MASSES & *MAINSTREAM*

IDEAS ON TRIAL:

The Intellectual Leadership of V. J. Jerome

By HERBERT APTHEKER

esson In Conduct — By MARGUERITE HICKS

olitical Prisoner, U. S. A. — By CARL MARZANI

Mrs. Stowe's Best-Seller

By SAMUEL SILLEN

SPARTACUS'' — By DOXEY A. WILKERSON

rench Film vs. Hollywood — By ZELDA LYNN

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IDEAS ON TRIAL

The Intellectual Leadership of V. J. Jerome

By HERBERT APTHEKER

IT WAS while the six of us were at the hearing trying to get the government to accept our $10,000 as bail for V. J. Jerome that this startling thing happened. Jerome's wife, Alice, was explaining, at the insistence of the Government's attorney, where she had gotten her share of the fund. The liquid assets of the Jerome household came to $1,000 and this had been willed, in the form of a trust fund, to the Jeromes' two boys by a grandparent.

The Government's mouthpiece evinced shock and horror at the fact that Mrs. Jerome was offering *that* money—willed in trust for her children—in so "speculative a venture" as bailing out their father! He thought the act quite immoral and said so. This made His Honor, the Commissioner, ponder the deep ethical problem; but when Mrs. Jerome's lawyer pointed out that the *Bank* had thought it was all right to give her the money, His Honor said, "Why yes, that's so. We'll accept the money."

Now that's not the startling thing I had in mind. In these Smith and McCarran Act days things have got to be *really* unbelievable before one refers to anything as "startling." It was just after His Honor grudgingly had accepted Mrs. Jerome's part of the bail fund that the *startling* thing happened.

A bailiff tiptoed to His Honor, said he was sorry to interrupt, but—and then whispered something. His Honor said: "What's the charge?" The bailiff said: "Smuggling." His Honor said: "How long will it take?" The bailiff said: "Only a minute." "All right," said His Honor. "Bring him in." The ailiff left the room.

His Honor said to all of us: "Please move towards the rear of the room." We did, and in walked what appeared to be a Hollywood type gangster, snappily attired, flanked by two tremendous bruisers, and followed by the bailiff. The bailiff put some papers before His Honor, who signed them. He looked at Humphrey Cagney and said: "You're released on your own recognizance." The man remained motionless. "That means," said His Honor, "You can go now. That's all. We'll notify you when to

come back." The bailiff took the papers and marched out followed by Humphrey and his two supporting characters.

Without flicking an eyelash, His Honor called to us: "Come on up now and let's start again." And we returned to the five hours' long effort to persuade the government to release V. J. Jerome, not on his own recognizance, like the distinguished smuggler-suspect, but on the basis of $10,000 raised, with difficulty, by his wife and by a retired Protestant minister, a distinguished woman writer, a leading screenwriter driven from Hollywood, a world-famous novelist, and an historian.

Later, bail accepted, a guard brought in the indicted one. Quiet and deliberate in his movements, of average build, slightly bald, past fifty, wearing glasses, he stood before His Honor. After the last formalities, Alice embraced him, they kissed warmly, and Jerry thanked each of us.

An editor, a writer, a scholar, a poet, a linguist, a lover of the word, aflame with the truth, has come from prison and faces years more of it. One thinks of the questions posed by that other Communist teacher, that martyr to truth, Julius Fuchik: "How many thousand prison-cells has humanity plodded through on the road forward? And how many more must it go through?" Fuchik knew, as he said, that "man is awake at last, awake at last." He was one of the awakeners of man, and so is V. J. Jerome.

GABRIEL PERI, like Fuchik a Communist editor executed by the Nazis, wrote: "I came to the Revolution by way of passionate study and meditation." So did Jerome find Marxism-Leninism, but the direction of his passionate study and meditation was set in the first place by the poverty and suffering of his childhood and youth—in a Polish ghetto (so magnificently recreated in his forthcoming novel, *A Lantern for Jeremy*) and a London slum and New York's East Side. Oppression, hunger, war—Jerome knows:

"Culture and raggedness! Culture and slums! Culture and hunger! Let us sing the glory of "civilization as we know it!" The joyous leisure of men without jobs, the inner harmonies of chain gangs, the essential dignity of prostitution, the superb solitude of the untended sick, the twilight in the eyes of workers discarded at forty, the shining wings of youth beating against the barred doors of factories and offices, the infinite wanderlust of the evicted, the rhythmic machine-gunning of strikers, the spiritual ecstasy of lynchers, the flaming beauty of war!"*

And he knows not only the suffering, but the resistance, the fierce struggle for peace and beauty. This, too, he first learned from the working people of Poland and England and the United States. Constantly and doggedly, working by day and studying at night, he dug into the hard rock of knowledge. As a worker, Jerome helped found a generation ago, the Office Workers

* V. J. Jerome, *Intellectuals and the War* (N. Y., 1940), p. 59.

ague. He was a leader among the F. of L. militants demanding trade ion democracy and the organiza-on of the unorganized, for which e top bureaucrats expelled him om the Bookkeepers, Stenographers d Accountants Union in 1927. uring this same period he took rt in the Left-wing struggles of the ngster-ridden needle trades work-s union in New York.

What he had seen and felt and rned led him to the conviction at only the theory of Marxism-ninism offers the key, in the words Stalin:

". . . to understand the inner con-ction of current events, to fore-e their course and to perceive not ly how and in what direction they e developing in the present, but w and in what direction they are und to develop in the future."

To be convinced meant to act and erefore, some twenty-five years ago, rome joined the living embodiment Marxism-Leninism, the Commu-st Party.

As he himself put it, in *Culture in Changing World*: "A basic prin-ple of Marxism-Leninism, the inte-ation of theory and practice, finds fulfillment in the Party of social nsformation — the Communist rty. Ideological unity alone, Lenin essed, would not suffice to bring cisive victory to the working class; eological unity requires to be con-lidated by 'material unity or or-nization.'" To Jerome, the Com-nist Party, created by the work-ing class and consciously expressing its immediate aims and its long-range aspirations, is as indestructible as it is vital. Since joining, Jerome has played a leading role in the organizational and ideological struggles of the Party as author, Chairman of the Party's Cultural Commission, and, for eighteen years, associated editorially with the monthly theoretical journals of Scientific Socialism, *The Communist* and *Political Affairs*.

JEROME'S firm grasp of Marxism-Leninism and his consequent devoted participation in the day-to-day struggles of the Communist Party have made him a particularly keen analyzer of the waverings and betrayals of less well grounded and less fully integrated intellectuals. Thus, in commenting, a dozen years ago, on the hesitancy prevalent amongst such individuals in the fight against fascism, he wrote in *Intellectuals and the War*:

"Many intellectuals failed basically to understand fascism and therefore the struggle against it. . . . The *open* dictatorship of fascism blinded them to the existence of dictatorship of a concealed kind. Thus, the non-fascist bourgeois states, instead of appearing to them in their true character, as political instruments of class domination, took on in their eyes an aspect of pure democracy; the sword of class dictatorship was for them fully concealed within the scabbard of bourgeois democracy. They saw chauvinism and anti-Semitism as psychopathology, the racism of men gone mad, the state-violence of a sadistic cult; they did not see that very racism as one acute manifestation of the war—chau-

vinism fostered with changing emphases by all imperialism. They saw fascist terrorism as glowing with strength; not as the terrorism of crisis-gripped finance capital desperately endeavoring to beat back the advancing proletarian revolution. Failing to realize its imperialist content, they did not basically oppose fascism as a phenomenon of a moribund social order in the convulsions of general crisis. Failing to see its weakness as well as its violence, its terrified as well as its terrorist aspect, they did not see the proletariat indomitable in the face of the spasmodic power that had outlawed its organizations and slain or incarcerated its leaders."

In many individual cases, Jerome's scalpel has exposed festering sores of compromise and opportunism long before they were manifest to others. The surgery always had the same aim—to preserve the integrity of the working-class' ideology—its Marxist-Leninist theory. He unmasked "An American Revisionist of Marxism," Sidney Hook, back in 1933, exposing the pragmatist and anti-Marxist essence of his "revolutionary" position. Similarly, six years later, when Munich produced a crop of turncoats and doubters, Jerome, in a piece entitled "To The Munich Station" (*New Masses*, April 4, 1939) said of Edmund Wilson, who had set out to "take Communism away from the Communists": "Wilson's heralding of his retreat (though no one had heard of his advance) has the artful undertones of blaming the betrayed in order to clear the betrayer. His 'counsels of solitary diligance, and moral self-dependence' are merely his sanctimonious way of saying: *unity in struggle is no worthy of us.* . . . Munich is by n means the last word and the ant fascist forces of the world are in tensifying their struggle."

Equally incisive was Jerome's crit cism of Vice-President Wallace show of "impartiality" in attributin "Prussianism" to Marxism, short after Stalingrad had dealt Prussia ism and Hitlerism a devastating blo In an article published in *The Com munist* (May, 1943), Jerome com mented:

"The distortion of Marxism as 'th child of Prussianism' brings Wallace read into Soviet foreign policy practic that are in direct contradiction to the pu suit of peace he has elsewhere correct attributed to it. A Third World War, warns, 'would be inevitable if Russ should again embrace the Trotskyist id of fomenting world-wide revolution.' W shall dispense with discussing the my of a Trotskyism connected with any rev lution except counter-revolution. The re significance of Wallace's remark attach to his seeming readiness to join in th Bolshevik-bugaboo alarm that served H ler as a provocation in his predatory ac in Spain and throughout the Munic period, and that serves him still. . . ."

Jerome's childhood and youth, su rounded as it was by suffering an resistance to oppression, his imme sion in the theory of proletaria liberation, his day-to-day particip tion in the struggle against imp rialism, have developed in him soul-cleansing, searing hatred of th exploiters which is but the other si of his profound respect for and d votion to the exploited. And H

V. J. JEROME

work within the *collective* of the Party, its self-critical nature, its comradeship, have produced in Jerome a Communist intellectual, one who can feel and write lines like the following from *Culture in a Changing World*:

"For the working class, culture is a matter of struggle, a matter of heroism. Heroism is the very breath of the working class. It is the driving force of its daily struggles, the sustaining power of the striker, the union builder, the Communist, the working-class mother, the Negro fighter for freedom. We should err as creators of culture if we saw heroism only in great dramatic unfoldings of the class struggle, if we failed to see it in the seemingly prosaic week-days of the worker's life. . . . Neither the romanticist nor the narrow empiricist view, but only deep insight into the *essential nature* of the working class, will save the artist from moods of defeatism in the face of setbacks. . . . With such insight comes the understanding that there are no absolute defeats in the historical movement of the working class."

Specifically, in the cultural arena, Jerome has battled for the reclaiming of the finest in world culture and for a dialectical—a Marxist—resolution of the vulgar, mechanical view minimizing form, and the idealist view absolutizing form. To the mechanist, content is everything; to the idealist, form is everything. "The solution for Marxists," he has written, "cannot, of course, be an equation of the two. The solution is, rather, an interpenetration, in which content is primary, determining form, but cannot be achieved without form. Every significant content r quires its specific, relevant, and r vealing form. Without form there no art; but form alone cannot offered as art."

In his writings on culture, as everything Jerome has done, a everything his Party has done, a co cern for the best national intere and the great democratic heritage the American people is all-pervasi *Culture in a Changing World,* pu lished five years ago, puts this as e plicitly and as centrally as it is po sible for language to do:

"To know the cultural resources u which we can draw is to realize that progressive ideas dynamically opposed the ideology of reaction in the cultu field issue from the deep democratic w springs of the American people. The c tural flow of the American common m derives from his sensitive regard for mocracy, as that concept is embodied the Bill of Rights; from his profou sense of the dignity of man, of the nec sity for freedom of conscience and for separation of Church and State; from perception of the social usefulness of c ture. This is the basic idea-content of best in American culture through generations. And it is this idea-cont that the monopoly-administered mass "c ture" strives to pervert. Our task as Ma ists is to fight for the maintenance and tension of this powerful and signific tradition and to give it concrete sense our times."

WHERE intellectuals have giv promise of cracking throu the pressures of the ruling cl Jerome has been anxious to assist, a

o assist in that way which shows he highest regard—namely, by fraernal criticism. Very early, indeed, erome hailed an American work as eating a path "toward a proletarian ovel," and it was in this sense that e evaluated Fielding Burke's *Call Home the Heart,* in *New Masses* of August, 1932.

He has several times undertaken he exceedingly laborious—and frequently thankless—task of offering a ritique of a whole body of progresive literature as in his considerain of the first volume of the quarerly *Science and Society* (*The Comnunist,* December, 1937) and of "A Year of *Jewish Life*" (*Ibid.,* Septemer, 1938). In each case critical remarks offered by Jerome had valid pplicability, not only to the special ubject of his study, but also to the whole body of Left literature proluced in the United States.

Thus, in hailing the invaluable ontributions of *Jewish Life* to the truggle against reactionary and Soial-Democratic ideology in the Jewsh community, Jerome felt impelled o criticize the "method of stating he enemy's viewpoint with but a cornful expletive of our own" which is supposed to do the duty of effective, painstaking refutation. At ottom, of course," he went on, "it neans a sectarian approach, taking he agreement of all readers for granted so that cogent reasoning is ot considered necessary; it means eckoning without the ideological peciousness of the enemy. . . ."

Again, in commenting upon the positive work done by *Science and Society* in combatting bourgeois theories, he called attention to the danger of eclecticism, and stressed the importance of the Marxist "quality of fierce partisanship rising from objective historical analysis." As one whose own early writings were here subjected to brief but searching criticisms which forced re-evaluation (and, incidentally, led me to seek out Jerome personally, for further guidance) I can testify to the powerful nature of his analyses.

WITH the enemy's outpourings, Jerome is merciless. His own work exemplifies the qualities he called for in the work of others—"fierce partisanship rising from objective historical analysis" and effective, painstaking refutation.

Most of Jerome's work, including dozens of articles and more extended efforts as *Leninism The Only Marxism Today* (1934; written in collaboration with Alex Bittelman), *Social-Democracy and the War* (1940), *Intellectuals and the War* (1940), *The Treatment of Defeated Germany* (1945), *Culture in a Changing World* (1947), and *The Negro in Hollywood Films* (1950) are, in classical Marxist form, polemics directed at particular enemies of the moment, but all are so infused with scientific analysis and are so thorough that they have a lasting quality.

Thus, in the spring of 1943, *New Masses* published a series of three

articles by Jerome attacking bourgeois idealist concepts of history. These, then, largely took the form of a revival of interest in the accidentalist theory of history, and Jerome's critique retains striking applicability to the entire set of anti-materialist, anti-humanist, non-causal, cynical concepts which now characterize capitalist historical philosophy. And the essential purpose of this degeneration is put into a sentence with crystal clarity: "For a world which we cannot analyze, in which things happen without law, is a world against which we cannot contend, and one in which human acquiescence and passivity are the only justifiable attitudes."

Two of the finest pieces of brief, devastating polemics in the history of American literature have come from Jerome's pen. We have in mind his review of Trotsky's much-touted "biography" of Stalin and his reply to "The Anti-Social Ethics of Red-Baiters," as exemplified by Clare Booth Luce. The first appeared in *New Masses,* June 25, 1946, the second, originally, in the N. Y. *Herald Tribune,* December 1, 1946; both were reprinted in pamphlet form by *New Masses* and both are models of Marxist writing—clear, pungent, impassioned, accurate and overwhelmingly persuasive.

The most thorough and brilliant autopsy of present U.S. imperialist culture, in general, is Jerome's *Culture in a Changing World.* Here, by citing chapter and verse from the whole gamut of creative effort—fiction, philosophy, playwriting, poetry, science, history, theology—is demonstrated the truth: "The adoption of the cult of irrationality is plainly the confession, ideologically, of inescapable defeat—by a doomed bourgeoisie: the desperation which unleashes the drive to fascism."

