

**Defeatist Trends on the 'Left'**  
**By Earl Browder**



APRIL 3  
1945

# NEW MASSES

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*NO: PAUL M. LIMBERT*

*YES: CARL ROSS*

**PEACETIME  
MILITARY  
TRAINING?**

**ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:**

The Army Tackles Jim Crow, by Councilman Ben Davis, Jr.; Index to France, by Yves Moreau; Get Along, Mister Hitler! by Woody Guthrie; The Auto Workers Stand Firm, by Nat Ganley; Getting Together on Trade, by Virginia Gardner; "Black Boy" by Richard Wright, reviewed by Isidor Schneider.

# BETWEEN OURSELVES

WE ARE printing the following letter because it raises a problem of serious concern both for the magazine and for our readers.

"Gentlemen: For six months we have been receiving NEW MASSES and our friendship with the publication goes back many years. But—we are not renewing our subscription at this time because neatly stacked, mainly unread, we have NEW MASSES in our home. Both of us are active with progressive groups, we attend classes, we read a daily paper and we simply don't get to NEW MASSES. We're not being fair to ourselves to have NEW MASSES every week and to find ourselves putting it aside for reading at another time. Somehow that other time just doesn't come.

"This explanation has flaws which I recognize, but for the present we will not renew our subscription."

SUSAN B.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mrs. B. unquestionably faces the fact, along with untold others, that the day is simply too short to do all the things one would like to do. We are not presumptuous enough to suggest how people should utilize their time, yet we have found that this "no-time" argument has been a real roadblock in the expansion of our circulation. From the political hogwallows of the land arises a cacaphony that by volume all but drowns out the voices of reason. To win more adherents to the program of sanity becomes the primary problem for all of us in the fight for the Yalta outlook, and one of the ways of doing it is to make more people familiar with our point of view. In the area covered by the national press, NEW MASSES has secured for itself a tiny beachhead. Our collective job is to give that beachhead greater depth and length. Sub cancellations by our friends do just the reverse.

We do not claim to have the solution to this time problem, but we do know that to have no time to read Louis Aragon on Gabriel Peri or Romain Rolland, or Joel Bradford's articles on Arthur Koestler, or Isidor Schneider's excellent literary pieces, or Editor Joseph North's cables from London, or Earl Browder's discussion in this issue of Alvarez Del Vayo's ideas, is to have no time to read at all. This is a period, it need hardly be mentioned, for discussion and explanation. The other day a Senator complained to a friend of his that less than ten percent of the population knew the actual Bretton Woods program, a cornerstone of our postwar peace edifice. Never before has it been so necessary, in Lenin's words, to explain and explain and explain. Well, we can't do that unless our progressive press is at its greatest strength.

We are happy, of course, to boast that the vast majority of our readers stay with the magazine from cover to cover. Others tell us they find the magazine invaluable even though they are able to get in only a part of reading of each issue. Our concern is not with them, but with those few of our readers who never seem to find the time to get the magazine out of the wrapper.

Since it is a truism to say that to weaken us is to strengthen the enemy, we have the following suggestion for those few. Instead of putting the magazine aside for that never-never day when you will be able to stretch out and read it from cover to cover, read the most arresting or attractive one or two articles, then pass the magazine on to a friend. At the end of a year you will find that both you and your friend will have benefited from this procedure. The alternative is the curtailment of indispensable reading, an ignorant friend and a weakened NEW MASSES.

We are sure that many of you have been

cursed with this problem. And if you feel like speaking up we will be glad to print what you have to say.

BILL GROPPER, our indefatigable cartoonist-editor, who indicated the extent of his chores in his last week's cartoon, has recently been honored by the Patrons Purchase Award for original drawings by the Los Angeles County Museum. Hundreds of artists from all over the country competed. J. F.

We want to take this opportunity of thanking all those who are participating in the program of our memorial tribute to Romain Rolland this Friday evening at Carnegie Hall and all the members of the sponsoring committee, of which Thomas Mann is chairman. Since we published the list of sponsors in our March 13 issue, the following additional names have come in: Rev. L. M. Birkhead, Alfred Kreyborg, John Howard Lawson, Max Lerner, Robert Morss Lovett and Yehudi Menuhin.

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## PEACETIME MILITARY TRAINING?

A Debate by **PAUL M. LIMBERT** and **CARL ROSS**

The following debate on the question of compulsory postwar military training presents two opposing views: the first by Dr. Paul Limbert, of the national council of the Young Men's Christian Association, the second by Carl Ross, national executive secretary of the American Youth for Democracy. Mr. Limbert and Mr. Ross wrote independently of each other. NEW MASSES' views appear on page 19. Readers are cordially invited to participate in this debate.

**M**ANY loyal and socially-minded American citizens are convinced that to pass legislation now calling for compulsory military training in peacetime is neither necessary nor wise and that such a step would be a major setback in the struggle for a just and durable peace. According to the latest opinion polls, at least two-thirds of the American people seem to be in favor of universal military service in general, but as the implications of this drastic change in American tradition become more clear, we believe that the opposition will grow speedily in volume and vigor. It is our contention that: (1) the military value of compulsory training in peacetime is doubtful; (2) its social implications are fraught with danger, and (3) the international consequences would be disastrous for all "peace-loving nations."

Much has been made of the need of universal military service for the sake of national security. Most supporters of the proposal are content to stand or fall on one main issue: whether such training is necessary for the future protection of our country. Public statements by leading officers of our armed forces give the impression that the proposed training scheme is modest and reasonable in its demands. Upon closer examination, however, a number of question marks appear:

How much real contribution to national defense can come from one year of training for youths just out of high school? Modern warfare, it is agreed, calls for skilled technicians—mechanics, radio operators, engineers, experts in aviation. How much of this technical

knowledge and skill can be acquired in one year by immature eighteen-year-olds? And how much of what they learn now will be of use five years later in view of rapid technological changes? When pressed on this point, proponents usually fall back on the virtue of training in the fundamentals of being a soldier: submitting to discipline, getting accustomed to physical discomforts and similar rather vague considerations. Apart from the doubts about the permanent value of these "fundamentals," to be discussed later, it is obvious that this basic training makes a very limited contribution to actual military preparedness.

Again, we are being assured that trainees would not be called upon for peacetime service outside the country. Strictly speaking, say the advocates, the term "conscription" is inaccurate; these young men cannot be called to active military service without their consent, except in the event of war. What bearing, then, has this training program upon the much-publicized need for much larger military and naval forces to protect our interests in various parts of the world? If there are to be armies of occupation and indefinite patrolling of the whole Pacific as an American sphere of influence, where is the manpower to come from? Either the authorities are not agreed and really expect to use some of these eighteen-year-olds in actual combat duty, as General Marshall recommended two years ago, or they are keeping quiet for the moment about the need for a large force of regulars when the war is over. Praiseworthy as is General Marshall's desire for a "citizens Army," all indications point to a rather large "standing" Army for some years to come, and all this *in addition* to any reserve supply of younger trainees. Some

military leaders fear that the necessity of training a large number of youths each year would occupy the time of thousands of experienced officers who otherwise would be giving their attention to the real business of national defense.

This question of size deserves further exploration. How large is a "small" army? It is a conservative guess that our military and naval leaders after the war will call for regular armed forces totaling at least 1,000,000 men. The size of this professional Army and Navy will be *increased*—contrary to popular thought—by universal military service, because of the large corps of officers and noncoms required to handle the training program and the fact stated above that these trainees will not be expected to take the place of regulars in national defense. One authority on military affairs estimates that under such a system our total Army and Navy forces on duty every summer, including refresher training, may come to 2,400,000 men. Surely there would be a heavy price to pay, not only in money but in a disruption of educational programs and a departure from American traditions, for a venture with very doubtful military returns. "A year in the Army at seventeen," writes one of our popular columnists, "can be little more than a physical culture course and is not material to the raising or maintaining of a defensive Army."

**T**HE argument for a year of compulsory military training on the basis of its alleged benefits to the health and discipline of our youth is pretty well exploded. Even the military authorities are said to be opposed to any broad program of "national service" *a la* CCC and admit that non-military considerations are incidental. Yet in the popular mind the view persists that it would be "good for our young people" to have this year of training.

Granted that a period of vigorous outdoor exercise on a good diet would be beneficial to those who are already physically fit, for the large proportion of our manhood who have serious physical or emotional defects one year of mili-

### Next Week

A cable from Joseph North, "Britain Wants a Prosperous America," will discuss British views of Bretton Woods.

tary regimen at eighteen would be "too little and too late." The greatest percentage of men rejected for physical reasons in this war came from sections where the per capita income was lowest. Good health for the nation depends upon a well-rounded program of health services throughout the land beginning with children—a program that is less likely to be undertaken if we spend from two to four billions each year on universal military training.

As to discipline, no one has disposed of this argument so neatly as George Soule writing in *The New Republic*: "Military discipline is good only for an army that has to fight, and for nothing else in the world. . . . It contributes nothing whatever to the self-discipline which is of value in civil life. . . . It is almost invariably doffed as easily as the uniform and with far greater alacrity." Furthermore, think of the griping within the armed services and in our homes that would go along with compulsory military training in peacetime. There is nothing romantic or challenging about the training program when no enemy is in sight. Have we forgotten the low morale within our Army camps even in the year before Pearl Harbor? Five years after the cessation of hostilities, when the world has settled down again to fairly peaceful ways, one can foresee a great wave of reaction against a practice so foreign to American tradition, resulting probably in a repeal of legislation passed under war hysteria.

But a more serious social implication is involved in compulsory military training in peacetime: namely, the possibility of a dangerous warping of the social outlook of the American people. One need not be anti-New Deal or a nineteenth-century individualist to be concerned about too great an expansion of federal authority over the lives of all citizens. In the United States we have resisted steadily federal control of our school system. Setting standards and granting subsidies, yes; but prescribing the curriculum for all youth and telling them what to think, never! Yet admittedly one of the chief purposes of military training is indoctrination, not only as to details of behavior within the Army but in fundamentals of social philosophy. In America we would not go to the extremes of a Nazi regimentation, of course; but peacetime conscription would play into the hands of those who want a more centralized social system and a firmer control over "dangerous thoughts."

Before we accept easily the thesis that compulsory military training for all is

the democratic way, as compared with voluntary enlistment, we do well to read a recent study of conscription by B. H. Liddell Hart, well known British writer on military affairs, who believes that the development of conscription damaged the growth of freedom in the continental countries and weakened their efficiency by undermining the sense of personal responsibility.\*

**A** LOOK at the international implications alone of peacetime compulsory military training in the United States ought to convince the American people that this proposal is both reactionary and untimely. Our chief hope of averting the third world war is to demonstrate that there are other ways of settling disputes among nations than by force of arms. This will require the slow and patient development of a body of international law and techniques of consultation among nations great and small. It will call for farsighted economic planning. It will depend most of all upon a *spirit of mutual trust among the great powers now allied in military struggle.*

Adoption of compulsory military training at this particular stage in world affairs, when peacetime military needs are remote in time and uncertain in quantity, would be significant only as a *symbol.* And for what? By smaller nations and colonial peoples this move could easily be interpreted as a sign that the United States is joining the game of power politics and putting little faith in the development of a genuine world organization. Our major allies might well become uneasy. The Soviet Union ought to take special note, in view of the whispering campaign in many quarters that the next great conflict will be between the United States and Russia. Germany and Japan, once thoroughly defeated, simply cannot become major military powers again unless the present Allies fall out among themselves, as they did after World War I, and actually encourage the rearmament of their former enemies. "Compulsory military training in America! Whom are they getting ready to fight?" At home the hands of the nationalists would be greatly strengthened. One can almost hear the I-told-you-so's among those who all along have been skeptical about any form of collective security.

Many of the advocates of compulsory military training will protest that such

\* B. H. Liddell Hart: *Why Don't We Learn From History?* London. Allen & Unwin, 1944.

interpretations at home and abroad are unwarranted and that legislation of this kind is meant to show our good faith in collaborating to keep the peace. But it is typical of human nature to claim only honorable intentions for the policies of one's own nation and to suspect the motives of others'. Whatever we *say* about the reason for peacetime conscription, it will *look* to our neighbors to the south and across the seas as if we are embarking upon a safety-first and big-stick policy in world affairs. At home such action will play into the hands of the isolationists, the Soviet-haters, the neo-imperialists, and all others who are cynical about a genuine society of nations.

If the United States adopts compulsory military training now for the post-war period, how can any other great power hold out against similar action? Instead of using our unparalleled strength toward relieving the burden of armament by some form of international pooling of military resources, we would be in grave danger of entrenching the war system around the world.

For at least five years after the war America will have mighty resources of fighting machines and manpower. No emergency is upon us that calls for any decision now about our military establishment in peacetime. Why run the risk of giving the precarious cause of world organization another serious setback by adopting a form of military establishment whose worth for any large peace-loving nation has never been demonstrated? Surely the burden of proof is on those who are trying to push through Congress—now of all times—a permanent plan of compulsory military training.

PAUL M. LIMBERT.

**P**RESIDENT ROOSEVELT, in his recent Message to Congress, stated: "I am clear in my own mind that, as an essential factor in the maintenance of peace in the future, we must have universal military training."

The President has here expressed the conviction of the advocates of universal military training that this measure is required to implement effectively America's responsibility in organizing the world for peace.

An overwhelming majority of Americans place their faith for the future in the policies enunciated at the Teheran and Crimea Conferences of the "Big Three." They regard Dumbarton Oaks as the foundation upon which the structure of peace will be built. Implicit in the acceptance of the Dumbarton Oaks plan is the principle of using all measures,





Courtesy ACA Gallery.

Portrait of Philip Evergood. Serigraph by Harry Sternberg.

military and non-military, to prevent aggression and to remove the causes of war. No serious and realistic proposals for complete disarmament after the war have been made, nor can they be made, without attacking the very heart of the Dumbarton Oaks plan. On the contrary, the major powers are faced with the necessity of maintaining the armed forces necessary to enforce the peace.

Universal military training is the most effective and, at the same time, the most democratic method whereby the United States can build the postwar military establishment that we shall need to implement our share of these obligations. An America strong in the military as well as in the social and economic sense will best be able to guarantee its security and participate in world organization for peace.

Let it be clear in the first instance that we cannot assure our security by unilateral armament, no matter how large. Our national security rests upon world security and world peace. The advocates of universal military training are proposing the building of an American military establishment within the framework of a system of United Nations cooperation. That cooperation is directed against the reemergence of Germany and Japan as aggressors as well as toward the removal of the political, economic and social causes of war. Military force in the hands of the United Nations is, therefore, the unequivocal assurance that Germany and Japan can never again contemplate successful aggression.

Needless to say the present rulers of Germany are moving heaven and earth to frustrate that aim. They seek to preserve economic and political bases of fascism in Germany, throughout Europe, in Argentina and wherever else the Nazi "underground" can take hold. The extirpation of fascism will be a long and arduous process involving the policing of Germany and Japan, punishment of the war criminals, the rooting out of the fifth column and the eventual, moral reeducation of those corroded by Nazi ideology. Until the last vestige of fascist influence is destroyed there can certainly be no relaxing of the military guarantees of peace. What else should we conclude from the tragic events preceding this war when Germany rearmed with relative ease and hurled the entire world into war?

It has been said that adoption of universal military training would imply a lack of confidence in our allies. Would it not be far more likely that our allies would consider adoption of this measure as a pledge of lasting and effective cooperation? Surely we shall not suggest that the United States signify a retreat into isolationism by leaving the matter of peace enforcement to our allies alone, who most assuredly will take ample measures to retain the necessary military force.

One of the highest expressions of confidence in Dumbarton Oaks is to provide without hesitation the means of enforcing it. But there have been suggestions that action on universal military training be postponed until we discover if

Dumbarton Oaks will work. Actually the proponents of this opinion, such as the Federal Council of Churches, are saying that they are willing to gamble upon Dumbarton Oaks succeeding without one of the essential means for its implementation recommended by our President. They thereby actually urge upon us the course they presumably hope to avoid—reliance upon the frail reed of American armaments as the alternative to collective security. How is it possible to chart policies for the future except with confidence in the single greatest fact of our times—the concord of the United Nations?

The same pessimistic outlook underlies the objection that military training would lead to reckless armament races and eventual war. The threat of war in our time comes from fascism, not from the US or its allies. Neither today nor in the past have arms in themselves either led to war or averted war. If we adopt the view that arms are subordinate to national policy and are instruments of policy we will agree that arms are a force for peace in the hands of an America bent upon maintaining peace. Again we must consider the larger issue of whether the United States is committed to a course of peaceful cooperation or is taking a path of rampant aggressive imperialism threatening to all other nations. The country has already passed judgment on this question; most recently in the presidential election which repudiated those who dream of an "American Century" or of the US undertaking the job Hitler failed at—destroying the Soviet Union. It is for us, the people, to guarantee that our country will remain on that course. It is, moreover, possible to see agreement upon the limitation and eventual reduction of armaments only through American participation in a system of collective security.

Now we come to the nub of the argument. Why is universal military training the most effective and democratic method for building a military establishment geared to the needs of the postwar world?

It should be understood that by every indication universal military training is supported by a very substantial majority of the people. The National Opinion Research Center of Denver finds seventy-six percent favoring and only seventeen percent opposing peacetime compulsory military training. This trend is borne out by every other public opinion poll.

