America "at its mercy"!

It isn't so difficult to answer these falsehoods as to make the answers heard clearly. But before we consider that, let's look at what's behind the lies. Excess profits, for one thing—that's plain enough from the attack on overtime pay. However, it is only one part, and a more innocent part, of the whole plan behind the blitz. Have no doubt about it, the blitz itself is directed *against the war effort.* For look at what is happening. These anti-laborites know very well, though they would die before admitting it, that labor is straining itself to get a maximum war production. They know—and it infuriates them—that labor and management together are working toward unity and a greater output, that joint management-labor councils are being set up in war plants, labor has voluntarily relinquished its right to strike, and an increasing number of employers publicly recognize the importance of cooperation with their workers. It requires a desperate campaign, a desperate lie, to break down this growing movement.

As for nailing the lies, labor is not alone in that job. An array of high government officials testified to a Senate Appropriations Subcommittee that restrictive laws against labor unions were not at all necessary. Other officials, beginning with the President, have testified to the workers' eagerness and patriotism in war production. Manufacturers themselves, when queried by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, refuted Smith's story—of 650 replying to the Bureau's question, only two felt that overtime pay for more than forty hours' work a week had any hampering effect on production. After a Senate Appropriations Subcommittee had heard Donald Nelson's expose of lies against labor, Harry Truman of Missouri promised an investigation by his own committee if the Appropriations one didn't act. Such an investigation is in order.

Chile

AMONG the tankers and freighters which Axis submarines have been sinking off our Atlantic coast, there have been a number of Latin-American vessels. At least two were of Brazilian ownership; another came from Uruguay, and a third, the *Tolten,* was of Chilean origin. Evidently the Axis is making a deliberate drive to sever communications between the United States and the Latin-American republics, hoping at the same time to create antagonisms in these republics against trade with the United States. In the case of Uruguay and Brazil this plan backfired. The governments of both countries, having broken off relations with the Axis at the Rio de Janeiro conference, side firmly with the United States. Popular anti-Axis demonstrations in Rio and in Montevideo have left no doubt as to how the people in these countries feel.

The situation in Chile is somewhat different, and among the most delicate in inter-American relations. Chile is one of the two nations (Argentina is the other) which has not yet broken off relations with the Axis. The new president, Dr. Antonio Rios, is scheduled to be inaugurated on April 2, and it was believed that the break would come at that time. But the Chilean government has taken the position that the *Tolten* ought not to have turned off its lights, as requested by the American naval authorities off our coastlines. Many Chilean newspapers under Axis influence, and even others which are not, have tried to make it appear that our coastal regulations rather than the U-boats were somehow responsible for the sinking.

It is obvious that the leading governmental forces in Chile are moving warily; the influence of Argentina's neutrality is very strong; the Axis agents are working very diligently and the Japanese are threatening to take advantage of Chile's long Pacific coastline for reprisals on her ports if Chile does not continue normal relations and trade with Japan. On the other hand, Chile's labor movement, in the interests of its country's independence, has taken a strong stand for support of the United States and the Allies. The powerful Confederation of Labor just concluded a session in which support of the United States was strongly urged as were measures against the Axis fifth column. There is no doubt where the Chilean people stand, but there is some doubt as to whether the new regime will be responsive to their wishes.

Jose Diaz

THE death of Jose Diaz, general secretary of the Spanish Communist Party, deprives the world anti-fascist forces of a brilliant and heroic leader. Diaz died in Moscow last week at the age of forty-six. He had burned up every ounce of his strength in the fight for republican Spain. Without rest, too often without sleep, Diaz had organized the unity of his people against the Axis invaders. Together with the Party that he led, he was a pioneer hacking his way through the wilderness of illusion, proclaiming to the world the need for solidarity against fascism.

Diaz early associated himself with the democratic struggles of his people. At thirteen he took part in the Barcelona general strike of 1909. Eleven years later he was severely tortured by the Madrid police. In 1927 he began working with the Andalusian Communists and soon became leader of the Party in Seville. He helped bring together the various political groups that defeated the pro-fascist government of Lerroux and Gil Robles on Feb. 16, 1936. When Franco and his fascist friends tried to wrest power from the people on July 17, 1936, Diaz and the Communist Party again took a leading role in welding the resistance of the People's Front.

Just two weeks before the Franco insurrection, NEW MASSES published a "Letter from Spain" written by Diaz which is prophetic: "The aim of the provocateurs is clear. They seek to disrupt the unity of the popular forces in Spain. They attempt to flaunt the disturbances which reaction itself brings about, before the whole world, with the accusation that the Leftists cannot preserve order. They call upon the government to break with the working-class parties. . . . They try to horrify the more moderate Republicans with the specter of social revolution, of Bolshevism. They warn of the assassination of all citizens by the Bolsheviks, and spread tales of that sort which no one with half a brain would believe."

We do well to repeat Diaz' words today as we confront the propaganda of our own fifth columnists. To the honored and beloved memory of Jose Diaz: a pledge that Spain, and with it the world, will yet be free of the barbarians whom he fought to the last moment.

The Sales Tax Again

THIS year, as usual, soon after the Treasury Department presented its tax plan the National Association of Manufacturers presented another. It looks a little different from previous NAM ones—all done up in patriotic bunting and bleeding with sacrificial intentions. It turns out, however, that the wounds are not to be inflicted upon the NAM but upon labor and consumers, and that the knife for inflicting them is that old blade, Sales Tax. According to Mr. J. Cheever Cowdin, testifying for the NAM before the House Ways and Means Committee, an eight percent general sales tax would be about right. This would allow for reducing the Treasury's proposed taxes on big corporations (though not on small ones) and would only burden a man making $500 a year about four times as much as a man making $10,000.

It is good news, then, that the sentiment in Congress for a general sales tax has been melting considerably under the heat of labor protest. Both the AFL and CIO are working to make congressmen thoroughly aware of what the tax would do to the workingman's pay envelope—and aware also that big corporations can stand a stiffer excess profits levy than that proposed by the Treasury. Last year, according to the Federal Reserve Board, 629 of the largest industrial corporations earned net profits, *after taxation,* of $2,181,000,000, or fifty percent more than in 1940. Here is where large additional revenue should be found.

Straight Shooting

THE desire to get on with the war found effective expression last week in speeches by Archibald MacLeish, Wendell Willkie, Quentin Reynolds, and Dorothy Thompson. Addressing 2,000 guests at the inaugural dinner of Freedom House, each of these figures hit out hard against the unholy coalition of Jim Crow and Cliveden.

Mr. Willkie attacked discrimination against Negroes in the armed forces. Using as an example the heroism of Dorie Miller, Negro messman, during the Pearl Harbor attack, he sharply criticized the Navy for selecting men on the basis of color. This injustice, Mr. Willkie said, "makes a mockery of all our fine words." A mockery it is; and the government should see to it that it is ended. To continue the prevailing practice with regard to Negroes is to carry on a form of national suicide.