And the most persuasive application of this Marxist searchlight to a particular area of U.S. imperialist degradation is Jerome's study of the motion-picture industry, and its relationship to that imperialism's special object of persecution, the Negro people. In his *The Negro in Hollywood Films* a basic contribution is made to the Marxist-Leninist struggle against reformist and gradualist conceptions of the Negro question. And again, as is typical of Jerome's work, the pamphlet undertakes specific summary and analysis of each of the films it handles, a survey of Hollywood's past record on the Negro question, a placing of the detailed within the general cultural scene, and a program of action against racist stereotypes and discrimination in employment.

V. J. JEROME'S intellectual contributions have by no means been confined to the artistic and literary areas. As editor of *Political Affairs,* the theoretical journal of Scientific Socialism, he has actively participated in hammering out a Marxist-Leninist position on every phase of domestic and international affairs. His own writings have been

umerous and encyclopedic in range -from Technocracy to Tito, from the .S. labor movement to the Vatican, om Germany to Japan, from studies the origins of Socialism in the nited States to evaluations of Len-'s theoretical contributions.

Indeed, in the three-pronged strug-e for Socialism—the economic, po-ical and ideological—it is in the tter, it is as a theoretician, that rome has made his *particular* con-ibution. All three interpenetrate, of urse, and merge and affect each her. The analyses offered by Jer-ne, in a whole range of political id philosophic questions, have been ovoked by real needs of the work-g-class struggle, as they have, in rn, influenced that struggle.

Here his every word is infused ith the struggle against imperial-m and its offerings—poverty, chau-nism and war, and with his passion build a peaceful, decent, creative istence for all mankind. It is this rtisanship which makes his analy-s true and their summarization or notation so timely.

Those who would again attack e U.S.S.R. would do well to read rome's article, published in *The ommunist* in August, 1941 and en-tled "The Red Army—Spearhead Humanity." Here Jerome, on the sis of his knowledge of the na-re of the Socialist Soviet Union, ated that the Red Army would nash the juggernaut which had ushed the armies of France and ngland. He knew "the war will be long and hard" but he knew that the Red Army, "shock troops for the peoples of the world," would emerge victorious.

In the course of the war, Jerome repeatedly warned of the latent pro-fascist forces within American capitalist society and particularly denounced one of their prime weapons —white chauvinism. Thus, in June, 1942, he demanded an end to the "disgraceful practices of discrimination against Negroes in industry, in the armed forces, and in civil life —practices of the very tissue of the fascism we are fighting to destroy...."

By February, 1943, Jerome was warning of "a small but powerful defeatist element centering in the du Pont clique of the National Association of Manufacturers" and denouncing their "treacherous purposes." And in October of that year he stated that, "Against the anti-fascist forces in each land are ranged, not only the Hitlerian Axis, but tenacious and pro-fascist enemies at home." And he added: "The failure of fascism until now to gain ascendancy in Britain and the United States should not lessen our alertness to the danger of efforts by fascist-minded monopolists to establish an 'Anglo-Saxon' brand of fascism."

As for Anglo-American imperialism's tenderness toward Nazi Germany, by May, 1945, Jerome's book, *The Treatment of Defeated Germany,* had been published and there he had warned: "Not by appointing Nazis

and war criminals as acting Mayors, not by opening schools to 're-educate' Nazi policemen will the job of purging Germany of fascism be performed. Perverse indeed is that logic which seeks to justify with the plea of 'expediency' the installation of Nazis to administer the destruction of Nazism!"

As the crystallization of reaction occurred following the end of World War II, Jerome brilliantly projected and analyzed the *ensuing* period in an article entitled "Lenin's Method," published in *Political Affairs* in January, 1946. The whole article was an important instrument in the struggle against Browderite revisionism. Jerome wrote:

> "The unfolding postwar period in the United States reveals that, notwithstanding the military defeat of the Axis, we are still in the historic period of the struggle against fascism. We are in that phase of the anti-fascist struggle which has as its objective, on the domestic scene, the defeat of the camp of reaction and fascism in order to prevent its reconsolidation to beat down labor's living and working standards, crush the labor movement, and fascize America. As regards the foreign-political tasks, the struggle is to prevent the camp of reaction and fascism, whose imperialist base in the United States has been strengthened in the war relative to the general weakening of world imperialism, from thwarting the complete destruction of fascism in the defeated Axis countries, impeding the development of the democratic peoples' governments in liberated countries, and reviving anti-Soviet aggression."

Particularly noteworthy have been Jerome's analyses of American religious institutions, and of the cha acter of the labor movement in t United States. Concerning the fo mer, Jerome has stressed decayi capitalism's compulsion to repudia reason and abandon science. At t same time he has distinguished b tween the necessity to fight this o scurantism and a "sensitive rega for the deep-going religious feelin of millions who must be united the struggle for peace and dem racy.*

And, in regard to the labor mov ment, Jerome has probed especia into the economism and opport nism which have plagued it for long. In an essay, "Lenin and O portunism in the Labor Movemen (*Political Affairs,* January, 1949) meriting careful re-reading and stu —Jerome pointed out: "In Euro the traditional task of Social-Demo racy has been to head off the mass cialist consciousness of the worki class from the realization of soci ism; in the United States, the tra tional task of the reformists has be to retard the maturing class conscio ness by blocking labor's independe political action."

This lack of political indepe ence, this economism, is exceedin costly for, "The concessions wru from the capitalist class are imperm nent and precarious so long as political energy of the labor mo ment remains harnessed to the wag

* See, especially, his essays, "The Vatic War on Peace," in *Political Affairs*, April 19 and "A World 'Christian Front'?" in *Masses*, November 26, 1946.

of capitalism. Ergo: the Wagner Act of the 'thirties can be exchanged for the Taft-Hartley Act of the 'forties." The timeliness of this analysis in 1952 is painfully apparent.

V. J. JEROME is one of those who, in Fuchik's words, "dare sing freely out in the world." In summarizing his report to the Fifteenth National Convention of the Communist Party, held in December, 1950, Jerome summarized his life, devoted as it has been to the best interests of the whole American people:

> "As Marxists-Leninists, we voice the deepest needs and aspirations of the people, Negro and white, native and foreign-born. The warmongers and their decadent cultural apologists offer the people physical and spiritual impoverishment, the slow death of subservience and the swift death of the atom bomb. Our Party offers the people the science and culture of true human relations based on the guaranteed rights to material satisfaction and cultural fulfillment. We must go forward to the people with the message of peace, of freedom, of Socialist humanism."

And this report, published under the title "Let Us Grasp the Weapon of Culture" in *Political Affairs* (February, 1951) constitutes "Overt Act No. 22" in the case of the *U.S.* v. *Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, et al*! This is Jerome's criminal "overt act" for which he stands threatened with five years' imprisonment! Well, this is Jerome's belief, his conviction and, to him, the truth of his convictions, the honesty and sincerity of his belief are infinitely more valuable than his personal freedom, than his own life.

Opposed to such a life the imperialists can only sneer, as did William Henry Chamberlin in a recent issue of the Social-Democratic *New Leader* (December 3, 1951): "To assume that ideas are always impervious to force is to exaggerate the willingness of the average human being to be a martyr." This gestapo-like threat does not daunt *Elizabeth Gurley Flynn et al.* Those Communists know that when an idea's time has come and when it seizes the masses it is the one absolutely irresistible force in history. They know, too, that whether or not you like *their* ideas, their right to those ideas and to the fullest expression of them cannot be curtailed without destroying the Bill of Rights. They know that if they may not speak, others may not hear. They know that liberty is indivisible.

They know that the policy of anti-Communism shields the drive towards fascism. They know that if they are imprisoned, the thought-control officials will move—how far they have already moved!—to ban every decent thought and action preparatory to launching a new world war.

They know, too, that they can win, and that they will win if the truth about themselves and about their persecution is brought to millions of Americans. Those millions, understanding the life-and-death issues involved in the Case of the Seventeen, will see to it that the Seventeen never go to prison.

"Conduct is social, too..."

By MARGUERITE HICKS

MY FAMILY left the Deep South with that hopeful, surging army of Negro migrants near the end of World War I. Most every one headed for Detroit. They had heard of Henry Ford's magnificent generosity; his workers got $5.00 a day! Others were going to New York City, to try their luck in that fabulous Harlem, see what Lenox Avenue looked like, taste real freedom. But my mother held out for Boston. No, she had no relatives there, not even friends, but she'd read so much about Boston in the history books, it just seemed the right place for us children.

My first day in a Boston school comes vividly to mind. For days mother lectured over and over, "You're going to school with white children now, and white teacher, mind you know how to act. Study hard, show them what you can do."

Every morning before I left for school I had to pass strict inspection and questioning. Did I know my lessons? Was I neat, clean, well dressed? It wouldn't do to look the least bit shabby in a mixed school. Cleanliness, always a must in our household, was now carried to extremes. Dresses must be nicely starched and ironed, and changed daily, shoes well polished.

I protested at first against all this the other girls and boys in my cla weren't always so starched and clea why did I have to be? My moth would look me squarely in the ey and ask the all-important questio "Are they white?"

When I answered yes, she wou pound through the lesson I must lea and never forget. "If they want to l dirty or even so-so clean that's a right for them, they're white. N body's going to look at them and s why doesn't their mother keep the clean, they must be all like that. B that's what they'll say about y children if you're dirty, they'll s all colored folks are dirty, and if y don't know your lessons they'll s all colored folks are stupid, so mi you, study hard and keep clean. He change that dress! You go lookin bad and the next thing you kn they'll have all you colored childr out of those schools."

And so, many, many years af integration in schools became lega and socially accepted in Massach sets, the burden of proving its sag ity was placed squarely upon my year-old shoulders. I grew to acc the challenge with dignity. Week

ıd week out the teacher pointed to e as the nicest girl in the room. erfect conduct, better than average :ades (my hand was usually one of ıe first to be raised to answer ques- ons), and always so neat. "Here," id teacher, "is a girl whose mother orks out every day, and yet she has me to keep her children neat and ean. Sees to it that they study, too. only goes to show what you can) when you really try."

All this was duly reported to my ırents. Their pride, of course, was eat. Everything was coming out st like they had told me. Study ırd, keep clean, and presentable, and e good, and you'll succeed as well the next person.

But this strict life soon lost its ow for me. I was teacher's pet but was lonely, very lonely. None of ıe girls called on me to join their ımes in the school yard. No one cked arms with me or shared a hispered secret. I came to school one, I went home alone. Then one ıy in the dressing room I mumbled remark about the teacher. I didn't ink it was funny, but the other rls did. They laughed so hard they ıd to bend over and hold their omachs.

The incident was a turning point. fter that the girls looked to me to y something funny, anything, throw a witty word or two every day. I ever failed them. All these lonely onths I'd been piling up impres- ons in my mind of teachers, school les and so forth: now was my chance to test them on my classmates. I became the life of every ring game, and revelled in it. Not only did I convulse them outside of school, but I kept the class in an uproar inside as well. Gone was my adult resolve to show white people what I could do, how good I could be. I became just a little girl again, content to enjoy myself. The childish adulation of my classmates for my every word and misdeed was music to my ears, I couldn't give it up.

Of course my marks suffered. If you wanted to belong to the gang you must not be too bright or cooperative, and I loved belonging. I did experience a twinge of conscience now and then, because I hadn't entirely lost my determination to help speed the "progress of the race," but I figured I could take it up again, say when I was about 15. But for the present I was having fun.

At first teacher was puzzled. Then annoyed. She tried a little plain talk with her former model. "You were such a good girl when you first came to us, I used to think you would grow up to be a Credit to Your Race. You can do it, too. Your people are asking for a lot of things these days. They want to vote everywhere, they want all kinds of jobs, they want a social life they've never had. Well, you can help right now, even if you are only 8, by having good conduct. You know, conduct is social, too."

I stood with head lowered while she talked, unmistakable proof of humility in our school. But all the

while I was busily assembling quips in my mind to regale my friends with afterwards. I knew a little group would be waiting for me outside to see how I took the lecture. When I went out I looked for all the world like the girl who didn't care, even though I'd had to pummel my conscience a little. Just made light of the whole affair.

HOWEVER, it was not long after that that teacher's patience came to an end. "Have your mother in school tomorrow morning," she said. My mother had to work the next day, so she sent my father. His company was strike-bound, and he had been home for several weeks.

Now my father had been growing more and more morose for some time. In the South he'd had a trade, brick masonry. He was steadily employed at this, along with other Negro workers. In fact Negroes did most of that kind of work in the South during that period. It was, of course, unorganized, the pay ridiculously low, but there was always work. Then the great exodus to the North began. I remember hearing letters read from those who had gone ahead. How they extolled the virtues of the people they had met in their new homes, and the money! That's what sounded so wonderful to a family man. He could make more than twice the money he was making now, provide a good living for his family, and educate his children, too, for a certainty.

And so we uprooted; he left first, and the family followed a few months later. When we arrived, he told my mother of his fruitless search for work at his trade. First, he was told to join the union, then when he went to apply for union membership he was told flatly they didn't take Negroes. This in the North! Just the form was a little different.

As time went on we could see he was hurt, it showed in every gesture in every word he spoke, though he spoke little. He had been the butt of a cruel joke which had raised his hopes so high of better things in a better place only to have them dashed to pieces. So he took the only work open to him, that of a day laborer. With this he managed to make almost enough to support the family. My mother filled in with part time work, but when his lay-offs and strikes came, she worked full-time. Then my father took over most of the household tasks, silent and brooding, but efficient. It was during one of these periods that he was summoned to my school.

Teacher stood in the doorway and talked to him. Outlined all the things she objected to in me, told of her great disappointment in me. He stood there listening sadly, his shabby overcoat and hat contrasting with my neat little dress.

I heard him agreeing with everything she said. Yes, it was a shame I was wasting my time so. It worried him to hear it. Oh yes, he agreed, I had a great opportunity to

lp bring credit to my race: he dn't had such. He only went to e fifth grade, had to leave and go work, would probably have a good o now if he'd had the education. nd so on and on they talked. The llow, defeated sound of his voice ould stay with me for days after-rds. For once I was unable to sum-on any bright, amusing words to my nd. The only thing I was con-ous of at the moment was a lump my throat, that try as I might I uld not down.

When school was out I ran home ne. I knew my father would have le to say to me, but he would re-rt to my mother. He left all dis-pline to her anyway.

MY MOTHER had become a domestic day-worker in Boston. ne of the thousands and thousands women who would go to an em-oyment agency and sit and wait for e telephone to ring. Some house-fe would call and ask for a strong oman for cleaning, or a thin woman serving the table (they look bet-in the dining room), or a wom-who'll love my children to take er the job of minding them, an perienced laundress to wash and n, a Southern woman, a Canadian man, and so on, and so on.

As the man in charge listened to se specifications he'd turn and vey the eager applicants. When gaze came to rest on one he ought appropriate, he'd beckon to r, write the name and address of the housewife on a slip of paper, and send her off. The others would move up nearer the desk and wait for the next telephone ring. They all hoped for a day in which the telephone rang busily. Then practically everyone would be sent out.

Those were the days when a domestic did almost everything asked of her when she went out. The whole labor movement was weak, and pressure was indeed great on the lowest rungs. If you went to clean, you scrubbed on your knees without question, even washed walls and windows. If you went out for laundry work you scrubbed the clothes on your knuckles (not too many washing machines in 1919) and then you lugged the heavy basket outside to hang them up, even in winter. Your hands froze, so did the clothes, but it was good for the clothes, they smelled so nice afterwards. Nor was it unusual for an employer to interrupt a woman's cleaning to ask her to take the children to the park for an airing.

I remember my mother came home one day feeling quite elated. Her employer for that day had asked her if she would stay and work an hour or two overtime to prepare the evening meal. When Mom hesitated, the employer had promised three days work every week regularly. This, of course, had settled it: Mom stayed. "She didn't have quite enough change to pay me for the extra time I worked today, but I told her that was all right, she could pay me tomorrow

when I go back."

When I came home from school the next day, to my surprise Mom was already there. "Are you sick?" I asked. "No," she answered, "when I got there this morning that woman sent her little boy to the door to tell me she was called away on business and wouldn't need me any more. Now you know that's the biggest lie. How can that woman have the heart after I went out there in all that snow?" Mom didn't keep her hurt feelings to herself like Pop did. I hated that woman too.