Surveys of opinion officially conducted by the War Department in the armed

forces show that sixty-nine percent of the men in the Army desire a system of postwar military training. The argument that we should wait until the boys return to take action is dissolved in the face of these facts. On the contrary, action now to adopt universal military training would tend to improve morale by demonstrating to our fighting men that we mean business this time with respect to keeping the peace.

General Marshall, in laying down Army postwar policy, has assumed that Congress will enact a system of universal military training as "the essential foundation" of our postwar military establishment. The essence of this plan is that the United States should maintain a relatively small peacetime professional armed force while building a reserve of citizen soldiers through universal military training who could be called upon in time of emergency. Underlying the proposal is the conception that a democracy should build a "citizen army" rather than a large standing army of professional soldiers built around a limited military caste. We have only these two alternatives to choose from. If we adopt the standing army approach we shall most assuredly need an army of maximum rather than minimum strength, whereas under a system of training citizen reserves we are under no obligation to commit ourselves now as to the actual size of the peacetime forces. We will know that the *principle* of universal training assures the possibility of quickly increasing the Army to a maximum of strength.

Brig. Gen. J. M. Palmer, adviser to the special planning division of the War Department, and acknowledged outstanding Army expert on this question, has pointed out that judged by our experience, the demands of modern war call for a minimum of one year's training to equip a young man in the rudiments of the art of war. We were fortunate in this war that our fighting allies, at an untold cost in blood and lives, gave us time to mobilize and train the needed manpower. Our country was perilously close to the necessity of throwing millions of green recruits into suicidal combat against the seasoned armies of the Nazis. Universal military training is the best assurance that this will not again be the case.

In what way can this be considered a violation of democratic principles? What, in fact, is more democratic than the universal obligation of all able-bodied citizens to learn to fight for their country? The ultimate security of a nation rests upon its citizenry being quali-

fied in every respect to fulfill the obligations of citizenship, no less upon military literacy than upon literacy in general.

America has a long tradition of opposition to the concept of enforced conscription, from which many refugees from semi-feudal regimes sought a haven in this country. We have, as a result, developed a national policy shaped in two directions. In time of war our country has always applied the principle of a universal citizen's obligation for service, whether through a colonial and frontier militia system or Civil War conscription; yet it has never applied the principle of peacetime obligatory military training. The requirements of modern war, however, are such that our traditional methods based on wartime improvisation of a military system must now be modernized. Universal military training is a method designed to bring our military policy up to date.

University military service for America has nothing in common with the Prussian or Nazi concept of military training. The Nazi-Prussian method is for training inhuman brutes inculcated with all the vile concepts of race superiority capable of running murder factories on the Maidanek model. It is fantastic even to compare our own armed forces and the outlook of our military command with the mentality of Prussianism. Look at our citizen army today with its increasingly excellent morale program intended to help the soldier understand what he is fighting for. The soldier coming home from this war is more than ever an intelligent citizen with a democratic outlook.

Universal military training would impress upon young people their responsibility toward the nation and a consciousness of the need to defend the nation with arms. But this is a far cry from militarism. It is better that we train our youth in the art of war so that they may live in peace than to raise a generation schooled in the spirit of pacifism that would fail to keep the peace.

**T**HE one basic charge of anti-democratic policy to which our armed forces are open is the continued existence of discrimination against Negroes. Intolerable in our wartime Army, it is no less so in time of peace. That it must give way before the democratic spirit of our times and in the face of military necessity is already being proved in practice. We have registered great wartime advances under the leadership of the President in eliminating some of the grossest aspects of this shameful policy.

We now have the assurance of the

President in a letter addressed to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People that Army policies with respect to peacetime have not been finally crystallized and it would be incorrect to assume that "they will be discriminatory in their application to Negroes." He adds that "steps have been taken by the Army from time to time to correct unfair racial situations. Most assuredly this process will be repeated in the future."

What about the interruption of schooling?

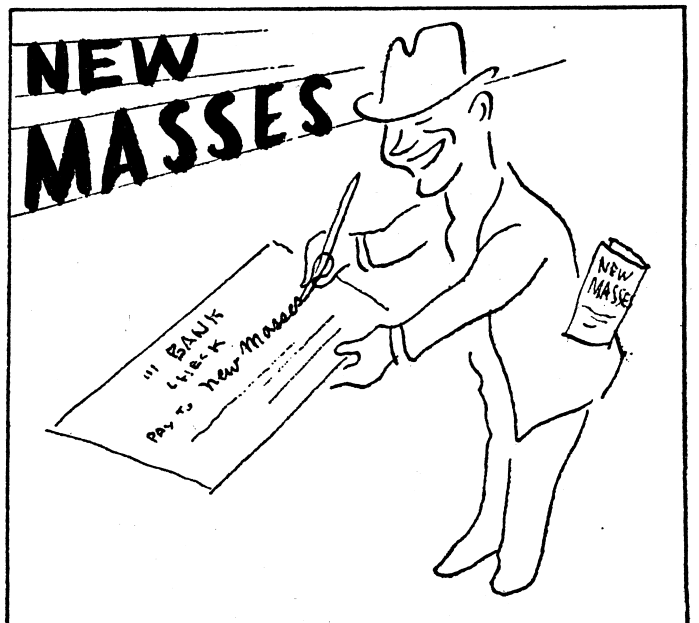
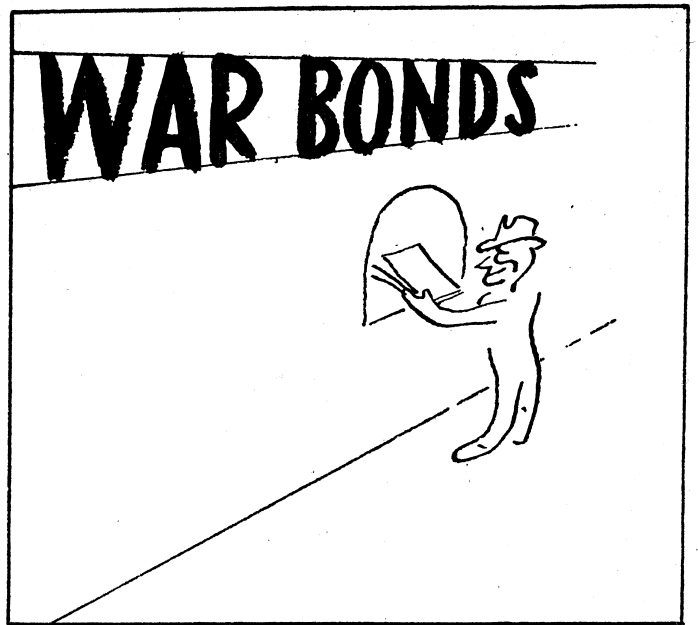
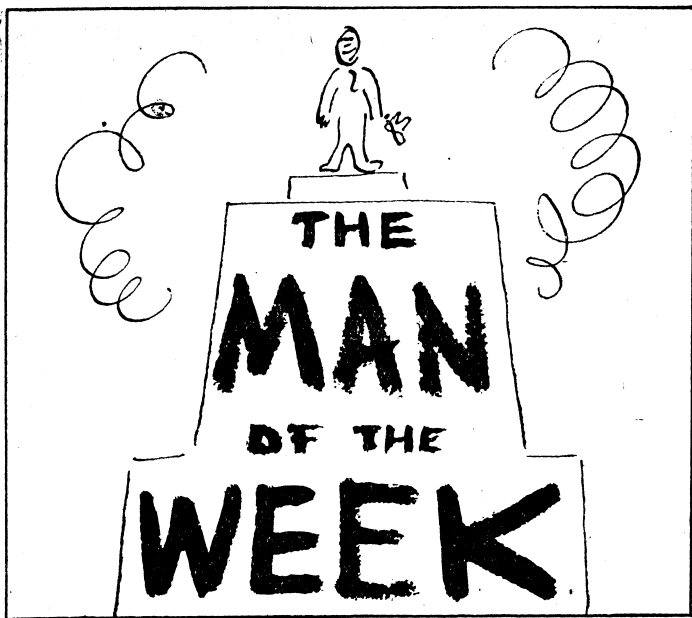
Obviously the education of young people will be affected. A commonsense approach should be able to resolve these problems, however, establishing a year of training at an age least likely to interfere. An intelligent correlation to our school system can certainly be worked out. The advocates of universal military training appreciate its potential values in terms of citizenship training, vocational experience and physical benefits, but no one is suggesting that military training substitute for our schools.

Honest reservations concerning the possible effects of military training on our way of life are quite different from the opposition of a Norman Thomas, who is bent upon wrecking the peace machinery of Dumbarton Oaks at all costs. The "Peace Now" gang is irreconcilably opposed to every step the Big Three have taken toward assuring the peace and for that same reason oppose military training. They may do incalculable harm if they succeed in their current stratagem of splitting the President's supporters on this issue. And unity is essential if we are to prevent the reactionaries from taking a major hand in shaping the program.

The President has wisely stated in his letter to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, that "the universal military training program will not, and should not, be enacted into law until it has been fully examined and studied by Congress. This may require many months, since the plan affects not only our military policy, but also the social, economic and educational aspects of our way of life."

This calls for public discussion among those who recognize the need for guaranteeing our peace and security. A conference bringing together representatives of the War and Navy Departments, educators, labor, industry, religious groups and other public spirited bodies would greatly further this process and would undoubtedly agree upon a program acceptable to the vast majority of Americans.

CARL ROSS.



## DEFEATIST TRENDS ON THE "LEFT"

"THE left, and within the left the intellectuals more than the workers, shows the same unhappy inclination it has had for the last two decades to raise the white flag before the battle has really started." So writes J. Alvarez Del Vayo, in the *Nation* of March 17. "Here, indeed, is a dangerous tendency," he continues, "for it demoralizes and consequently weakens the left at the very moment when the real struggle between progress and reaction, inside the victorious coalition and inside almost every European country, has been made inevitable by the approaching end of the war."

This is a very healthy note of self-criticism to be sounded today among American liberals. Defeatism is the abiding danger in the non-Marxist "left"; of this we witnessed an example in our country when, within sixty days of the glorious victory in the national elections, a panic swept through our liberals under the slogan "Who won the elections?" We see smaller examples every day.

Unfortunately, Mr. Del Vayo has not in his further discussion given a clear lead for the necessary struggle against defeatism. In fact, at the close of three pages (which contain many sound observations as well as some confusion) he himself accepts the defeatist line in the matter of the stability of the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition. He already accepts as determined the postwar dissolution of the coalition. This idea is the very core of "defeatism on the left," but Del Vayo seems to have accepted it as his basic point of orientation. For he sums up: "Only through a planned economy and through solutions very close to socialism have the rebuilders of Europe any reasonable chance of success. The day of effective capitalist control is over; the trend of Europe is toward the left. If the democratic powers had been willing to gear their foreign policy to this trend, the change to a socialized society might have been a peaceful one. They have not done so; instead they have moved from one costly experiment in reaction to another, and in doing so they have only promoted revolution."

Now if this is to be taken as a correct description of the dominant current in world affairs, then indeed the military victory over the Axis will be only the curtain-raiser to World War III.

It is my opinion, however, that Mr. Del Vayo has raised the white flag much too early in the battle for a lasting peace as the fruit of victory. That battle should not be conceded so quickly to the powers of darkness. It can still be won. But to win it, it will be necessary to reject the leadership which already concedes defeat and wishes now to reform our lines as if we had been defeated.

Where Mr. Del Vayo switches off onto the defeatist side-track is in his estimation of the world role of America. "The iron hand of capital, particularly American capital," he says, will yield nothing, and will in no way help reconstruct the world "but for the profit and power of free enterprise."

It is my contention that capital, "particularly American capital," knows that it no longer rules the world with an iron hand, and is prepared to accommodate itself to the

reconstruction of a world in which a large part is definitely socialist, and in which another growing part takes a line of development which does not correspond to American definitions of capitalism as "free enterprise." This is the reality that underlies, and gives substance to, the declarations at Teheran and Yalta projecting the war-coalition into the peace which is to be long-enduring.

"The profit and power of free enterprise" in America has no perspective except upon the foundation of this coalition; but once it is adjusted to this coalition and the policies required to preserve and develop it, then this American free enterprise gains a new perspective of life and growth. Both its profit and its power are today realizable only *in partnership* with the socialist sector of the world, and this partnership is stable only with the other countries of Europe free to determine for themselves, on a democratic basis, their economic and political forms.

Of course, this is a new, untried, and difficult course. It will not work out without many conflicts, delays, hesitations, and crises. The first stages will be the most difficult. Greece has already given us a preview of how dangerous and deep these crises may be. There may be other Greeces. Nothing will be presented on a silver platter all polished and finished. It may take a generation to develop the new processes of peaceful economic and political reconstruction of the world which are implicit in the Teheran and Yalta declarations. But they are inherently possible of achievement. And one of the key factors making this course possible is that a large and growing sector of American capital is ready to take this road.

If the political camp of the "left"—only a part of the democratic world, even if a most important one—should follow the line of thought indicated by Mr. Del Vayo, that might be the factor which would defeat this prospect of a stable peace. By raising sharply as the only perspective for Europe a series of violent revolutions for the general establishment of socialism, carried through against the opposition of American capital as a whole, the "left" would surely throw the more enlightened sectors of American capital back into the arms of their reactionary fellows. The old "Red bogey" would again arise from its grave and stalk the world, and might well produce a Hitler for America as it once did for Germany and Europe. The next generation might be condemned to a new round of revolutions and wars. That certainly is one of the possibilities inherent in the world situation. But it is not the only possibility, and certainly there is no reason why the Del Vayos must deliberately choose it. There is another possible course for history, if we can bring together the forces that will fight for it—and if we can dam up all the little springs of defeatism that rise from the difficulties and lack of perspective.

It is earnestly to be hoped that Mr. Del Vayo (who has played a constructive role in Spain and abroad) will think more profoundly on these problems, and bring his political judgments and tactical conclusions into harmony with that excellent warning against defeatism which I quoted at the opening of this article.

# GETTING TOGETHER ON TRADE

By VIRGINIA GARDNER

Washington.

Two seemingly "technical" and dry topics are on the nation's agenda for the immediate future—renewal of the Reciprocal Trade Agreement Act with an amendment, and a conference of the ten largest cotton producing countries of the world. The reader who is allergic to the very sound of these words, but who will read with eagerness anything he sees about the forthcoming San Francisco conference, is a highly inconsistent fellow—and maddeningly frequent, I might add. But just as the Bretton Woods legislation provides the girders on which any structure to maintain peace must rest, so are tariffs and commodity agreements inseparable from any working International Bank and Monetary Fund.

We have to lead the way if we expect other countries to refrain from the restrictive tariffs of the thirties, and other perfectly "legal" practices which were morally acceptable up to now because we expected gang warfare and international anarchy in matters of economics.

The Doughton bill, which Republicans have announced they would oppose in a "last-ditch fight," would renew the Reciprocal Trade Agreement Act which expires June 12, and at the same time allow the administration to adjust the Smoot-Hawley tariffs of the early thirties as much as seventy-five percent. The present act allows those levels to be pared down fifty percent.

This does not mean, however, that we can expect every Latin American country with a struggling infant industry immediately to follow suit. Eventually, yes. But not until they are given a chance, through the functioning of the Bretton Woods institutions and through the working out of raw materials commodity agreements, to get on a more stable footing.

The line-up on the Doughton bill will be interesting to watch. Authorizing the legislation for the administration is Chairman Robert L. Doughton (D., N.C.) of the Ways and Means Committee, whose position in tax matters for many years hardly has been what one would call enlightened. Of course the traditional Democratic position is that of "free trade," and the Republican, one of supporting high protective tariffs. But despite the pronouncement of various Republicans on the bill, the *Journal of*

*Commerce* has come out editorially in favor of it, and the only criticism from importer and exporter groups is that the bill doesn't go far enough.

The fact is that it is greatly to our advantage now to support the "free trade" thesis. We are the only nation that can afford it now. But this was not always so. There was a time when it was Britain which was the great apostle of free trade, and not the USA. And there are still groups in this country which, wishing to protect weak or high-cost industries, will oppose any tariff reduction or granting of powers to reduce tariffs.

What does all this mean? It means that essentially, American economy as it was constructed before the war was an isolationist economy. It means that if it is to be remodelled along international rather than isolationist lines, with the object not of being Santa Claus but of living in prosperity and peace with our neighbors, then we will have to make some shifts in our economy. There will be some hardships. With proper incentives or subsidies paid to tide the victims of hardship through the transition period, we should make the grade, without bitter dissension or splits in our national unity. But it won't be easy.

Let us take an example. The world, it happens, is faced with a serious surplus of copper. Nitrates and copper provide about forty percent of Chilean employment. Chile cannot think *at this time* of reducing its trade barriers and fighting the copper cartel. To expect Chile to reduce tariffs first, and then wait for a vaguely promised succor, is asking too much. But when it is given an alterna-

tive to national economic suicide, that is another story.

Chile's "out" is a raw materials commodity agreement. Certainly it will be no solution for Chile to continue a high tariff, because a tariff barrier never guarantees a market. For this reason Latin American labor's objections to some of the economic phases of the Chapultepec agreements are understandable. It may be that under a copper agreement among producing and consuming nations we would agree to cut down our high-cost or marginal mines. We can imagine the hue and cry that will be raised. If you are in any doubt about it, talk to Senator Millikan of Colorado.