Appeasing Jim Crow is as disastrous as appeasing those whom Archibald MacLeish described in his talk as the defeatists and divisionists of the country. The enemy is the newspaper publisher or politician "who fears or hates our allies in this war more than he trusts and loves his fellow citizens; the American bigot who fears the beliefs of the Russian people more than he trusts the beliefs of the people of America and who would willingly see the United States destroyed if Russia could be destroyed in the same disaster. . . ."

On the same occasion Quentin Reynolds declared that before he returned home six weeks ago he was under the impression that America was at war with the Axis. After reading some newspaper editorials and some speeches by members of Congress, he began to wonder whether "we are not really at war with Britain and the President of the United States."

We need such plain talk. It is good to see leading public figures taking the offensive against the Cliveden mentality.

Inside Germany

TO NEW MASSES: In the February issue of *Freies Deutschland* (Free Germany), a monthly magazine published by anti-Nazi German refugees in Mexico, I read the following letter and I am sending it on to you because I believe it will interest NEW MASSES readers. The editors of *Freies Deutschland* prefaced the letter with the explanation that it had reached them from Essen three months after it was posted, having wandered over many lands and across the ocean. It describes facts and moods at the beginning of the winter of 1941-42 in the Ruhr, Germany's greatest industrial region. The correspondent's name is not published for obvious reasons.

F. G. HERBERT.

Chicago.

"Finally I have a chance to smuggle out a report. Perhaps I don't know any more than the average anti-Nazi. Since my record is by no means 'spotless' because of my former activity against the Nazis, I have to be very careful. That is why I don't meet with other people very often.

"What does Essen look like? The bombings of the British Air Force have done the most damage to the residential section in the southern part of the city. It has been completely laid waste. It is impossible to determine from the outside what the effect of the English bombs on the Krupp Works has been, though many have fallen there. I have no direct contacts with Krupp workers. But in spite of efforts to shut them up, I know that several entire departments have had to stop work for days at a time.

"I am not exaggerating when I say that morale in general is very low. In spite of extra rations for workers in heavy industry, food is insufficient, especially for the miners. For several weeks during the summer and autumn there was a noticeable shortage of potatoes, due to transport difficulties—all the trains were jammed with troops on the way to the Eastern Front. Wages aren't high enough for the men to buy the official butter rations. Work clothes are made of such poor material that after a few weeks they go to pieces like tissue-paper. The miners' pit shoes are literally made of paper and wood. Besides, there is now a shortage of even the commonest objects in daily use. My wife ran around for days vainly trying to buy a market-bag. She wanted to buy a pair of scissors she saw in a show window. 'Goods on display; not for sale!' they told her. There are no more pots, no more metal knives or forks or spoons, no more leather goods available.

"So dissatisfaction about general living conditions is growing. In addition, long casualty lists from the Eastern Front have been published during the past few weeks. Soon there won't be a single house in the workers' districts without a brother, a son, a son-in-law, or a brother-in-law either dead or badly wounded. The people were stunned when they heard that the Russian front had been more or less stabilized. You can often hear them say: 'Now he (Hitler) is sitting tight.'

"I know that many people outside Germany often wonder about the weak resistance of the common people of Germany. But who in 1938-39 gave such a heavy blow to the year-long, illegal work of the German anti-Nazis? It was Chamberlain's and Daladier's betrayal of the collective peace front against Hitler. Outside Germany you probably underestimate the staggering effect of the Munich Conference of September 1938 on the German people. Our hopes of support from abroad in our struggle were then sorely disappointed. Moreover, Hitler's victories turned the head of many a young worker. But Hitler's most stupid act was to attack Soviet Russia, for Russia always enjoyed very strong sympathies among the miners and foundry workers here.

"I talked to a miner whom I knew to be a good anti-Nazi fighter in the days before Hitler, and who has remained loyal. He said: 'Since the start of the German-Russian war their [the German workers'] feelings have gone down and down. Many listen to foreign radio stations, London and Moscow. The general sentiment, however, is that they still can't dare to open their mouths.' He then told me that in September 1941, in one of the big Ruhr mines, there was a movement for higher wages. Several shifts stopped work. Delegates went to the Labor Front with demands. To prevent the movement from spreading, every one of these demands was granted within two hours. The Nazi leaders were terrified lest this single strike become the signal for an outbreak in the entire Ruhr region. . . .

"There is also talk about several demonstrations which the women are said to have carried out. During the last six weeks I spoke to a soldier from Hamburg, another from Munich, and to a relative of my wife from Berlin. Each of them told me of women demonstrating against the slaughter of their husbands. Once it was supposed to have occurred in Hamburg, another time in a side street off the Koenigstrasse in Berlin, and a third time in Munich, where the women gathered in a crowd at an office and demanded information about the fate of their husbands. From still a fourth person I heard of a similar incident in Cologne. None of my informants saw the demonstration himself—all of them heard about it from a third person. But the fact that in different parts of Germany people are talking about women's demonstrations gives you an idea of the general feeling. There's something in the air. . . ."

That Western Front

TO NEW MASSES: Colonel T. speaks horse sense on the question of opening a Western Front against the Nazis. His praise of Major George Fielding Eliot's article in *Look* magazine is deserved, but I think there is one thing wrong with the article which Colonel T. fails to mention: Eliot does not speak of an offensive in the spring, but seems to put it off to the more or less distant future. This isn't stated in so many words, but it is clearly implied. Major Eliot says that three things must be done: "(1) throw the Germans out of Africa; (2) hold our positions in the Middle East and in Great Britain; (3) enable our Russian allies to hold their own and, if possible, continue their offensive against the Germans." Note there is no mention of opening a Western Front. Then Eliot goes on to say:

"Can they [the Nazis] be attacked? Can they be beaten? The Russians have proved they can be. British and Americans can do the same.

"It will have to be a *gradual process, a development of great things from small beginnings.* At first we shall not have the forces for a full-dress invasion which can meet the Germans on their own grounds and beat them. We shall be compelled to use smaller forces for operations of limited extent in areas where the Nazis cannot get at us with their main forces." (My emphasis—R. T.)

It seems to me that Eliot, while agreeing that the invasion of Europe is necessary and even discussing where it can best be done, postpones indefinitely the actual opening of the Western Front that can give Hitler the death squeeze. Your magazine has been doing a fine job of pointing out how mistaken and dangerous it is not to strike from the West very soon. Hitler is not going to wait till the "full-dress invasion" that Major Eliot speaks of is ready down to the last shoelace.

RALPH TREADWELL.

Praise for Zweig Article

TO NEW MASSES: I read quite a number of articles dedicated to the memory of Stefan Zweig, who happened to be a relative of mine. I have to congratulate you for having published Mr. Ring's fine study, "Life and Death of Stefan Zweig." (NEW MASSES, March 10.) He shows a perfect understanding of Stefan Zweig's nature, and his analysis of the motives for that startling suicide was excellent.

ALFRED A. STERNTHAL.

New York City.