It was after one such day that Mom came home to hear about my poor showing in school. She greeted us in her usual way: "Hello, get my slippers." And while I went after them my father began telling what the teacher said. He didn't forget a thing. As tired as she was, my mother probably would have liked to forget the whole thing for awhile, but she was from the spare-not-the-rod school. Her conscience would hurt, she said, if she let any need for discipline go by. Anyway, she took care of the situation in a manner to soothe her conscience, and trouble my sitting.

While we were eating supper, both my parents kept up a punishing lecture. Didn't I realize my golden opportunity? Did I want to grow up ignorant and have to work hard like they did? They said the way I was going I was headed straight for domestic work! My mother said if I could see what she had to do at work, I'd grab my books and study all nigh if necessary. I promised solemnly do better—study, give no mo trouble. I meant it too. The last thin in the world I wanted to do w grieve my parents.

THE next day I started off to scho starched and stiff, once more d termined to take up the racial stru gle. Come what may, I would my part. All went well for about week. I played as much as ever ou side, but in school I was once aga the girl with a purpose in life, a I tried in every way to show that knew it was high time I was abo it.

But my fall from grace came abo again as fast as it did the first tim Absolutely unpremeditated. Teach who was portly, was conducting spe ing class one day. I was called on spell the word "padding." Just as stood up and started to speak, teach bent over to pick up a piece of cha off the floor. I began spelling p-a d-i-n-g while pointing brazenly her very ample posterior.

Great was the joy of my classmat The lost one had returned to the fo They pressed their hands hard o their mouths, but the sniggles bro through them and spilled out over the room. Teacher didn't kn what had happened, but she did kn something had, and that it was good. "I wish to speak to you o side," she said to me. This time I kn how the lecture would go. "Y know, conduct is social, too!"

SPRING CLEANING

(On the Anniversary of the Women's Rights Movement in the U.S.)

By EVE MERRIAM

A time for Spring cleaning.

Now tear the swaddling veil off stiff brocade, heavy paneling.
Break the beading, fretwork, embroidered scrolls;
Unlock the scented boxes.

Shake out the dust of settled ignorance:
Invigorate the air.

Look beyond the yellowing pages
And gaze into the sun.

Acquaint with them for what they simply were:
Women, cooped and caged,
Daring to be human.

From the walled-up facade to over the wall—
Not tossing a lovelorn trinket
Or a silvered moonstruck wish—
Setting their hands in broad daylight upon the winter wall
And leaping over.
Look, my sisters, a world,
A world of humankind!

And stones flung,
Rotten eggs,

Dung on the doorsill;
Put pepper in the stove and shake these females up,
Smash the windows,
Douse the hall with flames,
They're getting too blamed cocky—
The jeerers brave with lawless law and guns.

Their feet continuing along the road
Faltering,
Unsure in their cramped shoes,
Oh what a muddy road
Long and serpentine!

Penny by penny
The petitions mount to Congress
"That all men *and women* are created equal . . ."

Back to your knitting, ladies.
Back to your soap and candles,
Preserves, bread-baking,
Floors to scrub, buttons to sew, cloth to weave.
Nursing, unofficial doctoring
(Trouble is, they haven't enough for idle hands)—
And as the annual calendar another child
Born dead so often,
Only the future hope refusing the stillborn event.

Elizabeth Stanton,
Sojourner Truth,
The one little and pink,
The other tall and black,
The many from factory, field, slipping out by the kitchen rear
Into the dazzling open air
Tasting the cup of clear water
Are we not women—
And sisters?

A common day, a long day
With Douglass, Garrison, union-leader Sylvis,
Lucy Stone's husband:
Our freedom lies together.

The day confused, the day dying,
The mistakes, the bickerings
And the victories scarcely visible
Slow, slow
Growing old in the cause

The fresh-faced girl a memoried grandmother
Rocking the dwindling years.

And the day renewed,
The day continuing

Sojourner's straight back in the pride of Rosa Ingram
(In the countless Rosa Ingrams)
Little Liz Stanton leading the housewives to City Hall
We'll boycott meat
We'll boycott war
There shall be milk and April for every child

The day endless with fetch and carry, stoop and bend
And all to do again
The day endless, will the load ever lighten?

The day unending
The day beginning

To lift, my sisters
Many hands, my sisters

Lifting into Spring.

On the occasion of International Women's Day, March 8, the Editors are happy to present the above poem; the contribution by Miss Marguerite Hicks, a Negro writer living in Boston (this is her first published work); and the following article on Harriet Beecher Stowe.

Mrs. Stowe's Best-Seller

THE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF AN AMERICAN CLASSIC

By SAMUEL SILLEN

SOON after the Fugitive Slave Act was passed in 1850, Harriet Stowe received a letter from her sister-in-law in Boston, Mrs. Edward Beecher. "Hattie," said the letter, "if I could use a pen as you can, I would write something that will make this whole nation feel what an accursed thing slavery is." Mrs. Stowe read the letter to her children, and they recalled years later that their mother, then a woman of 39 who had suffered much illness and poverty, crumpled the letter, rose to her feet, and said quietly: "I *will* write something. I will if I live."

But writing a book was no simple matter for a mother of six children who had to make ends meet on Calvin Stowe's salary as a professor of Natural and Revealed Religion at Bowdoin College. There was an infant to nurse—"as long as the baby sleeps with me nights I cannot do anything." There were chowders and pies to prepare in the rented house on Federal Street in Brunswick, Maine. And to stitch out the family income, Mrs. Stowe had to turn out short journalistic sketches.

Yet the book would not be downed, even if Mrs. Stowe had to shock the Bowdoin faculty by using her husband's office as a writing hideout. Life was pressing home the horrors of the slave system which Harriet Stowe thought she was leaving behind when the family moved up from Cincinnati. For eighteen years she had lived in the "Queen City of the West," where her clergyman father, Lyman Beecher, headed the Lane Theological Seminary. In Cincinnati, divided only by the Ohio River from slave territory, the religious New England girl had helped her brother Henry Ward Beecher, loaded revolver at his elbow, edit a journal which Southern postmasters refused to handle because of its views, as they said, "on a certain subject."

During these years she had seen organized pro-slavery mobs, "composed in the main of young men of the better class," wreck the printing plant of Abolitionist James Birney's *Philanthropist*. She had witnessed the sacking of alley-shacks in the Negro ghetto of Cincinnati, the brutal cap-

ure of slaves who had escaped, like iliza Harris, across the frozen Ohio. Her home was a haven for fugitives, nd she had herself helped a young Negro woman in her employ slip way from a "master" who was on er trail. The "peculiar institution" tself she had seen at first hand dur- ng her visits to Kentucky across the iver.

These experiences, which were to orm the rich soil of her novel, had eepened her anti-slavery convictions nd made her sympathize with the Abolitionists. But she had been held ack—not only by the energy-con- uming hardships of her own family, ut also by social pressures against woman's taking an active part in politics," by a rather unworldly hus- and wrapped up in his theological esearches, by her own pacifist and onciliationist yearnings which were t odds with the era and her abhor- ence of chattel slavery. She came ack North in 1850 as to a refuge.

But there was no refuge from the ational crime. With the passage of ie Fugitive Slave Act in the very ear of her return, failure to join in unting down Negroes, failure to be n *active* accomplice in slavery, was ronounced treason by the govern- ient. In this treason every man and oman of conscience wholeheartedly oined. When the Negro fugitive hadrach was arrested in a Boston estaurant, where he worked as a aiter, he was defended by Richard Henry Dana, Jr., the lawyer who ten ears earlier had protested the flog- ging of merchant seamen in his *Two Years Before the Mast.* Shadrach was forcibly rescued from U.S. custody by Negroes in February, 1851, and their leaders, defended by Dana and John P. Hale, won a hung jury and acquittal.

When Thomas Sims, a 17-year-old fugitive from Georgia, was arrested in Boston in April, so great was the popular indignation that the "trial" (without jury, of course) had to take place in a roped off courthouse sur- rounded by two companies of militia, and three hundred policemen escorted the Negro youth to the Savannah steamer. Mrs. Stowe's brother, Dr. Edward Beecher, who had been in Illinois with the Abolitionist martyr Elijah T. Lovejoy, preached a fiery sermon against this deportation to slavery.

AT THE height of these agitations, inspired by what she described as a "vision" in church, Harriet Stowe resolved to write *Uncle Tom's Cabin.* She wrote to Dr. Gamaliel Bailey, editor of the anti-slavery *National Era* in Washington:

> "Up to this year I have always felt that I had no particular call to meddle with this subject, and I dreaded to expose even my own mind to the full force of its exciting power. But I feel now that the time is come when even a woman [even!] or a child who can speak a word for freedom and humanity is bound to speak. The Carthaginian women in the last peril of their state cut off their hair for bow-strings to give to the defenders of their country and such peril and shame

as now hangs over this country is worse than Roman slavery, and I hope every woman who can write will not be silent. . . ."

Carthaginian women, Negro and white, had in fact long spoken out, despite abuse from pulpit and press, social ostracism, physical violence. Nearly twenty years before, in 1833, the popular novelist Lydia Maria Child had sacrificed her large following, but at the same time won a new audience, with her anti-slavery book *An Appeal in Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans.*

Negro women like Harriet Tubman, and Sojourner Truth, whose eloquence deeply impressed Mrs. Stowe, and Frances E. W. Harper, most popular Negro poet of the period, were rousing the country. Carthaginian too were women like the poet Maria White, wife of James Russell Lowell, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, Abby Kelley, the sisters Grimke, and many others who understood the bond between the struggle against chattel slavery and the crusade for women's rights.

These women, together with Douglass, Whittier, Garrison, Phillips, had prepared public opinion for the book which Harriet Stowe was now writing. It began to appear as a series of sketches in the *National Era* in June, 1851. Mrs. Stowe conceived it as a serial of three or four installments. But the subject would not let go, and neither would the readers of the *National Era* who begged the author to go on and protested vehemently to the editor when the paper missed an installment. And on it did go until nearly a year passed and there were forty sections, for which the author was paid the sum originally contracted for—$300.

The paper's circulation was tiny but word of its astonishing serial spread through the country. Finding a publisher for the book was another matter. The Boston firm of Phillips, Sampson and Co. turned it down. It could never sell a thousand copies, they said, and besides, success would be even worse than failure, for success would "ruin our business in the South."

Fortunately a Boston woman, Mrs. John P. Jewett, had been moved by the serial, and she induced her husband, who headed a small publishing house specializing in "practical" books, to gamble on a novel. Worried Mr. Jewett cannily offered to split the investment with the author and divide the improbable profit fifty-fifty, but Harriet's husband, not to be outdone in shrewdness, held out for a ten per cent royalty. Mrs. Stowe was pleased, and she said: "I hope it will make enough so I may have a silk dress."

THE two-volume work entitled *Uncle Tom's Cabin, or Life Among the Lowly* was published on March 20, 1852, a hundred years ago this month. The edition was 5,000. No reviews appeared for several weeks. But reviews were hardly necessary. A miracle had taken place

The 5,000 copies were gone in two days, and from the first it was impossible to keep up with the demand despite the four power presses working day and night and the 200 bookbinders pressed into service.

By the end of a year over 300,000 copies were sold in this country—the equivalent of four million today. Miners in California rented pirated editions for a quarter a day. A score of songs based on the book, including Whittier's saccharine *Little Eva,* became sensational hits. A card game called "Uncle Tom and Little Eva," based on "the continual separation and reunion of families," ran up big profits for a manufacturer of home-amusement devices. The first of countless dramatizations opened in September a 100-night run in Troy, New York, and Mrs. Stowe collected not a dime for her silk dress, since dramatic rights of authors were not protected until 1870.

Nor has any American book, before or since, been so widely read or had such a terrific impact abroad. In England nearly 200,000 copies were sold that first year in editions pirated by twenty different publishers. Editions of *Il Zio Tom* were sold in all Italian cities, an edition of *Caban F' Ewythr Twm* appeared in Wales. The book was translated into Bengalese, Danish, Chinese, Persian, Bohemian, Swedish, Japanese, Armenian, German, Finnish. In Paris three newspapers serialized the book simultaneously in three different translations. In Rio de Janeiro a Portuguese edition contributed to the movement for freeing Brazil's slaves.

The Russian translation of 1853 was greeted by leading revolutionary democrats like Herzen, Dobrolyubov, Chernyshevsky as an aid in their struggle against serfdom. The work was distributed as a supplement to the magazine *Sovremenik,* edited by Chernyshevsky, who in his own novel *What Is To Be Done?* has the girls in a co-operative sewing establishment inquire about "the life of Mrs. Beecher Stowe whose novel we have all known."

Tolstoy, who read the book as a young man, later included it in his *What Is Art?* as an example of the highest literature "flowing from love of God and man. . . ." The popularity of the book in Russia has continued to the present day, its latest re-issue in the Soviet Union being dated 1951.

Writers the world over hailed the book—Heine, Dickens, George Sand, Frederika Bremer, Macaulay. The reaction of the British people is vividly depicted by the Abolitionist leader William Wells Brown, who in 1853 published his own anti-slavery novel, *Clotel,* the first novel by an American Negro. Writing to Garrison from London on May 17, 1853, Brown describes an overflow meeting of 5,000 at Exeter Hall which Mrs. Stowe attended on her first trip abroad:

"No time could have been more appropriate for such a meeting than the present. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* has come down upon the dark abodes of slavery like a morn-

ing's sunlight, unfolding its enormities in a manner which has fastened all eyes upon the 'peculiar institution,' and awakening sympathy in hearts that never before felt for the slave. . . . At this stage of the meeting [when Mrs. Stowe appeared] there was a degree of excitement in the room that can better be imagined than described. The waving of hats and handkerchiefs, the clapping of hands, the stamping of feet, and the screaming and fainting of ladies, went on as if it had been in the programme, while the thieves were at work helping themselves out of the abundance of the pockets of those who were most crowded. A few arrests by the police soon taught the latter that there was no room there for pick-pockets. Order was once more restored, and the speaking went on."

THIS welcome alarmed the government of the United States. The pro-slavery Democratic Administration of Franklin Pierce did what it could to tone down the demonstrations for Mrs. Stowe which it considered hostile to the "best interests" of this country. Ambassador James Buchanan, the future President, was assigned to prevent if possible a reception of the novelist by Queen Victoria. Buchanan wrote triumphantly to Secretary of State Marcy that the Queen, who together with her consort Prince Albert had wept over the death of little Eva and written a note of thanks to Mrs. Stowe, had "remarked very sensibly that American Slavery was a question with which Great Britain had nothing to do."

(A hundred years later, with Eleanor Roosevelt playing the role of James Buchanan, there was to be a repeat performance of the U.S. government when William L. Patterson came before the United Nations with *We Charge Genocide!* which should rouse all humanity as the *Uncle Tom's Cabin* of this generation.)

Nor was the response to Mrs. Stowe's novel unmixed at home. Significantly, the first blast came from a Northern paper representing the big cotton investors, the New York *Journal of Commerce.* The slaveholders themselves reacted with laws banning possession of the book in the South. A Mobile bookseller was run out of town for stocking it, and a free Negro of Maryland received a ten-year prison sentence for reading it. Mrs. Stowe herself got threatening letters, and one day there arrived a package containing an ear cut off from the head of a Negro. Southern children were taught to chant:

"Go, go, go,
Ol' Harriet Beecher Stowe."

The *Alabama Planter* editorialized: "For her own domestic peace we trust no enemy will ever penetrate into her household to pervert the scenes he may find there with as little logic or kindness as she has used in her *Uncle Tom's Cabin.*" Very quickly there appeared a raft of pro-slavery "Anti-Tom" books, such as Mary H. Eastman's *Aunt Phillis's Cabin; or, Southern Life As It Is.* A Northern reviewer of this last book wrote: "The pictures of the intense happiness of the slaves are so very

arming one wonders why the in-ntors do not make haste to sell eir children to the slave-traders." Ironically, Mrs. Stowe had intended r book as an appeal to the "noblest minds and hearts" among South-n slaveholders themselves. She anted, her preface explains, to reathe a humanizing and subdu-g influence, favorable to the devel-oment of the great principles of ristian brotherhood." She por-ayed sentimentally idealized images "benevolent" slaveowners like elby and St. Clare, and she made e most evil characters, like Simon gree and Dan Haley, Yankee in igin. She made a false separation tween owners and traders of slaves. it there is no evidence that any veholder ever appreciated her ef-rts, and the ban on her humanizing ok has remained virtually in effect the present day in the white-su-emacist schools and libraries of the uth.