There is a great deal of misinformation current on commodity agreements, and aside from this, a great deal of opposition. It is one of the toughest problems in the international picture, and even within the government there are violent disagreements on the subject.\*

Thus the typical "perfectionists," as the President so aptly described the chief trouble-makers for the economic proposals to be discussed at San Francisco, take the following line on commodity agreements: (1) Before doing anything else you must outlaw cartels. (2) You must next get everybody to agree *all at once* to cut down trade barriers. (3) Having done these things, you provide the candy after the hard-to-take castor oil, or vitamin pill—you give those naughty countries who don't have our upholstered economic constitutions their reward—commodity agreements.

Taken in this order, we will never attain any of these objectives, admirable as this strictly moral approach may be. With all our promises of civilized treatment, we are not really talking turkey until we get down to the economics of the individual country.

Countries which are primarily manufacturing countries have relatively stable economies. Those which are primarily raw materials producers are extremely vulnerable to fluctuations in market prices. Raw materials commodity agreements remove the fear of absolute chaos which has most of these countries in its grip; and once this hysteria is removed, they can consider alternatives, the development of other sources of income.

Not too much is known specifically



Eugene Karlin.



about the commodity agreements on which State Department experts are working, aided by technicians of the Foreign Economic Administration and other agencies. The forthcoming cotton conference, to convene the last of March here, will be watched closely—with sneers by the cynics and realistically by the hopeful. If it is successful, then an ensuing conference will include not only producing, but consuming nations.

The thesis of the State Department is that each of these agreements should concern one commodity only, that the materials of which there is a surplus threatening to demoralize entire economies should be the first considered (or where other important considerations attach, as in the oil agreement); and that the general aim be to achieve less fluctuation and less speculation each year.

When the ten largest cotton producing nations meet, they will review matters, decide whether to call a world conference, and probably try to negotiate a world cotton agreement. Producers and consumers will bargain. Producers will decide, say, that it would be fair to cut prices to twenty cents a pound; consumers will insist that ten cents is enough. The result would be to negotiate a hypothetical twelve cent price. Then they will negotiate on how much the consumers will take. "It would be good for you to take so much," they will tell one country. But with her eye out for rayon and other substitutes, which might be cheaper, she will be cagey. When they get those quotas established, the producers then will go into a huddle to work out how much of the whole each will get to produce.

"Joe," one would say, "you ought to take a cut. We've decided to produce according to needs—not to glut the market—and you can produce many other things." Joe resists. He has his internal politics to consider. And so it goes. The US magnanimously suggests every country take a proportionate cut. The little countries, aware that the US has 10,000,000 pounds of cotton in warehouses, just as magnanimously hold out for another system of cutting production. As a result, a weighted formula probably will be adopted.

The essence of the matter is that this is multilateral trade. There will be no barter deals, no business of "You trade with me on this, you buy my cotton, or you'll be punished." There will be no monopolistic deals whereby one part of the world is forced to buy our meat, another our competitor's. A year from the agreement, the consumers and producers



would meet for another conference. Adjustments would be made if experience proved them necessary.

For instance, consider Brazil, who knows, after the world agreement is established, that she can sell only so much cotton, her quota. She has, say, ten to twelve thousand farmers in the least fertile areas who should shift to other lines. She encourages other production and probably provides some incentives or subsidies for them for a certain period while they are shifting over.

Difficult as this is, it is far less difficult than the problem she would face if no agreement were drawn and she were left to compete in a world unfettered by any trade restraints, against the other nine big producing nations. For in view of the surplus, it simply would mean that Brazil at the end of the year would have to deal with from one to two hundred thousand farmers who got far too little for their cotton and were unable to keep going. And there would be nothing she could do about it then—except to sit by and watch what always happens when farm prices go down. The producers frantically produce more and more and the surplus increases.

COMMODITY agreements are no panacea, but they represent one of the realistic props which must underlie any system of international economic collaboration. With greater stability, the country which has been too dependent on one product is afforded a breathing space in which it can begin to plan for an expanded economy.

Every country will have to work out its own internal arrangements for keeping to the agreements. If the US agreed the first year on a cut of ten percent in cotton production, and more later, the

government would have to work out some method—an AAA check, for instance—for reimbursing farmers who complied with the plan. In all cases, however, the burdens falling on individuals should be borne by the economy as a whole.

Of course, we may expect tremendous opposition to any such program from such farm bloc Senators and Representatives as John Bankhead II, whose amendment to the Stabilization Act made \$100,000,000 for the cotton mills last year, and nothing for the farmers. But by continuing the heavy subsidy which keeps our domestic cotton price far above the world price, we are keeping afloat non-economic farm practices. We are keeping labor tied to low-paid, low-productivity areas. This is generally the case: by and large, high tariffs or other subsidization mean low productivity and low wages—as in textiles and marginal mines. If we really expect to have full production and a high national income, we must maximize our labor use. National income, of course, is the equivalent of what labor produces.

When in talking about increasing our foreign trade the question is asked, "What will we import?" we mean, actually, "How are we going to remodel our economy?" because we produce everything here—but some of it very expensively. During the war, we remodeled our economy to get full production and called it mobilization. If the peace is to work, we have to have mobilization, also. That means cutting out subsidies for high-cost production, gradually, and subsidizing changeover to something else for the individual, while at the same time we utilize richer resources abroad either of minerals, timber, or certain agricultural products. This does not mean we throw people out of work—we can import raw products and have them processed here.

And in the long run, whether or not any one group is thrown out of employment temporarily or, rather, forced to shift, possibly to get retraining at government expense, is less important than the over-all problem of maintaining full employment. And so long as we are a capitalist nation it is childish to expect a perfect distribution of wealth. We cannot consume all we produce for long, and we must have foreign trade. This assumes that we must in the long run give others a chance at a healthy economy too—which means having a more nearly balanced ratio of imports to exports. This means we have to learn to import ourselves.



# INDEX TO FRANCE

By YVES MOREAU

Paris (by cable).

THE first winter since the liberation of France has come to an end. It has been a hard, cruel winter. The French people are hungry and cold. They have no fuel or gas or electricity; schools and hospitals have gone unheated. The cost of living is unbearably high. And there is uneasiness, provoked by repeated rumors about money manipulations like those which caused so many disorders in Belgium. In fact, it is impossible to exaggerate what France has suffered these past few months.

Incredible as it may seem in a country where there is so much to rebuild, there were 650,000 unemployed last January. The disorganization of transportation, for which no satisfactory solution has been found, contributes to the material hardships. Yet the French people bear these trials with dignity and courage. They put their faith in the promise of the Allies to help them and hope that the Allies, recognizing the tremendous sacrifices France has made to the common goal of the United Nations, will keep their word.

It is almost certain that the slowness which characterizes the conduct of the purge of fascist collaborators is in large part responsible for the slowness of the country's revival. Too many men who were the docile servants of Vichy and the Nazis are still at the wheel. One could wish that the whole Vichy bureaucracy had been swept away when the national insurrection took place last summer. One could wish that French administrative bodies such as the Treasury should no longer be infested with collaborators who, of course, interfere with every honest effort at rehabilitation. Many men in office subordinate the national interest to their private interest and see every effort or innovation as an economic impossibility.

One is particularly surprised to learn that practically nothing has yet been done about the trusts, justly considered the principal agents of the defeat of June 1940. No accounting has yet been demanded from those responsible for war production from 1937 to 1939. It was these men who as soon as the occupation started, put all their strength at the service of the German war machine and increased their production to levels never reached before. In autumn of 1942 the *Frankfurter Zeitung* published a report,

later reprinted by the *Journal de la Bourse*, which announced the establishment by the four most important French banks of a company having as its aim the creation and development of French-German industrial projects. The administrators of these four banks have not yet been investigated for their work with the Germans. The demand of the Communist members of the Consultative Assembly that these administrators be brought to book for espionage and traffic with the enemy has not been heeded. Naturally all this affects the program of the National Resistance Committee—a program approved by all parties and resistance movements and by General De Gaulle. That program foresaw the confiscation of the wealth of traitors and the return to the nation of the monopolies. The National Resistance Committee demanded on March 15, 1944, that those measures be applied immediately upon liberation of the country. But nothing has been done.

IN ALL this the position of the Communist Party was defined by Maurice Thorez, its general secretary, at an important meeting of the Party's Central Committee last January. The world knows by now what a remarkable role the Communists of France played in the underground during the occupation and since the country's liberation. The Communists enjoy the highest prestige today and their influence is enormous. Despite the limitations set on newsprint, Communist newspapers have a sale of 700,000 copies daily. Everything Communist leaders say and write is given the closest attention, and the Party's membership has reached about 400,000.

"Unite, work, fight"—was the slogan chosen by the Central Committee. It

reiterated the basic policy that everything should be for the front until the complete defeat of Hitler Germany and fascism throughout the world. It is in this context that the Communist Party asserted that neither the Liberation Committees nor the National Resistance Council can act as government bodies. They should instead be organizations for the mobilization, training and organization of the masses to help the war effort and to help the government put into practice the program worked out by the resistance movement.

THE Communists are doing everything possible to unify the nation and to create stable conditions of life, without which only the enemy and his agents can profit. In a recent interview which he gave to a Catholic newspaper, Thorez noted that under the actual conditions of present day French democracy there is a place for different parties. But he also expressed the hope that the Communists and Socialists would unite into one party and that on that base a large people's party would one day be built to include the peasantry, the middle classes and professional workers. Thorez warned that the scattering through France of rival parties would only make a farce of democracy. He also pointed out that while the resistance movements suited the needs of the underground struggle, conditions have changed. These movements must not take the place of parties.

Soon after France's liberation a committee comprised of representatives of the Communist and Socialist parties was formed to coordinate their activities. We may reasonably expect that the organic unity of these two working class parties can be realized. Last January Thorez said that the organization of one party—its principles, methods and forms of organization—would be defined in common with the Socialists on the basis of the lessons taught by Marx and Engels and on the basis of the later developments of Marxism by Lenin and Stalin.

There has already been unity of action between the Socialists and Communists. At the call of both parties a huge demonstration took place to commemorate the days of February 1934—days during which the French people kept the fascists from achieving the defeat of democracy. Moreover, the Communists



Herbert Kruckman.



The San Francisco Flyer (Bretton Woods) comes round the bend.

and Socialists jointly agreed to demand that the program of the resistance movement be put into effect. Early in March the Communists and Socialists together issued a manifesto calling in part for the immediate nationalization of the big banks, the rapid nationalization of the principle sources of raw material as well as the key branches of the transportation industry, and for the confiscation of wealth belonging to traitors.

The joint manifesto specifies that nationalization should consist of: (1) depriving private capitalists of their investments in a given enterprise; (2) depriving them also of any part in the management; (3) putting management in the hands of committees composed of workers, technicians and representatives of the public interest, and representatives

of the government ministries or elected town councils; (4) indemnifying equitably the expropriated owners, except in the case of confiscation for treason. The owners are to receive an income for life based on their former average income from their shares in a given enterprise without repayment of capital. In the event of their death their children will receive income for ten years, or if they are minors, until their majority.

THESE measures, as one can see, are no more socialist than, for example, the state control of the tobacco industry by Napoleon and Metternich or the state control of the principal Prussian railways by Bismarck. The Socialists and Communists in addition specify that small and middle enterprises must not be nation-

alized—only the monopolies and trusts responsible for a large part of the defeat of 1940, those who collaborated with the Germans and are responsible for the difficulties encountered in France today. It is believed that in nationalizing less than ten percent of the factories—and in some cases only a dozen enterprises—two-thirds of production will thus be under government control. All this indicates how highly developed capitalist concentration has been in France.

The French have rejoiced deeply over the decisions of the Yalta conference, which came soon after the signing of the French-Soviet Pact. The Yalta meeting assured the appearance of France in the arena of the great powers. She will occupy a part of Germany and will participate on the European Advisory Commission. France will go to the San Francisco meeting as a guest nation and not as a host as was originally thought. The French people are irritated and undeniably uneasy at the uneven relations between France and its great allies—especially the United States. On the part of the French the uneasiness has its source in a narrow chauvinism which, fortunately, has no roots in the nation itself. It is an uneasiness exploited only by the common enemies of France and her allies. Herr Goebbels will rejoice at seeing a Parisian daily resurrecting, on the occasion of the Yalta conference, the ghost of Metternich and the Holy Alliance, especially since everybody in France knows from his schooldays that Metternich was the symbol of the triumph of the worst feudal reaction in Europe while Yalta means the worldwide victory of the forces of liberty over the most bloody dictatorship of all time.

It is clear that only by the greatest development of its war effort and by an ever-growing participation in the final battles now taking place and by the building of a big national army—where the FFI (French Forces of the Interior) will receive the welcome it deserves—will France regain her right to be considered a great power. Our allies must certainly accord us the help we need. But the French are convinced that it is even now possible with their own resources to provide a bigger contribution to the war than they have since they regained their freedom last summer. The heroic deeds of the FFI lifted the shame of the armistice signed by Petain and gave France back to the world. Today, after Yalta, it is possible for France to rewin her rank and to arrive at the forthcoming peace conference as a great nation with glorious achievements behind her.

# GET ALONNG, MISTER HITLER!

By WOODY GUTHRIE

YOU ask me to tell you the story of the things we did to get the men aboard our ship to write ten hundred and twenty-five letters to Congress.

We had been torpedoed off the French coast and had been towed into the British Isles. I saw all kinds of robot bombs and most of the big towns of England, Scotland, Ireland; then we were sent aboard the *M. V. John Ericson* to come back home. This ship had a load of fliers, soldiers, seamen, who had served their missions and were on a furlough home. The crew was writing letters to Congress in competition with the *Brazil*, the prize winner for letters so far.

Sol Levitson, NMU delegate aboard the *Ericson*, ran his legs off to pat the men on the back, shake their hands, preach them history, coax them, beg them, order and command them, to get into the letter contest. The letters were about: (1) unemployment insurance for seamen; (2) GI Bill of Rights for seamen; (3) citizenship for alien seamen.

Jimmy Longhi, an Italian boy from the Bronx, and Cisco Houston—two of my buddies—turned themselves into actors, showmen, trapeze artists, dancers, singers, troupers, slap-stick comedians, philosophers, sages, and politicians on our last three ships and we all worked together in a sort of a stretchable-unit for union reasons. We had been torpedoed on two occasions and so the decks of the *John Ericson* were just another stage, another pulpit, a new lecture platform; and Sol Levitson saw to it that we took part in the letter contest.

We sang in daylight and dark, fog and sun, in winds from all nine directions:

*You gotta join that One Big Union*

*You gotta join it by yourself  
Everybody here will fight beside you*

*But you got to join us by yourself!*

And:

*When that road gets rough and rocky*

*And the hills get steep and high  
We will sing as we go marching  
We will win our Big World Union by and by!*

*If you wanta read that union writing*

*Wrote in blood on union walls  
Take up your paper and your pencil  
And fire away to the Congress Hall!*

Guys ganged around us and yelled, "Yeah! But we done wrote!" "Wrote more'n you birds did!" "Shorty here's only forty-seven inches tall and he's wrote a letter fer every inch!"

"An' me!" A second man would yell, "I wrote six already! One fer ever' tooth I got knocked out in th' shoreside strike of thirty-six!"

"You men sing yer heads off, but I didn' see you write none!"

"I'll pass you monkeys up like a fast train suckin' out a rabbit track!" I got sore my own self. "Better whip 'er up! Shorty! I'm on yore tail!" And so I used up towels, napkins, sacks, all sorts of paper, even some stationery, V-mail, wrappers, and in two or three days I had almost caught up with forty-seven-inch Shorty.

"Man, you won't never come close to me," Shorty smiled all over the ship. He showed all the men a few dozen letters which Senators, Representatives, Congressmen, had sent him. "Answers from my last two trips. Coupla gov'ners 'n stuff still didn't answer. Guess they went fishin'!"

"Fishing for some way to fish another dime out of your pocket!" a Mexican kid laughed. Then he looked serious and said to all the men playing poker, "I would verry much like to write one letter forr each one of my sweeties, ohhh, but no! No, the letters would pile the Congress house full and scare all of them away!"

And Cisco swelled out his chest and said, "They have already ran away. On these three bills they did. Hmmm." He scratched his head and drank coffee. "What in the hell will I write about? Hmmm. Let me see. Yes. A letter for each bombed town I have been to. Or one for every lousy meal I ate, every buggy bunk, every crummy blanket. Give me some ink as black as this coffee."

MEN played poker in little gangs here and there, all over the ship. It was only as one would go broke that he would take a fit of writing. "'Course I never could write no damn letter for all th' dough I tossed off on dice an'

cards. I do damn well ta git one wrote."