Information, Please

TO NEW MASSES: I should like to avail myself of the use of your columns regarding a book I am now writing. I am doing a biography of Dr. Norman Bethune, the Canadian surgeon who met his death in China in 1939 while serving with the Chinese forces against the Japanese.

Any information, correspondence, or anecdotes relating to Bethune would be greatly appreciated by the writer and would be publicly acknowledged.

As the writer worked with Dr. Bethune during the latter's entire stay in Spain, he has all of the information necessary relating to his work there. Any letters sent from Spain, however, would be appreciated.

Particularly important to the writer is information relating to Bethune's childhood and his life up until his departure for Spain in 1937.

Anyone having any information about Bethune can contact the writer through his agent, Leland Hayward Inc., 654 Madison Ave., New York City.

TED ALLAN.

New York City.

Recollections of a Hero

TO NEW MASSES: Four years ago Wilfred Mendelson left to fight in the anti-fascist forces of the Spanish republic. He died in action two months after his arrival. A group of us from his Brooklyn neighborhood are publishing a pamphlet about him.

He was known to thousands at City College in New York and other colleges, and to people who are active in the labor movement all over our country. We would like these people to pen their recollections of "Mendy," to send us letters he wrote them.

Please mail them to

GERTRUDE MENDELSON,
1775 E. 18th St.,
Brooklyn, N. Y.

WALT WHITMAN: THE WAR YEARS

"Is he beloved long and long after he is buried? Does the young man think often of him? and the young woman think often of him? and do the middle-aged and the old think of him?" That, said Walt Whitman, is the final test of greatness in a poet. It is the test by which he hoped his own work would be judged. For he did not seek the favor of a few. He wanted to be loved by the people, by those he once called the "exhaustless, intelligent, brave and reliable rank and file" who are, in the long run, the sharpest and most enduring critics.

And today, just fifty years after his death at Camden, N. J., on March 26, 1892, we may answer his question with assurance. Other strong voices reach us across the years: Freneau, Bryant, Whittier, Lowell; but no American poet lives so amply in our minds. Longfellow has had a wider audience, but he has not stirred us so deeply. Poe's lines have greater magic, but only on the surface. Emerson's verse is more chiseled, but it lacks passion and scope by contrast. The most varied impulses of our national life, the hope, confusion, energy, and sweep of our experience, have nowhere found richer expression than in *Leaves of Grass*. This titanic song of democracy grows more meaningful as the years pass, and we recognize with growing clarity and pride that it is, as the peoples elsewhere have long known, our greatest single contribution to world literature.

"I am with you, you men and women of a generation, or ever so many generations hence." And with us he is, in an even deeper sense than he could have known when he spoke so confidently in "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry." None of our own contemporary poets is so very much with us.

But if Whitman looked toward the future, he also flooded himself, as he said, "with the immediate age as with vast oceanic tides." Some poets think to woo posterity by holding aloof from their own time. Whitman did not yield to this illusion. He means so much to us now because he was so intensely alive in his own day. Both as poet and as citizen he fought for the values which we now defend. Walt Whitman in the Civil War years furthered the victory of Union and Emancipation.

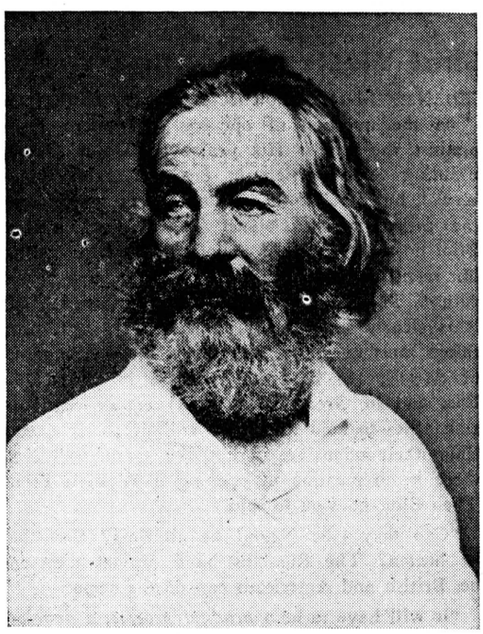
Even before Fort Sumter he had written that the poet is the most deadly force of war: "Who recruits him recruits horse and foot . . . he can make every word he speaks draw blood." He had occasion soon enough to use words as weapons. In the early months of war, he later recalled, the North had suffered from overconfidence and complacency. But, following the humiliating disaster at Bull Run, popular feeling recoiled to the opposite extreme of gloom and apprehension. It was in this emergency that Bryant wrote "Our Country's Call" and Walt Whitman added his "Beat! Beat! Drums!" which was used as a recruiting song. He bursts into the solemn church to scatter the congregation and into the school where the scholar is studying:

Are beds prepared for sleepers at night in the houses? No sleepers must sleep in those beds,
No bargainers' bargains by day—no brokers or speculators—would they continue?

For this, wrote Whitman in "1861," this is the armed year, the year of struggle:

No dainty rhymes or sentimental love verses for you terrible year,
Not you as some pale poetling seated at a desk lisping cadenzas piano
But as a strong man erect, clothed in blue clothes, advancing, carrying a rifle on your shoulder. . . .

This is the year of the shock electric, with the blood of the city up, and the poet has charged himself to compose a march for these States. His collection of war poems, *Drum-Taps*, was first published as a separate volume in 1865. It was—and remains—"a battle-call, rousing to arms if need be, years, centuries hence."



Years, centuries hence. For Whitman believed, as in "Years of the Modern," that the drama of Civil War would ultimately unfold into a world struggle for freedom. A nation half-slave and half-free could not long endure. Neither could a world divided into tyrants and justice-loving men:

I see not America only, not only Liberty's nation but other nations preparing,
I see tremendous entrances and exits, new combinations, the solidarity of races.

Freedom, Law, and Peace he saw as a stupendous trio issuing forth against the idea of caste. In the marching and countermarching of swift millions:

I see the landmarks of European kings removed,
I see this day the People beginning their landmarks (all others give way) . . .

The war years deeply influenced his poetic vision. Long after, in 1888, he recalled that, while he had made a start before, the final reasons-for-being of his song date "only from the occurrence of the Secession War, and what it show'd me as by flashes of lightning, with the emotional depths it sounded and arous'd (of course, I don't mean in my own heart only, I saw it just as plainly in others, in millions). . . ." The reference to what he saw in others, in millions, is significant. For up to the war his utterance was largely individualistic. He was, mainly, celebrating himself, "a single separate person." The war brought not only new emotional depths, but simultaneously, as part of the same process, it brought a sense of valid identification with the masses. He now spoke for a whole people. He was able, with a vast sense of maturity, to pronounce the word Democratic, the word En-Masse. And his poetry grew in discipline, range, decision.