NEGRO leaders were quick to wel-come the book as a weapon for ancipation, whatever its shortcom-gs. Frederick Douglass, describing isit to Harriet Stowe early in 1853, d the readers of his paper that the velist had "unfolded the secrets of slave's lacerated heart" in her ok and done so with "deep insight o human character, melting pathos, n and quiet wit, powers of argu-ntation, exalted sense of justice, l enlightened and comprehensive losophy."

Mrs. Stowe, after the first five installments of the story appeared in the *National Era,* had written to Douglass asking him to help her in collecting information about life on a cotton plantation. The great Negro leader rejoiced in the universal appeal of the "master book of the nineteenth century":

> "One flash from the heart-supplied intellect of Harriet Beecher Stowe could light a million camp fires in front of the embattled hosts of slavery, which not all the waters of the Mississippi, mingled as they are with blood, could extinguish. The present will be looked to by after coming generations as the age of anti-slavery literature—when supply on the gallop could not keep pace with the ever growing demand—when a picture of a Negro on the cover was a help to the sale of a book. . . ."

When Mrs. Stowe published in 1853 *A Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin,* replying to her pro-slavery critics with documents, Douglass wrote:

> "The most unwise thing which, perhaps, was ever done by slaveholders, in order to hide the ugly features of slavery, was the calling in question, and denying the truthfulness of *Uncle Tom's Cabin.* They had better have owned the 'soft impeachment' therein contained—for the *Key* not only proves the correctness of every essential part of *Uncle Tom's Cabin,* but proves more and worse things against the murderous system than are alleged in that great book."

Less than a year after the novel came out, a call to the National Negro Convention to be held in Rochester, N. Y., cited "the propitious awakening to the fact of our condition

at home and abroad, which has followed the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin.*" Sojourner Truth made a trip to greet Harriet Stowe, while Frances E. W. Harper in her poem "Eliza Harris'" evoked one of the most moving passages of the book.

The tradition was to continue with Paul Laurence Dunbar's sonnet to Mrs. Stowe in 1898. As late as 1927 the eminent Negro historian, Dr. Carter G. Woodson, was still defending the novel against a white magazine writer who ridiculed its portrait of slavery's horrors. *"Uncle Tom's Cabin* met the test of realism," Dr. Woodson declared.

Yet another irony enters here. This book, which played such a dramatic part in the struggle for emancipation, has itself been an instrument for giving wide currency to some of the foulest slanders against the Negro people. The fault is mainly in the cheapening and distortion of the book by its myriad dramatizers. The essential meaning of the novel has been perverted into its opposite, and consciously so, by the "blackface" minstrel-show versions which millions of Americans have seen. These shows have created the image of a grovelling "Uncle Tom," a monstrously stereotyped "Mammy," a ludicrous "Topsy." The tragic elements of the story have been stripped, the evils of slavery have been converted into parodies of an oppressed people, the dignity and deeply felt moral outrage of the book have been destroyed.

These obscenely chauvinistic "Uncle Tom shows" have been picketed by Negroes and white progressives, and rightly so, for they are spectacles fit only for lynch mobs. But the picket signs have also pointed out that these shows defame not only the Negro people but Harriet Beecher Stowe, who championed their cause. To identify the crude caricatures with the original would be to hand over to the Bourbons a part of the people's heritage.

YET the book does have very serious faults, beginning with the characterization of Uncle Tom himself. Through her hero—and she conceived him as morally heroic—Mrs. Stowe expressed her own world outlook, which was deeply religious. She did not portray a merely submissive or obsequious man, certainly not a betrayer of his own people, as the term "Uncle Tom" has come to suggest. She felt the highest reverence for his Christlike meekness of spirit, his humble simplicity, his turn - the - other - cheek philosophy which no insult, outrage or suffering could ruffle.

But in developing this image, it tended as noble and based in part on a living hero, Rev. Josiah Henson, Mrs. Stowe became the victim of her evangelical fervor. The man of great heart becomes almost heartless in his capacity for forgiving even a Simon Legree who is murdering him, and the dignity assigned to him is undermined by his infan-

ability to suffer indignities. His faith in the divine does not nerve his power to resist evil, but robs him of it; and he becomes a "good servant" not only of his Lord but his mundane master. At the same time, be it noted that Uncle Tom goes to his death rather than betray the escaping Cassy, the victim of Legree's brutal lust.

While Garrison, like the later Tolstoy, could applaud the pacifistic nonresistance philosophy of Mrs. Stowe's hero, the Negro leader C. L. Remond declared at a Massachusetts state convention of Negroes in 1858, where he called for militant resistance, that he "did not go so far as Uncle Tom, and kiss the hand that smote him." Rev. Josiah Henson, who was present at the convention, retorted that "When I fight, I want to whip somebody," a remark which one would have welcomed in the novel.

The book has other weaknesses, sharpened up by a reading today. The idealization of some slaveholders has been mentioned. The conclusion that colonization in Liberia plus prayer is the solution contrasts rather ironically with the objective facts reflected in the body of the work itself.

The book falls into generalizations about Negroes which, while intended to be friendly, border on a racist character. The sentimentality in regard to little Eva is stifling. There is a middle-class white lady's snobbishness in the distinctions made between the lighter skinned and darker skinned Negroes. The former are always comely, while only the latter speak in a dialect which is the arbitrary phonetic rendering of an ill-trained listener, with occasional "comic" effects, that has become so conventional in American fiction.

The novel suffers too from its ramshackle structure, the sudden tying together of loose threads with the magic of melodrama. The story, like the waif Topsy, just grew. Nor did Mrs. Stowe revise. The failing is made evident by repetition, discrepancies in characterization, backtracking of plot.

BUT outweighing such flaws of form and content is the powerful indictment of the whole institution of chattel slavery. The system itself is the villain of the piece. Mrs. Stowe's conscious aim was to show its inherent barbarism, with the Simon Legrees as its final and inevitable expression.

"There is no arguing with *pictures,*" she had written the editor of the *National Era,* "and everybody is impressed by them, whether they mean to be or not." It is as a painter of lifelike images of injustice and cruelty that the novelist excels. She had not read Dickens in vain. Her book is permeated with the intense partisanship for humanity that one finds in the author of *Hard Times.*

The book is rich in scenes that evoke the heartbreak of families split up, the unbearable anguish of mothers whose babies are snatched

from them on the auction block. One of the most memorable is the scene on the steamboat *La Belle Riviere,* with its fashionable white folk sunning themselves on the top deck while on the freight deck below the young Negro mother Lucy, tormented beyond human endurance, hurls herself into the river to escape "into a state which *never will* give up a fugitive,—not even at the demand of the whole glorious Union."

The better known scene of Eliza Harris' crossing the ice with her son Harry, after she had won some precious time because her pursuers were misdirected by Negro men, is convincingly heroic. And the author does not hesitate to speak directly to her white women readers:

> "If it were *your* Harry, mother, or your Willie, that were going to be torn from you by a brutal trader, tomorrow morning —if you had seen the man, and heard that the papers were signed and delivered, and you had only from twelve o'clock till morning to make good your escape,— how fast could *you* walk?"

Again and again the novelist sets up this vivid identification between the reader and the human beings for whose freedom this book was fighting. And repeatedly, as in the case of George Harris, she shows the moral and intellectual superiority of Negroes over their white rulers.

Harris, who had seen his mother put up at a sheriff's sale with her seven children, is sent by his owner to work in a bagging factory, where he invents a machine for the cleaning of hemp. George Harris "talked so fluently, held himself so erect, looked so handsome and manly, that his master began to feel an uneasy consciousness of inferiority. What business had his slave to be marching round the country, inventing machines, and holding up his head among gentlemen? He'd soon put a stop to it."

But George Harris refuses to go back to the field. "I'm a better man than he is," he says. "I won't be taken, Eliza; I'll die first; I'll be free, or I'll die. . . . I'll fight for my liberty to the last breath I breathe." And fight he does, with arms, side by side with white Abolitionists in Ohio until he and his family are free. Here Mrs. Stowe achieved something of the quality of a Negro novelist like Martin Delany, who in his *Blake, or the Huts of America,* published in 1859, stresses the spirit of revolt among the fieldhands more than she.

THE "keen and quiet wit" which Douglass praised asserts itself delightfully throughout the novel. George Harris' owner says: "It's a free country, sir; the man's *mine* and I do what I please with him,— that's it." St. Clare's slaveholding father venerated God "as decidedly the head of the upper classes." Marie St. Clare complains about the "obstinacy" of the Negro woman whom she had separated from her husband and children: "she won't marry anybody else; and I do believe, now though she knows how necessary she

to me, and how feeble my health is, ıe would go back to her husband to-ıorrow, if she only could. I *do* in-ɜed; they are just so selfish, now, ıe best of them."

Such knife-thrusts are not dated, ıd indeed one reads many sections the book with a painful aware-ɜss of how much most white peo-e still have to learn from a book ritten a hundred years ago in a me of slavery. It was Harriet Stowe's mforting hope that "as so many the world's sorrows and wrongs ıve, from age to age, been lived own, so a time shall come when etches similar to these shall be valu-le only as memorials of what has ng ceased to be."

When she published her second ti-slavery novel, *Dred,* in 1856, she w a little more clearly that such time could not come without great uggle. And this struggle she fully pported during the Civil War, ıen she devoted her newspaper col-ın to pressuring Lincoln for an or-r of emancipation, and when, as ırl Marx noted in the New York *ribune,* she forced the British anti-orthern press into the open.

But what she could certainly not ɜetell was that a hundred years er the inhuman oppression which e damned would be carried on under the hypocritical banner of freedom. Very shrewdly she had made one of her characters say concerning the argument that the Bible sanctioned slavery: "Well, suppose that something should bring down the price of cotton once and forever, and make the whole slavery property a drug on the market, don't you think we should soon have another version of the Scripture doctrine? What a flood of light would pour into the church, all at once, and how immediately it would be discovered that everything in the Bible and reason went the other way!"

Economic exploitation remains the keystone of the arch, and on it all hypocrisies are erected. The imperialists continue the slaveowners, and Truman continues Pierce. The traders in human flesh have become apostles of genocide.

But above all what one feels in rereading the book on this anniversary is the magnificent onward march of the people who continue Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth.

Today it is their novelists and singers, their leaders and thinkers, it is the masses of the Negro people themselves, allied with all that is progressive in our life, whose eloquent wrath rings throughout the world and wins the response of all humanity.

Political Prisoner, U.S.A.

By CARL MARZANI

THE political prisoner not only has the pressure of his family's welfare on his mind: there is an equally great pressure from political developments outside. Politics is of immediate and urgent concern to him. On the climate of the times depends his parole and, importantly, further prison sentences. If the trend to Fascism is not stopped, jail becomes a career.

Over the thirty months I spent in jail, few developments were more disheartening than the degradation of the Supreme Court by Mr. Truman. The characterization is that of Professor Rodell of the Yale Law School. The Court, he writes, is "lazy" and "degraded"; Truman's appointees range from "mediocre to miserable" and Tom Clark in his opinions reveals a "stark incomprehension of underlying issues."

Today, in liberal circles, the Court stands pretty well exposed, but I felt in jail that not sufficient emphasis was being placed on the tacit complicity between Mr. Truman's Court and Mr. Truman's Department of Justice. The nexus of this unholy alliance is the Solicitor General, Philip Perlman, who merits attention.

Perlman, a former utility lawyer from Baltimore, is a bully, and a rather stupid one, at that. At the American Bar Association Convention he threatened lawyers who defend radicals and more recently at a banquet of C.I.O. lawyers defended the government's witch-hunting with some really ludicrous logic.

The C.I.O. legal banquet deplored the government attack on civil liberties. Such is the temper of the times, however, that these same C.I.O. lawyers complimented Perlman on his "efficiency" in winning his cases before the Supreme Court. Since many of those cases were precisely cases on civil liberties, the C.I.O. lawyers can only be understood as exceptionally religious men: they hate sin, but they love the sinner.

Perlman has not lost a civil liberties case for the good and sufficient reason that a majority of the Supreme Court is in tacit complicity with him. The scorching dissents of Black and Douglass might give pause to a more honorable or intelligent Solicitor General.

I saw Perlman in action twice, ıch time on my case.

He began the first hearing with a ılsome description of my educa- on, talents and achievements. His ıtent was to show that this was no rdinary criminal but an irresistible lachiavellian termite who should be iven no quarter. This was stupid. he harangue only stimulated the in- rest of the judges. As for his legal rguments, they were literally ıredded by Justices Rutledge and lack.

An example will give the tone of ıe arguments. There are no trans- ripts of Supreme Court hearings, o that quotations are not possible, ut the gist is correct.

One issue was, could the govern- ıent prosecute for any false state- ıent? Osmond Fraenkel for the de- ense made this parallel: suppose a ıessenger boy comes in late, and his ıperior questions him. The messen- er says he's been to his grandmoth- r's funeral, whereas in fact he was laying baseball. Can the government rosecute?

That's silly, said Perlman.

Why was it silly? asked Justice lack.

Because it wasn't an important ıatter, said Perlman.

Who decides what is important? sked Black.

You do, said Perlman.

In other words, said Black, the *ct* of the crime does not exist unless nd until we say so.

Perlman, too late, saw that he had ut his foot in it, since there is no such thing as retroactive crime. He opened his mouth and he put out the final clincher: "The government," said Perlman in these exact words, "must defend itself."

Justice Black looked at him in disbelief and uttered a snort of contempt that half whirled him around in his swivel chair.

Justice Rutledge leaned over, massive, slow-spoken, with a granitic integrity. Do you mean to stand there, he said bitingly, and actually argue that the government can do anything it pleases?

"The government," repeated Perlman, "must defend itself."

Rutledge, too, gave a snort like an angry water buffalo. He leaned back in his chair with the air of a man who knows the worst.

To me the interesting thing was Perlman's attitude. There was an element of defiance in it, as if he knew the argument was illogical, yet at the same time an attitude of intimidation. My side is powerful, said his attitude: take care!

It may have been my fancy, but I felt that the fight of Black and Rutledge and Murphy in that court, a fight fueled with a passionate ardor that was both obvious and exciting, that this fight, this passion, this ardor, was at least in part due to the fact that they recognized the challenge and the threat.

Throughout, Chief Justice Vinson was quietly helping Perlman. With his pouchy equine face draped in benevolent somnolence, Vinson was actually and sharply alert to aid Perl-

man in the worst faux pas. Vinson himself, as Professor Rodell points out, is no intellectual giant.

DURING the second hearing another issue developed. Could the government prosecute on a statement made without witnesses, without transcript, in a private conversation? There was no evidence as to the content of the conversation, other than the say-so of an official whose account was diametrically opposed to mine. (The most charitable interpretation is that his memory was at fault; the least charitable that he committed deliberate perjury.)

At any rate, in one point of the argument Vinson interrupted the defense.

Marzani, he said, has agreed with the testimony.

The defense lawyer looked up, surprised. But your Honor, he said, Marzani hasn't.

I mean, said Vinson, the conversation is all written down.

"But your Honor, it isn't," said the amazed lawyer. "That's precisely the issue."

"Oh, well," said Vinson, with an intonation that said: what does it matter?

Justice Black, next to him, swiveled about and looked at him squarely.

" 'Well, indeed,' " he said in a tone of such complete contempt that I could have hugged him.

But Vinson had a right to be bored. He had four votes sewn up, and I went to jail for three years, on a four-to-four decision. Today Vinson does not even have to pretend attention. Mr. Truman has seen to it that Philip Perlman can prosecute with impunity before a "degraded" Supreme Court.

MR. TRUMAN recently stated in the same breath that we have the finest prison system in the world and no political prisoners. The first half of the statement is dubious; the second demonstrably false.