We put on acts, sang our songs in earshot of the gambling games:

*This ship she's a union rider this trip!*

*This ship is a union rider this trip!  
And every soul is a union fighter  
This ship is a union rider this trip!*

I played dice, cards, all kinds of losing games. I didn't preach out against gambling because I knew why the men played. I'd lost \$400 on our last ship, but we had a rule that if your boat got hit, all poker debts were cancelled. Men even teased me and said, "So ya go an' ya lose alla yer pay on poker, then ya go an' call th' Huns in ta knock yer tub off ta keep yer wife from cavin' yer head in!" I knew they were just joking. But I did sing:

*This boat don't carry no gamblers,  
this trip*

*This boat don't carry no gamblers,  
this trip*

*This boat don't carry no gamblers  
Whores, pimps, nor side street  
ramblers*

*This ship she's a union vessel this trip!*

Manny Warden had shipped with Cisco several trips before I drifted along. Manny always kept my guitar out of tune but I never heard him miss out on making up songs. He sang Jewish, Spanish, French songs, and made up words in English. The guitar had a label that said, "This machine killed ten fascists," and it never cooled off this whole trip. I heard Manny at all hours of day and night:

*Our boat was full of TNT.  
We dumped our load in Sicily  
Over the waves and gone again  
Over the waves and gone.*

*If you want to live on our union plan*

*You got to write to your Congressman*

*Over the waves and I'm gone again*

*Over the waves and gone!*

And we wrote. I finally caught up with forty-seven-inch Shorty. In fact, I wrote 112 letters and nailed samples up all over the ship: "Dear Sir, I'm facing buzzer bombs, mines, torpedoes

and bad weather for you. Surely you can face a few Congressmen for me!"

I made some letters two pages long, some only one page. I won the prize for most letters and I told every Congressman that I lived in his same block.

The chief steward, chief cook, troop commander, captain, all got together and cut out our night coffee and sandwiches just when we needed it worst. We had fights and arguments and all kinds of meetings about it but the big boys shook their heads: "Sorry, got to be done." But Sol told a messman to feed us night lunch with the rest of the poker players and nobody noticed when we sneaked a coffee and a snack. We sang songs about it and ducked out of sight at proper times.

*Hey little coffee man*

*Bring your coffee 'round*

*If you don't bring me some coffee*

*I'll make you set your coffee pot down.*

*I'm writin' me a letter*

*Signin' with my own hand*

*Yest writin' me a letter*

*Signed in my own hand*

*It takes as much coffee to deliver nitro*

*As it does to fire up a Congressman!*

**I**F YOU could write that was swell. If not it was dandy. If it was neat or like hog tracks you wrote anyhow. You fell into the spirit of writing and you wrote to the Senate just like you was "knocking off a line to your folks." Sol's red thermometer out in the hall climbed every day up to ring a bell at the thousand mark.

"Hey, Salty, hey, c'n ya cuss out one of them there Senate fellers without gettin' th' ball an' chain?"

"Reckin' so. I tried all night to think up some polite words but I couldn't, so I cussed some. We'll see."

Sol was a hard runner and a quick worker. He traveled light and he rambled fast. He smiled. He frowned. He talked. He marched and pranced. He wiped his face on his shirt tail and he had a way of pulling, shoving, coaxing, collaring you, a way that you couldn't get sore about. Some got sore. To write a card was a thing that scared them worse than ten torpedoes and six life rafts; much less this business of writing a whole letter when I didn't write a line to nobody about nothing for nine years. Or worse when a man wanted to write. "I been a living just for a day when I could whale away an'

blow my top at one of them Congress boids! But I can't. I just can't write. I can't even write my own John Henry. So, hey there, will you take down what I tell you there on your piece of paper? Then let me pop my Hancock on th' bottom an' mail 'er off?"

"Try."

"I git back a answer from some big shot, huh?"

"Might."

"An' alla th' alien seamen gits to be citizens?"

"Yeah."

"All on accounta this letter?"

"Ship load of letters."

"If I talk will you write it? Write it right?"

"Right as I can."

"Buy ya a shot when we hit th' dock."

"Hey, Music men. I need mooosick, my brains just 'bout ta fernkshunnn. Yay hooo! Dear Senateur!"

"Hey, Hey."

"Thought I had 'er but she got away! Dear Congress man. I hope you're a man. Ha."

*You gotta join*

*Our big world union*

*You gotta join it by yourself*

*Everybody here*

*Will join it with you*

*But you gotta joinn it by your self!*



Honore Sharrer.

We danced, we whooped. We laughed and we kidded. Men of all colors and all sizes made up their own reasons to write. We took up a nice size pot for Marcantonio's election and some got sore, "Yez tink I aim ta woik my tailbone raw and then toss it off to git dat gink elected? Bah, outta here."

"Marc got you several hundred of them iron men, boy! Get that in your skull straight!"

The seas rolled and the motors pounded, the sun shined and the days went under in the whirl of our big brass screw blade and we docked at Forty-second Street in New York.

After being examined by every examiner of the FBI, Naval Intelligence, Insurance Inspectors, Immigration and Citizenship Examiners, Fire, Hail, Plague Preventors, and I don't know what all, I made a bee-line for a taxi, the subway and home to Coney Island to see my folks.

I was back in the NMU Hall early next morning humming union songs to myself. Cisco, Jimmy, Manny all charged in singing some of their own words to songs.

*Whoopie ti yi yo*

*Get alonnnng Mister Hitler*

*Well it's your misfortune and none of my own*

*Whoopie ti yi yo*

*Get alonnnng Mister Hitler*

*You know that the graveyard*

*Will be yourrrr*

*New Hommmeee!*

They sang as loud as the walls of the halls would allow and then in ran Sol. He had a grin on his face like the new morning sun. "I done already mailed 'em!" Then he outshined the sun. "Guess how many!"

"Four—"

"Five Hundred?"

"Six—seven?" We all let our figures run wild. A wild herd of dive bombers could not have made as much of a noise as all of us did when Sol laughed and yelled, "Ten hundred and twenty-five! Record for all ships!"

And then, even louder than that, we all sang out:

*There's a better world a-coming*

*Wait and see see see*

*There's a better world a-coming*

*Wait and see!*

*When we all get union*

*And we all get free*

*There's a better world a-coming*

*Wait and see!*

# THE ARMY TACKLES JIM CROW

By BENJAMIN J. DAVIS, JR.

Last week the Army newspaper "Stars and Stripes" announced that Negro and white soldiers are fighting side by side in mixed units in the First and Seventh Armies on the Western Front. After repeated requests from Negro soldiers for combat duty, the zone commander, Lieut. Gen. John C. H. Lee, issued an appeal on December 26 for combat volunteers, which brought a tremendous response. Out of many thousands of applicants in service and supply troops, some 2,300 were accepted for refresher infantry training. In one engineer regiment, 170 out of 186 volunteered. Thirty-six were chosen from 100 volunteers from a laundry unit. Four first sergeants accepted demotion to the rank of private in order to qualify.

A footnote on how much still remains to be done before the Negro people can have a full sense of participation in this war was written in the court martial of four Negro WACS serving in the Lovell General Hospital at Ft. Devens, Mass. The WACS, who had been serving as orderlies, were found guilty of refusing to obey a direct order to return to work after a protest that they were being discriminated against. Military orders are not to be taken lightly, but there seems to be considerable evidence that the WACS in question had been subjected to severe provocation, and three Representatives from the state of New York have demanded an investigation of the affair and protested the severe sentence: one year at hard labor, dishonorable discharge, and denial of pay and certain other allowances.

The magnificent response of the Negro troops to the call to combat service confirms and underlines the conclusions of the following article by Councilman Davis of New York, which was written before the announcement of the first mixed units appeared in the press. And it indicates what tremendous reserves of patriotism and achievement in the American Negro people await an extension of this policy—real measures to prevent such incidents as the case of the four Negro WACS, both in the Army and in civilian life.

ONE of the surest signs that Jim Crow is on its way out in America is the terrific battering this un-American principle has received in the armed forces. This has been looked upon

as one of the strongest citadels of racial discrimination, because here progressive changes must necessarily take place from the top down instead of from the bottom up. That is exactly what has happened. US Army leaders, moved primarily by cold military considerations, are taking the initiative in the direction of democratizing the armed forces, resisting and even overcoming reactionary civilian pressures, and instituting progressive adjustments which, in civilian life, come primarily through broad, organized mass activities.

Spurred by the political imperatives and dynamics of the present national liberation war, several established bastions of Jim Crow in the military have fallen. The War Department order eliminating discrimination and segregation in recreational and transportation facilities on Army posts breaks a long tradition and actually makes Army policy more democratic than that of civilian authorities, particularly in the poll tax states. The admission of Negroes into the Marines ends a ban of more than one hundred years. The commissioning of Negro officers in the Navy reversed the policy of restricting Negro men to mess service only. Jim Crow bars have been wiped out against Negro women in the WAVES, as in the WACS, and against Negro nurses in the Army and Navy. Additional opportunities have been opened up to the Negro serviceman and woman, although some on a segregated basis. But it is already clear that segregation—last refuge of the Jim Crow system—is to yield to the spirit of the times.

More has been achieved against racial discrimination during President Roosevelt's administration than under all the other administrations put together since the Civil War. In fact, under the President, the role of the Army, for the first time since the Civil War, has been transformed into one of upholding the constitutional rights of Negro citizens—as in the Philadelphia transit situation last year. This has been achieved, of course, as a part of a war emergency. But we should remember that Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation was also signed as an emergency war decree when our nation was fighting for its life. Another leaf was borrowed from the great Civil War Commander in Chief when Army leaders recently ended Communist affiliation as the test of whether an

individual American citizen can give his best fighting talents to his country.

While there are still some burning injustices practiced against Negro troops by certain officers who do not follow the policies of their Commander in Chief, the crux of the mistreatment is not primarily within the military. Mistreatment of Negro troops stems chiefly from prejudiced and influential civilian officials, particularly in poll tax states, who refuse to respect the uniform of the United States when it clothes a Negro citizen. It is high time that Attorney General Biddle and the Department of Justice made an example of these Hitler-minded officials, and prosecuted them to the limit of the law. There are ample laws and war emergency powers under which the law-enforcement agencies could move with despatch and effectiveness, especially since these are civilian crimes committed by civilian authorities in defiance of the Constitution and of the armed authority of the nation.

IN VIEW of the very real gains being made by the Negro people and the need for a sound approach toward actually realizing the abolition of second class citizenry, some comment should be made on the estimates of Walter White, secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, as he puts them forth in his recent book, *A Rising Wind*.\* Mr. White's book is based on observations made during his recent tour of the European and Pacific theaters of war, and with some interesting and informing sidelights, offers a serious discussion of discrimination in the armed forces. In many respects the incidents Mr. White recounts add to the positive picture of the growing struggle against Jim Crow. He indicates that (1) there are a growing number of rank and file white soldiers who are ready for the end of segregation in companies and regiments; (2) six times as many Negro officers have been commissioned in this war as in World War I, trained on a basis of equality with white officer candidates; (3) Negro troops are giving an excellent account of themselves, their principal complaint being that they want equal combat opportunities; (4) General Eisenhower and his staff have rec-

\* *A Rising Wind*, by Walter White. Doubleday Doran. \$2.

ognized the dignity and the achievement of the Negro troops, and the General has often intervened against anti-Negro injustices; (5) white soldiers have frequently interceded against mistreatment of their Negro comrades by prejudiced American civilian officials; (6) despite provocations, Negro troops have brought credit to their country in their relations with the English and continental civilian populations.

But Mr. White does not always do full justice to Negro soldiers. It was not necessary to raise the question of the social relations of Negro soldiers in England in terms of their sex competition with white soldiers. And he need not have insisted on his "sharp disagreement" with a white American officer who claimed there was not "a single instance of rape" by a Negro soldier in England. He would have done better to leave to the common enemy—the white supremacists—the business of making a bugaboo of the sex question.

There are, to be sure, many incidents that fall on the debit side, showing that while the forces of Jim Crow are, like Hitler, in retreat, they are not yet vanquished. But there are many indications in this book that Mr. White does not see the new things in the fight against discrimination. New facts of life, new victories, new and more favorable relations of forces require an entirely new perspective—a perspective of immediate and democratic solution. Where he recognizes the positive gains, Mr. White regards them as accidental and disconnected events rather than new facets in a world picture intimately related to the whole struggle against fascism and its racist concepts and to humanity's effort to establish a peaceful, free and prosperous postwar world. He gives the impression that nothing has happened between 1920 and 1945, with respect to Negro rights. Although he discusses international questions, Mr. White does not mention Dumbarton Oaks, Bretton Woods, nor the Moscow, Cairo, Teheran and Crimea conferences, the charters for a new epoch of democracy, events that advance the whole struggle for Negro and colonial liberation. Without them there can be no hope of ending the myth of white supremacy.

Mr. White grants that the Soviet Union is a factor for racial equality, but thereafter concludes that the Soviet Union is building "spheres of influence" and "balances of power" against America and Britain for a war of the darker peoples against the white nations of the world, a race war theme with shocking overtones. The "balance of power"

theory was buried in the Crimea and it is not likely that it will be disinterred unless it can find collaboration among the very people it would destroy.

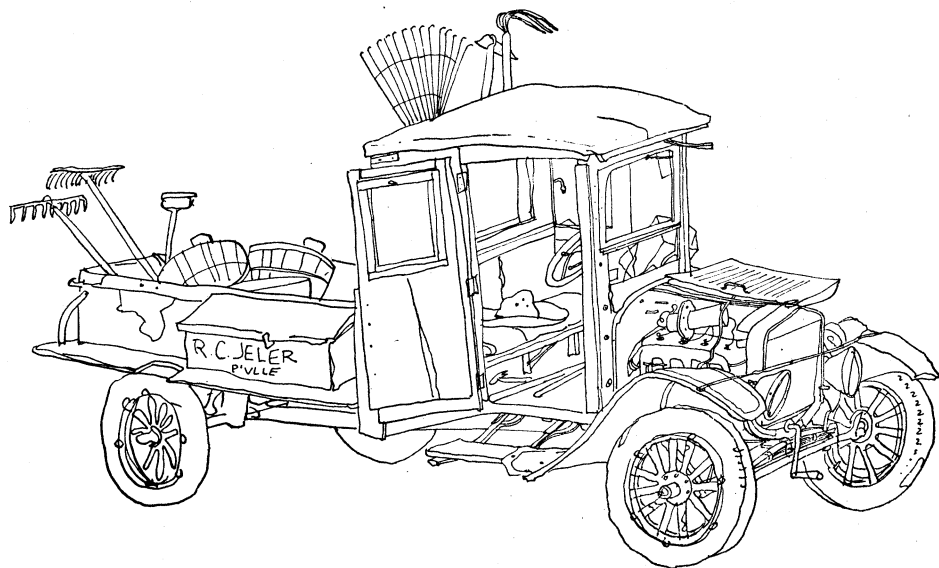
Mr. White's convictions about the character of the war are not clear. He quotes Lady Astor, of the pro-Nazi Cliveden Set, whom he interviewed in London. He repeats the demagogic taunts of Tokyo with respect to Allied war aims, apparently not recognizing that these enemies take pains to create all sorts of doubts about a war being fought to defeat them and their ideology. Their world is being smashed daily—by Allied guns and by United Nations solidarity. One wonders that Mr. White does not emphasize the positive aspects of the world that is to be. Without convictions about the war it is hard, indeed, to have a perspective on humanity as a whole, let alone on Negro rights.

The book's implication that the returning Negro soldier must fight "by himself," after he has fought beside new allies on the battlefields of the world—not to mention those at home—is not for the Negro of 1945, as the majority of them know. One of the outstanding evidences of the maturity of the Negro people is their widespread collaboration with the labor movement and other democratic forces moving toward victory and a better world. That is the clean new rising wind destined to blow fascism and all its works from the face of the earth.

Mr. White has a fatal propensity to adopt race and color as the basic dividing line between forces in the world today—instead of recognizing the line as between the forces of fascism on the one hand and anti-fascism on the other. While he is clearly against Hitlerism, he

falls short of taking an unequivocal position with the anti-Hitler coalition because it is led by "white nations." No such middle ground exists. To think so is a false and dangerous illusion.

The colored peoples of the world—the 400,000,000 Chinese, the Central and South Americans, the Filipinos, the majority of the people of Africa, India and the West Indies, the Negroes of America—have understood that the side of the United Nations, is the side of freedom and self-determination. The Crimea and San Francisco conferences are designed to prevent the unimaginable horror of a "race war" or any other kind of a World War III. It is surprising to see Mr. White taking a racially isolationist point of view. One can't sit it out in the bleachers while the issue of what kind of world we're going to have is being decided. One has to accept responsibility along with millions of others for helping to bring about the better life. By no tests can one risk nothing and gain everything. But there is no feeling of resolution on this issue in *A Rising Wind*. Moral strictures against racial discrimination have long been important and should by no means be neglected, but the struggle ahead is fierce and involved, and it will not be decided on so simple a ground. A complicated interplay of bayonets, economics and politics, operating in the service of a united, conscious humanity, will be decisive. It is profoundly disappointing that a book by a leader of Mr. White's influence should reflect the muddleheaded hesitations and doubts that restrain one from taking an unequivocal position of responsibility with the very world forces which are moving to destroy the myth of white supremacy wherever it exists.





# READERS' FORUM

## That Ivory Tower

**T**O NEW MASSES: If we ever get to have a people's art, it will be an art that people can understand. The people have got to help the artists by telling them honestly whether or not they do understand.

Let me, as one of the people, start this honesty by saying, apropos of the article on Picasso (NEW MASSES, March 13) by Pfc. Jerome Seckler, that I don't understand Picasso. Let me, all for the sake of honesty, go a little farther; say that such pictures as are shown with that article strike me as just plain silly; that, as they appear there, they haven't a single redeeming feature.

It is nothing in Picasso's life whether we understand or not. "I paint this way," he is quoted, "because it is a result of my thought. I can't use an ordinary manner just to have the satisfaction of being understood. I don't want to go to a lower level." Reconcile this, if you can, with his statement: "I am a Communist, and my painting is Communist painting."