Some writers have tried to show that Whitman shirked the responsibilities of war. They say he loafed and invited his soul. But this is—and one must put it bluntly—a lie. For we have not only the testimony of Whitman's poetry, which is in itself sufficient, but the testimony of his letters, his war diary, his newspaper dispatches, and manuscript materials that anyone may read at the Library of Congress and other libraries. The story that Whitman was, as Higginson wrote, a "slacker" is one of the damnable myths of our history, together with those that surround the names of Freneau and Paine and John Brown.

We do not, even now, have all the facts, but their main outline is clear. Whitman was forty-two when the war broke out. Almost at the outset, as we have seen, he published work to further the war effort.

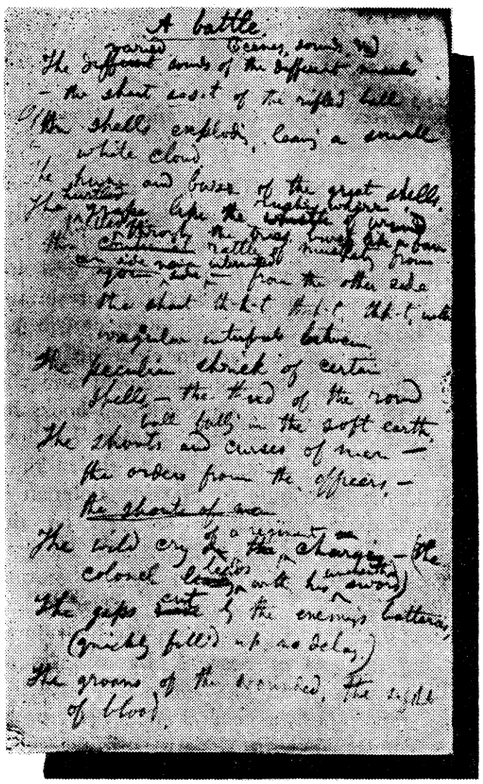
Moreover, there is now documentary evidence that Whitman did volunteer work at the Broadway Hospital in New York where he tended wounded soldiers. At the end of 1862 he had his first direct contact with the front. His brother George had enlisted with the 51st Volunteers of New York. When the news reached home that George had been wounded at Fredericksburg during the defeat of Burnside by Lee, Walt traveled to Virginia to find his brother. His vivid impressions of camp life may be found in the New York papers of the period.

Whitman was to remain near the front for the duration. As a volunteer nurse in Washington's military hospitals, he was a tireless, conscientious, and enormously helpful war worker. His experiences were fascinating. One may read them in the hurried, succinct jottings of the 1863 notebook—the bloodstains on some of his notebooks speak volumes. Or one may read them in the numerous letters that he wrote to his mother, his friends, or the many relatives of wounded boys or of the boys who died at the hospital. Regrettably, he never wrote a full book on these experiences, as he had intended. But the record is sufficiently rich.

He saw men tried by the most fearful and probing tests, "the living soul's, the body's tragedies, bursting the petty bonds of art." In those days of poor anesthesia and asepsis, suffering could be intolerably cruel, and Whitman does not prettify suffering. But he prefers to dwell on the bravery of "our American man—how he holds himself cool and unquestioned master above all pains and bloody mutilations." Whitman was proud when the doctors told him that his comfort and sympathy provided "a medicine which all their drugs and bottles and powders are helpless to yield." It is touching to see him supplying the soldiers with cool peaches pealed and sprinkled with sugar, with milk and blackberries and brandy, with shirts and handkerchiefs and tobacco plug. And to raise money for these luxuries he constantly wrote appeals to friends up North, to Emerson and Alcott among others.

Finally his own health broke down. Despite the doctors' warnings he had continued too long to expose himself to disease, and one may no doubt trace his later invalidism to this period of absolute devotion. In addition, he had to struggle along on the small wage he earned by copying documents for the Paymaster's Office. But he was not thinking of himself.

Through these firsthand experiences with the war his political views matured. As a newspaper editor, and for a time as a worker in practical party politics, he had of course been in touch with the main issues. A supporter of Jacksonism and later of the free soil principle, had he not lost the editorship of the Brooklyn *Daily Eagle* for his liberalism? In *The Eighteenth Presidency* he had written our most blistering political document, a savage and well deserved attack on Fillmore and Buchanan as agents of the slavocracy. In his uncollected "Anti-Slavery Notes" he


A battle

Whitman's first draft of "The Artilleryman's Vision"

wrote that "Every one that speaks his word for slavery, is himself a slave." But to a degree, at least, he had shared the illusion of Lincoln that the issue of Abolition could be separated from the issue of preserving the Union. It was the war that proved to him, as it did to Lincoln, that the victory of democracy was impossible without Negro emancipation.

His interest in the Negro troops was profound thereafter. His diary and his letters contain glowing references to them. On Oct. 1, 1863, he notes that 2,000 Negroes have been enlisted in Maryland under the direction of one officer alone, Captain Birney, and the work is still going on. Later the same month he observes that a deputation of slaveholders from Maryland visited Lincoln to protest against his taking Negroes for soldiers. The President replied firmly that he would take all he could possibly get, not only from Maryland but from all the border states and all the slave states: "The necessities of the country demand it & it should be done." In his collection of newspaper clippings one may study his interest in the Colored Volunteers. He is impressed with the story of Mrs. Hannah Moses that "several of the best pilots in the US ships in the attack on Charleston were blacks." He is aware of the existence of a Negro engineering regiment. He kept a clipping on "The Arming of Negroes in the West" which contained the speech of Adjutant Thomas to Grant's army urging the soldiers, some of whom were hostile, to respect the Negro troops. Whitman appreciated the fact, as some of our contemporaries do not, that discriminatory treatment of Negroes in the armed forces was not only morally indecent but downright treasonable: "The necessities of the country demand it & it should be done."

And, equally, he learned to smoke out and despise the Copperheads. To his close friend Lewis Kirk Brown he wrote, "I don't believe it is destined that this glorious Union is to be broken up by all the Secesh South, or Copheads north either." He told his mother that "There are exciting times in Congress—the Copperheads are getting furious and want to recognize the Southern Confederacy. This is a pretty time to talk of recognizing such villains after what they have done, and after what has transpired the last three years. . . . The war must be carried on, and I could willingly go myself in the ranks if I thought it would profit more than at present, and I don't know sometimes but I shall as it is." And he was jubilant at the victory over the traitors in the November 1863 elections. "I tell you," he wrote from Brooklyn to his hospital comrades in Washington, "I tell you the Copperheads got flaxed out handsomely—indeed these late elections are about as great a victory for us as if we had flaxed General Lee himself, and all his men." He had more use, said Whitman, for Lee and his men than he had for the northern Copperheads.

Thus, in the course of the war one notes the ever-increasing firmness and militancy of Whitman as of Lincoln. For the poet, Lincoln was a great symbol, the supreme expression of the century's democratic struggle. "He has a face like a Hoosier Michael Angelo, so awful ugly it becomes beautiful," wrote Whitman in a letter dated March 19, 1863. And he added that Lincoln has shown an almost supernatural tact in keeping the ship afloat, "with head steady, not only not going down, and now certain not to, but with proud and resolute spirit, and flag flying in sight of the world, menacing and high as ever." Whitman was to continue the image in his grief-stricken "O Captain! My Captain!" following the infamous assassination of Lincoln. The fearful trip was done. The ship had weathered every rack. The exulting people proclaimed the dawn of a new America.