Whether the *Federal* prison system is the best in the world is doubtful; what is certain is that it doesn't rehabilitate. The personnel is not there for even the simplest measures of rehabilitation. Lewisburg Penitentiary had one psychologist and one psychiatrist who doubled as an ear and nose specialist—one and one-half men to guide and help 1,000 inmates. Danbury Jail with 400 inmates had one part-time psychiatrist, a real nincompoop, who after a five minute interview said that I sought "martyrdom." I told him his recourse was simple: release me and thus "frustrate the hell out of me."

More important, the Federal system is *not* the major prison system in the United States. State and county jails are overwhelmingly more extensive and most of them are barbaric. I've talked to dozens of prisoners and the picture given in *Scottsboro Boy* is not exaggerated in the least. Finally, for Truman's benefit, whatever is good in the physical conditions and personnel of Federal jails is directly attributable to the New

Deal. Mr. Truman's policies are actually subverting the existing standards.

The reason is simple. In the process of dealing with political prisoners, prison authorities are scared of being accused of "softness" towards communism and therefore take a more and more stringent attitude. This in turn reflects itself in the attitudes to regular criminals. In the field of penology, as elsewhere, the witch-hunting and subversion of civil liberties undermines the entire process of democratic progress.

Mr. Truman notwithstanding, there are political prisoners in America today. One political prisoner would be one too many: there are currently dozens either in jail or about to go to jail. Already a literature is growing around the subject, a fund of stories and anecdotes. Prison stories, like army stories, tend to be off-color and some indulgence is required.

A favorite one concerns ex-Congressman Parnell Thomas and Lester Cole of the Hollywood Ten. They had last seen each other across a table with Thomas trying to bully Lester. They met again in Danbury Jail.

Thomas was assigned to taking care of chickens on the farm. He was on top of a chicken coop, shoveling down chicken droppings as Lester came by the wire enclosure, cutting weeds.

Said Lester, "Well, Feeney, we meet again."

Thomas grunted.

"Still on different sides of the fence," went on Lester and Thomas snapped back:

"And you still got a sickle in your hand."

"That's right," said Lester pleasantly. "And you're still shovelling chicken stuff!"

Humor is a fine defensive weapon but one can't be funny the live-long day. There are no substitutes for books, magazines, and the mind's expression through talking and writing. Here the plight of the political prisoner is serious. Attempts are made to censor his mail on political grounds; his list of correspondents is kept to a minimum in contrast with other criminals. While Hearst's *Journal-American*, Gannett's newspapers and such completely fascist sheets as the Brooklyn Archdiocese's *Tablet* are freely circulated in jails, nothing is allowed which has anything to do with Marxism or with the Soviet Union.

Even anti-Communist books, such as Carr's *The Bolshevik Revolution* are prohibited if the title scares them. *Masses and Mainstream* was prohibited, *Science and Society* likewise. As for the *Daily Worker, Political Affairs* or the *Labor Monthly*—perish the thought!

WRITING is a particularly sore point. The official position was set forth in a letter from the Bureau of Prisons. This is the revelant paragraph:

"You are correct in stating that Federal

prisoners are permitted to write while confined in our institutions. We encourage all types of creative work and many men are working on short stories and books. From time to time we send these manuscripts to publishers for consideration but so far none has been published."

This would seem to mean that they like people to write, and they do. . . . BUT not political prisoners. I got reluctant permission to write and I wrote both a novel and a book on civil liberties. After a year and a half during which parole had been denied, attempts at censorship had been made, books had been prohibited, I came to the conclusion that while I would be allowed to take out the novel, the political book would be confiscated. Whereupon a series of coincidences took place which resulted in the manuscript being buried outside the prison walls for safekeeping.

It was accidentally discovered and the ensuing hullabaloo is still reverberating. One would have thought it was a mink coat. I was haled before a prison "court" and the consequences were pretty grim. I was "fined" five and a half months good time, i.e., I would be released five and a half months later than was normal. I was sent away from Danbury to Atlanta, over 700 miles from New York so that it would have been impossible for my wife to visit me. Luckily very strong protests halted my travels and kept me in Lewisburg, a mere 250 miles away. In the process I was kept over two months in semi-isolation, in a cell alone, with no permission to buy cigarettes, pipe tobacco or other small luxuries that make life in prison a little easier.

Now the authorities concerned had no personal interest in being "tough." They have no special interest in censorship and harassment. But they are frightened of the McCarthys, they are frightened of the McGraths. You can play fast and loose with a mink coat but woe betide the wrong handling of a political manuscript. Incidentally, while I have the novel, to this date I have not received the manuscript nor two essays confiscated at the same time. One was on Toynbee's *Study of History,* the other on the Chinese Revolution. The continued confiscation of this material is indefensible, yet there is no recourse.

SINCE political prisoners do exist and are in jail, it is of the utmost importance that prison rules be made to fit them. Political prisoners should have the right of free correspondence, the right to buy whatever books and magazines they see fit, and the right to write freely and to keep their material. This is a minimum program on which all decent people can agree without reference to divisive political opinions. A dignified letter to Mr. James V. Bennett, Director, Bureau of Prisons, Washington, D. C., will do good.

Above all, we must put a stop to having political prisoners. It is a task that will require the most united and unremitting struggle.

field of plunder

By CHARLES HUMBOLDT

They send him
Not among the cool flowers
But on that brimming-with-blood
Hard hill, and to the sour shore
Like sideways crawling crabs, claws
Hanging from cliffs of smoke

Not to a calm house—
Trapped by flies in the sand, trod on
By the monster sun, wind made of dust
Shutting his eyes and mouth, buzzing
In his breath

Not riding home
From the beach, the show, the game, the park
In the bluegold air, reclined in speech
Because of the day and evening and night
So long and graced with acts of love

But by the burnt walls crying and
In the dry river biting stones, learning
To walk in the shade of clanking iron
To whirl in circles when guns cough
To run forward and backward
Through the chalk gully, toward the split tree

A dream of love covered by snowing death
No time, no place for the stars of heaven
And flowers of long walks

A dream of flying flesh, shrubs of white fume
A plan of scorched bones and scattered teeth
A bell crying bong, bong, bong
Over those who never did him wrong.

The masters of the hunt
Cried for a wounded paw
If a falcon fell from the sky
Someone would have died
Of sorrow for that symbolic bird

But those who send him
Wait behind the hills
Beakéd and blinking, till the sound of death
Tells them to soar, and now they hop
On the bleached horror, the cracked bell
The smell of man delighting them, as they
Pick profit on the field that curses them.

Eftimie's Horse

A Story by V. E. GALAN

WE APPROACHED the house picking our way through the slippery mud in the court-yard. Somewhere near us a mastiff barked angrily in the darkness, rattling its chain and scratching its back on a stack of hay or maybe maize stalks.

Old man Eftimie Ion Lupu stopped, disconcerted, his hands on the door handle.

"The old woman is not in. . . ."

I struck a match and looked at my watch.

"She will have been delayed somewhere in the village. . . . It isn't six yet."

Mumbling something—as far as I could make out—about how short the days are in winter and how long women's tongues are all the year round, Eftimie signed to me to stay where I was and, setting off briskly, disappeared into the darkness surrounding the sheds of his narrow bare court-yard.

He was soon back beside me, however, holding in his hand a huge key like those they use in monasteries, wrought with much care by some local smith. We went in.

In the yellowish light of the newly lit lamp whose glass was still steamy, every nook and corner of the dwelling, with its whitewashed walls and its earthen floor newly evened, testified to the diligence of the mistress of the house.

"When she'll see the light in the window, she'll be back in no time. That's the arrangement between us," the old man explained.

And after he'd arranged a place on the bench against the wall for me to rest on, he took off his coat and his sandals, and swung himself on top of the oven as nimble as any squirrel.

I smiled and lay down on my couch:

"Do you know, Old Man Eftimie, you haven't aged a bit."

"Fancy that now! Of course I haven't aged because I am not old, see? Is forty-seven old?"

"Not old, but . . . er. . . ."

I stammered, flustered by the man's

V. E. GALAN *is a young Romanian newspaperman and author whose novel,* The Dawn of the Slaves, *was published in* 1950.

obvious vexation and the ever swifter movement of the shadow of his hands on the ceiling.

"But what? . . . There's no but about it. When I entered my name for the collective farm, the same story. . . ."

"Oh, I wasn't speaking about that, Eftimie. . . ."

"I know you weren't, but some of them spoke in the same strain at the time. . . . They said: 'You want to come in too, old man.' That's how they spoke. As if all that there was left for me was to sit down and wait for death to come and get me! To hell with all that nonsense! When there was that meeting to form the farm group, who was the first to stand up? Yours truly! I told them: 'Yes, I am forty-seven, and I have an old woman, a horse, a cart and two hectares of land. Can I put down my name for the collective farm-group, or do you think I'm only fit now to lie down on the porch, a pipe between my teeth, and keep a sharp lookout to see from which side death is coming?' They laughed and held out the list to me, and so I put down my name. Do you get me? I was the very first man in this village to put down his name—my name topped all the others on the list. And, according to custom, I made a cross beside it for my old woman to put her thumb print on. Yes, that's what happened."

"It's a good thing you put your name down, Eftimie, a good thing and. . . ."

"Let be, lad, you're not going to teach me what's good and what isn't. I know that for myself—it's not for nothing that God planted a head between my shoulders. Let me tell you that I'm not like some folks I know, stupider than the horse. The horse. . . ."

"Which horse, Eftimie?"

"What do you mean which horse? My horse. Didn't I tell you I had put down my name with the horse. . . .

". . . The land, the cart and the old woman—I heard all you said. Only I don't quite see the connection."

"Of course you can't see any connection, if you won't let me speak. There is no way to find out, it's not written on the walls. Only I know it; if you want to know too, just you keep quiet and listen to me. Well, do you mean to keep quiet?"

"Sure."

FROM the oven where he was, the old man tossed me a counterpane to wrap my feet in and sat up, crossing his legs under him.

"I say, if we're going to talk there's no need for so much light. So lower the flame of that lamp a bit. You see, in this village we are short of paraffin. There's no way of getting it over. You've seen the state our roads are in. If you were to harness pigs to the cart, they'd give it up in disgust after a bit. If you come back here next year, you'll see what a fine road we will have made by then. A road like the palm of your hand so that people may walk on it and not

flounder in the mud like buffaloes, after every drizzle. The Provisional Committee has promised us the stones. There've been some engineers here too. . . . Perhaps we'll build a power plant as well, have you ever heard of such a thing? Heigh ho! You'll see what a fine village this will be then!"

I lowered the flame of the lamp and settled down again, thinking of the power plant, of the road and of a bay horse — an old puny, scraggy jade, with burrs clinging to the tuft of hair that grew between its ears and half way down its forehead. Just an ordinary horse which old Eftimie had bought some ten years back. Was that the horse he was talking about?

"Yes, of course. You know it, then," the old man rejoiced. "Let me tell you."

And he told me.

SO, HE began, we entered our name for the collective farm and went back home. My two sons also entered their names, each with his household. During a week or two we held a few meetings, had a few comrades over from the Party and the ministry to direct us; some engineers came over too—we chose the land, measured it, considered things, pooled the land, repaired the sheds on the farm; in short we set things going.

We inaugurated it too. People simply poured into the village for the occasion. It was an honor and glory for this village such as it had never enjoyed before!

Well, that was that.

On the very next day, the man in charge of the organization said: "Now let us bring to the farm the cattle, the carts, the fodder and the tools we have registered with."

"All right!" agreed the meeting.

I didn't worry much about my old woman during those days. She was always about the house, as a woman should. But when I came to fetch the horse, what do you think she did? Sat herself plump in the middle of the court-yard and began to blub.

"Where are you taking it, Eftimie? Where are you taking it?"

"What do you mean where am I taking it? I am taking it to its home."

"What? Isn't this its home?"

I talked to her gently.

"Now don't be a fool," I said to her. "You know where I am taking it and why."

She looked at me affectionately first, then angrily. . . . We argued for some time. Then, as she saw she couldn't have her own way, she fell on the horse's back and began to weep and lament as if she were mourning the dead:

"I bore you,
I brought you up,
And now you're going to your death,
Little one, my little one."

The horse behaved as any horse would have done: it shook its head and whisked the flies away with its tail. . . . It took not the slightest notice of the old woman.

"What nonsense they — whoever they may be—have filled your head with, woman!" I tried to comfort her. "What do you mean, you've borne it? What the deuce? — God forgive me! — you're not a mare! And about bringing it up, don't you remember that when we bought it, the jade was already old? And why should you speak about death? A dead carcass wouldn't lash you between the eyes with its tail. . . . And just listen to the woman! 'Little one, my l-ee-ttle one' indeed!"

She frowned between her tears:

"Well, are there special mourning words for a horse? Of course there aren't. So I mourn over it as I have learned how—and now will you leave me alone!"

I thought she had calmed down. But not a bit!

Before I could get out of the yard, she laid hold of the reins somehow and began to kiss the horse's muzzle more tenderly than if it had been a lover.

I stopped dead, looked at her flabbergasted and crossed myself. . . . The jade tried to pull its muzzle aside—no good. When it saw how things stood, it rolled its eyes, swelled its flanks and sneezed into her face.

She drew aside then and said: "You can take it wherever you want to now. The dead do not come back from their grave."

"Oh! oh!" I said angrily, "that's what you mean? You mourn over it and kiss it as if it were dead. . . . Then," I added, "if I would let you do as you like, I bet you'd bring priest and banners here and begin handing out alms. . . . That's really a bit too thick!"

I laid hold of a stick then.

"DON'T you touch me, Eftimie," she turned on me like a viper, "don't touch me or I'll leave this house and never rest until the whole Party and the whole Democratic Women's Union knows how you treat your wife at home. . . ."

"So you've grasped that," I said, getting angrier still, "you've grasped everything, but you don't want to understand what a collective farm means. . . . Besides, this is not the house, it's the court-yard. And I'll behave as I please and think fit. That's one thing. The second is that —as you may have heard—I haven't joined either the Party or the Democratic Women's Union. So if you won't see reason, I'll smash you to a pulp, like a beetroot, without accounting to anyone for it. . . ."

And with this, I went up to her, stick in hand.

She defied me.

"All right, smash me to a pulp. Why don't you? I am far worse off than any beetroot now. . . . You run about all day, bothering about nothing but that collective farm, while I sit here, wondering and racking my brains and fretting and telling my fortune with maize grain without getting any answer to my questions. . . My head is whirling with all I hear, one saying this, another that; I hold my tongue and listen like a fool and wonder how things really are. . . .

Don't strike me, Eftimie," she shrieked. "Didn't the Party make your son Gheorghe promise that he wouldn't thrash his wife any more? You know they did, when they reprimanded him. And Ilie Sascau, didn't they. . . ."

I flung the stick away and said to her: "Why the deuce did you join the collective farm, woman?"

"Why do you ask such a question? I joined it because you had joined, but I didn't think it would come about so quickly."

"And why are you so set yourself against me now? Who is it that eggs you on to be so pig-headed? Is it Hurduc's or Puiu's wife? Which kulak's wife eggs you on, eh?"

"Don't you worry your head about that," she answered, "I have my advisers. But do you think I can't see things for myself? You have become almost a stranger to me since that collective farm business was set afoot. God only knows where you go and who has come between us. . . . Maybe you've taken a mistress in your old age. . . ."

I told her another thing or two, lashed the horse and was off.

She kept on mourning: "Little one, my l-ee-ttle one."

OLD MAN EFTIMIE stopped and asked me to throw a few more sticks into the fire — not many.

There is great scarcity of wood about here, he explained presently. We manage as best as we can with dried cattle dung and sunflower stalks. There were forests about here in the old days. Beautiful ones too. But they cut them down as it suited them. When there will be more collective farms, we're going to have a plan as they have in the Soviet Union; we'll do our utmost to grow forests again, on the hilltops and along the banks of the rivers. . . . If you come back here in fifteen or twenty years, you won't recognize these places: our village will look like a garden by then. By that time maybe we'll have asphalt on that road too . . . and brick houses. And not only in our village. In all the villages all over the country. . . . But let me go on with my story. As I was telling you, I took the horse to the stables of the collective farm.

All well and good.