People who think of Communism as a revolutionary movement musn't get the notion that it is to herald in a general revolutionary free-for-all. It is a people's movement; and whether it is called revolutionary or revisionary it rests upon popular understanding and participation in every activity that it involves. There were, as I recall it, a lot of artists in old Russia who welcomed the Revolution as entitling them to the irresponsible luxury of being misunderstood. They soon found out it didn't. If the "Revolution" means anything, it means increased social responsibility for everyone and an end to such silly, ivory-tower self-expressionism as Picasso boasts.

Picasso is apparently a modest man. He hasn't sought publicity for his ideas. An interview was all but forced upon him. But he did give it. He did talk. And he read over and edited the remarks attributed to him. Well, read them. For significance and profundity I can think of nothing comparable but an answer of Churchill's printed in the Carson City (Nevada) *Chronicle* and quoted in the *New Yorker*: "London: In answer to a question put to him in the House of Commons today Winston Churchill, Prime Minister of England, said 'No.'" New York. ROCKWELL KENT.

## "New Jazz"

**T**O NEW MASSES: Recently, a New York friend sent me the program from a concert of so-called "New Jazz." The commen-

taries, the published program, and the patrons and sponsors of this venture all represent a pernicious and anti-democratic trend in American culture.

Jazz developed as an indigenous people's art. As such it was marked, and is marked, by the same structural discipline, sense of form and development, and particularly by the same vigor that has marked all art deriving from close contact with the masses. The often-drawn parallel between great jazz and such classic masters as Bach and Beethoven is basically valid because the common denominator of all is the fact that plastic means (the objective element) is drawn from the demands of the great mass-movements in which the creators were, directly or indirectly, involved (the subjective element).

Denial of the link between great art and the mass-movements from which it springs has been a hallmark of the infantile leftists of art for the past half-century. However, it has never presented a more dangerous aspect than today, when reaction is forced in desperation to come into open conflict with the ideology of democratic art.

Entrepreneur Barry Ulanov glibly announces that the "old jazz" was "helter-skelter, each-man-for-himself improvisation" and that the "new jazz" is "disciplined musical expression." This is an obvious distortion. From the early records of King Oliver (*Froggie Moore, High Society*), Louis Armstrong (*Muskrat Ramble,*

*Potato Head Blues*), and Jelly Roll Morton (*Beale Street Blues, The Chant*) to the "Chicago" period of Frank Teschemacher (*Nobody's Sweetheart, China Boy*), down to such recent groups as Lu Watters' Yerba Buena Jazz Band and the Bunk Johnson band sponsored by Harry Bridges, *ensemble* has been the essence of jazz expression. The overblown emphasis on soloist and on individualistic improvisation has been due to the decline of a functional basis for jazz (the emigration from dance-hall to concert-hall), and to the back-room "jam-session," in which musicians broke violently and individualistically with the inhibitions of commercial music. Given an audience that wanted to dance to the old (if people's art can ever be "old") forms, a group such as Lu Watters' turned out jazz within the classic forms, with emphasis on ensemble, on uninhibited but pre-arranged structural plans, and with a texture and pulse entirely attributable to its close ties with the people.

The "new" jazz is not "new" at all. It is derived, if not completely copied, from the many hybrids that accompanied and grew out of the parent form. These hybrids, for the most part, were "dicty" music, music for the more sophisticated classes, for those who could not accept an indigenously American music in its "raw crudity."

There has always been a ready audience for the hybrids, because these groups utilized indigenous material only in a bastard form, and only within a framework of familiar European traditions, and the worst traditions at that. . . .

If art could be divorced from reality, from the world of action, all this would be of no account. But art is the voice of the struggles that occur in the world of action. When certain people act to emasculate an art that is pre-eminently democratic, it is not an academic question. We can even ask "Who is it that would do this thing?" And the answer, in the present case, is conveniently printed on the back of the program.

Heading the list of patrons is Mrs. Vincent Astor, always a friend to dilettantism: among her fellow patrons are two princesses, a marquis, and a marquise. (As to the latter group, I do not question them on the basis of possible foreign birth, but on the basis of the fact that such titles are rarely associated with fervid adherents of democracy.)

The list of sponsors is even more enlightening. Here we find the darlings of non-objectivism and surrealism (Alexander Calder, Marcel Duchamp, James Johnson Sweeney), the remnants of the self-styled "lost generation" (Carl van Vechten), renegades of the literary world such as James T. Farrell, a dilettante of strip-tease (Gypsy Rose Lee), an apologist for the "Old South" (Stark Young), "White Russian" emigres (Tamara Toumanova, Pavel Tchelitchev), and the patroness of New York's most gilded coterie of snobs (Peggy Guggenheim), among others. And all of these gilded lilies of the world of art and fashion are most notable for their utter disregard of the life-and-death struggle which the forces of democracy are

(Continued on page 22)

## Memo to Writers

The deadline for the Art Young Memorial Award of \$100 for the best poem to be submitted to New Masses is extended from March 15 to April 15, 1945. Readers are reminded that manuscripts should be typed, double-spaced and on one side of the paper. There is no limit to the number of poems any contestant may submit. All poetry submitted or published in New Masses since the announcement of the awards, May 16, 1944, is eligible.

# NM SPOTLIGHT

## 'Race Across the Main

THE last great campaign of the war in Europe is in full swing.

The Rhine barrier has been shattered and soon the river will become nothing but a lateral line of communications for the Allied armies. Practically in all areas of Allied penetration east of the Rhine German resistance is completely disorganized. Bridges on the Main and the Issel have been found intact—just as the Remagen bridge was found intact. Great strongholds, such as Kaiserslautern, have been taken by single platoons commanded by sergeants. Crossings of the Rhine, such as Patton's at Oppenheim, were made without a single casualty. The great airborne operation east of Wesel was effected without any interference from the German air force. To top it all Patton raced thirty-four miles to the Main between breakfast and lunch.

It would be ridiculous to expect the Germans to fight a large scale battle of maneuver on the Prussian Plain after the Allied troops have cracked the last natural defense. The Teutoburg Forest may be full of Germanic tradition, but Blaskowitz is not Arminius and Montgomery is not Varus. The modern Arminius has too few men in the west and the modern Varus has too many. The Germans cannot fight a battle of maneuver any more, at least not west of the Elbe. Whatever they have left has been shifted to the east.

The difference in the kind of resistance on the two main fronts is underscored by the actions of the German garrisons of such fortresses as Koenigsberg, Danzig, Glogau, and Breslau. They have been fighting back furiously. The Germans have in combat lost daily between 150 and 200 tanks, and often more than 100 planes. For two months now the Germans have been squandering huge numbers of men and tanks defending western Hungary. Now their resistance is broken and Marshals Malinovsky and Tolbukhin are advancing against fierce resistance into the Gap between the Danube and Lake Balaton.

Further north Marshal Konev is probing the Moravian Gap which leads into Moravia and Bohemia. On the northern wing Rokossovsky and Vassilevsky (the latter has replaced General Cher-

nyakhovsky, killed in battle) are squeezing Koenigsberg and Danzig in a death vise.

Yes, these are the final blows.

## Democracy in Finland

AMONG the many things the Finnish elections prove, one of the outstanding is that Finnish opinion was never what the old ruling coterie claimed it to be—solidly against the Soviet Union. In fact, the returns again magnify the truth that it was only Helsinki's past policy of severe repression that stifled the warm and deep feeling which thousands of Finns have for their neighbor. Now a new era in Finnish-Soviet relations begins. Old official trends are not yet completely reversed but the presence of the Democratic Union's fifty-one representatives in parliament is a substantial guarantee that the Tanner Social-Democrats and their allies in the other parties will meet the most determined opposition should they attempt to hold back the tide of progress.

It would be a mistake to believe that the desire for earnest and honest collaboration with the USSR was centered solely in the Democratic Union. There are groups in other parties which recognize at long last that a German orientation has cost Finland dearly, that it has menaced Finnish independence and brought her to ruin. They may be expected on vital matters of foreign policy

to work together with the Democratic Unionists, although they may have differences over internal reforms. And reforms there must be aplenty. There must be a sweeping purge of the entire state apparatus, where reactionaries still hold many commanding posts; the war criminals must be more swiftly punished; land must be given to the hard-pressed peasants, and this can be done by dividing up large estates; there must be many measures to reduce the burdens borne by workers and members of the middle class, especially demobilized soldiers. Finland's tasks are far from easy, but she has taken the first steps toward a new life.

The elections have significance beyond Finnish borders. They once more refute the columns of print and the endless talk that the USSR would gobble up the country. The *New York Times*, with a long record of anxiety over the fate of Finland, admitted on March 21, that the elections were free and without interference from the outside. We shall be seeing more such elections with, of course, varying results. The polling booth will be the passageway to many far-reaching changes from one end of the continent to the other. Thus do Crimea and Teheran bear fruit.

## At the Golden Gate

DESPITE persistent efforts by the State Department to define the scope of the coming conference in San Francisco there are people who continue to believe that the meeting will take up questions which it clearly will not. Mr. Stettinius has explained that the conference will be charged with creating a security organization based upon political decisions already made and others to be worked out; he has emphasized that it will not have authority to make political decisions itself.

One of the vital issues on which decisions, except for the general provisions of the Atlantic Charter, have not yet been made is the future of the colonial world. In the Far East alone colonies account for 600,000,000 people, in Africa for another 150,000,000. There is consequently a great deal of speculation as to whether or not San Francisco will cope with this question. Under these circumstances we should be clear on



what can and what cannot be expected from the security conference.

From the official Washington directives it is clear that the conference will not be authorized to consider such problems as the independence of India, self-determination for Puerto Rico, dominion status for Indo-China, or any similar political question. These all-important issues must be held over for another meeting in the future.

There are other aspects of the colonial problem, however, which will come before the San Francisco meeting. One of these is a plan for trusteeship of the colonies and mandates of the enemy nations. But to our mind an even more important element in the colonial picture which will be affected by the conference's decisions is the relation of the world security organization's economic and social organs to the sub-standard areas of the world. With the really strong Economic and Social Council projected at Dumbarton Oaks, furnished with an able staff and properly financed economic, social and other commissions with sufficient authority, the San Francisco conference can do much to lift the colonial peoples out of their present enforced backwardness. If strong organizational measures of this sort can be adopted at San Francisco, the chances of progressive political decisions being made at a later date will be greatly enhanced.

### Vote "Yes!"

WHEN the American Bankers Association launched its campaign against the Bretton Woods proposals the *New York Times* and the *Herald Tribune* sought to make it appear that only bankers were qualified to pass judgment on such complex matters which supposedly are beyond the mental capacity of ordinary men. Now it turns out that the nation's most authoritative banking leaders are supporting the Bretton Woods proposals with few, if any, reservations. The Independent Bankers Association, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, a vice-president of J. P. Morgan & Co., the presidents of the Federal Reserve Banks of New York, Boston and St. Louis and the presidents of eleven leading Philadelphia banks have so far approved the proposals, embodied in the Spence bill on which hearings are now being held by the House Banking and Currency Committee.

The Committee for Economic Development, representing over 2,000 of the most powerful business enterprises, has

## About Military Training

THE debate between Dr. Paul M. Limbert and Carl A. Ross on compulsory peacetime military training, published elsewhere in this issue, concerns a question about which many Americans, who support our government's efforts to construct a durable peace, have honest differences of opinion. That a decisive majority of our people, as shown by the polls, favor peacetime military training does not obviate the necessity for further discussion.

It is no secret to our readers that NEW MASSES' own position on this question is strongly in accord with that of Mr. Ross. As we have stated before, the character and purpose of compulsory military training, whether in war or in peace, is always dependent on the *policy* of which it is the instrument. Those who invoke fears of "militarism," "reaction," "Prussianism," must first show that our postwar policy is going to be militaristic, reactionary, Prussianized. It seems to us that Mr. Ross has pulled the issue out of the stratosphere of abstract discussion and rooted it in the real world when he writes:

"Let it be clear in the first instance that we cannot assure our security by unilateral armament, no matter how large. Our national security rests upon world security and peace. The advocates of universal military training are proposing the building of an American military establishment within the framework of a system of United Nations cooperation."

And contrary to Dr. Limbert's suggestion that peacetime compulsory military training would fill our allies with fear and suspicion, the reverse is true. Failure to enact such legislation would be interpreted as a recrudescence of American isolationism and a sign of reluctance to fulfill our obligations in the new world security organization, particularly in view of the fact that all the other major powers—and most of the smaller nations—will not follow our example in this respect.

Dr. Limbert questions the military value of "one year of training for youths just out of high school." It seems to us that this is hardly a debatable point in view of the fact that in this war one year—and even considerably less—has proved ample, *especially* for youths of eighteen or nineteen. And Dr. Limbert is on no firmer ground when he calls as a witness against the democratic character of universal peacetime military training the British military writer, Capt. B. H. Liddell Hart. If Captain Liddell Hart is as wide of the mark on this question as he was on military strategy, his opinions deserve no serious consideration. It was he who in the pre-war years became best known for his theory that defensive warfare based on fixed fortifications like the Maginot Line was the way to defeat Germany.

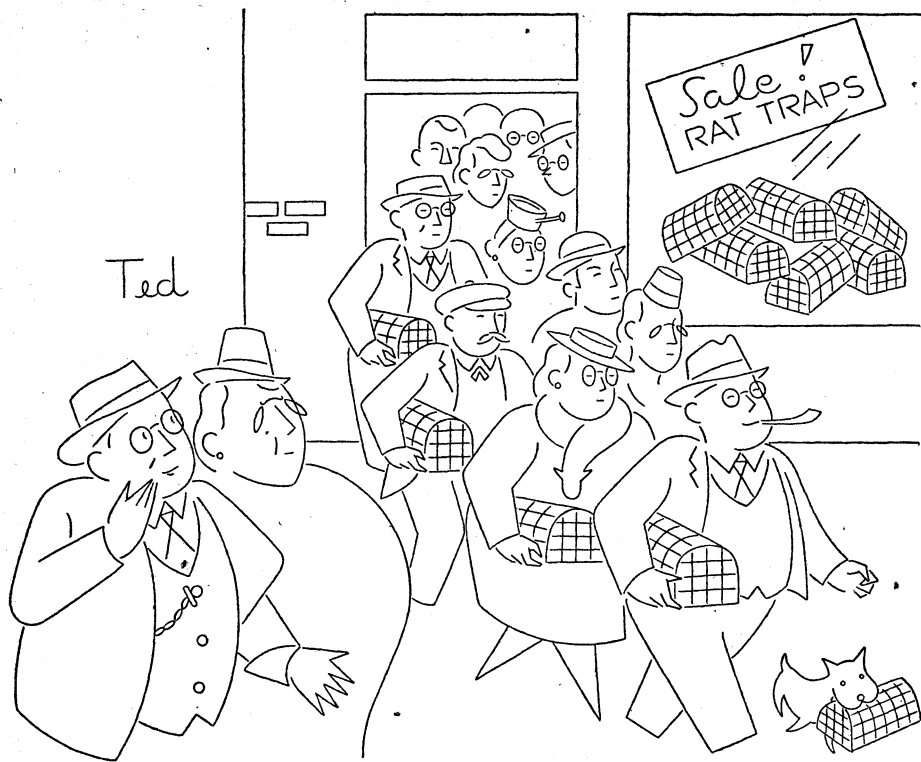
We prefer to trust Roosevelt rather than Liddell Hart. If we are to help shape a peace that lasts, we cannot shirk our responsibilities, political, economic, military, even if it means abandoning some of our pre-war habits and prejudices.

not only approved the twin proposals for the international bank and the monetary fund, but has also recommended an amendment that will strengthen the functioning of the Fund rather than scuttling it, as the ABA demands.

Senator Taft of Ohio, who can be counted on to oppose every measure for international cooperation, has come to the aid of the ABA with an appeal to backward prejudices and suspicions, describing the Bretton Woods plan as a grand administration scheme for giving away \$6,000,000,000 to the ruined and

irresponsible nations of Europe. The cooperative principles of world mutual aid and self-preservation underlying the Bretton Woods plan are not beyond the mental capacity of Senator Taft. He understands its purposes only too well and that is why he stoops so low to distort them.

Opposition to the Bretton Woods proposals is confined to a small but powerful group of bankers who command the services of a large section of the press and an influential group of reactionary politicians. If their efforts to undermine the



"They say Gerald L. K. Smith is coming to town."

Bretton Woods structure are to be defeated, forward-looking organizations and individuals should impress on their Congressmen the importance of voting yes on Bretton Woods and doing it before the San Francisco Conference on April 25.

## The Welfare of All

A GUARANTEED annual wage to all who work for a living is an old aspiration of the labor movement that now bids fair to become a reality in the visible future. President Roosevelt has ordered the advisory board of the Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion to study the question. This marks an important milestone on the road to a full employment, full production economy for our country. The War Labor Board recommended an inquiry into this problem last December. The President told his press conference that he had been thinking about it for the past ten years. Philip Murray, head of the CIO, has for years been calling for the practical consideration of this vital problem. Now at last a subcommittee of the advisory board will be working on it.

The appointment of this subcommittee is more than a gain for labor: it represents a step forward for the entire nation. The stabilization of the wage earner's income would create a sounder foundation for uninterrupted production and a rising national living standard. Enlightened employers ought to be the

first to welcome any move in that direction. The inclusion in the subcommittee of Philip Murray, along with Eric Johnston, president of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce, Albert Goss, master of the National Grange, and Mrs. Anna Rosenberg, New York regional director of the War Manpower Commission, is recognition of the fact that the welfare of all classes is concerned in the question of a guaranteed annual wage.

