MASSES & MAINSTREAM

LIZABETH GURLEY FLYNN

An Epic of
erican Labor
by
HARD O. BOYER

O RIVERA vs. THE WAR-MAKERS • EARL CONRAD'S "FRIENDLY" SLANDERS
ANTERN FOR JEREMY" • MUSIC AND MEANING • THE HAYMARKET DEFENSE

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PEACE and the SOVIET UNION

A MAY DAY EDITORIAL

F SOUTH AFRICA'S Malan is a bulwark of the Free World, then ely America's Major-General Grow an angel of peace. If napalm brings eration, then surely madness is san-

.

The madness is here and a cunning anity it is. It is the madness of se to whom spring, the sea- n of new life, and May Day, the y dedicated to a joyous life, are teful. It is the madness of those to om war is not only a way of life, t a means for life. And this when peoples of the world—in greater mbers than ever before, with more rity than ever before, and with in- itely more power than ever before demand peace, insist on peace, see war humanity's greatest catas- phe.

What, then, is their ultimate mad- s, their ultimate cunning? To point the Land of Socialism as the source imperialist aggression! To accuse Soviet Union of threatening rld peace!

See what vistas this opens up! Arm the teeth and profit to the gorge! ricans who demand Africa, Chi- e who demand China, Koreans o demand Korea, Mexicans who nand Mexico—all, all Red imperi- t agents! Negroes who demand ality, workers who demand decent wages, families that demand housing, men, women and youth who demand peace—all, all Red imperialist agents!

And this in the name of righteousness and liberty—even the liberation of the "enslaved Russians." To all bearing gifts!

"The Russian lie is the father of lies," wrote Walter Lippmann and Charles Merz (the latter now is editor of the New York *Times*) in 1920, in the *New Republic*. "For lie, damned lie, it has been," the angry young men then went on. "It was a lie that the people of Russia were calling for military intervention. It was a lie that they believed in Kolchak and Denikin. It was a lie that they did not prefer the Soviet government to anything offered them by the Allied generals and the monarchist cliques . . . and because these lies were the base of a policy of lawless invasion, disgraceful intrigue, bloodshed, devastation and famine, they have had to be established by every device known to panic and credulity."

And the tales of Hitler—that the Soviet people were enslaved; that millions of Christians were being slaughtered; that the Soviet Union was about to invade Western Europe — *were these not lies?*

Did not the American Ambassador

to the U.S.S.R., Joseph E. Davies, write: "If you can picture a personality that is exactly opposite to what the most rabid anti-Stalinist anywhere could conceive, then you might picture Stalin"? Was he lying?.

Did not Quentin Reynolds "apologize as a Catholic" for what he had previously believed of the Soviet Union, *after he had lived there* for several months in 1941-42? Was he lying?

Did not the German, Italian, British, French and American chiefs of staff unanimously agree in June, 1941, that the "disaffected, tortured slaves" of Stalin would surrender to Hitler in—at most—three months? Did they? Perhaps it is a lie that the Red Army captured Berlin?

AND today: If the U.S.S.R., and not the U.S.A., is gearing for war, why do prices rise here and fall there? Did the Soviet Union lower its prices, in March, 1952, for the fifth time in two years, simply to impress the 500 delegates to a Moscow economic conference, as we were told, in all seriousness, by the commercial press? Isn't there anybody at all that the monopolists of the United States might impress, in this manner?

If the U.S.S.R. and not the U.S.A. is gearing for war, why does Soviet law provide 25 years imprisonment for anyone propagandizing for war, while the United States provides cabinet positions and Pentagon desks for such criminals? If the U.S.S.R. and not the U.S.A. is gearing for war why does the Soviet parliament—and the whole Soviet population—sig the Stockholm Peace Pledge whil the U.S. government denounces th Pledge and attempts to jail Dr. D Bois for circulating it?

Why is it Malik who proposes truce in Korea and not Austin; wh is it Stalin who proposes—again—top-level discussions, and not Tru man; why are American troops, an not Soviet troops, killing Koreans Are U.S. naval, land, and air bas surrounded by the U.S.S.R.? Are Ru sian guns executing Greek anti-fa cists, destroying Malayan peasant shooting down Viet-Nam patriots Are Russian fleets patrolling Taiwa and paying courtesy calls upon th tottering butcher, Franco? Why is the Soviet Union, and not the Unite States, which strengthens intern tional brotherhood by holding cou trywide celebrations of the cultur contributions of titans of humaniti like Da Vinci, Hugo, Whitman?

This lie of Soviet aggression w central to Hitler's war-making, an it is central to U.S. monopoly-capita ism's war-making. The lie must b met, boldly and decisively, and e posed; otherwise the effectiveness resistance to the real war danger undermined.

Mr. Thackrey, publisher of th New York *Daily Compass,* perform a distinct disservice to the pea movement—which he unquestionab does support—when he refers to "th conspiratorial role of Soviet comm nism . . . backed by Russia's milita strength." And he compounds th disservice by speaking of "the hy

a of the witch hunt or of Soviet logists."

Communism is not a conspiracy is a movement of liberation aris- from the needs of the people of ry country. Russia's military ngth has been used and is used y to protect the building of Social- within the U.S.S.R. and to drive and crush all lustful interlopers hin her borders. There is an hys- a of witch hunting by the fascist- ıded in the United States, but :e is no hysteria on the Left and Soviet Union needs no "apolo- s."

Today, more and more Americans beginning to crack through Wall et's central lie about "Soviet ag- ssion." At such a moment, to take "neutral," "plague-on-both-your- ses" position does not broaden the ce coalition; it thwarts it. *It has effect of justifying Wall Street's drive.*

F COURSE the movement for peace must be broad. It must be ıd enough to include all persons good will, regardless of political vs. Its breadth must encompass who really want peace. But ıdth will not come to the peace vement by having some of its kesmen wield the main ideologi- weapon of the war-makers.