I was pleased in a way but felt sorry too. The old woman was as mute as a fish now at home. I told her things, I explained to her—no good! After a time, I began to chaff her: "My! What a wonder that you should keep silent so many days running! I keep looking at you and don't recognize you: are you a woman or an angel? I can't make you out any more."

On a Sunday, at the plenary meeting, I raised the question: "What about the women, comrades? Mine has not uttered a word these last two weeks. I have almost forgotten what her voice is like. What she is up to, I don't know, but it bodes no good. She draws away from me and becomes nastier. . . ."

"Why don't you bring her over? Isn't her name entered on the col-

lective farm too?" the old man in charge of the organization asked.

"Sure it is; only, you see, should she loosen her tongue and bring a few more like herself, women will rule the roost on our collective farm. . . . That's not as it should be and everybody will make fun of us. . . ."

"Don't you worry about that; just you tell her to come over and see what it is all about, so that she may understand. . . ."

"All right, I'll tell her."

"Or do you think it would be better if someone else told her?"

"Yes, I think that would be better. . . . I'd rather wash my hands of it all. . . ."

Ever since, my old woman would dress up Sundays as though for church and follow me to the meeting. She never uttered a word on her way there, or back, or while she was there. But she seemed to soften. A few things here and there helped. . . .

One day, when we first began to dig for the hothouse—for we are going in for serious gardening—I saw her also at work.

"What are you doing here, woman?"

She didn't answer.

"What is my wife doing here?" I asked the man in charge of the organization.

"Well, it's her farm, isn't it? She is working."

"That's all very well, but who the deuce is going to cook for me?"

"She's brought you some food, man. You needn't go home to dinner at all, you'll both eat here."

"Do you think she's brought my dinner too?" I said wonderingly.

"Of course, she has," he said and got on with his work.

THE old woman *had* brought my dinner.

We went on in this way until November.

Then, one day, I had to take in my share of the sunflower crop for the state collection. I went over to the farm, asked for a horse and a cart, went back home, loaded it, and took the load to the farm.

The old woman was at work.

It was my horse's turn to do duty. I could hardly recognize it now—it had grown fatter and swifter and glossier. It looked positively younger!

When I got back late at night, my old woman came out to meet me.

I hadn't even jumped off and she had already unharnessed the horse—she made a better job of it than even our men at the 11th Horse Regiment where I did my military service — and thrust the jade into the stables.

"Whatever are you doing here, woman?"

She didn't answer.

"I have to take it back to the collective farm, and don't interfere in what doesn't concern you!"

"But this does concern me!" — Her tongue was loosened now. "Isn't the horse mine? Isn't the collective farm partly mine too? Where do you want to take it in the dead of night anyway? Who's waiting for it there? Its daddy or its ma maybe? Who's going to feed and water it?"

"They will probably do that tomorrow morning."

"And suppose it is sick? Here it will have everything it needs, can't you see? It's common property — trifle with it? Isn't it enough that you should make a laughing-stock of me?"

When you came to think of it, she was right. At the collective farm there was no one overnight except the watchman.

"All right," I said, "if that's how you feel, I'll take it over tomorrow morning."

"Right you are, let it enjoy its house and its real masters for a few hours at least, for it must be sick and tired of living among strangers. . . ."

How could one keep one's temper when one heard such things? I told her: "You kept silent for two full months, like the wise woman in the legend, and now, as soon as you open your mouth, you say some silly nonsense."

That's all I said. You can't talk to such people.

I had my supper and went to bed.

The old woman could not rest. All night long she had the fidgets.

She kept going from the house into the stables and back again all through the night. She took all manner of tid-bits to that horse: a bag full of apples, a pickled cabbage, a handful of peeled nuts . . . she also took it a pot of thick soup and some porridge. The old jade had a regular bean feast.

Towards dawn, dead beat, she had fallen asleep on a bench.

AT SUNRISE, I heard an uproar in the court-yard. I got up, looked around, but didn't see anyone. The dog was curled up and only pricked up its ears now and again.

I went into the yard and what did I see? In the stable, the horse seemed to have gone mad; it neighed, kicked at the walls, viciously bit the boards of the pen. . . .

I went back into the house and woke up my wife.

"Listen to me, listen, it's about your horse. . . ."

"What did you do to it, what did you do to it?" she snarled.

"I? I didn't do anything to it. Only it's got settled habits now: as soon as the sun rises, it clamors for its daily portion: oats, water and a curry-comb. . . . In the collective farm, things are not done as they are here. There, every jade leads a proper life, doesn't just muddle through. When it's meal time, they get their meal on the tick. If they don't get it on time, they carry on like that. Habit is habit. Can't you see? It looks younger than it looked here. Do you think it's the work of Providence? Yesterday, while I was loading the cart, I could hardly curb it. A well-fed, well-groomed horse, and no mistake! That's what all horses will be like in a few years' time. For you see, animals, just like men, need. . . ."

Do you think she stopped to listen? Not a bit.

She took the pail in one hand,

plunged her other hand into the horse's mane—she had fastened a red ribbon to it overnight—and led it to the fountain.

Late into the forenoon, about two hours later, she came back alone, half laughing, half crying.

"Where's the horse?" I asked her.

"Where should it be but at the collective farm?"

"Did you take it there?"

She pulled her head-kerchief over her nose, sat down on the porch and didn't answer. I sat down beside her.

"Can't you speak, woman? Did anyone from the collective farm come to fetch it?"

"Nobody came."

"Did you take it there?"

"No."

"Well, then, what happened? Speak. Is it on the farm, or have you done something silly again, you stubborn creature!"

"What shall I say? There is nothing to say. Go and ask it how it was."

"Ask whom?"

"It—the horse, man, your damned jade. . . . For, after it had drunk four pailfuls of water—my arms went almost numb turning the wheel — it put up its tail and galloped off."

"Where to?"

"To the collective farm, didn't I tell you? When I caught up with it, it was butting the gate with its head to push it open. Look what I've got here."

She held up the red ribbon that had probably fallen off the horse's mane when it had knocked against the gate of the farm. She went on: "I opened the gate for it with my own hands. If it finds it pleasanter there, let it live there. Don't bring it back any more. They are properly looked after, there; I've seen that. And after all, it's still ours. . . ."

WHAT was I to say?

"So that's how it was! . . . It's all right, then . . . quite all right. Let thy will be done at least for once. But there's one thing that fetches me. Not that the horse proved itself cleverer than you—that's no great wonder.

But what surprises me is that it "proved itself cleverer than I am. I've been striving ever so hard for a long time and I haven't succeeded in teaching you a quarter of what that jade has taught you in an hour. . . . And now, what the devil are you doing there? Are you laughing or crying?"

She pulled her head-kerchief still lower down over her eyes.

"I couldn't tell you for the life of me: at times I feel like crying, other times like laughing. . . ."

Well, that's what happened.

Things are different now! . . . But sometimes I remind her of it, so that she shouldn't forget.

I tell her for instance: "You'll get me into trouble."

"How, man?"

"What do you mean, how? The horse, of course."

When you mention the horse to her, she pulls her head-kerchief lower over her eyes and laughs: "Are

you going to lecture me again? Get on with it then!"

"No, I'm not. But it's a fact. Didn't you put down your name beside mine at the top of the list for the collective farm?"

"I did that."

"Well, that's the trouble!"

"Shouldn't I have done it?"

"I don't mean that, but you shouldn't have put down your name right then, and not at the top of the list."

"But why, man?"

"You don't understand a thing! But just imagine it's ten years hence. Well?"

"Well, what of it?"

"Think it over. Do you know what will happen in ten years' time?"

"No."

"I don't know either. But supposing there was a conference, a congress or something of the sort for the peasants on the collective farms. There will be no end of people on the collective farms by then—as many as there are leaves on the trees or blades of grass on the common. . . . Well, if there is a congress, there must be a committee, mustn't there? Of course, there must be. Whom do we appoint on the committee? Prominent Party members? Of course. Prominent members of the Government? Of course. Prominent scholars? Of course. But Comrade Gheorghiu-Dej will say: 'Quite a good committee you folks have chosen, but it must be enlarged, there are some other people who also deserve this honor.' Who, Comrade Gheorghiu?' 'You give me those lists over there, and I'll tell you directly.'

"And I guarantee, he'll choose all those who topped the lists when these fifty-six collective farms were set up.

"'These comrades,' he'll say, 'deserve the honor. Send them each a telegram to bid them come. How many of them are there?'

"'Fifty-seven.'

"'How is that? There were only fifty-six collective farms in 1949.'

"'Yes, but you see, one of them, Eftimie Ion Lupu, put down his old woman's name beside his own. . . . That mark, you see, is the woman's thumb print. . . . She was illiterate then.'

"'All right,' Comrade Gheorghiu will decide. 'Let fifty-seven telegrams be dispatched.'

"And we'll receive the summons that very day. I'll receive one and my old woman another. Just like that: the postman will come on his motor-bike and bring two telegrams. When you've got proper roads, the postman goes about on a motor-bike, doesn't he?

"Well, to cut a long story short, we'll take one of the cars on the farm—for besides lorries we'll have a car or two for jobs to be done in a hurry, we'll catch a train and present ourselves at the place to which we've been summoned. Someone or other will come to meet us and greet us thus: 'You, the founders of the first collective farms in this Republic, will be on the committee.' That's how they'll greet us.

"I'll be in a quandary then. Shall

I keep quiet and say nothing? I shall not. 'No, comrades,' I shall say, 'It's not right that we should both be sitting on the committee. It is not right and that's a fact.'

"'Why, comrade?'"

"'Well, it's like this. As a matter of fact, this old woman of mine, damn her, only put her name down much later, about two months after me, and, to be quite honest, not only after me but also after the horse.'"

"I'll explain it all to them and then I'll conclude in this way:

"'So, comrades, as it is well known in our village that the jade passed away in our collective farm a few months before it reached its twenty-sixth birthday and since it is also well known that this old woman of mine has reformed since and has worked honestly for such a long time by my side, sometimes even being ahead of me in her work, I think she should not be sent home but should be allowed to share with me and with all of us this great honor because—as far as I can judge—she deserves it.'

"That's what I'll say."

THE little gate squeaked and footsteps picked their way through the slippery mud.

"It is she," the old man said joyfully.

Somebody knocked at the window.

"Eftimie!"

"What is it, woman?"

"Leave that oven for a bit and bring me the little book we were reading last night."

"Which little book? Do you mean *Ten Questions and Ten Answers?*"

"Yes. I don't want to come in, I have mud up to my knees, and have no time to take my boots off. . . . Come on, hurry up and bring it."

"Yes yes. . . . I'm coming. . . ."

Old Eftimie Ion Lupu jumped down nimbly, hunted through the papers on the shelf and went out into the lobby.

They whispered together hurriedly, then he came back into the house, shivering.

"There will be a frost tonight. . . . It may snow. . . . I didn't tell her you were here. . . . What do you think? She is a brigade-leader. During these last two months she worked forty-nine days on the collective farm. . . . There is one thing no one can deny: she's a hard-working and wise woman. . . . She's just told me she had come across a group of women working together. . . . They were spinning and talking their heads off all the while. . . . The wife of some kulak drops in now and then, stuffs their heads full of all manner of nonsense. . . . That's why she took that book along to them. They'll listen to her, of course, for everybody in the village knows how she came round to right thinking.

"But she won't be long now and immediately she comes in we'll have supper. . . ."

RiGhT FaCe

Opinion Report

"The magazine of opinion has a rough time nowadays. You tend to restrict your opinions more and more to make them coincide with the opinion of your readers and sometimes you find you have restricted yourself to rather small groups."—*Michael Straight,* New Republic *editor, announces the magazine will move to Washington, replace two editors, and support Eisenhower for President.*

Hope Springs Eternal

"When a single Government for the world, embodying the military supremacy of some nation or group of nations, has been in power for a century or so, it will begin to command that degree of respect that will make it possible to base its power upon law and sentiment rather than upon force; and when that happens, the international Government can become democratic."—Bertrand Russell in *New Hopes for a Changing World.*

Recipe for a Renaissance

"The only thing wrong with literature in our time is that it lacks the proper proportion of malice, envy and hate. The writers seem to have a phobia about not being rascals—or, at least, for concealing that they are rascals."—James Jones, author of *From Here to Eternity,* accepting the third annual National Book Award.

Life With Father

"He revealed, for example, that before the renovation his bathtub began by degrees to sink through the floor, threatening to plunge into the Red Room underneath. He asked Mrs. Truman what she would do if the bathtub with him in it suddenly descended into the middle of a reception for the Daughters of the American Revolution. Mrs. Truman did not think this supposition funny, the President said. She wanted, he said, to slap his face."—*The N. Y.* Herald-Tribune *reports the tour with newspaper correspondents conducted through the remodelled White House by the President of the United States.*

We invite readers' contributions to this page. Original clippings are requested.

French People Fight Hollywood

By ZELDA LYNN

Paris

NEW YEAR'S afternoon was clear and almost warm in Paris. On the crowded boulevards people drifted along, lingering to window-shop or to watch the magic-bubble vendor. Many were looking for a movie to go to; they complained that there was hardly anything to see but American films dubbed in French, mostly war pictures or gangster stuff. In front of the few theaters showing French films the lines were long.

Along the boulevards that day technicians and artists from the movie industry gave out over 15,000 leaflets to explain their plight and ask for help. Caught between the invasion of Hollywood films and the forty percent taxes on every ticket, the movie industry was faced with imminent collapse. In the big holiday week (December 26-January 1) there were American pictures in twenty-seven first run theaters totalling 32,800 seats, and just seven French first runs with only 3,700 seats.

No wonder the French film industry is in a crisis. On November 7, 1951, there were seventy-one completed French movies awaiting a theater. Of these, thirteen had been finished in 1949 and 1950! With the closing in November of the studios at Joinville, the most important in France, fifty-five percent of French movie studios producing sixty percent of French pictures are closed. Seven pictures are in production as against eighteen a year ago.

If 1952 should continue last year's downward trend, France will produce only twenty-five films instead of its normal one hundred. Ninety-two percent of the movie technicians are jobless. At a meeting where the whole French film world protested the closing of the Joinville studios, Rene Clair said:

"People consoled themselves about the ill-health of our cinema by thinking that — better or worse — the invalid continued living. And now the studios at Joinville are going to close. It is a brutal, photographic fact. . . . The French cinema wants to live. . . . The French cinema crisis must have a 'happy ending.'"

The film crisis in France is not one

of quality. Of the 120-odd pictures made since October 1950, there have been very many good films and at least twenty-five or thirty of highest quality. The French have won prizes at all the International Film Festivals with pictures such as *Justice est faite, Dieu a besoin des hommes, Maitre apres Dieu, Sans Laisser d'addresse, La Nuit est mon royaume,* etc. During the same period, of the U.S. films shown in Paris 132 dealt with crime, 80 featured sex appeal, 24 were based on alcoholism or insanity, 64 on war and 6 on Red-baiting.

The crisis is not a question of cost either, because the French films are by far the cheapest to produce. In 1950 the average French film cost 45 million francs (about $126,000), the average English film about $868,000, the average U.S. film over a million dollars.

THE crisis of the French film is not a result of internal weakness. It is caused externally.

Immediately after the liberation of France the movie industry came back with a rush in such sumptuous productions as *Les Enfants du Paradis.* Even during the worst periods of the war the French cinema had managed to survive; for the Nazis demanded for their pictures, dubbed in French, only fifteen percent of the theaters. But in 1946 the French and American governments signed that predecessor of the Marshall Plan, the Blum-Byrnes Accord. By this agreement France gave up fifty-one percent of its screens to Hollywood products.

The late Louis Jouvet, commenting on the Blum-Byrnes Accord shortly after it was signed, said:

"The American agreements not only attack an industry . . . they put in doubt the survival of our dramatic art. . . ."

By 1948, the French movie industry was near collapse. That year it had produced only seventy-five films. In response to the cinema's cry of alarm a wave of public support had swept the country. Committees of defense had been formed with hundreds of thousands of members. The Blum-Byrnes Accord was abrogated, although, unfortunately for France, its job was soon taken over by the Marshall Plan.