In his superb elegy on Lincoln, "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," Whitman asked:

O what shall I hang on the chamber walls?
And what shall the pictures be that I hang on the walls,
To adorn the burial-house of him I love?

And he replied that he would remember Lincoln with pictures of plain farms and homes and ringing bells "And all the scenes of life and the workshops, and the workmen homeward returning." That is how we remember Whitman on the fiftieth anniversary of his death. He too was a powerful western fallen star. He too, beyond death, arouses echoes in our hearts and guides us to the just and necessary triumph.

SAMUEL SILLEN.

Two Fighters

THADDEUS STEVENS, *by Elizabeth Lawson. International Publishers. 10c.*
HARRIET TUBMAN, *by Carl Conrad. International Publishers. 15c.*

THE importance of these two works cannot be overemphasized. I say works advisedly, for it is necessary to overcome the feeling, fostered by the commercial press, which will not review them, that pamphlets are not serious reading matter. Yet, in her thirty-one pages, Miss Lawson does more to clear up confusions about the Abolition movement and the Reconstruction period than a dozen books by "acceptable" historians like James Truslow Adams, David Muzzey, and their kind. Mr. Conrad's tribute to Harriet Tubman is matched only by similar research on the part of Henrietta Buckmaster and Herbert Aptheker into the Negro's own liberation struggle.

Miss Lawson has found an excellent form for her analysis of Stevens. By a series of brilliant quotations, she shows his growing understanding of the general and specific problems connected with slavery, suffrage, civil rights, and economic oppression. In 1835 he led the fight for free education in Pennsylvania. Later he denounced the plantation owners and the equally guilty members of the northern commercial, shipping, and banking aristocracy who served as the apologists of slavery. He fought in Congress against all appeasement of the southern leaders who were threatening to dissolve the Union unless their demands were met. He showed that emancipation was a pre-condition for victory, and he lashed out at those conniving profiteers who used the war to establish their economic sovereignty.

Stevens' political stature became even more manifest during the early days of Reconstruction, when Andrew Johnson's confused petty bourgeois struggle against the big capitalists threw the President into the arms of the plantation princes. Stevens refused to permit the slightest compromise with those elements who thought they could retain the old tyranny within the legal form of emancipation. He demanded martial law for the South against the ex-slaveholders, pressed for the passage of the Federal Civil Rights Bill, and fought, though unsuccessfully, for resolutions which were later embodied in the Fifteenth Amendment.

His record as an "internationalist," as Miss Lawson calls him, is equally bright. He supported the fight for women's suffrage, and he exposed the plan of American manufacturers to reduce wages to the level of those of the European entrepreneurs. He also called upon the government to aid Juarez against Maximilian, "the puppet of Napoleon III."

Miss Lawson concludes her estimate of Stevens with a fragment from a speech to his Lancaster constituents in the fall of 1866:

"The Goddess of Liberty is represented in ancient statues as a very nice little goddess, but very small. I want her to grow—to put on the habiliments of mature age—until she can embrace within her folds every nation and every tribe and every human being within God's canopy."

If we remember that the respectable historian James Truslow Adams called this man "perhaps the most despicable, malevolent, and morally deformed character who has ever risen to high power in America," we may better understand the necessity for such penetrating revaluations of history as Elizabeth Lawson's.

IT IS equally important to rescue from the oblivion of "official" history figures like Harriet Tubman, heroine of the Negro people. An escaped slave herself, she swore that she would not rest until her people were free. "I had seen their tears and sighs, and I had heard their groans, and I would give every drop of blood in my veins to free them." The biblical tone of this sentence is unmistakable. Indeed, Harriet Tubman is a kind of Deborah of the Negro people. She too was an organizer of victory. Her work in the Underground Railroad, for which she made nineteen secret trips to slave territory, earned her such deadly hatred from the slaveowners that the Abolitionist Unitarian minister Thomas Wentworth Higginson wrote of her: ". . . she will probably be burned alive whenever she is caught, which she probably will be, first or last, as she is going again." But Harriet was never caught. When the Civil War broke out, she joined the Union army, and led and participated in some of the most important guerrilla engagements. She was present at the storming of the Secessionist Fort Wagner which guarded the city of Charleston. She described the battle to the historian Albert Bushnell Hart in words that are unsurpassed by any passage in the Bible:

"And then we saw the lightning, and that was the guns; and then we heard the thunder, and that was the big guns; and then we heard the rain falling, and that was the drops of blood falling; and when we came to get in the crops, it was dead men that we reaped."

This was the woman whom the greathearted John Brown called "General Tubman," and whom Mr. Conrad has helped us never to forget. CHARLES HUMBOLDT.

Brief Reviews

THOMAS PAINE. *Selections from his writings, with an introduction by James S. Allen. International Publishers. 75c.*

THE heroes of history, decently buried with honors and often forgotten with relief, have a way of coming to life when most needed. The old class to which they belonged surrenders them with its banners, and they speak again with new meanings for a younger generation. Tom Paine was in any case an embarrassing hero. The winter soldier was always shaking his fellow revolutionists to be sure that they would not fall asleep at

their posts. His pamphlets, like shots in the night, hit the enemy but also kept the generals awake.

What distinguished Paine's work from ordinary political polemics was the extent of his vision. His mind would not rest upon present gains, but always moved into the future. He was the great philosopher of the democratic bourgeoisie because he did not represent its position as a class so much as its utmost potentialities. By so doing, he rose above that class and became a spokesman for all humanity.

This becomes very evident when we read Mr. Allen's selections and his introduction. The excerpts from *Common Sense, The American Crisis, Rights of Men,* and *The Age of Reason* are full of lessons for us. Paine's fight against the appeasers and Tory traitors and his resourceful courage in times of defeat are models for present action. He saw that religious toleration depended upon the separation of church and state, and political liberty upon the continual development of new social and economic measures. The significance of his insight into these problems lies in its acuteness and its dynamic quality. He knew that to stand still was to go back, merely to hold a position was to lose ground, and that not to take the offensive was to ask for defeat. If his strategy was bound by the material and mental conditions of his time, it was never limited in its character, which was essentially modern. This strategy of the offensive on all fronts helped to win our revolution then and it can help win our war now.

HILLS BEYOND MANHATTAN, *by Guido d'Agostino. Doubleday Doran. $2.50.*

This novel has a promising central situation and a potentially interesting central character, but neither comes to life. The action deals with the attempt of a group of New Yorkers to establish an exclusive hunt club in a village north of the city; their plan is opposed by the villagers, whose traditional freedom of hunting and fishing is threatened. Gustave Chambord, an emigre French architect commissioned by the hunt club group, becomes disillusioned with its artificiality and selfishness and aligns himself with the people of the village; he outgrows his exile's loneliness and his "objective" cynicism and achieves a richer sympathy with the American common people.