Thackrey believes the United es is arming to resist Soviet ag- sion, then where does his posi- differ from that of the Acheson- les team? Is his difference a quan- ive one—that the danger is not quite so great as the team says, and that the U.S. armament pace need not be so furious as it is? Is this the way to resist the war-drive, to build the peace coalition?

Does one imperil the peace move- ment by bringing to the people the truth as to the source of the war danger? Is this the role *for progres- sive leadership*—to befuddle and ob- scure—now, when the imperialists are beside themselves as their putrid tissue of lies begins to disintegrate for all to see?

It is not only Communists who know that world peace is threatened by imperialism and is defended by Socialism. It is not only Communists who know that the United States ruling class is the main source of the war danger, and that the Socialist Soviet Union is the main bulwark of world peace. There is hardly a single issue of the *Daily Compass,* since its inception, whose news columns have not revealed this great truth of our times.

Saying this is saying that which must be said — and understood — if peace is to be secured. Saying this is not being unpatriotic or "narrow." Saying this is affirming the key to peace and is therefore the essence of patriotism, the foundation of wis- dom in today's world.

The Soviet Union is not an "em- barrassment," a "burden" to progres- sive-minded people. When the Soviet Union is understood, when its his- tory and role are grasped, then this Land of Socialism shines forth as a

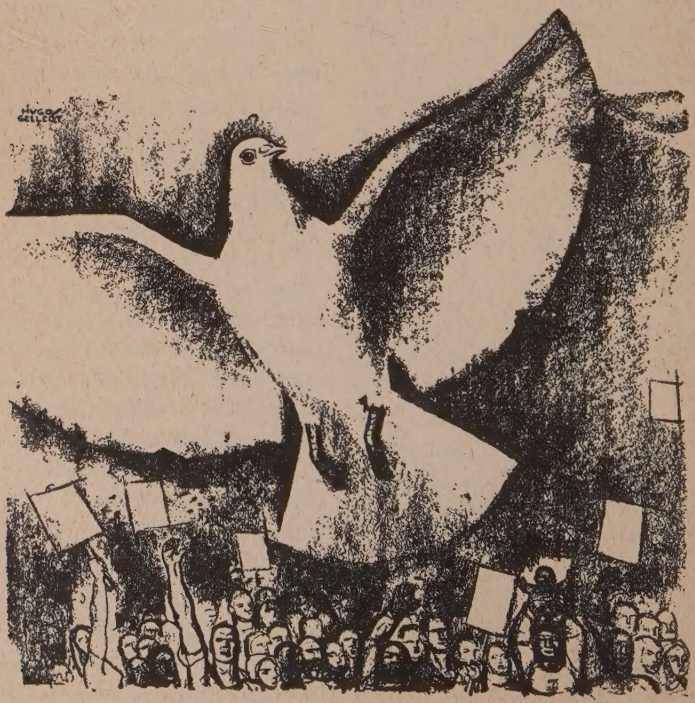
beacon-light for all forward-looking humanity.

Paul Robeson asked exceedingly pertinent questions, admitting of but one answer, when, in 1949, he said: *"Has not the history of every country shown that it was precisely those who sowed hatred against the Soviet Union who proved to be the real traitors to their country? Was it not those who advocated and worked for friendship with the Soviet Union who proved to be the genuine patriots?"*

Genuine patriotism is genuine internationalism. On this May Day, this American-born day of proletarian internationalism, the word is Peace. And Peace will be won by a people united—the working class, the Negro people, all democratic forces; by a people clear-eyed and organized; by people who know their friends and enemies; by people who know the source of the war danger; by people who take the cause of peace in their own hands and are not led, blindfolded and befuddled, down the abyss.

Nazim Hikmet put it with the simplicity of genius:

"To be duped or not to be duped
That is the question.
If you are not duped you will live.
If you are duped you will not."



ELIZABETH GURLEY FLYNN

An Epic of American Labor

By RICHARD O. BOYER

"I walked with Big Bill Haywood into a quick lunch restaurant. 'There's Gurley,' he said. She was sitting at a lunch counter on a mushroom stool and it was as if she were the spirit of that Lawrence strike that had so much hope and so much beauty. She was only twenty-one but she had gravity and maturity. She asked me to come to see her at her house. She had gone on strike, bringing with her her mother and her baby. . . .

"When Elizabeth Gurley Flynn spoke, the excitement of the strikers became a visible thing. She stood up there, young, with her Irish blue eyes, her face magnolia white, and her cloud of black hair, the very picture of a youthful revolutionary girl leader. She stirred them, lifted them up in her appeal for solidarity. . . . It was as though a spurt of flame had gone through the audience, something stirring and powerful, a feeling which has made the liberation of people possible."

—MARY HEATON VORSE

THE girl of twenty-one is sixty-one now and at the height of her powers. The mother and the son, who accompanied her to the Lawrence strike, are dead. So are Big Bill Haywood, Vincent St. John, Joe Hill, Frank Little, Jim Connolly, James Larkin and many hundreds of others who have been executed like Connolly and Hill, imprisoned like St. John and Larkin, by the violence of a dying class since Elizabeth Gurley Flynn began her career forty-six years ago.

And yet as she addressed the jury in New York's current thought-control trial where she is a defendant acting as her own attorney, they seemed to come alive again as she described her life. For a moment as her eloquence evoked their presence and recalled their struggles, of which she was a part, it was again "as though a spurt of flame had gone through the audience, something stirring and powerful, a feeling which has made the liberation of people possible."