## Vendetta Against Bridges

THE case of Biddle versus Bridges, which might better be characterized as the case of Biddle versus the war effort, is nearing its climax. Early in April it will be argued before the Supreme Court. The incredible stubbornness of Attorney General Biddle in repudiating the unanimous findings of his own Board of Immigration Appeals has forced the defendant, and the many thousands who believe in the justice of his appeal, to take this matter to the highest tribunal.

At this last hour, it is hard to believe that Mr. Biddle can be so bigoted as to go through with the case. But his record of obstructionism, of kowtowing before Social Democrats and reactionaries, of bias against the West Coast labor leader is such that every one must be prepared for his waging this personal vendetta to the end. Nevertheless, no effort should be spared in appealing to the Attorney General and to the President to drop

the deportation order and to allow Harry Bridges to become a citizen of the United States.

Philip Murray has said: "I am of the conviction that the spirit of the American people is deeply troubled by this order of deportation and the destructive consequences to American unity it will bring with it. It is time for the Attorney General and the President to lift this burden from the conscience of the American people."

## Blood on Our Hands?

AS WE go to press, the outcome of the government's strike poll among the miners is still unknown. Irrespective of the results, we think the whole project fantastic, a caricature of democracy. We shall have the blood of many of our own fighting men—and those of our Allies—on our hands unless this futile approach is abandoned and replaced by strong federal intervention in the coal fields. Every dictate of common sense should direct the government to seize the mines and forestall even a moment's loss in war production. This is hardly an issue between coal miners and employers. It involves the entire country and millions of troops; it involves military plans and the fate of battle in Germany. John L. Lewis in his fury will shame every one of us from California to Maine, will ridicule us before the United Nations, if he is permitted to pursue his course of wreck and ruin.

The government must know by now that except for a handful of Lewis conspirators, the labor movement stands for continuation of production while backing all efforts to win improved conditions for the miners through orderly processes. Labor will support the government in any action which will prevent a paralyzing strike. The miners need to be reached with appeals to repudiate strikes that will help them see that Lewis is leading them to the brink of a tragedy in which their own sons and daughters in uniform will suffer severely. We congratulate Miners' Local 866 of Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania, for forthrightly speaking its mind in a resolution that all grievances be settled without stoppage of work. There are thousands of other miners who feel the same way. They must be encouraged publicly to take their stand.

## Poison

IT SEEMS strange to discover the overtones of the theory of the master race in an article in a learned journal bear-

ing the title, "Digitalis Poisoning," signed by no less than three M.D.'s and loaded with a column's worth of bibliography. However, in discussing a serious rise in toxic effects from overdosage of digitalis, three doctors have been permitted to set down in cold print in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* that the considerably higher percentage of poisoning in the case of Negro patients "does not warrant any assumption of the less careful treatment for the

Negroes but probably is due in large part to lower intelligence and may indicate less careful observances of directions on their part."

When Dr. Harold Aaron of New York protested in a letter to Dr. Morris Fishbein, editor of the *AMA's Journal*, that such a conclusion flew in the face of all scientific knowledge, and reiterated that any apparent differences in "intelligence" between races and groups are by now thoroughly

established as due to differences of income, education, or cultural advantages, Dr. Fishbein answered with a refusal to print the letter in the *AMA Journal*. It is good to know that not all of the departments of organized medicine are as indifferent to matters of such world importance, and the Medical Society of the County of New York is to be congratulated on its courage in printing in its journal both the original letter of protest to Dr. Fishbein and a letter of

## The Auto Workers Stand Firm

By Nat Ganley

Detroit.

"OUR PEOPLE in the shops have lost all respect for our International officers because of their no-strike policy. . . ." So shouted Ben Garrison, adherent of Trotskyite policies and appointee of Vice President Walter Reuther, before the resolutions committee at the ninth convention of the United Automobile Workers-CIO convention in Grand Rapids, Mich., last year. These words were part of his speech in introducing the resolution for the immediate rescinding of the no-strike pledge. Reuther was in a bloc with the supporters of John L. Lewis and the Trotskyite rescinders and unsuccessfully tried to maneuver the convention into scuttling the no-strike pledge in so-called civilian goods plants after the defeat of Germany but prior to the defeat of Japan (a sort of preferential treatment favoring our Japanese as compared to our German enemies). When the Garrison and Reuther resolutions failed at the convention, their backers united to carry the convention for a postcard referendum vote on the issue.

Now the "people in the shops" have spoken through this referendum. A total of 1,250,967 ballots were sent through the mails. More than twenty-two percent mailed their ballots back before the deadline. And the answer of the people in the shops is a resounding defeat for those who sought to betray our fighting men by killing the no-strike pledge. *The rescinders could not carry a single region for their anti-CIO policy.* The fifteen UAW-CIO regions in the United States and the Canadian region all voted in favor of the convention action in reaffirming the no-strike pledge. Among the UAW-CIO members in the armed forces the vote was overwhelming: 93.1 percent for retaining the pledge and only 6.9 percent opposed. The over-all count showed sixty-four percent favoring the pledge; 34.7 percent against; and 1.3 percent spoiled ballots. Thus the membership showed it understood that the no-strike pledge is labor's offensive weapon for defeating fascism and winning a high wage policy for our nation.

Region 1A (Detroit's west side) where Reuther has reputedly had strong backing, voted 54.5 percent for the pledge and 45.5 percent against it. The answer to Detroit's wildcat strikes was also given in De-

troit's east side region, which voted fifty-four to forty-six percent to keep the pledge. This region includes Briggs Local 212, which has been a hotbed of wildcat strikes since Pearl Harbor. The vote here, as throughout the union, is also a rebuke to reactionary employers who provoke strikes in order to discredit and weaken the labor movement.

The anti-CIO, pro-Lewis forces around John McGill of Flint received a fitting reply when the rank and file in their region voted 56.6 percent as against 43.4 percent in favor of the no-strike pledge. Richard Gosser, the Reuther satellite who is national board member from the Toledo region, is undoubtedly sweating plenty over the fact that his membership voted 71.8 percent in favor of the pledge and only 28.2 percent against it. Returns from the other regions showed the following:

Region	For Pledge	Against Pledge
1B—Pontiac area . . . . .	63.9%	36.1%
1D—Muskegon area . . . . .	74.3%	25.6%
2—Cleveland . . . . .	74.2%	25.8%
2A—Ohio, West Va. . . . .	74.6%	25.4%
3—Indiana . . . . .	78.6%	21.4%
4—Ill., Wisc., Minn. . . . .	71.4%	28.6%
5—Mo., Kansas, Texas . . . . .	72.3%	27.7%
6—California . . . . .	87.4%	12.6%
7—Canada . . . . .	54.2%	45.8%
8—Tenn., Va., Del. . . . .	83.8%	16.2%
9—N. Y., N. J., etc. . . . .	71.0%	29.0%
9A—East . . . . .	72.6%	27.4%

Thus the UAW-CIO "people in the shops" showed the profoundest respect for all the UAW-CIO international officers who stood staunchly behind CIO policy. This includes all the top officers of the UAW-CIO except Walter Reuther. The results of the referendum are a blow struck at the Lewis-Dubinsky-Woll conspiracy to turn the labor movement against President Roosevelt and against the decisions of the Crimea Conference.

*Mr. Ganley is business agent of Local 155, United Automobile Workers-CIO.*

critical comment along with Dr. Fishbein's callous reply.

## Here and There

CONGRATULATIONS to the people of Chile for electing to their senate one of the outstanding poets of the Americas, Pablo Neruda—who, though not a Communist himself, ran on the Communist ticket. . . . Noted with pleasure, as an additional sign of the rifts in Spanish reaction, the manifesto of the pretender Don Juan demanding that Franco step down; but no bouquets to the pretender himself, whose dynasty showed the same pliant collusion with fascism during the Rivera dictatorship as the Italian royal house with Mussolini. . . . Welcome to Hitler into the company of murderers, assassins, thieves, torturers and the like, among whom the United Nations War Crimes Commission, in London, has finally got around to listing him. . . . Richly deserved Nazi honors to W. L. White whose *Report On The Russians* has just been taken up by Goebbels. . . . Razzberries to the mean and the petty-minded who, in a sniping foray against President Roosevelt, are crying famine in well-fed America, grudging to our allies and to the starving liberated countries of Europe the bare food minimum needed to make them effective on our side in the remaining stages of the war and in the peace to come. . . . Razzberries, too, to the Senators who voted down Aubrey Williams as administrator of the Rural Electrification Administration, in a mean-spirited gesture of revenge for having to take Wallace. History will record their folly and futility.

The London "Daily Worker" of March 14 carries a report on Maurice Chevalier, the French actor, which lifts the fog of rumors about him. According to the report Chevalier's name has been cleared by Louis Aragon. During the first days of the German occupation it seems that Chevalier, like so many non-political Frenchmen, did support Petain. But in 1942, when the Germans occupied the Vichy zone, Chevalier "realized where his patriotic duty lay." He met Aragon in the south of France and talked things over with him. As a result, Chevalier agreed to receive and forward secret correspondence "and in this way rendered considerable aid to the Resistance." Chevalier, escorted by Aragon, was recently given a tremendous ovation at a demonstration held by the French Communists in honor of the heroic dead.

## Spain in Need

YOU remember them, surely. You admired their courage, you stayed up nights waiting for the bulldog editions to tell you how their battle was going. You collected funds for them on street corners and you went to meetings on their behalf. They are the same men and women, these Spanish fighters. They are as dauntless and aflame with anti-fascism as ever. All of us remember—and yet sometimes we forget. We sometimes forget there are thousands of them—refugees—in France, without food, or clothing or shelter. Perhaps when we remember their great moral strength we forget that hundreds of them are ill and in need of medical care. They are scattered over the earth, these great fighters, and they need your help. Send all you can—and more—to the Spanish Refugee Appeal, now campaigning for \$750,000 under the auspices of the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee (192 Lexington Avenue, New York 16, N. Y.). Keep these thousands of our friends in good shape. They have a big job before them.

## Reader's Forum

(Continued from page 17)

waging with fascism. All of them eschewed any intervention when the issue of democracy and reaction was posed in the national election.

Anna Seghers in her excellent *Tasks of Art* (NEW MASSES, Dec. 19, 1944) concluded, "If sincere artists help expose and refute [fascist and pro-fascist] ideas, they are helping by their books and pictures to destroy fascism." I submit that the ideology behind the "New" Jazz, behind its sponsors (those named above, as well as the magazine *View*), is, consciously or unconsciously, pro-fascist and anti-democratic.

The democratic traditions of our culture are winning greater victories each day. But to consolidate those victories requires continual, vigilant struggle, as was pointed out by Dr. Edwin Berry Burgum in his review of Samuel

Sillen's *Walt Whitman*. [NEW MASSES, Dec. 5, 1944.] The music of jazz, the blues, work-songs and play-songs of the Negro and white masses inherits the culture of the ages: its defense and its propagation is part of the greater struggle.

BILL CUMMING.

Spokane, Wash.

## Dr. Carver's Day

TO NEW MASSES: You who have been in touch with the work of The National Achievement Clubs, Inc., know that we have been working for a long time toward the national recognition of Dr. George Washington Carver through the establishment of a "George Washington Carver Day." Our efforts have been crowned with a modicum of success. Today there is a joint resolution before the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives designating January 5 as George Washington Carver Day.

But our work toward this goal is not yet done and shall not end until George Washington Carver Day has become a national reality. The purpose of this letter is to urge your readers immediately to write to Judiciary Members Hatton W. Sumner and Sam Hobbs asking that they support this resolution. (H.J. Res. 111.) Let our efforts show that we wish this great humanitarian, scholar and scientist to be honored by his country in a manner befitting his enormous contributions to humanity.

ALMA ILLERY, President.

National Achievement Clubs, Inc.  
Pittsburgh.

## Laurels

TO NEW MASSES: [NEW MASSES Cultural Awards Dinner, January 22] was really an outstanding affair and we all got a spiritual lift from it. However, one award was missing—an award to Ilya Ehrenburg, whose pen, like the sword of Zhukov, terrifies the Nazis.

I would like to see a special committee organized with the cooperation of the NEW MASSES to plan for a fitting way to bring to the attention of the American people the great service of Ehrenburg in the present campaign against the Nazis.

MORRIS A. GREENBAUM.

New York.

## Invitation to Scholars

TO NEW MASSES: I am very much interested in Francis Franklin's comments on classical Greek philosophy and literature in NEW MASSES of February 27. May I suggest further expanded comment on that subject—perhaps in the form of letters to the editor by classical scholars. Most people talk about the classics, some even own them—but few of us read them. Still we like to know.

CAMILLA JOSEPH.

New York.





# ONE APART

**"Black Boy," by Richard Wright, reviewed by Isidor Schneider**

AS AUTOBIOGRAPHY *Black Boy* has all the faults of that riskiest form of writing; as a picture of the Negro people it is a distortion; but as a document of the psychological patterns of race tension it is unique, powerful and of considerable importance.\*

The fatal risk of autobiography is that the determination to tell the truth is frustrated by the accompanying impulse for self-preservation. The mind, fearful of its vulnerability in the nude, at once covers itself with justifications. That is why the heroes of autobiographies and of autobiographical fiction are generally nullities, cancelled out in the process of confession and simultaneous self-justification.

But Wright's form of self-justification also prevents him from realizing character in any other of his figures. They are all cast in active or passive phases of antagonism to him; all are obstacles to his self-fulfilment. By their antagonism he justifies his alienation. Their role is to serve the ego purpose of autobiography: "See what I have surmounted!"

What Mr. Wright reveals in *Black Boy* helps to explain his characteristics as a writer, his choice of material, his attitude toward people. The tension of conflict leaves its mark in the obsession with violence.

By the evidence in *Black Boy* these characteristics took form from some early childhood wound or maladjustment traceable only by a psychiatrist. We see them operating already in the child of four, as Wright recalls him, who sets fire to his house in retaliation for adult prohibitions. They are on view in the book in an almost unbroken record of hostility, cruelty, alienation, guilt sense, and violence.

The obsession with violence is particularly marked in Wright's early reading memories. This is how he recalls the story read to him by a friendly young woman boarder in his grandmother's house:

She told how Bluebeard had duped and

married his seven wives, how he had loved and slain them, how he had hanged them up by their hair in a dark closet. As she spoke reality changed, the look of things altered and the world became peopled with magical presences. My sense of life deepened and the feel of things was different somehow. Enchanted, and enthralled, I stopped her constantly to ask for details. My imagination blazed. *The sensations the story aroused in me were never to leave me.* (My emphasis, I.S.)

In a similar vein he recalls a pulp serial in a newspaper that he sold in order to be able to read it:

I was absorbed in the tale of a renowned scientist who had rigged up a mystery room made of metal in the basement of his palatial home. Prompted by some obscure motive, he would lure his victims into this room and then throw an electric switch. Slowly, with heart-wracking agony, the air would be sucked from the metal room and his victims would die, turning red, blue, then black.

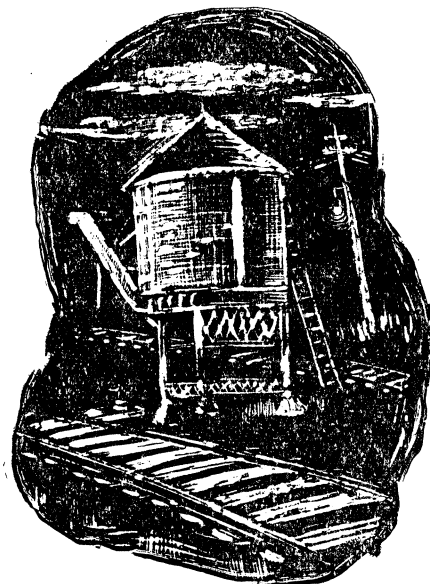
The chief significance in these passages lies not in Wright's enjoyment of such stories but in the place they have in his memory. They are the only early reading experiences recorded in detail and commented upon for their hold on his imagination. Indeed, as Wright notes, they never left his mind. In various forms the closet of crime, the torture chamber, the images of locked-in guilt,

recur in Wright's fiction along with other fantasies of hostility and violence. What it fed on gives us the quality of Wright's imagination.

Hostility and alienation has not only kept Wright from intimate understanding and rounded presentation of individuals but also from sympathy with his people. There are derogatory epithets and allusions all through the book . . . "peasant," "wall-eyed yokels," "bleak pool of black life," etc. They are summed up in these parenthetical paragraphs printed early in the book:

. . . I used to mull over the strange absence of real kindness in Negroes, how unstable was our tenderness, how lacking in genuine passion we were, how void of great hope, how timid our joy, how bare our tradition, how hollow our memories, how lacking we were in those intangible sentiments that bind man to man, and how shallow was even our despair. After I had learned other ways of life I used to brood upon the unconscious irony of those who felt that Negroes led so passionless an existence! I saw that what had been taken for our emotional strength was our negative confusions, our flights, our fears, our frenzy under pressure. Whenever I thought of the essential bleakness of black life in America, I knew that Negroes had never been allowed to catch the full spirit of Western civilization, that they lived somehow in it but not of it. And when I brooded upon the cultural barrenness of black life, I wondered if clean positive tenderness, love, honor, loyalty, and the capacity to remember were native with man. I asked myself if these human qualities were not fostered, won, struggled and suffered for, preserved in ritual form from one generation to another.