For all this we have only the author's word and the mechanics of the plot. The struggle between the villagers and the snobbish intruders is never put sharply enough to arouse emotion or even interest. The characters are not clearly defined; the individualization of dialogues goes no further than an occasional *"Eh bien"* or *"Dio mio"* to indicate that the speaker is French or Italian. The story itself, though neatly enough constructed, plods along without energy or variety. It lacks warmth and the necessary qualities of genuineness and insight.

Brief Reviews *(Cont'd)*

BIG BEN, *by Earl Schenck Miers. Westminister Press. $2.50*

Mr. Miers has based his novel on the early career of Paul Robeson, particularly his years at Rutgers, and he has warmly acknowledged his debt and his admiration. The story has an appealing honesty, dignity, and tenderness, but it does not fully answer the challenge of its subject matter. It follows pretty closely the pattern of such "boys' books" as the Ralph Henry Barbour series and it shares many of their limitations. There is a disproportionate emphasis on the virtues of patience, forbearance, and humility, and a corresponding underemphasis of the affirmative, militant courage which has always distinguished Robeson. And the struggle of the Negro people serves largely as a static background to Ben's own individual "success story." These particular limitations, and the consequent oversimplification, do not detract from the book's warm-heartedness and charm. They do, however, strengthen one's feeling that Paul Robeson's achievement as a representative of his people deserves a richer and more penetrating treatment.

THE HEART OF EUROPE, *by Denis de Rougemont and Charlotte Muret. Duell, Sloan & Pearce. $2.50.*

This crisply written, stimulating volume is a cross between a love poem and a travelogue; or better yet, it is one long toast to Switzerland. And while the authors do recognize a flaw here and there, most of the time they are just a bit tipsy in praise for their native land, its people, its mountains, and its federal democracy. There is much good history here, some excellent folklore, and the reader does come away with respect for a unique nation where people who speak four different languages, are half Catholic and half Protestant, manage to keep peace among themselves and peace with their neighbors. The volume has a real point when it argues that Europe has much to learn from Switzerland as a federated state. But the authors also stretch that point too far. Is it not true that Swiss prosperity happens to depend on the fact that Switzerland is a crossroad, a junction in the main highways of European commerce, rather than the fact that it is a successful federation? Isn't it also true that Swiss peacefulness flows less from the fact that it is a federated state and more from the fact that it is a *buffer* state, that is, a state which all of its powerful neighbors find it unnecessary to disturb? So that while Switzerland's experience may be valuable, Europe will have to find a much larger, far more secure basis for its federation, a problem which is bigger than this book, and therefore bigger than the review.

"Closing down the magazine is my real desire"—James H. R. Cromwell

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And the Freedom of the Press

NEW MASSES is being sued for $1,000,000 by Mr. Cromwell. If NEW MASSES should lose this suit no periodical or newspaper would be able to speak out. Legal precedent would be established to curtail the freedom of the press. And not only is freedom of the press involved, but something much more. If the "Cliveden Set" cannot be exposed by the friends of unity, the whole national effort is impaired.

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THEATER FIRST AID

The men and women of the stage continue their great tradition of providing entertainment and relief for our fighting forces. . . . Johnny 2x4=0

THE theater worker all over the world is notorious for his soft heart, and you would be hard put to find an actor, stagehand, or playwright who is not willing at any moment to play a benefit for a deserving charity. Perhaps he got that way because, for generations, it was supposed to be somehow disreputable for a man (and particularly for a woman) to be an actor. Despised for so long as social outcasts, frequently unemployed, theater people have always known what it was like to be in need. So the tradition of helping others in distress comes easy to them.

Nowhere is this tradition more vital than in the services the theatrical profession invariably renders its country in time of war. During the present war the theater workers of Britain, America, and the Soviet Union are right behind the fighting forces of their respective countries—with men actually in arms, men and women entertaining the soldiers, fund-raising, the organization of shows and films and radio plays for purposes of morale, the organization of comforts for men in arms and for their families.

It will be no time at all before every theater worker in America—on stage, screen, radio, and in night clubs from coast to coast—is enlisted in the American Theater Wing War Service. Organized in 1940 by Rachel Crothers, the playwright, and several other prominent women of the theater, the Wing was originally a section of the British War Relief. As such it raised over $80,000 for British civilian relief before America was attacked at Pearl Harbor. People in the theater, galvanized by the horrors of the all-out bombing of British cities, bent every effort to afford relief to the suffering, sent ambulances, canteens, cots and blankets for children, innumerable articles of clothing, and contributed to the maintenance of hospital beds and children's orphanages.

WITH the attack upon Pearl Harbor by Japan, the American Theater Wing of the British War Relief became, almost overnight, the American Theater Wing War Service. An enormous and violently enthusiastic audience of theater people filled the Hudson Theater last month for a mass meeting, at which the reorganization of this notable relief setup was begun. The immediate objective was $100,000, announced by producers Gilbert Miller and John Golden, who addressed the meeting. The device was announced of appointing captains for separate groups—each captain to be responsible for raising $500.

That same evening 200 people volunteered to be captains, which automatically guaranteed the $100,000 set as the first objective of the new Wing. The headquarters of the organization is at 730 Fifth Avenue, New York, and it is the scene of marvelously integrated activity. It has provided 300 volunteer speakers for the Treasury Department's defense bond-selling campaign. (Playwrights write some of the speeches.) Twenty-five speakers and 175 pretty girls were provided to the Red Cross recently, in connection with its current fund drive. These pretty girls from the stage are to be found nightly in every theater in the city, where they offer collection cans.

Actresses who can knit or sew work during off hours in the headquarters of the Wing, or get materials to take home and are making thousands of garments for service men—sweaters and pullovers, helmets and wristlets, clothing for the children of men in the armed forces. Comfort kits are being gathered and filled. Radio plays (to be sold to local chains) are being written by the radio division of the Wing, and actors have volunteered their services to perform and record these plays. Individual companies now playing on Broadway have separate captains, who involve the casts they represent in competition with other Broadway casts, to raise funds for the Wing. A canteen and a service man's leisure-time club (called Stage Door), has already opened in the old Little Club of the 44th Street Theater and is the biggest smash hit on Broadway. A service uniform is all that is needed as a ticket. Everything—food, soft drinks, entertainment, dancing—is on the house.