This power of moving masses of

people is, of course, the reason that the government has indicted her under the Smith Act, for when she speaks of world peace now and socialism eventually through the free choice of the American people the same stir and movement always runs through her audience. Her words make people act, and thousands on thousands of Americans have acted over the years after hearing her speak, whether it was to free Tom Mooney or struggle for the liberation of Sacco and Vanzetti or to contribute funds for strikers or for the defense of Madrid.

Today this Communist leader is a threat to Wall Street's plans for war. That is why she faces five years in prison because, in the words of the indictment against her, she "on or about August 2, 1948, did participate in a meeting at the Riverside Plaza Hotel, New York, N. Y." where she spoke for world peace.

As in the days of the singing Wobblies, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn is still at the very heart of the life of her time; still fighting for the rights of labor and the Negro people although two-score years and more have passed since she stood as a girl on the streets of Missoula in Montana's Rockies battling for free speech. Since then she has frequently been described as one of the ten or twelve great women of all American history, a pioneer of industrial unionism and a leader of some of the most important strikes in the annals of American labor.

She has lived out her life in a force and violence bought and paid for by predatory corporate interests. She has seen National Guardsmen bayonet strikers, seen whole areas of the country, as in the case of the Mesabi Range, terrorized by hired thugs; seen women murdered as was Fanny Sellins, the steel organizer, in 1919; heard the Rockefellers justify the Ludlow Massacre; seen the Morgan interests unleash violence against the metal miners of the west, and been a witness to the massive, institutionalized genocide always and everywhere practiced against the Negro people.

And yet one of the charges against her, and the fifteen working-class leaders on trial with her, is that she and they have conspired to teach the very violence they have always fought and still fight through their opposition to the mass slaughter of a third world war.

THERE is almost a literature describing her youth, telling how she often spoke eight or nine times a day in addition to being concerned with strike strategy and relief. The stories almost always tell of her calmness in the face of danger, of her contempt for the hired goons who shadowed her every move, and, moreover, almost always mention her beauty.

She is graying now, a stout maternal figure of quiet dignity, but as she fights for peace and the Bill of Rights in her Smith Act trial she displays a seasoned wisdom, an indomitable gallantry that makes mere youthful beauty seem a little pathetic.

In the great shadowy courtroom, designed to overawe and as preten-

tious in its lines as a Wall Street bank, she addresses the jury, speaking without frills, an unassuming yet compelling figure in a plain blue dress, her hair, although graying, still preponderantly black, her eyes as blue and keen as when the reporter at Lawrence spoke of their singular quality when she was twenty-one.

She has nothing of pose. It is apparent that she finds it sufficient, and honor enough, to be herself. She speaks simply, her sentences declarative and short, her style still based on the fact that the strikers before whom she learned the art of public address were mostly foreign born who could understand only the plainest of English. And that is what she speaks.

She tells the jury that although she is charged with "conspiracy to teach and advocate" the principles of scientific socialism, she taught and advocated socialism in her first speech almost a half century ago. That, she says, was on January 31, 1906, and she describes herself, pig tails hanging down her back, her two sisters, Kathy, then thirteen, Bina, eight, her brother Tom, eleven, and Mr. and Mrs. Flynn, trudging over the Willis Avenue Bridge in the Bronx, their footsteps squeaking and crunching in the snow of that cold winter night so long ago when she spoke at the Harlem Socialist Club.

As she mentions the place names that have been the scene of her struggles, the textile towns of New England, Braddock and Homestead in Pennsylvania, Minnesota's Mesabi iron range on Lake Superior's shore, Missoula in the Rockies and Spokane of the Pacific Northwest, it seems incredible that any should believe her "un-American." She is so plainly what she seems to be, an American woman who has given most of the years of her life to the American labor movement, that it is apparent from the whispered comment of the spectators that they have difficulty regarding her as a sinister conspirator, in endowing her with the dime novel aura of plot and counterplot.

It was apparent, too, as she addressed the court, that Elizabeth Gurley Flynn has throughout her life been at the center of events. When only seventeen she toured the country in defense of Haywood and Moyer, the framed-up leaders of the Western Federation of Miners whose trial and acquittal rocked the nation in 1907. She was a leading figure in the great free speech fights waged by the lumber workers of the Northwest between 1908 and 1910 and won her acquittal in Spokane when she was tried then, as she is being now, for exercising her rights under the First Amendment.

She led unemployed demonstrations in New York City when she was twenty-one and she was the center of the Lawrence strike in 1912, one of the greatest industrial strikes in American history, and she was a leader, too, of the hotel workers' strike in New York City a year later. She was at Paterson, where she was also arrested and won an acquittal, and she fought for Joe Hill, the Wobbly

poet executed in 1915 in Utah.

As she spoke of Hill, her sister Kathy, sitting in the courtroom near me, handed me some faded and yellowing photographs. There was one of Elizabeth and Gene Debs. But two were of Joe Hill, one just before his execution and one just after. He had been very handsome and very young and very brave that day they killed him.

As the defendant acting as her own attorney continued, Judge Dimock, his face pale and ascetic above his black jurist's gown, listened attentively, and even the bailiffs seemed interested.

When twenty-six she began the fight to free Tom Mooney that was not ended until she was forty-nine. She organized a nation-wide campaign in defense of the I.W.W. leaders at Everett, Washington, when they were charged with murders that had in fact been committed by vigilantes and she defended hundreds, including Eugene Debs, arrested for anti-war agitation in 1917 as well as hundreds more arrested in the Palmer Raids three years later.

From 1920 to 1927 she fought to free Sacco and Vanzetti, struggling with such intensity that she almost lost her own life, becoming seriously ill after their execution. Recovering and returning to the fight she joined the Communist Party in 1936, fighting for collective security and peace, fighting against Franco and for Republican Spain, fighting then, as she is now, to prevent the rise of fascism and world war.