It is true that the popular movement had also forced an aid law from the government providing for some state support for the industry. But, as Rene Clair said recently, "The government isn't one-handed. For, while with the left hand, regretfully, it helps the French cinema, it strangles it energetically with the right hand." The aid law provided about $14 million for exhibitors and producers between September 1948 and July 1951. But the government took in over $25 million in box office taxes in a single year, 1949-50. Most of the aid money came from an additional surtax on admissions. The government really gives 61 cents for every $2800 it takes!

The French movie critic and his-

torian, George Sadoul, shows that as early as 1917 Hollywood threw the French and Italian film industries out of business for a long time. After the 1921 Hollywood maneuvers the flourishing Swedish cinema became virtually non-existent. In 1925 the U.S. industry almost wiped out German movies. British film prosperity has never been able to last more than a couple of years since its near destruction by Hollywood in 1930.

WITH such a history is it possible to dream of U.S.-French "cooperation"? Of American money working with French taste? The Blum-Byrnes Accord, the Marshall Plan and a series of private agreements are the answer. Six years after the reciprocity agreements between Pathé and RKO, Pathé doesn't have a single picture in a first-run theater, while one RKO picture dubbed in French currently has 7,000 seats in three of of the best Parisian theaters and is expected to gross over $280,000.

As for a U.S. market for French films—it is limited entirely to some tiny theaters in New York and a few other centers; unless, of course, the film has the "luck" to be able to make the sexy circuit. Not one French film has been run on any of the big theater circuits; not one French film has been dubbed in English. That is, one film was bought and dubbed by MGM in 1945 (*Goupi Mains Rouges* or *It Happened at the Inn*), but the resulting version was so good that it was never released. The American public might have developed a taste for French films.

The U.S. film industry is using every method of massive dumping and massive advertising to swamp and eventually secure the *whole* French movie market. For *Samson and Delilah*, for instance, Paramount spent $210,000 on publicity in Paris (almost double the total cost of a French film) although the picture, in spite of a record first-run gross, only netted $36,400. Similar tactics are being used on a bigger or smaller scale with every U.S. film in order to drive the French pictures off the French screens. Monopolists are always ready to lose some money temporarily to gain sole control of a market. With this policy the United States has succeeded in limiting French films in the average French movie theater in 1950 to only seventeen weekly programs out of fifty-two.

The amazing thing is that the American films with their two-thirds monopoly draw only about forty percent of the box office, while the French with their one-third draw almost fifty percent. The governmental figures of the Centre National de la Cinematographie show that "a French film has an average attendance of almost two million spectators, while an American film hardly attracts more than a million," and this disparity is increasing with every year.

These figures show how much the French people love their national in-

lependence, and how much they love nd will struggle for their culture. Hollywood forgot to reckon with the ower of French taste.

EVEN this life line of popular support is being cut by a government of American clerks working for he boss' policy of rearmament to the eeth. With super rearmament and loody wars a country can have neither butter nor culture. The impoverishment of the population and he brutal prices that make meat a uxury in France nowadays have caused a drop of more than sixty nillion movie spectators in the last ear. Of these greatly reduced box ffice receipts an incredible proportion goes straight to the tax collector —and thence into the war budget.

Most French producers are not big nonopolists, but small industrialists; nd they have reached a complete impasse. A typical case is that of Pierre Gerin. On four films costing him 338,800, that are now several years ld, the net receipts totalled $260,400. The "state aid" helped him with 58,800. Total loss on the four films —$19,600. But on the gross receipts f these same four pictures the government had gotten $358,400.

The French producer's situation s further aggravated by the fact that e usually works with borrowed capital and must have immediate payment rom the distributors and a quick urnover, especially since the movie risis has made money much harder o get and has made interest rates regular usury; while his Hollywood competitor tempts the distributor with easy terms, lower rentals and ninety-day credit.

The whole French people has now reinforced the demands of the French cinema for the return of $5,600,000 out of the total of $140,000,000 the government has drained from the movie industry since 1945 —money drained out of the peaceful movie industry into the cancerous "war effort." Acting together the people and the artists have forced the government to admit that it must give something back; and an investigating commission has been appointed by the National Assembly.

THE popular forces have always been closely linked to the development of the French cinema, and are its biggest mainstay in every crucial period. The world economic crisis of the middle thirties blighted the French cinema, but the Popular Front movement saved it from disaster, and made possible such masterpieces as *Grande Illusion, Kermesse Heroique, Carnet du Bal, la Marseillaise.* Today, once again, the French cinema finds itself at one with the efforts of the whole French people. For, saving the French cinema from foreign domination is part of the people's wider resolve to safeguard the national independence of the whole country; just as throwing off at least part of the unbearable tax burden is part of their wider

determination to safeguard world peace.

Producers, directors and stars are not confining themselves to protecting their own industry, but have become militant spokesmen in the fight for the protection of their country and of peace. Directors such as Jean Renoir, Jean Cocteau (*Orpheus*), Louis Daquin (*Maitre Après Dieu*); stars like Gerarde Philippe (*Le Diable au Corps*), Bernard Blier, Françoise Rosay. Françoise Rosay put their reputation at the service of humanity's cause.

"I speak to you as a mother, an artist and a taxpayer," she said at the recent French National Assizes for Peace. "Our government pretends to reason like Gribouille, who jumped into the river to keep from getting wet in the rain. They kill to save lives and arm in order to disarm. . . . It is not enough for mothers like us to care for our children. We have to save them."

That is why it has been impossible for the American war clique or its underlings to subvert the French cinema, to make it serve the purposes of war propaganda and brutalization of the mind—to make it go Hollywood. *The Desert Fox* couldn't be made in France, because no French cinema person would go near it. Recent efforts to make a picture glorifying the French mercenaries in Korea haven't succeeded even in getting together a technical crew, although there are hundreds of unemployed technicians.

All over France, in Marseilles, Lyon, Nancy, Paris, popular committees are forming to wrest from the government the necessities of life for the French movie industry. The demands of the industry are clear and to the point: one, the immediate government return of two billion francs; two, protection of the nation's movies from American dumping; and, three, the regulation of international exchanges on the basis of reciprocity—a program that can rally the nation to union and action.*

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* As a postscript, the author of this article writes from Paris:

"The news has just come of the first victory. The studios at Joinville have reopened. But their situation is still precarious; they can only look forward to two and a half months' work." [Eds.]

books in review

An Epic Revolt

SPARTACUS, by Howard Fast. *Published by the author. Box 171, Planetarium Station, New York.* $2.50.

"SPARTACUS" is a powerful novel of ancient slave society with rich meaning for the liberation struggle of our day. It is brilliantly written, and in certain sections probably represents the high point in the development of Howard Fast's superb craftsmanship.

The story of Spartacus and his army of slave warriors is one of the great epics of history. Early in the First Century B.C., a quickly organized force of 70,000 runaway slaves (some sources say 90,000, others 100,000), led by Spartacus and his heroic band of escaped gladiators, held the military might of Rome at bay for almost four years, routing its best legions, establishing control over most of southern Italy, and threatening the "Eternal City" itself.

They were finally destroyed by the state power of a slave system which, although in process of decay, was still a strong and stable society. Their revolutionary struggle for freedom—which historians euphemistically call "The Servile War" and "The Gladiatorial War"—forecast the day, some four centuries hence, when the maturing revolution of the slaves would pave the way for the "Barbarian invasions" and destruction of the Roman Empire—and along with it the slave mode of production upon which it rested.

The Spartacus revolt long ago attracted the attention of revolutionary leaders of the modern proletariat. Karl Marx wrote Frederick Engels in 1861: "As a relaxation in the evenings I have been reading Appian on the Roman Civil Wars. . . . Spartacus is revealed as the most splendid fellow in the whole of ancient history. Great general (no Garibaldi), noble character, real representative of the ancient proletariat." More recently, Soviet historiography found the Spartacus revolt an important event in its analysis of "The Transition from the Ancient World to the Middle Ages" (as in *Voprossy Istorii,* July, 1949).

But the story of Spartacus is little known in our day and country. Only from fragmentary and scattered accounts of a few contemporaries can it be pieced together at all. It is hardly mentioned in the history books of our schools and colleges. Only three sentences are devoted to the Spartacus revolt in the *Encyclopedia Britannica's* tedious, 100,000-word treatise on "Rome" and its long succession of rulers. Moreover, even the rare and brief accounts of Spartacus which do appear in our literature seek to deprecate this revolutionary movement as an incidental uprising of "desperate savages," "outlaws," "brigands," and "impoverished peasants."

In Howard Fast's novel, the Roman general whose legions finally defeated Spartacus recounts to associates visiting at the aristocratic *Villa Salaria* how, on orders of the Senate, he also destroyed two magnificent monuments carved by the revolutionary slaves out of volcanic stone on the slope of Vesuvius: "We destroyed the images most thoroughly and ground them into rubble—so that no trace of it remains. So did we destroy Spartacus and his army. *So will we in time—and necessarily—destroy the very memory of what he did and how he did it.*"

This prediction of the wealthy Roman praetor, M. Licinius Crassus, was almost fully realized. We are greatly indebted to Howard Fast for resurrecting and interpreting the significance of this heroic slave war for liberation, a war which came close to accomplishing what could be fully consummated only on the basis of economic and political developments which had yet to run their course.

Although the setting and narrative of *Spartacus* date back more than 2,000 years, it is clear that this novel was written to illuminate our own times. The pompous decadence of the Roman ruling class is here contrasted with the simple dignity and progressive vigor of the slaves in a way which evokes repeated images of the main contending classes of today.

One sees the cynical corruption of the Roman political leaders, their gross sexual immorality and perversion, the degradation of their women and the degeneracy of their youth. Here pictured is the sadistic delight of the ruling class and its sycophants in gladiatorial "fighting of pairs to the death," and their morbid fascination with the mass crucifixions of "enemies of the state." The magnificent "public" baths, the splendor of the *latifundia* estates and the elaborate cuisine of ruling class families contrast sharply with the horrible oppression of the slaves and the murderous poverty of the urban poor.

The reader is impressed with the parasitism of almost the whole non-slave population, in a society where even the dole or the army or the role of paid informer is considered much more "honorable" than work. One also comes to understand the vapid servility of the intellectual apologists of this rotten system—the Roman philosophers and statesmen who, like Cicero, would "explain, even to our-

selves, the logic of this justice"; who held, and seemingly believed, that "the state and the law served all men, and the law was just."

At the same time, it must be stated that the author's descriptions of the sexual adventures of his patrician characters are carried to excess, with consequent harm to the book.

On the other hand, the reader sees here the inherent dignity and spiritual nobility of the Roman slaves—in the alert but immobile countenances of the litter-bearers and house servants as they listen to the conversation of their masters; in the beautiful "comradeship of the oppressed" among Spartacus' followers, embracing those from many lands and tribes and religions; in their love and respect for their leaders; and in the simple laws they set for governing the revolutionary army: "Whatever we take, we hold in common, and no man shall own anything but his weapons and his clothes. . . . And we will take no woman, except as wife . . . nor shall any man hold more than one wife."

One grasps the foundational economic power of these producers of material goods, as when Spartacus asks his follows: "What is Rome but the blood and sweat and hurt of slaves? Is there anything we cannot make?" One senses the tremendous revolutionary dynamic in the simple creed: "The only virtue of a slave is to live." One also catches a glimpse of the free society which only the modern revolutionary working class can build, as in Spartacus' vision of "a world where there are no slaves and no masters, only people living together in peace and brotherhood . . . cities without walls . . . no more war and no more misery and no more suffering" — a vision which "had broken loose from the fetters of his time."

These and many more basic insights into the decaying class society of ancient Rome—and of our own times — are deftly woven into the narrative with such skill that one hastens on with the gripping story, hardly aware of the political purposes of the author. But the reader ends up with a profound and enduring lesson in the dynamics of social change.

It is not surprising that none of the big commercial publishing houses would bring out this book, or that the *New York Times* reviewer slanders it as "a tract in the form of a novel . . . proof that polemics and fiction cannot mix." They would defend the rotten and doomed imperialism of our day from the tremendous power of this cultural weapon of the working class.

For the novel shows that the Spartacus revolt reflected deep and inherent contradictions in the class society of the slave system, and that it probably would not "have changed history too much if Spartacus had perished" in the gladiatorial arena. Fast also suggests the true class basis of ethics in his strong contrast between the moralistic rationalizing of the decadent Roman ruling class and the elemental Spartacan code: "What was good for his people was right. What

hurt them was wrong."

A writer must be alert to the nature and historic role of the modern industrial proletariat to have the aristocratic young visitors at an ancient perfume factory sense that "there was something different and frightening" about the workers they saw there: "They were not slaves — nor were they Romans. Nor were they like the dwindling number of peasants who clung to bits of land here and there in Italy. They were different men, and their difference was worrisome." There is real materialist insight reflected in the musings of the Roman Senator, Gracchus, on why the fine ladies and gentlemen visiting at the *Villa Salaria* were so obsessed with discussions of the slain Spartacus and his wife, Varinia—"because Spartacus was all they were not. . . . Home and family and honor and virtue and all that was good and noble was defended by the slaves and owned by the slaves—not because they were good and noble, but because their masters had turned over to them all that was sacred."

The power of *Spartacus* stems, in part, from Howard Fast's consummate skill in telling a great story; but it comes much more fundamentally, at its points of real strength, from insights into history which are the fruits of Marxist science.

Spartacus is extremely well written. Parts of the novel beg comparison with the very finest writing in contemporary literature, notably the gripping account of the slaves working in a gold mine in the Nubian Desert, the intensely dramatic struggles "to the death" of the gladiator pairs in the arena at Capua, and the poignant recollections of the last of the gladiators as he nears death on the cross. Particularly striking also is the author's effective use of symbolism—as in his description of the magnificent Roman road lined with some 6,000 "tokens of punishment," the crucified bodies of captured slave warriors; the mutual respect and love of Thracian, African, Gaul and Jew in the gladiator training school; the old slave woman who feared to heed Spartacus' call to arms, but later keeps watch defiantly as the last of his followers is executed; and the somewhat irrelevant choice of David, the Jew, for the final crucifixion, just about one century before the death of Jesus.

An important weakness of the novel lies in the fact that hardly any of the characters are fully drawn, with the possible exception of David, who often seems to rival Spartacus as protagonist. Indeed, although the whole narrative is *about* Spartacus, one gets to know him largely through the eyes of his friends and enemies; there is too little of Spartacus directly for him to emerge fully as a person.

This weakness results, in part, from the oblique point of view from which the story is told. The direct focus is chiefly on the ladies and gentlemen of the Roman ruling class, presumably to highlight their decadence. Largely through them and incidental to their doings and sayings—with only interspersed direct

accounts of the slaves, themselves—does the story of Spartacus unfold. This is a curious and ill-chosen framework within which to interpret the heroic struggles of the revolutionary slaves whom Spartacus led. One shudders to think what might have happened to Gideon Jackson and his comrades if *Freedom Road* had been written from the point of view of the deposed ruling class of former slave owners in the Reconstruction South.

The fundamental weakness of *Spartacus* lies in its most disturbingly liberal, self-negating and incredible denouement. Crassus, "the richest man in the world," the proud and arrogant Roman general who defeated Spartacus and destroyed his army, appropriates the slain warrior's wife for his slave and falls in love with her: "Varinia, I love you. Not because you are a slave, but in spite of the fact . . . if you love me, I'll be something else. Something new and fine." Gracchus, the wealthy, corrupt and cynical leader of the Roman Senate, also falls in love with Varinia —sight unseen. He disposes of his fortune in order to have her stolen from Crassus, and spends one "grateful" night talking to her before she is to leave Rome forever: "In all his life before, he had never experienced this same feeling of contentment."

In the morning, just before leaving on her final journey, the strong and fine and heretofore fiercely partisan wife of the slain Spartacus reaches up and kisses the Roman politician who helped destroy her husband, and bids him to share her life: "If you come with me, I will try to be good to you—as good as I can be for any man." After she is gone, Gracchus frees his twenty slaves and commits suicide.

Absolutely inexcusable! It is a betrayal of the cause for which Spartacus fought and died. And the fact that it is a woman—*the widow of Spartacus*—who is made the agent of the betrayal compounds the wrong. It is tragic that Fast should mar this generally powerful and realistic novel with such sentimental and impossible tripe.