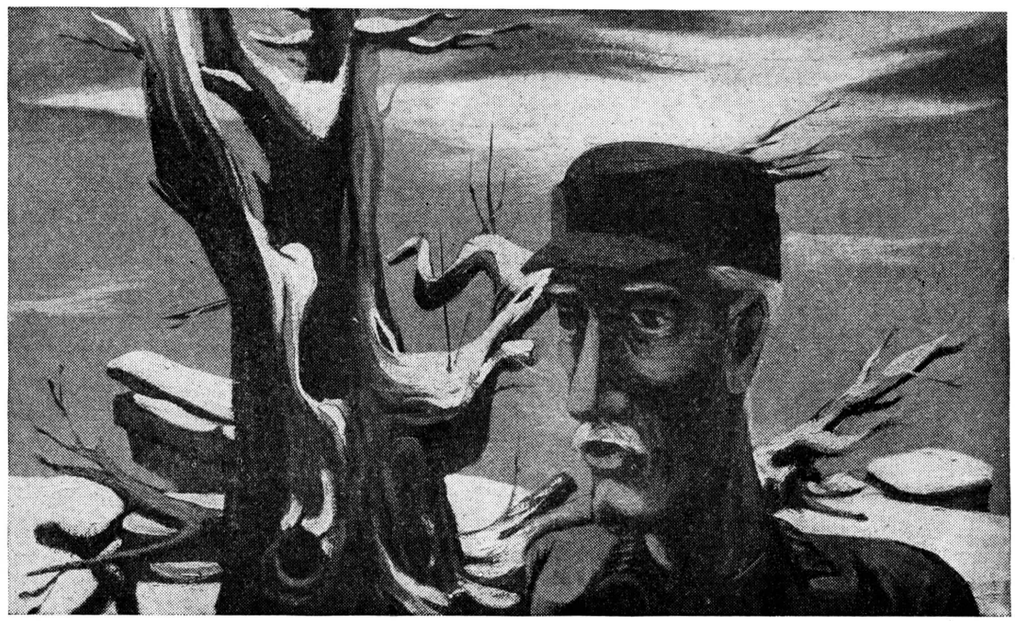
Within three weeks after the mass meeting at the Hudson, the theater workers had mobilized their talents for persuasion and charm so well that they raised over $37,000, as contrasted with the $81,000 collected in the two years when the Wing was a section of the British War Relief.

So when the pretty actress holds out the collection can for you in the theater these nights—your job is to help fill it.

ALVAH BESSIE.

IN 1926 George Abbott and Philip Dunning produced a play called *Broadway*. It was set in a night club (the era was prohibition) and the power that ruled the night club world of that period was the underworld of criminals and gangsters, bootleggers and hijackers. If I remember correctly, *Broadway* wasn't such a much as art, but it was a slick job of stage mechanics. It moved; in fact it ran; there were several clever performances and the milieu was exciting in a ten-twenty-thirty sort of way. There was a pure chorus girl who was mixed up with a gangster. There was a floor show going on offstage. There was a gang-boss who eventually got rubbed out by his rivals, who were muscling in on his territory. It was a genre picture, right out of the period and recognizable to all who had ever knocked at a door and, when the peephole was opened, said, "You remember me; I was here last night with Joe."

In 1942 (last week to be exact) Rowland Brown presented his own play, *Johnny 2 x 4*. It is set in a Greenwich Village speak of the *Broadway* period. There is a relatively pure



"Farmer Sy" by Anton Refregier. From his one-man show at the ACA Gallery in New York.

girl (a singer this time), who is mixed up with a gangster bootlegger. There is a floor show (visible this time). The gangster gets his just deserts from another of the ilk. Only, what this piece has in nostalgic quality (for any who could think those were the good old days) it lacks in the action *Broadway* commanded back in 1926.

In fact, it is nothing more than a third-rate floor show, interrupted at decorous intervals by the semblance of a plot. The floor show, third-rate as it was, was much more interesting than the plot, which went no distance at all in the recreation of character, mood, historical approach, or evaluation. Unlike *Broadway* it glorified its gangster, who died the death of a brave soldier. Unlike *Broadway* it lacked pace, characterization, or any validity as a story of ancient times (for so the period seems these days). Unlike *Broadway* it lacked the performances Mr. Abbott provided.

For with the exception of Bert Frohman (who was a creditable gangster) and Barry Sullivan (who was a likeable one), the huge cast was sadly routine. A young woman named Marie Austin sang a couple of songs in a brassy, competent manner. A young man named Leonard Sues played a hot trumpet. His solo was the high point of the show. Someone will hire him to play a trumpet more often.

THE REVIEWS by the critics in the New York press of *Johhny Doodle* were exceedingly disappointing. The *World-Telegram* was downright nasty. The *Herald Tribune's* man said it was "clumsily and feebly manipulated . . . a dull little charade." The *Daily News* man was patronizing, and Louis Kronenberger, of *PM,* while admitting that the show should not be judged "by Broadway standards," confessed in print that he "stole away before the show was over."

Only Mr. Atkinson of the *Times* was reasonably fair.

Aside from the quaint picture Mr. K. paints of himself stealing away, it might be pertinent to say, (1) Broadway standards this year are nothing to boast about, and, to be exceedingly genteel, (2) what in hell are the critical gentlemen looking for in the theater?

Johnny Doodle is not a Broadway show. Good enough. But it has more vitality than nine out of the ten turkeys that have died their death on the boards this season. It possesses this vitality because the idea that animates it—that the American people have a long tradition of struggle for liberty—is in itself a thousand times more stirring than, let us say, the spectacle of a Victorian gentleman gently driving his wife insane (as in *Angel Street,* a smash hit).

In addition, there is present a cast (largely highly competent) of energetic young people who are thoroughly enjoying themselves, not shambling through a tedious charade (as say, for instance, *Johnny 2 x 4).* In addition, there are the authentic (and well executed) folk songs of an earlier America, infinitely more ingratiating and exciting to hear than the Tin Pan Alley tunes of, shall we say, *Banjo Eyes, Best Foot Forward, High Kickers,* or *Priorities of 1942.*

The critical gentry are infinitely sophisticated when it comes to a fresh effort that is not entirely "professional." Yet they become notoriously not-dry-behind-the-ears when so trivial a piece of claptrap as *A Kiss for Cinderella* comes along. (Even Mr. Atkinson found this dreadful thing to be a Work of Art.) They love a *Blithe Spirit,* a *Lady in the Dark* (cf. any of them). They devote Sunday pieces to the profundities of *Let's Face It,* or *Porgy and Bess,* or Olsen and Johnson, or other such.

If that's what they want, we can always say, "Go to it, gentlemen, there's plenty of it." But the jaded critical appetite that dismisses *Johnny Doodle* because (1) its cast is not "professional," (2) its tunes are old, (3) its dramaturgy is not Ibsen (nor even George S. Kaufman) is a touchstone for something or other.

See *Johnny Doodle.* If you don't enjoy it, I'll willingly eat Brooks Atkinson's biography of Henry David Thoreau, Louis Kronenberger's latest work on the eighteenth century, or John Mason Brown's *Accustomed As I Am.* Or even Dick Watts' permanent blue shirt.

A. B.

A Spirited Ghost

Andrew Jackson returns. . . . Eisenstein's "Alexander Nevsky."