Following out the implications of the last sentences one would have to assume doubts, on Wright's part, of Negro capacity for culture. Its existence could certainly not be proved from any testimony in the book. No reader would learn from it that there were any Negro cultural institutions or influences; or that Negro culture, even at the folk level, had made major contributions to American culture; or that a Douglass, a Carver, a Robeson had ever existed and stirred the Negro people; or that Negro struggle and protest was a proud strand in the American chronicle. It is, perhaps,



\* *BLACK BOY*, by Richard Wright. Harper. \$2.50.

no accident that Wright's own grandfather, who fought for Negro freedom as a Union soldier in the Civil War, is reduced to a ridiculous figure, bilked of his pension and presented, in possibly conscious symbolism, as somebody so impotent as not even to be of use to scare children into obedience.

Yet Wright's picture of bleak and shallow life is self-contradicted by episodes that the record compels him to set down. It would be difficult for any racial group to offer a finer example of deep feeling, of family solidarity and responsibility than his own far-scattered family who came in, some from Northern and Western towns, to assume the burdens brought by his mother's physical collapse. And it is contradicted in Wright's own book, written when he was a Communist, *Twelve Million Black Voices*.

Wright attempted to break out of the isolation that *Black Boy* defends by activities in the Communist Party. As published the book does not go into those years but it throws light on the chapters of recantation, published elsewhere, with which Wright brought that phase of his career to a squalid close. *Black Boy* renders any farther speculation on the causes unnecessary, as it renders his own self-justifications more specious and contradictory than was apparent at the time.

The causes which keep *Black Boy* from attaining stature as a work of art are the same which distort it as a picture of the Negro people. Yet its very concentration on the negative, the hostile, the violent, leads into explorations not attempted before. His innate interests heightened by a conscious interest in psycho-pathology, Wright makes keen observations of the neurotic behavior patterns and thought patterns produced by the race tensions in America. They form the major part of the second, and, by far, the most objective and successful part of the book. Set down with a sort of cold passion, they are powerfully and vividly realized. It is these contributions that give the book importance and a substantial compensating value.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

## Something We Live By

FOR CROSSING WIDE WATERS, by Hargis West-  
erfield. Driftwind Press. \$1.

POEMS, by Jon Beck Shank. Alfred A. Knopf.  
\$2.

AN AMERICAN IN SICILY, by Earle Davis.  
Margent Press. \$1.75.

HOPE has frequently been voiced that out of this war a refreshed current of poetry will flow. New vol-

umes by soldiers and war-chroniclers should, therefore, be greeted with eagerness.

For *Crossing Wide Waters* is a series of free-verse "lyrics" inspired by various phases of Army routine: examinations, guard duty, furlough, marching in the rain, first command. The style is realistic: Westerfield goes in for very little poetizing; instead of "poems," it would be more accurate to call the pieces "quick sketches." As such they have real value for readers who enjoy being comfortably inducted into the Army. Soldiers, too, may enjoy this "straight talk," since they've shared the experiences and moods, feel the same nostalgia for home, the same resentment toward overbearing officers, the same pride in marksmanship.

Through this area of affinity, it is easier for soldiers to reach the clear-headed militancy, the eagerness for battle which finally becomes the heartbeat of the little book. "Never in my life have I felt more integrated with a cause," the introduction states. Had the moods themselves been more integrated, more fully explored and crystallized, instead of merely jotted down as they "crowded in" upon him, the resulting verses would have been richer and perhaps even beautiful (which is, after all, important in poetry).

HORACE GREGORY has gone overboard for the first work of Jon Beck Shank, soldier. It "will arrive," he writes, "with the same sense of refreshment to its readers as Stephen Spender's *Poems* arrived a dozen years ago. . . ." It "also announces the arrival of the 1940's in American verse, and people will welcome its lyrical graces, its occasional turn of wit, its ease of statement as a positive reaction against the academic and political abstractions of the 1930's. . . ."

It is true that the book has "lyrical graces" and "occasional turns of wit." Shank also has a keen ear for music, and a sharp eye for imagery; and his technique tightens up remarkably as the volume advances. But how can readers welcome an "ease of statement" which comes from having little to state? Except for a few of the war poems, Shank's subjects, generally, are such as can form the basis of a poetic exercise. It is in the war poems, descended from Spender in their simplicity, passion, and true personality, that the pretty warblings are transformed into a deeply troubled, fine human voice, stating not easily, but nobly, the hope of our time:

*In this Spring I shall grub for fox-  
holes, not for food.*

*The green new time of planting  
stays no longer that.*

*In these reversed days we bend to  
harvest what*

*Is dearer than gold, yea, than fine  
gold wheat,*

*Being something we live by rather  
than eat.*

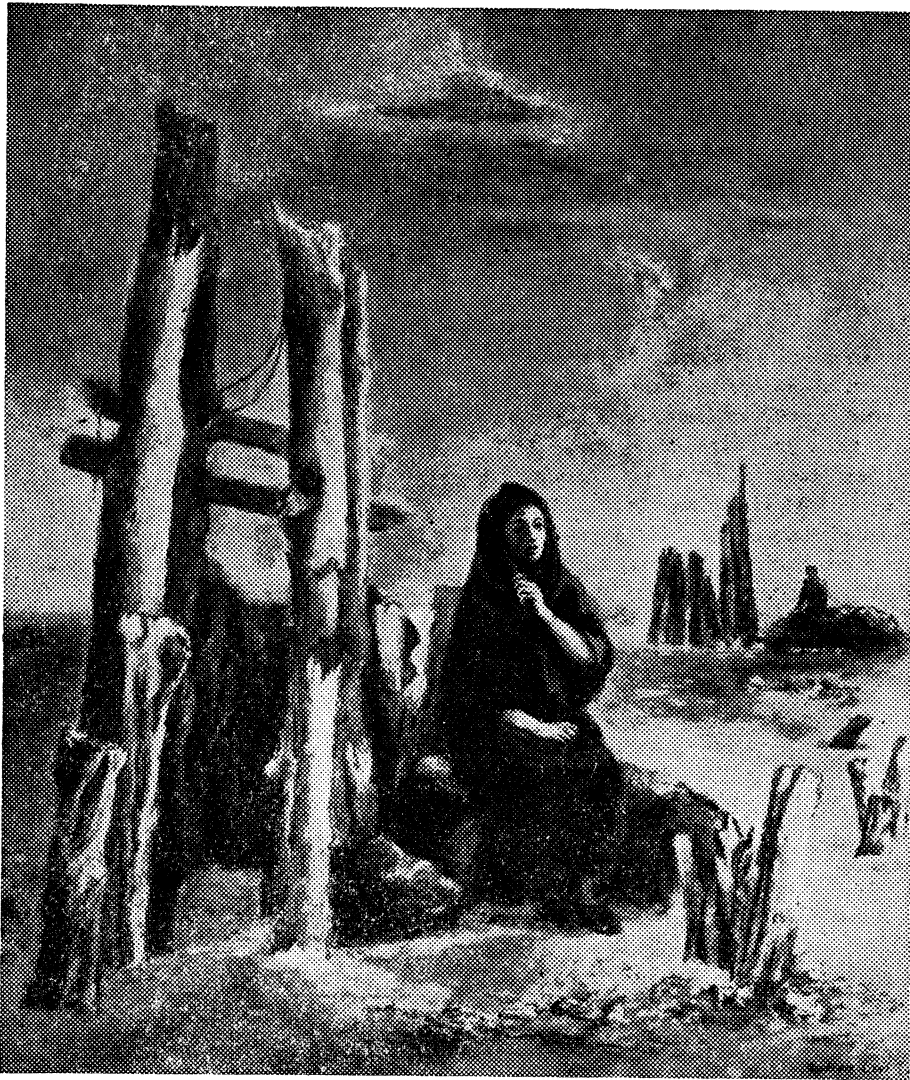
Had the volume contained more of this and less of the innocuous stuff which Mr. Gregory seems to believe readers will welcome, the lavish praise would certainly be justified.

EARLE DAVIS, a young Princeton Ph.D. now head of the English Department of Wichita University, Kansas, realized the tremendous material available for poetic, even epic use, in the events of our war. Seeing here an opportunity for distributing some old Jeffersonian ideals that can stand plenty of distribution as well as a few original ideals concerning man's interdependence, he selected the conquest of Sicily as his vehicle. His minor epic, *An American in Sicily*, composed in loose pentameter, unrhymed, contains hardly a passage that could be recognized as poetry. Yet it has a sustained, compelling narrative drive that completely binds the reader. It is difficult to believe that Mr. Davis never came closer to the war than teaching English to Air Corps Cadets. Perhaps because of his use of the first person; perhaps because the events are so close to us; perhaps because the style is matter-of-fact and colloquial; perhaps because of its humor and unpretentiousness, Mr. Davis manages to make every page gripping. We are swept into the thick of the fight, with few pauses for pity or pageantry. The political and philosophical discussions (and there are plenty of them) are never obtrusive; they form an organic part of the narrative: the boys are listening to a short-wave program, for instance, and hear the voice of Ezra Pound, which sets off a long conversation about Jefferson, democracy, and the meaning of the war. Some of Davis' theories are weird and false, such as his fear of the disappearance of individuality under Communism, and his insult to the character of the Sicilian people; but the big theme that remains with the reader is grandly trumpeted forth:

*We hold these truths to be self-  
evident: God created no super-  
race;*

*All peoples have inalienable rights:  
Individual initiative,*

April 3, 1945 NM



"The Widow," oil by Julian Levi. At the Downtown Gallery until March 31.

*Economic opportunity, Freedom  
from intolerance . . .  
. . . The safety and happiness of  
mankind  
Are the only concerns of govern-  
ments, organized to achieve these  
ends.  
. . . Distribution of knowledge,  
goods, spirit, and freedom will  
cure the world;  
Nor shall man take from man un-  
fairly: planned production can  
provide for all.  
In the name of universal man, we  
solemnly publish and declare  
That free and independent nations  
recognize their interdepen-  
dence. . . .  
United we stand: divided we fight.  
And for the support of a Holy  
Cause,  
Whether they can state it or not,  
thousands of Americans  
Have pledged their bones, their  
blood, their bowels, their fu-  
tures, and their sacred souls.*

*An American in Sicily* has received very little publicity from the poetry critics or "from the general press. Perhaps those worthy people feel that the public needs "refreshment" in the form of "lyrical graces" or perhaps they recognize the voice of Earle Davis as a fresh voice of the American people; and, being consistent with their customary policy, attempt to bury it under a stone of silence.

AARON KRAMER.

## To the Partisans

GUNS FOR TITO, by Maj. Louis Huot. Fischer. \$2.75.

IN OCTOBER 1943, Maj. Louis Huot, an American Army officer, established a secret supply line from recently liberated southern Italy to Partisan Yugoslavia over German-infested waters. *Guns for Tito* is the vividly told record of this mission.

Major Huot did not go to Yugoslavia cold. Stationed at Cairo, he "had been

responsible for the American part of certain combined British and American operations in the Balkans," principally the selection and briefing of American officers sent on these tasks. He had noted how Tito's name, "still little known to the public," loomed ever larger in the reports. Then he himself received orders to "join my friends in the Balkans" and among other responsibilities to "get to see Tito now and find out for myself what explained the success of his fabulous troops."

At headquarters in Algiers he got no clearer definition of his mission; but fortunately he met two Partisan officers there, apparently the first to reach the outside world. A few days earlier these "Yugs" had landed in Bari with wounded compatriots and to their amazement had been passed along and on to Algiers, where together the Americans and Partisans worked out their plans.

In Dalmatia, on his first contact with Partisan-held territory, Huot met more of these "wonderful people" who "tear your heart out." He met Colonel Ilic, the Partisan commander who had walked sixty miles to see this American officer, and scores of other Yugoslavs, "men one could be proud to help." He was guided through "liberated" territory to Marshal Tito's recently established headquarters at Jajce. The Partisans, he learned, had gone through their "Valley Forge" just a few months earlier; and fought the Germans, Italians, Croatian Ustashi and Mikhailovich's Chetniks. Now they were planning the future of Yugoslavia as a fusion of Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Montenegrins, Catholics, Orthodox and Mohammedans into a homogeneous democracy.

"What," Major Huot asked Tito, "do you tell them they will have when all this is over and there is peace again?" Tito's reply was: "We don't tell them. We ask them. What they are fighting for is the right to decide for themselves what they shall have."

Since this book was written in May 1944—it has just been released by the censors—we have learned more about the Partisans and Tito. *Guns for Tito* is, however, the first book to treat of the Partisans entirely and it comes stirring-ly up to its subject. The political comment it lacks was clearly not in Major Huot's province to give. But in a clear and forthright manner he has told how the Allied supply route to the Partisans was established; he has shown us the Partisans; and he has indicated how the Yugoslav people, in their new-found national unity, will go forward. Finally,



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MARTIN T. BROWN.

## From the Spanish

SELECTED POEMS, by Rafael Alberti, trans-  
lated by Lloyd Mallon. *New Directions*. \$1.50.

THE TOWERS OF MANHATTAN, by A. Ortiz-  
Vargas; *English version* by Quincy Guy  
Burriss. *University of New Mexico*. \$2.50.

IN AN interesting foreword to his  
pamphlet, Mr. Mallan maintains that  
Alberti is easier to translate than the  
intense Spanish of Lorca. Mallan should  
look again to his rendering of Alberti's  
"Buster Keaton Searches Through the  
Forest for His Sweetheart, a Full-  
Blooded Cow." He has fallen into the  
same pit that Lorca's translators have,  
who cannot handle "*verde que te quiero  
verde*." Mr. Mallan distorts the sweet  
sound sequence of *Cucu; Cuacua; Gua,  
gua* into the ugly English of Cawkoo;  
Cawcaw; Wahwah, wahwah! The en-  
tire range of sounds in this deceptively  
simple poem is soft. A translator who  
can make the Spanish *cri-cri* into beep-  
beep I suspect of being a little deaf.

To translate poetry, one must be a  
poet. The most successful translations in  
this pamphlet are in those poems that  
have prose-like lines, like "That Burn-  
ing Horse Through the Lost Forests."  
Mr. Mallan does not transmit the sense  
of structure that is characteristic of  
Alberti; and in cutting off several final  
important evocative lines in the elegy for  
Sanchez Mejias, as well as completely  
ignoring the simple a-b rhyme scheme of  
the later poems, Mallan has destroyed  
some of Alberti.

Minor errors abound where the point  
of some poems seems to have been  
missed. "*Tablas*," for example, means  
in the plural more than just a "board";  
it is "stage-board," or the center of at-  
traction in an inn when flamenco is sung.  
To miss that meaning shows the trans-  
lator has missed the Andaluz in Alberti.  
In addition, padding does not improve  
the original. "*Enlaza las dos bahias*"  
means "connects the two bays," not  
"connects the two blue pancake bays."  
Mr. Mallan improves "*Va cantando el  
timonel*," which literally says "The pilot  
goes singing," into the silly: "A song  
fulfills the pilot's face."

But I don't want to carp forever. In  
spite of inaccuracies this translation, in  
the words of the popular song, will do  
until the real thing comes along. Alberti  
must be read, even though this transla-  
tion is only a stopgap. I suggest to poets  
that the cheap Losada edition of Alberti  
be read along with it so that the original

stand as a reproach to this paltry English  
version.

IN DISCUSSING Alberti, the question of  
a double standard does not arise. We  
know he is a good poet and can place  
the blame on bad translation. Ortiz-  
Vargas, however, is relatively unknown  
except for some articles on Millay, Mac-  
Leish and Edgar Lee Masters in the  
*Revista Iberoamericano*. His emphasis  
on form in those articles has resulted  
here in a book that has form but little  
real content. However, that judgment is  
not based on a comparison with the orig-  
inal text, which I found unobtainable:  
Mythology and a salute to Radio City  
rather pompously "done into English  
verse" make this a book to be missed. I  
only regret the good intentions of the  
people involved. Cliches in translation  
have a "fading fragrance."

BILL AALTO.

## One Man's World

WORLD'S BEGINNING, by Robert Ardrey. Duell,  
Sloan & Pearce. \$2.50.

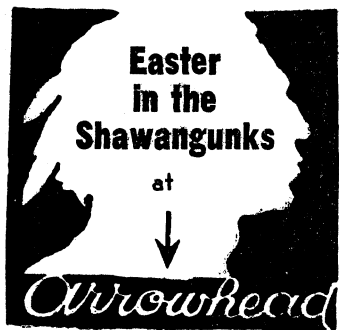
AFTER reading *World's Beginning*  
one is tempted toward a too-facile  
definition of a liberal as one who hopes  
for the best but fears so strongly for the  
worst that he can't recognize the begin-  
nings of his hopes right under his nose.  
Mr. Ardrey and his nameless newspaper  
*alter ego* in *World's Beginning* support,  
I am sure, the President's program of  
60,000,000 jobs, vast development proj-  
ects to rival TVA, the right of citizens  
to adequate housing, education and  
medical care, and the national unity  
necessary to realize the program. But he  
dismisses the conviction of those who  
work toward it as a "Rover Boy char-  
acterization of the human race." He be-  
lieves that existing tensions will tear us  
apart in the postwar period; that there  
will be clashes between Negroes and  
whites, veterans and civilians, labor and  
capital. Practically the only possibility he  
neglects is a Thurberesque war between  
men and women.