Reprinted on the jacket of *Spartacus* is the laudatory comment of Angus Cameron that "one can come away from the reading of this story hating Gracchus and Crassus and the rest for what they stand for and yet seeing the universal possibilities of good in each of them . . . you have told about life as it really is." One can understand this point of view in a liberal editor, but not in a class-conscious novelist for the revolutionary proletariat.

The final chapter of *Spartacus* is superfluous and anti-climactic. It tells the sory of Varinia's trip to freedom and summarizes her life and that of her children among the Gaulish peasants in the foot-hills of the Alps — all of which had better been left to the reader's imagination.

Despite its weaknesses, *Spartacus* is a very fine novel which merits the widest distribution. It ends with the prophecy: "And so long as men labored, and other men took and used

the fruit of those who labored, the name of Spartacus would be remembered, whispered sometimes and shouted loud and clear at other times." For American readers Howard Fast has done much to make that prophecy meaningful in our day.

DOXEY A. WILKERSON

Eliot Debunked

THE T. S. ELIOT MYTH, by Rossell Hope Robbins. *Henry Schumann.* $3.00.

TO TRACK one's way through all of T. S. Eliot's writings as Professor Robbins has done, including the poetry, the plays, the literary criticism, the pronouncements on society, and even the book reviews, is a heroic job. These writings are truly a forest of irrationality and confusion, of words adroitly set up to face two ways and convey opposite meanings at the same time, of quotations from the distant past of poetry offered as the original poetry of the future, and of a consistently reactionary spirit which alone should turn any decent person's stomach.

It is not a pretty picture of T. S. Eliot's mind that emerges. But to put it all thus between the covers of a book, with an erudition that enables the author to follow Eliot into all of his hideouts in the nooks and crannies of past culture with which Eliot has long awed the critics, is a real achievement. This book will now have to be taken into consideration by all of those writers and university professors who have treated Eliot like a "sacred mystery" not subject to the ordinary rules of logic and history.

Eliot is too much needed by reaction to be given up easily. The New York *Times* has already bravely rushed into the breach with a hatchet review by Randall Jarrall that completely misrepresents Robbins' book, giving the reader no idea of its wealth of documentation or the character of the argument, calling it "insensate," and never once mentioning the word that emerges so strongly and clearly, fascism. Thus bourgeois book reviewing has degenerated far below any honest conflict of ideas or differences of opinion, to become simply an out and out protection of fascism which must not even be mentioned or allowed to be publicly debated.

Robbins analyzes Eliot's sociology, his politics, his esthetic ideas, and his poetry. He does not rest his case in this portrayal of a reactionary mind on Eliot's political statements alone although these are numerous and nauseating. They include praise of Maurras, Petain, Oswald Mosely. Eliot used all his prestige to block any anti-Hitler activity of British intellectuals during the 1930's; he has enthusiastically supported the U.S. "Southern Agrarians" who look back to the slave-holding Confederacy as the ideal society. And of course the proponents of "back to the land" (worked of course by slave labor not by them), such as Allen Tate Robert Penn Warren, and Cleanth Brooks, have returned the compli-

ment, making up with Eliot a mutual admiration society that is avidly trying to drag all of American literary and intellectual life into its "new and bold" conservatism.

Imperialism has a superstructure of ideas, involving education, government, history, psychology, art, over its economic base. And it is this superstructure which Robbins unfolds in Eliot's writings, which in every case matches the exact stand that became a reality in fascist Germany, including the hypocritical expressions that adorned it. Thus Eliot believes in "education." But of course it should be restricted to the privileged classes. The rest of the people should be given what a "settled agreement" decides is right for them to know, this being determined by the "privileged."

Education should be run by the church. "The hierarchy of education should be a religious hierarchy." Furthermore education should eliminate science, history, economics, politics, and all the great achievements of the human mind turning darkness into light. It should consist only of the rags and tatters of past obscure writings with which Eliot adorns his own "creative" work. In other words, what Eliot means by "education" is really miserable ignorance.

Similarly, Eliot believes in "democracy," which is really, as he describes it, no democracy. "The increase of the electorate, in Britain, is the destruction of Democracy." Eliot, the "rebel," disdains "industrialism," "finance," and the "machine age." But what this brave revolutionary offers is a revolt to the Middle Ages, a kind of feudalism in which people of "hereditary rights and responsibilities," such as the cretins who usually inherited kingships and titles, take over the rule of nations.

Professor Robbins unfolds the vile spectacle of Eliot's anti-Semitism, ranging from the Fagin-like caricatures in his early poetry to such incitations to pogroms as "reasons of race and religion combine to make any large number of free-thinking Jews undesirable." This anti-Semitism is accompanied by a grandiose, all-embracing white supremacist ideology, exactly made to order for modern imperialism.

Eliot is one of the most vociferous propounders of the "Western culture" fake, by which the peoples of Asia and Africa, as well as the Indian peoples of America, are derided and sneered at even while their material resources, labor, and cultural treasures are plundered. It is an ignorant theory which blithely eradicates the tremendous cultural and material debt which "Western society" owes to these peoples. Nor has it room for the majority of people of the "West" itself, namely the working people. And Eliot adds to this "Western culture" theory a pseudo-religiousness which, as Robbins shows, has no spark of feeling for the poor and oppressed, no essential respect for humanity.

Robbins does a thorough job on Eliot the poet, as well as the literary critic. He describes the quality

of the early verse, which showed nothing more than a clever satiric style, sharply worded but far too thin in its ability to characterize people, far too limited in its imagery of disgust and horror, to be anything but a small talent.

Following this Robbins takes up the "Wasteland" style, in which the same meager talent is now dressed up with twisted quotations from 17th-century English poetry, classical allusions, myths, superstitions, and fragments of non-English languages, blended to make the "new poetry." The blend took skill, but it was a narrow skill fit only for the uses to which Eliot put it, a parasitism on past writings, a "museum" style, drawing the mind away from the present-day realities. Then Robbins takes up the latest phase, where the parasitical feeding is done on old hymns, prayers and incantations.

There are some fuzzy parts to the book, due mainly to the fact that problems are raised on which only a developed Marxist criticism can throw full clarity. Thus the social setting into which Robbins fits Eliot is largely described as one of "decadence," in which there is also a "mainstream of culture and enlightenment." The setting should be named as the world of imperialism, of monopoly capitalism in its parasitic, dying stage. This is not simply a matter of terminology. Seeing Eliot this way, we can understand that Eliot's philosophy and art are not simply aberrations but the cultural reflection of imperialism. Eliot attacks the great classic and realist traditions of cul ture, even as imperialism must turn against the limited civil and human rights of bourgeois democracy.

And this in turn helps to explain as Robbins does not, the Eliot prestige and eminence. The truth was that Eliot led the way, being one of the first to see the need for dressing up reaction as pseudo-revolt, drawing many gifted and lost people after him. Of course, even this "leader ship" was a swipe from French re actionaries, and from obscure Cam bridge proto-fascists like T. E. Hulme But in English literature Eliot saw what reaction would need even before reaction itself was fully conscious of this, and he is now being properly rewarded.

A Marxist treatment would analyze Eliot with a much sharper sense of class relations and the presence of two diametrically opposing worlds of culture. Robbins does speak of Eliot's exclusive interest in the drawing room set, but class is not simply a matter of rich and poor. It is a matter of exploiters and exploited, of those who live by others' labor, and those who labor.

This in turn throws a better light on Eliot's emotional life and mentality, as exhibited in his poetry. It is too vaguely described by Robbins as an "anti-human" or "anti-people" attitude. It is not only a personal mentality but a class mentality. What Eliot hates so violently is not simply "people" or "man." His is a clear hatred of the working class and the colonial peoples. He expresses the

urderous selfishness of a narrow ass which regards only itself as uman," and sees the vast majority f people, on whom it preys and hom it mortally fears, as being less an human beings.

Eliot has been answered in life. ven while he was preparing his mix- re of myth and medievalism, a truly ew culture was rising, fostered by e working people the world over nd especially flowering in the social- t Soviet Union.

But while many things remain to e said about Eliot and culture, Pro- ssor Robbins' book is a first-rate hievement. It is a contribution to e enlightenment of people. It may eet a "silent treatment" in some uarters, an attempt to strangle it in hers. But it is bound to have a ealthy effect on many who have been isled by Eliot's disciples.

SIDNEY FINKELSTEIN

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peaking for Peace

EAK OUT! AMERICA WANTS PEACE, by Arthur D. Kahn. *Independence Publishers, P.O. Box* 334, *New York* 3. *Cloth,* $3; *paper* $1.50.

TIMID, much too timid, we liberals and progressives! This is e indictment made emphatic by rthur Kahn's diary of six months travel in 1951 from city to town, village and farm in twenty-five ates. The American people want ace, he says. Others of us have been saying this, too. But Mr. Kahn has an extraordinary amount of first-hand experience and discussion with representative citizens to back him up.

The first challenge rising out of Kahn's travels is that we should provide the means for leaders in the peace movement to travel about the country during 1952 to "speak out" for peace.

The second challenge is this: you and I must do something to advance peace action in our own house and street.

Yes, the people want peace but the thinking of a great number of our fellow-citizens begins not with a world-wide, but a personal, concern. The first interest is today's bread, tomorrow's education for one's children, the next year's security for the family.

Are the majority of the American people like this? Perhaps Kahn would say "yes" and warn that, to do business with many people on peace, one must meet them squarely at the point of their own daily living with its problems.

The hope for a peace movement in our country is to be gauged by the proportions of the educational program launched by its leaders. The propaganda so nicely dividing the "free" and the "slave" world has confused millions. The vicious and false charge does stick with many that "the Soviet Union is an aggressor" and that "the Soviet Union is our enemy." But the course of events

"SPARTACUS is a powerful novel of ancient slave society with rich meaning for the liberation struggle of our day—in certain sections probably represents the high point in the development of Howard Fast's superb craftsmanship."

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has now given pause to these people. "Maybe we shall have to try to live in the same world with those Russians," they say, "war is not the way out." This is all the opening that is needed to begin an educational program aimed at bringing out the whole truth.

This reviewer may be permitted the observation that American-Soviet relations should have place at the center of any program of peace education. It has been a serious weakness in peace work thus far that many have so "successfully" skirted this fundamental but controversial issue in the mistaken notion that only this way could we unite all sections of the people in peace action. It doesn't work! People are willing to discuss the Soviet Union; peace leaders must tackle it.

We salute Arthur Kahn for his six months of valuable educating and organizing for peace and for this down-to-earth reporting of his experiences. His diary was exciting reading. One pushes on with him eagerly from place to place to meet new people. He names names in introducing us to a host of the friends of peace in intimate fashion — Negroes, trade unionists, farmers, students, professional and middle-class persons. Arthur Kahn's book gives us renewed hope in the goodness of ordinary people, in their potential strength as allies in the struggle for the peace which they desire.

RICHARD MORFORD

"PEACE WILL WIN!"

PEACE WILL WIN is a great motion picture.

Joris Ivens, together with Jerzy elubski, filmed this documentary cord of the International Peace ngress, originally scheduled for effield, England, and then transred to Warsaw, Poland, after Brit- authorities attempted to wreck it. e film is a vastly impressive drama men and women, Asians, Euroans, Americans, Africans, simple ople and world-famous intellectuals, chered to find out how best to ht for peace.

American capital, with all its flatut talk about "free enterprise," the ee" nations of the Atlantic Pact, "moral values" of the various changes, could never make a pice which so moved its audience. A lion dollars and a million extras uld not turn the trick. It needed at the Dutch and Polish co-direcs found with their camera: the nple drama of men and women o want life and growth, not death d profits.

They offer some splendid shots of the new Warsaw growing up among the almost unbelievable ruins of the Second World War. As a fitting accompaniment to the proceedings of the Congress we hear the sounds of peaceful labor as Poland rebuilds. Inside the Congress were people who spoke for other people, by the billions!

We see and hear such leaders of the world peace movement as Professor Frederic Joliot-Curie and Madame Eugenie Cotton of France; Kuo Mo-Jo, one of the new China's outstanding cultural leaders; Pablo Neruda, the great Chilean poet, now an exile from his homeland; Ilya Ehrenburg, Soviet journalist and novelist whose patriotic words inspired the Congress; the Abbé Boulier, Catholic prelate of France; Pietro Nenni, Italian Socialist Party leader.

These were a few of the great names known to the world. But how many more great names there were —names of men and women that the Congress delegates heard for the first time! The Italian parish priest; the Warsaw bricklayer; the African student; the British Tory MP; the Viet-Namese plantation laborers; the bearded Greek-Orthodox priests. They spoke many tongues, but they all shared one language: the language of peace.

THE climax of this documentary is more powerful than the contrived climaxes of a thousand "story" pictures. That climax arrives when

the slight figure of Madame Pak Den Ai of Korea ascends the platform to show, through newsreels, the unutterable brutality of imperialism in laying waste the women and children, the schools, hospitals, and playgrounds of North Korea. This sequence moves spectators in every audience to open expressions of horror.

Then Madame Pak Den Ai, speaking quietly and with a miraculous serenity, makes every American determined to end the shame of the slaughter in Korea. When she finishes there bursts forth the greatest ovation of the conference, and th hall in Warsaw is flooded with flow ers (not ticker-tape).

Where is the apologist for wa who can command such love an respect among the peoples of th world?

It would be fine to record that th entire Congress rose to its feet t honor Madame Pak Den Ai. This not so. Two people remained seate their eyes averted as the cheerin delegates surged around them. The two were O. John Rogge and h wife, Wanda. Ivens' camera caug them and made a film monument their spectacular pettiness.

Peace Will Win is more than a appeal to the emotions. It is prima ily an appeal to the reason and di nity of people. If our emotions a stirred, it is because reason dictat it.

The editing of *Peace Will W* is such that it is always in drama motion, even when the camera co centrates on a series of speakers ea ascending the rostrum. And the co mentator, without recourse to rhet ric, is a partisan in his narration. I is part of the film. He, too, wa peace.

Peace Will Win is a magnifice account of an active struggle. It he build the future by giving deep meaning to the past. Reflecting t breadth and strength of the wor wide movement for peace, it inspi confidence in the power of the p ple, if only they are resolute a united, to stop the warmakers.

IRA WALLACH

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Let's Wind It Up!

We had hoped that with this issue we would be able to announce that *Masses & Mainstream* had gone over the top in its drive for $7,500 to carry it through 1952. But we are still short of the goal.

This is a last call. It is directed especially to those readers who have not yet responded to our financial appeal. Your contribution, no matter how small—a dollar, or two or three —would spell the difference between concentrating our full editorial energies on the magazine, and distracting worries about meeting bills.

Our February issue, devoted to Negro History Week, won enthusiastic comment. It achieved a high point in circulation.

You can help make new advances. Won't you pitch in to keep *M & M* in fighting trim?

We take this occasion to thank all those hundreds of readers who responded so quickly and generously to our annual appeal.

To all our other friends we say: *Let's wind it up!*

—THE EDITORS

A Note on V. J. Jerome's Book . . .

There is a beautiful warmth and tenderness in this story of a childhood in old Poland. The personal experiences of the boy have an extraordinary depth and scope: we see the unfolding of historical forces, the interaction between the little Jewish community and the great movement of workers and peasants that would eventually transform Russia and Poland.

I have seldom read a book in which history is so poignantly realized in terms of human detail and the adventure of daily living. The impact of the 1905 Revolution in Russia transforms the life of the Polish village; we see the change through the eyes of a nine-year-old boy; we share his hatred of the oppressors; we know the wonder and truth of his dream that the people will one day win their freedom and build a new society.

The publication of the book will be a major cultural event. It will provide a powerful weapon in the struggle for peace and democracy, and for a better understanding of the social changes that have taken place in eastern Europe.
October 31, 1951

(*Signed*) JOHN HOWARD LAWSON

TITLE: *A Lantern for Jeremy*
AUTHOR: V. J. Jerome
PUBLISHER: Masses & Mainstream, Inc.
PUBLICATION DATE: April 15, 1952

(A TIP: Orders, accompanied by payment, received before publication date, will get autographed copies)

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