As she spoke of the many political prisoners she defended over the years she did not add that now the defender needed defending. As she mentioned their names, Ettor and Giovannitti the two Genes, Debs and Dennis both imprisoned for opposition to war, as she spoke of them and all the rest, her voice trembled and it was clear that these prisoners had never been abstractions or political slogans to her. As she told how she always kept pictures of them on her desk, the plain humanity of her bearing somehow seemed momentarily to reduce the ornate courtroom with its high vaulted ceiling, its black marble and maroon and gold drapes, into something a little more human.

2

ELIZABETH GURLEY FLYNN would not change her life for any other. She values it and values herself and in her own quiet way knows her place in history. As far as she is concerned the time is now. If the past was glamorous, it was also painful with mistakes made and strikes lost as well as won, with friends killed, and more imprisoned and she herself suffered experiences of which she does not often care to speak. The past is something through which she has won and over which she has triumphed to the wisdom she possesses.

She can abide anything but a fake. She can take anything but pretentiousness. Her manner is direct and simple and she expects others to be

the same. She is a good writer and her sentences have beat and rhythm. She honors words, loves poetry and hates sectarian clichés. When angry she gets quite pale and rears back a little, her face very still, the end of her nose seeming to crinkle as the air crackles about her with a sudden increase of electricity. She is usually so calm that her infrequent bursts of anger startle everyone about. But in the main they do a lot of good. They clear the air of bunk.

Her chief characteristics at sixty-one are judgment and endurance. She has become wise through struggle. Faced with five years in prison, she works some fourteen or sixteen hours a day, writes a column twice a week for the *Daily Worker,* gives a speech on the average of every other night, is usually working on a pamphlet or report. Acting as her own attorney through a long court day, she confers on the case and prepares for the next day's court session until after midnight and somehow also finds time for conferences with the fifteen other defendants who are being tried with her as well as for the political conferences that carry on the work of the Communist Party.

Of all the honors she has received over a long life she values most her election to her party's National Committee and to the chairmanship of its Women's Commission. She even takes a mild pride in the fact that the trial at Foley Square is sometimes referred to by lawyers as the Flynn case since her name comes first in the list of those being tried.

One cannot regard her staunch and busy figure without recalling the words of Robert Minor on her sixtieth birthday. "Elizabeth Flynn," he wrote, "is in the prime of her powers. Those who think of the sixties as an age at which people retire from active life are not acquainted with the history of the Communist movement. No one lives a harder life than a Communist leader. But there is something in the outlook of the Communist Party and its vital connection with the great collective life of mankind, so much bigger than our own, that tends to keep its men and women young."

3

ELIZABETH GURLEY FLYNN was born on August 7, 1890, in Concord, New Hampshire, the eldest of four children, two sisters and a brother. She was born into a sound working-class background. Her father, Thomas Flynn, a disputatious native of Maine, had been a member of the stonecutters' union before he became a surveyor and engineer. Her mother, Annie Gurley, a native of Galway, had been a skilled worker in men's clothing before her marriage.

When Elizabeth was still a small child both of her parents joined the Socialist Party. She was raised on stories of the struggles for Irish liberation and took pride in the fact that her ancestors on both sides of the family fought at Killala Bay in Mayo County in 1798 when the French revolutionary fleet sailed in

to aid the Irish patriots. Two of her great-grandmothers had arrived in this country early in the 19th century each with a brood of children and each a widow because their husbands had been killed in the fight against British tyranny.

The Flynn family was poor. Their amusement was talk and reading, the mother reading poetry and polemics for women's rights, Tom Flynn prancing around, cussing out the British, the government and the capitalist system, frequently telling stories of Robert Emmet and Wolfe Tone and sometimes reciting their last words from the gallows. He could take either or both sides of an argument and he was disappointed when people agreed with him.

He was a good Irishman, even if he had been born in Maine, and he told Elizabeth of the Molly Maguires, nineteen of whom had been hanged in 1876 because of their struggle for organization in the anthracite coal fields of Pennsylvania. They had been fingered by James McParland, the Louis Budenz of his time. Tom Flynn told his daughter, too, of the Homestead Massacre of 1892 and the Haymarket frameup of 1886. And Elizabeth remembers talk of the great Pullman strike and the jailing of its leader, Eugene Debs.

"Heroes in our home," she recalls, "were men like Debs, John Mitchell, the mine leader, and Father McGlynn, excommunicated for his fight for labor; women like Susan B. Anthony and Mother Jones. Villains were such as President Cleveland who used troops against the railroad strikers and Operator Baer, the coal-mine owner, who said during the anthracite strike of 1902, 'God in His infinite wisdom gave the mines to the rich!'

"Mother read poetry and classics aloud to us during the winter nights —Shakespeare and Byron and Shelley.

"I remember mother reading us Bellamy's *Looking Backward* and Dickens' *Hard Times.* Father recited the poetry of Irish history and read books on economics, even reading Marx's *Capital* aloud to us children huddled around the kitchen stove, in the winter of 1905-06. We were so poor that reading was our sole outlet. Father told us of signs when he was a boy in New England, 'No Irish Need Apply,' and we hated racist oppression."

The family came to New York in 1900 just after the Spanish-American War. Senator Beveridge was talking of the manifest destiny of Americans to rule the world, and President McKinley was prayerfully conquering the Filipinos. American imperialism was beginning to come of age. The Morgan interests were preparing to form U.S. Steel. Militant workmen were beginning to talk of one big union as an answer to the one big monopoly which seemed to be increasingly taking over American industry.

Elizabeth was ten years old when the Flynn family moved from New England to a cold-water railroad flat in the South Bronx of New York. Her father immediately joined the

Harlem Socialist Club at 250 West 125th Street and he always insisted that the whole family attend all meetings with him, Mrs. Flynn and the children, Elizabeth, ten, Kathy, eight, Tom, six, and Bina, four.