But after both the nation and the  
newspaperman have touched the depths  
(Ardrey's newspaperman got himself  
mixed up on the Negro side of a race  
riot and ended up killing a white man  
with considerable satisfaction; this causes  
him to wonder what on earth is happen-  
ing to him, as indeed it might!), there is  
the rumor of a dawn of hope in West  
Texas and newspaperman goes there to  
see.

The form of the hope should really  
be treated by someone more deeply in-







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RALPH BOWMAN.

**Brief Review**

CHINA'S GREATEST CRISIS, by Frederick V. Field. New Century Publishers. 10¢.

THIS pamphlet by a distinguished commentator on Far Eastern affairs should make the rounds of every family with a relative in the Pacific. Mr. Field's expertness is not the stodgy kind. He writes informatively but with a sense of the moment against its large background, and tells a story that cannot leave anyone indifferent. He sums up the central issues that have kept Chungking a backward and faltering power in contrast to the stir and energy of the Chinese people. He tells what must be done; and as an antidote to Lin Yutang's poison there is hardly anything better.

**ON BROADWAY**

"SHORE LEAVE," Frederick Wake-  
man's novel, is a toughly-written,  
interesting, but rambling story of three  
Navy fliers on leave in the States. It re-  
veals the terrible dislocation of some  
fighting men who cannot find in Amer-  
ican civilian life an equivalent to the  
dynamic stimulation and the sense of  
identification-with-a-group that war af-  
fords.

Luther Davis, a young Army major,  
has made the same sort of play out of  
*Shore Leave*, which John Moses and  
Mark Hanna opened at the Belasco  
under the title *Kiss Them For Me*. The  
play possesses many sharp and revealing  
scenes and a wealth of GI dialogue that  
is fresh and of the best. If the plot that  
Mr. Davis has given the play sometimes  
leads it away from life and into the pat-  
tern of theatrical comedy, the war is  
always close to the play, lending it a  
strong air of reality that draws the in-  
terest on.

*Kiss Them For Me* is an entertaining  
evening, but it could have been a first-  
class play. The slips that detour it from  
its destiny will not, however, deny it any  
part of its rightful audience. Some of its  
faults are inherited from the novel, and  
some are of Mr. Davis's own devising.

Having swindled four days leave  
from the Pacific, Mac, Mississip and  
their squadron leader, Crewson, arrive  
in the ambassadorial suite of a San Fran-  
cisco hotel. Methodically prepared for a  
wine, women and song jag, a gigantic  
fling at emotional release and pleasure,  
they are stymied by a self-seeking ship-  
building executive, become hopelessly

entangled in the red tape of the "paper  
Navy," and find themselves lost in the  
America they had so longed to see. In  
the end they swindle their way back to  
battle stations, leaving behind the  
"jungle" of civilian life, its selfishness  
and its coldness. Once again they are  
free of civilian responsibilities—all they  
have to do, ironically, is fight.

This last concept, although of prime  
importance to the story's development  
and the unfolding of its characters, has  
been insufficiently investigated in *Kiss  
Them For Me*. The characterizations  
too often lapse into a repetition of the  
gripe mood and the longing for the old  
gang aboard ship. These attitudes are  
legitimate, of course, and they serve  
well in infusing the documentary qual-  
ity into the play. But the deeper, older  
attitudes of these fliers are left to fleet-  
ing "explanations." One cannot truly  
understand a man without knowing  
what he has been as well as what he is.  
In the case of Crewson, especially, there  
is a striking absence of past.

In terms of its story, the play again  
fails fully to recognize its own theme.  
The entire second act is taken up with  
the fliers' conflict with the "paper  
Navy," in a routine physical exam  
which at first seems to be merely a cruel  
waste of a whole precious day of their  
leave. It turns out to be a catastrophe,  
for Crewson is grounded and Mississip  
discharged because of an enlarged spleen  
he never knew he had. The act itself is  
often amusing, and when not amusing,  
pathetic; it is never dull. But its situ-  
ation does not carry on the play's basic



conflict—the mutual misunderstanding of the civilian and combat minds.

On the other hand the true conflict, the most interesting and revealing one, is reflected in Mississip's relationship with his parents, whose Mississippi-cracker mentality he has outgrown through his contact with Negroes aboard ship. The deeper meaning of the play lies, too, in Crewson's struggle to adjust to civilian *mores*, and his failure to do so. The atoms of this conflict should go into the structure of the play, but they are scrambled too often.

That this conflict does not bear its theatrical fruit is due also to the neglect in which Mr. Davis has left his civilian characters. The most important of them, Gwynneth, is a semi-reformed society girl, the epitome, in life, of the self-seeker. But she is given little of interest to say and serves mainly as Crewson's line-feeder. Because she is such a blur, their scenes together seem pointless and full of hollow airs. This "love story" seems tacked on, when it should have borne the most meaningful conflict for Crewson and might have drawn out the truth of his personality. Jayne Cotter plays this character so stiffly that its one theatrical virtue—sex—becomes awkward and valueless.

The abounding joy of the play is nevertheless satisfying. Mississip is played by Dennis King, Jr., and if his acting squeaks a bit in the emotional scenes he does make up for it with his performance in the straight sections. As Mac, the third flier, Richard Davis is mild and understandable, if not inspired. Richard Widmark, a good actor always, gives a debatable performance as Crewson. I felt he lacked flair, that disarming charm one so often finds in the cultured drinker, the imaginative abandon of the hurt hedonist. He is engaging now, but his color is not quite loud enough. I suspect, however, that the writing could have supplied these qualities more freely than it did.

The one civilian who really ranks in interest with the fliers is Alice, a beautiful gal who works in a war plant and wanders into the hotel room in search of nylons. She stays to give her all, if she can convince anyone to take it, and as played by Judy Holliday, she makes the stage breathe and laugh. Her restraint and her sense of comic nuance are perfect.

As a Navy gunner, George Matthews is his natural self and has some wonderful lines to say and a wonderful way of saying them.

Given the limitations of the play, Herman Shumlin has staged it in a life-

like manner as befits its quality of immediacy. Frederick Fox's sets are colorful and in fine detail, as always. *Kiss Them For Me* might have been great; as it is, it is important, amusing and always an interesting show.

MATT WAYNE.

## "Wait For Me"

NO LESS than eighteen composers have written music for Constantin Simonov's poem "Wait For Me." A composition based on it has been the theme song for at least one movie, *Lad From Our Town*. The poem has also served as the basis of a play and of the movie now current at the Stanley Theater in New York. The theme is the constancy of wives in wartime, with the film arguing that a good part of the soldier's morale rests on the woman he has left behind and putting infidelity into the same category as deliberate absenteeism, loose talk, and other unpatriotic acts. Since it is as much of a problem here the film is certainly pertinent to American movie audiences.

*Wait For Me* uses an extreme situation to strengthen its case. It loads the dice in favor of the opposition, making it clear that if what it has to say on the subject is persuasive there, its reasoning should be conclusive for the average case. Its protagonist is not just separated from her aviator husband. He has been missing for six months, his plane officially listed as destroyed; all his crew but one are reported dead, and that one, a peacetime friend, is highly skeptical of his survival. This combination makes it tough for the wife to hold out, and yet she hangs on to the possibility that he may be alive. In contrast, her friend decides that she has waited long enough. Her missing husband returns while she is carousing, and his resultant death is a needless and avertable tragedy.

The film, for all its commonplace idea, never becomes sentimentally vulgar or bathetic as, say, *Since You Went Away*. The acting is infused with great warmth and restraint, and despite the almost martinet faith that guides the actions of the female lead, extremely plausible. The movie is notable for several fine sequences, such as two street scenes characterized by excellent crowd behavior, the moment when the husband returns, the meeting in guerrilla headquarters between the missing flyer and his friend, and the scenes in the forest hut with the trapped crew just prior to the Nazi attack.

This film marks the second attempt to dub English dialogue on a Soviet

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film. The dub-in technique is, of course, a progressive step in the marketing of foreign language films, and is in this case brilliantly successful in its word-gesture synchronization. But there is one serious weakness. The English voices are cast in a stiff, theatrical and recitative pattern, correct in timing, but way off in feeling. Consequently there was little relation between the informal, human, personal acting and the formal, impersonal English dialogue. The English language sounds more foreign to the actors than it need be. The all-around successful dub-in must have not only a reading of translated lines but a genuine understanding by the dub-in cast of the original characters.

Valentina Serova is the faithful wife, and Boris Blinov, a strong and skillful actor, the missing husband. The impatient wife is portrayed by Nina Zorskaia, her husband by Nikolai Nazvanov. Lev Sverdlin, as the friend who escapes the Nazis, is a kind of shuttlecock tying the strands of the story together.

JOSEPH FOSTER.

## Movie Check List

*Princess and the Pirate.* Bob Hope in his corniest routines to date.

*Objective Burma.* Fine film adventure of a group of Americans behind the Jap lines in Burma. Best action war film produced by Hollywood.

*A Tree Grows in Brooklyn.* Synthetic study of a drunken father, an overworked mother, a literary daughter trying to get along in Williamsburg.

*Without Love.* To be reviewed.

*Battle of Iwo Jima.* Thrilling newsreel account of bloodiest battle of Pacific.

*Keep Your Powder Dry.* A purported story about WACS. The RED CROSS can use the price of admission.

*Utah.* A Western with musical refinements.

*Murder, My Sweet.* A murder melodrama whose story will baffle you. Made interesting by fine direction, dialogue and characterizations.

*Winged Victory.* Movie version of the Moss Hart opus. Good filmic presentation of aviation training routines from the standpoint of trainee.

*The Three Caballeros.* Inept Disney.

*Hotel Berlin.* Silly adventure plot dressed up as topical film on inside Germany.

*Thunderhead, Son of Flicka.* Pleasant picture of horses and scenery. A weak second to *National Velvet.*

*Tomorrow The World.* Adult film showing the effect of Nazi ideas on a democratic community.

*Picture of Dorian Gray.* Banal attempt to translate Oscar Wilde's novel to the screen.

*The Suspect.* A creeper in which a middle-aged man becomes a murderer to achieve tranquility. Cut above average despite fake moral ending.

*Woman in the Window.* More of the same.

Better than *The Suspect*, with an even less forgivable conclusion.

*Song To Remember.* Fine musical film on Chopin. Deals with place of artist in society. *Abroad With Two Yanks.* Phooey.

*Tonight and Every Night.* Boy-girl adventure wrapped in war slogans. Extravaganza amid the ruins of London, 1940-41. J.F.

## Records

ARTURO TOSCANINI, leading the NBC Orchestra, and Helen Traubel, American dramatic soprano, collaborate in a new recording of "Briehilde's Immolation" from Wagner's *Goetterdaemmerung* (Victor DM 978). What Maestro Toscanini does with dramatic music is well known; and in the orchestrally and vocally stupendous last pages of the Ring cycle, he is superb. Fortunately, he has Miss Traubel working with him; for it takes a big voice to soar along with his Wagner. In an older recording of the "Immolation," with Edwin MacArthur conducting the San Francisco Opera Orchestra (included in Victor Album DM 644), Mme. Flagstad's voice is emotionally warmer than Traubel's, but MacArthur's orchestra is a subservient rather than a collaborative factor and destroys the Wagnerian design. Owners of modest record players would do well to compare, however. The intensity of the performance in the new set, enhanced by recording which captures much of Toscanini's orchestral dynamics, makes a large living room and a phonograph which can carry the load prerequisites.

MISS TRAUBEL's colleague at the Metropolitan, Lauritz Melchior, is heard in an album entitled *Scenes from Wagner Operas* (Victor DM 979), a compilation of some previously issued Melchior recordings. Included are the "Love Duet" (sung with Kirsten Flagstad) from *Tristan and Isolde*, Tannhauser's "Hymn to Venus" and his "Rome Narrative," the "Hammer Song" from *Siegfried*, Lohengrin's "Narrative," and the "Steersman's Song" from *The Flying Dutchman*. These selections, sung by a truly dramatic *Helden-tenor* with a voice of tremendous range, are Warner at his most inviting. The orchestral end is held up excellently in the *Lohengrin* selection by Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra, but in the others Edwin MacArthur, conducting the San Francisco Opera and a studio orchestra, gives the voice a clear field, to the detriment of the music as a whole.

**V**ICTOR ALBUM DM 972 has Sergei Rachmaninoff performing his last piano concerto, the *Fourth*, with Ormandy and the Philadelphia. The work fails to measure up to the *Second* and *Third*, although it contains something of their haunting melodic beauty and unleashed vigor. But it is worth having for its unusually good piano reproduction and because the Victor reserve of recordings by one of the greatest pianists of our generation is inevitably coming to an end.

**T**HE Toscanini-Horowitz recording of the Brahms *Piano Concerto No. 2 in B-Flat Major* (Victor DM 740) can be described as "electric." The fact that it was recorded in Carnegie Hall gave the engineers an opportunity to effect a marvellous balance between solo instrument and orchestra. Some listeners may want to cling to the more reflective poetry of the Artur Schnabel-Sir Adrian Boult version in an older, duller recording: it's all a matter of taste.

**M**ARIAN ANDERSON displays her almost superhuman vocal powers in what amounts to a group of encores in Victor Album 986. Included are Massenet's *Elegie* and Rachmaninoff's *When Night Descends* (accompaniment by William Primrose, viola, and Franz Rupp, piano); and, with Mr. Rupp alone, *Die Schnur*, *Die Perl an Perle* by Brahms, Liza Lehmann's *The Cuckoo*, Spross' *Will o' the Wisp*, *Comin' Through the Rye* and three spirituals.

Many of us will prefer to compile our own albums of Anderson recordings from the wide choice of single records in the catalogue.

**O**N A recording which captures the sound of the violin with fidelity, Erica Morini plays in clean fashion the Respighi arrangement for violin and piano of the Vivaldi *Sonata in D* (Victor 11-8671). On another twelve-inch single, Miss Morini meets the technical demands of the Wieniawski *Capriccio-Valse* (arranged by Auer) with assurance, and, on the other side, gets into the spirit of the superficially sentimental *Romance* from Wieniawski's *Second Violin Concerto* (Victor 11-8731).

JOHN KITTON.



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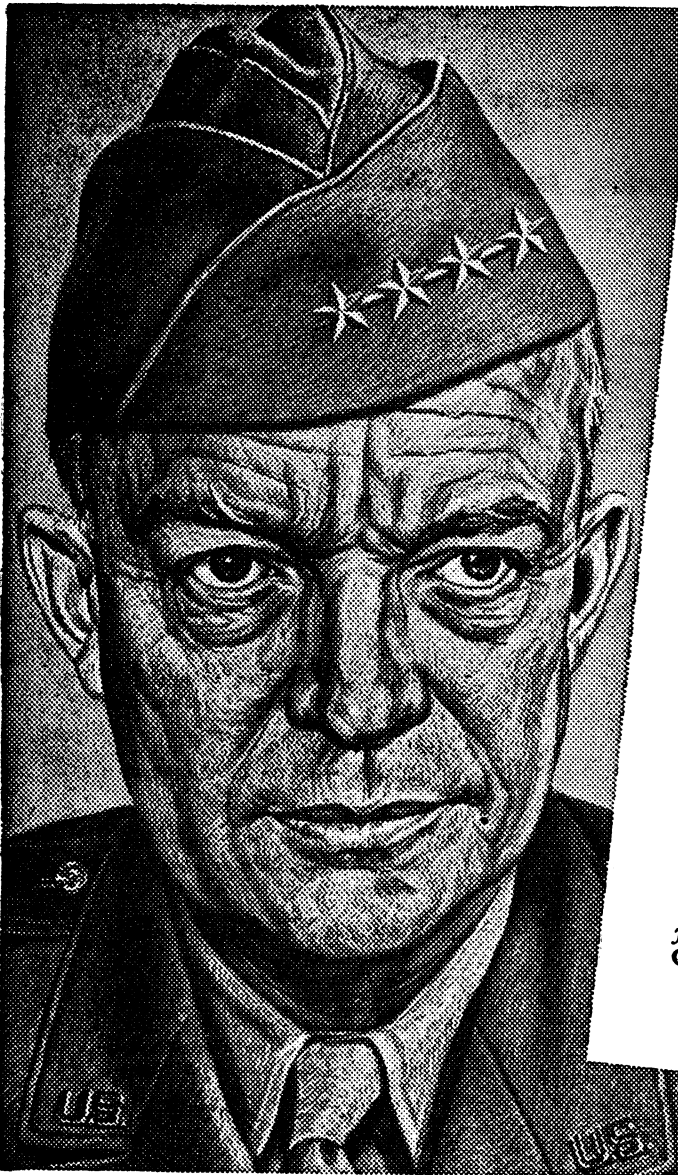
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### ASK YOURSELF

Ask yourself: "Have I done as much as I can for *my* Red Cross—which is at my boy's side—ready to aid, comfort and cheer him?"

You *can't* do too much to help the devoted workers in this great Army of Mercy—who risk their lives over and over again to bring our millions of G.I. Joes the proof that they are not forgotten by their home folks.

The Red Cross is doing *your* job—doing for your boy what *you* can't do. But you *can* help by giving *more* to the Red Cross *now*. Its job is stupendous—and it's growing bigger.

Give as much more as you can—*today!*

**GIVE NOW—GIVE MORE**



**KEEP YOUR  
RED CROSS  
AT HIS SIDE**