ANDREW JACKSON was not the man to lie quiet in his grave when anyone needed him. To the rhythm of muted drums he came marching out of the land of ghosts, breathing forth Maryland rye and damnation to crooked politicians, and proceeded to turn *The Remarkable Andrew* into a mad film carnival in the name of democracy. What brought the general to life was the political frameup of a friend's great-grandson; what he accomplished, after a lot of rye and hi-jinks, was the discomfiture of a group of small-town grafters. But these are minor matters. The fun of *The Remarkable Andrew* is in the general himself, a vigorous ghost still swearing at his tight ghostly boots.

Perhaps because Andrew Jackson himself is so impressive, the film which surrounds him seems rather slight. Dalton Trumbo's novel, from which the picture was made, stressed the issue of democracy, as much at stake in its small-town conflict as on the larger fronts of the world. But the film has slurred over this issue, and Andrew Long's trial is no longer a civil-liberties case but instead the routine movie thriller: honest young man against a ring of chiselers. The young man's speech defining democracy remains a sincere and powerful piece of work; it is, however, somewhat irrelevant to the rest of the picture. Similarly, the summoning of Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, and several other ghosts to aid General Jackson is a little wasteful,

especially as all the ghosts really accomplish is the discovery of a dictaphone record implicating the grafters. And though the ghosts are amusing, notably on the subject of Washington's cherry tree, they strain credulity rather far; one spook you can swallow, seven give you indigestion. Trumbo's lively writing and Brian Donlevy's lively acting, however, combine to make *The Remarkable Andrew* pretty good fun.

THIS WEEK it will be just 700 years since Alexander Nevsky smashed the Germans on the ice of Lake Peipus; April 5, 1242. Eisenstein's film about him is being revived frequently these days, and this reviewer found it, on her fifth visit as on her first, an overwhelming experience. *Alexander Nevsky,* on its own merits, is a very great film. An epic poem of the screen, it presents its almost legendary story in a style so far removed from contemporary film realism as to be misunderstood by many critics. Its hero stands godlike and glittering on a sunny hill; its warriors strike blows that are superhuman; its Russian moujiks fairly boil up out of the earth they are defending, to the transcendent musical choruses of Prokofieff. Its splendor is Homeric, but it has, too, an emotion not to be found in Homer: the passion of thousands of ordinary people defending their land.

And so *Alexander Nevsky* has, today, an impact far more powerful than even its own greatness. The exact and inescapable parallel of history, the repeated pattern of brutal invader and aroused people, takes you by the throat. Although released here early in 1939, the film might have been made from 1942's headlines; every line of it is the story of this war. The burned and tortured cities, the murdered women of Pskov—not 700 years ago. The dehumanized Teutonic Knights, with their greed and their iron blitzkrieg—are armored horses so different in meaning from armored tanks? The people of Russia, there on the screen, give their blood in battle and their work to make weapons; the Russian commander plans, not for defense alone, but defense by attack. And the Russian army takes the full grinding shock of the invasion, holds firm, gathers itself and drives the invader back, back over the breaking ice of Lake Peipus, back to Novgorod and Pskov, back by Vyazma and Smolensk and Staraya Russa, by Kiev and Kharkov and Orel; back by the borders of Latvia and the Finland border, back out of Russia.

JOY DAVIDMAN.

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PROGRESSIVE'S ALMANAC

March

26-29, incl. — Popular Theatre, "Johnny Doodle," Blackfriars, 320 W. 57th, 8:30 P.M.

27—New Theatre Center, Chez Liberty Cabaret, 135 W. 44th, 9 P.M.-2 A.M.

27—League of American Writers, Friday Night Readings, Dr. Harry Slochower will read from work dealing with Chaos of Standards in War Culture, commentators, Klaus Mann, Ralph Ellison, Franz Weiskopf, Chairman, Prof. Burgum, 237 E. 61st, 8:30 P.M.

27—I.W.O. West Side Forum, Richard Borst of N.M.U. on "A Seaman Views the Colonial Question," 220 West 80th St., 8:30 P.M.

28—Saturday Forum Luncheon Group, "The Doctor in Defense," Dr. Kingsley Roberts, AMA, speaker, Dr. Montague Ullman, Chairman, Rogers Corner Restaurant, 8th Ave. & 50th St., 12:30 P.M.

28—Veterans Abraham Lincoln Brigade Spring Dance, Webster Hall.

28-31—Martin Blaine Company, Musical Revue, "It's About Time," Tamiris, Laura Duncan, Arthur Elmer and others, Barbizon Plaza.

29—Annual I. W. O. Pageant and Dance, Paul Robeson, Guest Artist, Manhattan Center, 7:30 P.M.

29—Citizens Committee to Free Earl Browder, three simultaneous rallies to free Earl Browder, Manhattan Center, 34th St. & 8th Ave., Cosmopolitan Opera House, 55th St. west of 6th Ave., Royal Windsor, 66th St. and Broadway.

29—Russian War Relief, an evening with Paul Robeson, Brooklyn Academy of Music.

29—School for Democracy, Walt Whitman Night, Dean Dixon, Arthur Atkins, chorus, speakers, 13 Astor Pl.

29—Workers School Forum, A. B. Magil, lecturer, 35 East 12th St., 8 P.M.

30—Workers School, Spring registration, 35 East 12th St.

31—I. L. D. Dinner Forum, Civil Rights in support of the war, Hotel Roosevelt.

April

5—NEW MASSES Art Auction, afternoon and evening—ACA Gallery.

8—Council on African Affairs, Paul Robeson, Pearl S. Buck, Dr. Max Yergan, others, Manhattan Center, 8:30 P.M.

12—NEW MASSES, Rally for Defense of New Masses and Freedom of the Press, distinguished speakers, distinctive entertainment, Manhattan Center, 2:30 P.M.

12—Lower West Bronx Russian War Relief, Concert and Dance Recital, William Howard Taft High School, Bronx, 8:15 P.M.

18—School for Democracy, Concert, "In Time of Battle—Music for a Free World," Town Hall.

25—Peter V. Cacchione Association of Bklyn., 1st annual ball, program. Hotel St. George, Brooklyn.

May

2—Allaben Acres, Reunion & Dance, place to be announced.

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- ★ BEHIND CRIPPS' INDIA MISSION
- ★ THE NEW BRITISH CABINET
- ★ BEHIND BRITAIN'S RAIDS ON FRANCE
- ★ BRITAIN'S PRODUCTION PROBLEM
- ★ DUFF COOPER'S RECALL FROM SINGAPORE
- ★ BRITAIN'S PACIFIC FRONT
- ★ EDEN'S JOURNEY TO MOSCOW
- ★ LONDON'S INDIA PROGRAM

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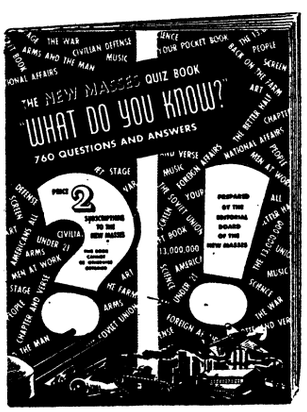

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