"It's a criminal thing to force kids to meetings," Elizabeth says now and recalls a time when the whole family was standing in a slow moving line waiting entry to some big mass meeting. "The old man," she says, referring to her father, "was damning everything-to-hell and Kathy was worried by his language. She looked nervously up at a cop and he said, 'Don't worry, kid. I got an old man at home like that myself.'"

TOM FLYNN was inordinately proud of Elizabeth when, at the age of twelve and attending public school No. 9 at 138th Street in the Bronx, she won a medal and a debate, speaking affirmatively on the proposition that the public should own the coal mines. She still has the reams of statistics she collected to support her position. She continued debating at the Morris High School but Tom Flynn's pride in her powers cut short her scholastic career when she was sixteen and was arrested under her father's admiring eye, for blocking traffic at 38th Street and Broadway, through urging a large crowd to adopt socialism. She left school, as a result of the publicity caused by her arrest. "The old man was very wild," she says.

David Belasco, the Broadway theatrical producer, saw her picture in the newspaper when she was arrested and was so impressed by her beauty that he offered her a role in a play. She refused saying, "I want to speak my own lines, not some one else's."

Before long she was speaking her own lines in defense of Big Bill Haywood, who with Moyer, had been framed by the copper trust. This trust, backed by the Morgan interests, was determined to break the Western Federation of Miners, backbone of the recently formed Industrial Workers of the World. The chief prosecution witness was the same McParland who had framed the coal miners of Pennsylvania thirty-one years before. Then as now paid lying was a profession, the same stoolpigeons appearing as repeatedly on the witness stand.

Elizabeth's work for the defense of Haywood and Moyer inevitably drew her to the I.W.W. and to the West, center of its struggle. In Montana and Washington where the fight revolved around the free speech necessary for organization, the jails were so packed with migratory workers that it was a common practice to release prisoners during the day so they could scrounge for their own food, without cost to county or city. They were rounded up again at night.

Finally the Wobblies refused to be ejected from prison during the day and folks came from miles around to see the men who could not be driven from prison. So crowded were the local jails that barbed wire concentration camps were set up. It was in one of them, in fact, that a few years earlier the Western Federation of

Miners had been born, the parent of the present Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers Union, whose members are again being threatened with concentration camps. Vigilantes, armed and organized by industry, frequently attacked I.W.W. halls and many of the union men were killed.

Elizabeth was eighteen when she arrived in Spokane in 1908 after resigning from the Socialist Party, convinced that it was sterile and sectarian compared with this grass-roots movement that was sweeping the country. She thought then, and thinks now, that the test of sincerity is action, and she had not been long in Spokane when she found herself in prison for speaking for the rights of organization.

She won her acquittal, and went to Missoula where she was again arrested and again won her freedom. Her ability, courage and beauty made her a legend among the workers of the West and from Texas to Oregon. In cabins of homesteaders and the shacks of section-hands, newspaper pictures of her could be seen pasted on the walls.

ALL the best of the working class, particularly its youth, were converging on Spokane and here, in 1909, she met William Z. Foster, a young locomotive fireman who was already wondering whether the dual unionism of the I.W.W. was the right policy.

While in Idaho, a few months later, she met a young man for whose liberty she was to work later for many years. He was a member of th Moulders Union of the A. F. of L an ardent Socialist, and he had bee in charge of literature distributio the year before on the "Red Specia train that had carried Eugene V. Deb all over the country during his cam paign for the presidency. His nam was Tom Mooney.

In 1908 she was married to J. A Jones. The marriage was not success and they were later divorce Early in 1910 Elizabeth was speedin back to New York hopeful of arri ing there in time to have her bab with her family about her. She arrive in time and her son, Fred, was bor

A few months later she was in th thick of a New York shoe strik and it was then, as she spok on a street corner, that a young ma from Texas, Robert Minor, first sa her and recalls: "As she spoke sh had an unconsciousness of self, complete concern with the issues sh was presenting, that made every wor convincing."

She was the central figure in th Lawrence textile strike of 1912 whic was in many ways the most remark able strike in American histor Something of its quality can be gaine from the words of Mary Heato Vorse, the writer who always re garded it as one of the decisive even of her life:

"It was not yet full daylight when w got to Lawrence. The street lamps sti threw circles of pale light on the sno We walked down to the ramparts of th mills and saw a soldier with his gun an bayonet. Down the street were more sc diers pacing back and forth. . . .

"It was a new kind of strike. There had never been any mass picketing in any New England town. Ten thousand workers picketed. It was the spirit of the workers that seemed dangerous. They were confident, gay, released and they sang. They were always marching and singing. The gray tired crowds ebbing and flowing perpetually into the mills had waked and opened their mouths to sing, the different nationalities all speaking one language when they sang together."

If there was any trickery or any violence or any fraud that was not used by the employers to smash the Lawrence strike of the 25,000 workers of 25 separate nationalities who spoke 45 different dialects it has never been since discovered in all the lexicon of reaction. The strike had begun spontaneously when the average wage of $6 a week was even further lowered in the case of thousands of women and children when their work week was reduced by statute from fifty-six hours a week to fifty-four.

Not only was the National Guard called out but employers imported 50 thugs from a Boston detective agency who masqueraded as strikers, overturned trolley cars, smashed windows, and assaulted people on the street. They planted dynamite near the strikers' headquarters. The strikers were charged with sabotage until one of the employers happened to get drunk and tell of the plot, committing suicide to atone for his error after sobering up. And when police shot one of the strikers, a girl by the name of Annie Lo Pizzo, they held two of the strike leaders, Joseph Ettor and Arturo Giovannitti, on a murder charge.

The miracle of Lawrence was the vibrant triumphant spirit, like something alive and palpable, that welded the 25,000 strikers together in unbreakable unity. And Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, it was freely conceded, did more than any one to forge that spirit.

"For Elizabeth that winter of the strike there was ceaseless work," writes Mary Heaton Vorse. "Speaking, sitting with the strike committee, going to visit the prisoners in jail, organizing their defense, and endlessly raising money. Speaking, speaking, speaking, taking trains only to run back to the town that was ramparted by prison-like mills before which soldiers with fixed bayonets paced all day long. She was the spirit of that strike."

But when it was all over the strike had been won and Ettor and Giovannitti had been freed and the writers who covered the case said that henceforth there were two kinds of people in the world—those who had seen the miracle of Lawrence and those who had not.

4

IN EVERY week of the next twelve years she lived more fully in a single week than most people do in a life time. To the writers there was only one Lawrence but to Elizabeth there were a dozen, one right after another. There were the strikes at Lowell and New Bedford and then

there was Paterson, where John Reed began the course that did not end until he was buried beneath the Kremlin wall after witnessing the birth of socialism.

In the winter of 1914 she led demonstrations of the unemployed in New York City where the police were particularly infuriated by the effort of the jobless to sleep in churches. As chairman of the Labor Defense Council, organized to give some measure of protection to those increasingly assaulted by police, she was constantly bailing out badly beaten up members of the army of the unemployed.

She participated in the demonstrations against the Rockefellers, who defended the Ludlow Massacre in Colorado. She led the 16,000 iron ore miners, striking on the Mesabi range for a minimum wage of $3 a day against a subsidiary of the U.S. Steel Corporation. Something of the violence in which she lived her life is displayed in a letter to Mary Heaton Vorse which read:

"One young boy, George Andreytchine, a civil engineer, a Macedonian, is being taken to New York City today to be deported. He called himself a Tolstoyan Anarchist and he was never arrested until he joined the strikers. One striker, John Alar, was yesterday killed on the streets of Virginia, Minn., but no arrests were made. Carlo and the others have been arrested as the result of a case in Biwabik, Minn., where four deputies entered a striker's home without warrant and attempted to arrest him. His wife objected and they clubbed her into insensibility. The husband and three boarders (Montenegrins) jumped to her defense and in the fracas, a deputy, Myron, and a strike sympathizer, sitting on a wagon outside the door, were killed.

"No guns were in the crowd but the deputies and an eleven-year-old son testified that he saw the mine guard, Nick Dillon, ex-bouncer in a disorderly house, fire the shot that killed the man on the wagon. The three boarders were all shot and lay in jail, wounded, for days. The woman had to be taken to the hospital. The speakers, that is the leaders of the strike, Carlo Tresca and the rest, were immediately arrested and charged with the murder on the theory that their speeches incited to murder. The strike ranks are unbroken and the ore production is crippled. Of course relief is becoming a pressing problem and we hope the East will realize this and help financially."

Such events were commonplace on the Mesabi range during the strike and George P. West testified before the Industrial Relations Commission that 1,000 hired thugs "have been placed in brutal and tyrannical control of a district comprising at least 100 square miles and 75,000 population. They are the creatures of U.S. Steel as is all public authority here." As the men leaders of the strike were arrested or beaten up, the leadership devolved more and more on Elizabeth until at the end she was virtually in sole charge. The strike was lost. She returned to New York, exhausted and discouraged.

She had not been home many weeks when the United States entered the war and she found herself in the Tombs, the New York City prison, charged with being a member of an organization dedicated to the overthrow of the government. A victim then, as she is now, of war hysteria, she was one of 120 leaders of the

I.W.W. arrested in midnight raids. Some 115 were tried en masse in Chicago where most of them were sentenced to long prison terms. Elizabeth and four others fought extradition to Chicago and won their liberty.

Eugene Debs and many other Socialists were arrested, charged with opposing the war, and all through it Elizabeth toured the country organizing their defense. And after the war, beginning in 1919, she had the thousands arrested in J. Edgar Hoover's Palmer raids to defend, raids which broke the back of many a union local and from which organized labor did not recover for a decade.

AFTER a lifetime spent in the advocacy of socialism she was jubilant when the Russian Revolution resulted in the working class becoming the governing power over a sixth of the earth, creating a system which produced not for the profit of the few but for the welfare and prosperity of the whole people. "When we talked of socialism when I was a girl," she says, "we had thought of it coming into being sometime in the remote and distant future and now it had happened in our own lifetimes!"

The Communist Party of the United States was formed in 1919. In the ensuing years she worked with C. E. Ruthenberg, secretary of the Party, William Z. Foster, chairman, and Mother Bloor so closely that they regarded her as a non-party Bolshevik. She was doing too many things at once now, but another case was developing to which she gave every fiber of her being for the next seven years. The frame-up of Sacco and Vanzetti, who were charged with murdering a pay-roll guard, gripped the heart of the world. Few had heard of the case when Carlo Tresca told Elizabeth about it. She went up to the Dedham jail in Massachusetts where she was successful in seeing Sacco.

He was quite young and very handsome. He felt sure that he would be released in a few days. It was all a mistake, he said, for no one who knew him could think that he would commit a crime for money. He talked of what he called The Idea, his plan for a better society, and told how he hoped to give his whole life for it. Man was a wolf to man, he said, but that would change as soon as the profit motive was replaced by production for use. In the meantime, he would study and he asked her if she could send him some books by D'Annunzio and some Italian translations of Darwin and Huxley. "This time I am idle in my cell," he said, "is a great time for me to learn."

Elizabeth, in those first days of the case, labored as she never had before. She raised $20,000, retaining one of the best members of the Boston bar, William G. Thompson for the defense. Through him she finally proved that the Morelli gang had committed the murder charged against Sacco and Vanzetti. She spoke in every large city in America and at most of the whistle stops. She wrote and cabled to almost every workers' organization in the world and by 1926 demonstrations were being held before Ameri-

can consulates in Buenos Aires and London, in Bombay and Shanghai, Paris, Moscow and Rome.

In that year she was given a testimonial dinner to mark her twentieth anniversary in the labor movement. It was attended by a cross section of the masses of American people. A message to her was read from Bartolomeo Vanzetti:

"You know, Elizabeth, I have not yielded—only my utter annihilation could bend my heart—crush my spirit—split my will. I still have the heart for a last vendetta at some final outpost in the eternal war between tyranny and freedom. I have a tin cup of water in my cell which I hold to toast to you. Yes, Comrade, good health and long life to you and long life to the brave struggle for the triumph of liberty."

She was in Oregon when the news came of their execution. A few days later she was ill; she did not recover for ten years.

5

"THE cases that you lose stay with you longest," Elizabeth says, "the men who go to their deaths." As she lay seriously ill in Oregon, staring upward at the ceiling, she tried to keep her mind blank, tried not to feel or remember at all, almost tried not to be. But willing or no, the picture of Frank Little, or someone like him, would come to mind. He had been on crutches when they hanged him from a railway trestle in Butte in 1917. A vigilante committee had told him to get out of town and had given him a time limit. He was organizing a fight for the eight-hour day and he stayed and they killed him. She remembered when she first saw him at Missoula in 1908 and again on the Mesabi range, only a year before his lynching, when he was kidnapped and beaten. He was about thirty when they lynched him and always said that he was a real Red part Indian.

She tried not to think, but far back in her mind, particularly when her fever was high, she went over every event of her life, over and over, trying to see where mistakes had been made, brooding over an insensate and cruel capitalism, so eager to kill and imprison the most generous and unselfish members of society. It was a long time before she wanted to live again, but almost imperceptibly she began to improve. Immediately after the Mesabi iron ore strike she had begun to wonder whether the I.W.W.'s formula for obtaining socialism without political action was correct, and now, as she thought, she was more than ever convinced that political action was necessary. . . .

It was a difficult time to be ill. So much was happening. Although her doctors advised complete rest, even attempting to keep newspapers from her, she found it increasingly difficult to ignore developments, and more and more her mind was occupied with events that happened beyond her bedside. Hoover was elected in 1928 and had been in office less than a year when a devastating de-

pression paralyzed the nation's economy. She who had battled so many years for the unemployed could not be indifferent, sick or well, to the ever lengthening breadlines, to the Hoovervilles that dotted the nation, to the rising spirit of resistance displayed by the American working class. She became more restive as Hitler came into power in Germany, as Mussolini prepared to assault Ethiopia, as both frankly glorified racism and war, and the depression became an international phenomenon save in a Soviet Union whose socialist accomplishments were being menaced by the rise of fascism.

Sometimes, too, as the years progressed and she still remained ill, as Americans flocked into trade unions and the Committee for Industrial Organization was formed under John L. Lewis for the organization of the unorganized into industrial unions, it seemed as if everything she had fought for was on the point of coming into being. She wanted to be a part of it.

After five years of illness the doctors still said she would never be able to return to active life. Her heart, they said, was permanently impaired and any prolonged exertion would kill her. Still in bed, she began to read omnivorously for the first time in her adult life—she had never had the time before—and now read history, biography, poetry, novels, but above all philosophy and comparative religion.

In 1935, Anita Whitney, an old friend and a founder of the Communist Party who lived in California, came to see her, bringing her a copy of George Dimitroff's *Report to the Seventh World Congress*. As she read it she felt as if all of her life had prepared her for this message, as if she had been waiting for it. Here was a guide to action, bold and affirmative, seeking to avert World War II by curbing Hitler and Mussolini through collective action. Three sentences impressed her and she wrote them down: "It is not enough to know theory. One must forge oneself a strong character with Bolshevist steadiness. One must be capable of subordinating one's whole personal life to the interests of the proletariat."

Late in 1936 she told her doctors she was going back to the battle. They said if she did she would not live a year. Her application for membership in the Communist Party was signed by Foster and Mother Bloor. As she made her first public appearance as a Communist at a rally on April 24, 1937, in Mecca Temple, New York City, where she called for the defense of Madrid, she knew that nothing again could ever break her.

ALTHOUGH few had ever worked harder or more efficiently over the years, she hit a new high of activity and effectiveness as a Communist. During the organizing drive in steel and coal in 1937, local after local demanded she appear before them because her name and life were legend, a synonym for devotion to the American labor movement. She was con-

stantly in Homestead, McKeesport, Braddock, in all the steel towns extending the length of the Allegheny Valley, and almost any day might find her at the entrance of a mine shaft, coal miners crowded about her. She became an institution in Pennsylvania, among the steel workers and miners, and competition was intense for her appearance at Fourth of July and Labor Day picnics. She became, moreover, the Party's chief recruiter and workers joined the Communist Party by the tens and twenties after she addressed large meetings.

Meetings of fur and leather workers, gatherings of seamen and longshoremen, called for her presence and she was accepted in many quarters that were otherwise closed to the message of Marxism. She worked closely with Irving Potash, vice president of the International Fur and Leather Workers, now serving five years in prison as one of the first victims of the Smith Act, between 1937 and 1948 when the union grew from 12,000 members to 100,000. She worked closely, too, with Albert F. Lannon, one of the founders of the National Maritime Union and now being tried with her. He recalls a meeting on New York's West Side when she addressed more than 1,000 Irish longshoremen, most of them Catholics but nevertheless determined to hear and cheer this American of Irish descent who was identified with Jim Connolly and Jim Larkin in the fight for Irish liberation.

Her great experience and ability brought her to leadership in the Communist Party. In 1938, she was elected a member of the National Committee and in 1945 was chosen chairman of its Women's Commission where she later worked with Claudia Jones, Negro leader and secretary of the commission, and now on trial with Elizabeth at Foley Square. Elizabeth was also a great united front figure, a member of the board of the American Civil Liberties Union and many other organizations. She was a co-worker of William L. Patterson and Vito Marcantonio in the International Labor Defense which saved the Scottsboro Boys, Angelo Herndon and many other victims of oppression.

And, as always, she toured the country, speaking at hundreds of meetings, pleading for peace, for collective security against war and fascism. The cause dearest to her heart then, and to the heart of every democrat in the world, was the defense of democratic Spain and she was proud indeed of Steve Nelson, Bob Thompson and John Gates, all Smith Act victims, who fought to make Madrid the tomb of fascism as did 2,000 other American Communists.

She liked the open highway whatever its dangers or hardships. In 1939 a meeting she was addressing at Des Moines was attacked by Legionnaires and disrupted. Her response was to return there a few weeks later and this time the meeting was held. Similarly a meeting in Philadelphia was broken up by veterans and similarly she returned and held a successful meeting. Everywhere she went she

conferred with rank-and-file and Party leaders on the fight for peace, for Negro rights, on the rising cost of living, on housing and education and cheaper milk for children, on everything and anything that was on the minds of the American people. And everywhere she went she advocated socialism as she had done for more than forty years.

In 1940 she suffered a cruel blow in the death of her son, Fred, following an operation. A few days later she was expelled from the board of the American Civil Liberties Union because of her political beliefs. With the outbreak of World War II, she again toured the country demanding that every man and woman, every machine and every acre be used in the fight against fascism.

In 1942 she ran as a Communist candidate for Congressman-at-large from New York and received more than 50,000 votes. Three years later she represented the Party at the founding of the Women's International Democratic Federation at Paris, writing a series of articles for the *Daily Worker*. In 1948 she returned to Paris to celebrate the birthday of Marcel Cachin, the grand old man of the French Communist Party, and there she was greeted as a world figure, as a woman who deserves well of mankind after long and faithful battle for it.

AS THE Communist Party came under increasing attacks she was made head of its defense work. She fought hard to keep Eugene Dennis, general secretary of the Communist Party, out of prison when he received a year's sentence for telling the un-American Committee that its southern members had been illegally chosen in elections barring Negroes. Since the death of her son, Gene Dennis had been particularly close to her and she felt his year's imprisonment as keenly as if he had been her son.

When Dennis, Gates, Thompson, and Benjamin J. Davis, who twice won election to the New York City Council, as well as Potash, Gus Hall, Henry Winston, Jack Stachel, Carl Winter, Gil Green and Johnny Williamson were indicted in 1948 under the Smith Act, she again headed the defense campaign and today, after their conviction, she heads the amnesty drive to free these Communist leaders.

When Eugene Dennis was leaving for prison, he said in a speech on May 9, 1950:

"Then there is a very dear comrade of mine and yours, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, a comrade who reflects, embodies, and symbolizes the most militant and revolutionary traditions of the American working class. Elizabeth is a foremost people's tribune of our Party, and a comrade, I would like you to know, who not only carries the message of our Party to the working people in her speeches, her articles, and her activity, but who also listens to the workers, who goes to the homes of the miners and the steel workers, learns from the working peo-

ple, and transmits their thoughts and feelings to our Party."

During the past seven years she, as well as those on trial with her, have fought the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, the North Atlantic Treaty, the Korean War and all of the other Wall Street plans for war and conquest. That is why she and they have been indicted and are now on trial.

Today with Pettis Perry, secretary of the Party's Negro Commission, chairman of its Farm Commission, and alternate member of the National Committee, who is also defending himself in the New York trial, she heads the Communist Party of the United States. As such she knows well why the government is using the Smith Act, the Taft-Hartley an McCarran Acts, against the America labor movement. These laws are a important part of Wall Street's pla for war, its design for rule witho the brake of democracy. They a Wall Street's legislative program avoid the inevitable—the majori rule by the working class and its a lies. For such a government wi mean peace and democracy for th American people and ownership of a that their sweat has built.

Then they will say of Elizabe Gurley Flynn, who has battled lon and courageously since she first spok as a girl of 15: "All of her life an all of her strength were given to th finest cause in all the world—th fight for the liberation of mankind

SUMMONS

The comrades of the dead are close tonight
(The summer wind is warm upon the grass);
Gravely the faces circle as they pass
Leaving the broken darkness edged with light,
Dante and Milton, Shelley, Whitman, Paine,
Gorky, Fuchik—they who crested ever
The deep and bloodied waves of man's endeavor—
And Caudwell dying on the hills of Spain.

The beast may spume and writhe, the fires fall;
Some drop beside the way. (Still bones are brittle.)
Terror may ride the night. But these endured.
These did not fail. Hot are their lungs that pour
Hot breath into our breath. Bright the subtle
Web that sparks the sharp, deep call.

J. BRANDRETH

DIEGO RIVERA:

Artist vs. the War-makers

By A. B. MAGIL

Mexico City

I WALKED up the stairway to the third floor of that massive monument to the baroque elegance of the Porfirio Diaz dictatorship, the white marble Palace of Fine Arts. The third floor is a shrine of Mexico's earthly trinity: Rivera, Orozco, Siqueiros, the walls reserved for their murals.

At the far end are the stark violences of Orozco's *World Catastrophe.* Opposite it across the gallery is Rivera's famous mural, originally painted in Rockefeller Center, but destroyed before it was completed because the central figure of Lenin offended the millionaires who had bought this piece of merchandise sight unseen. And on the long side walls two murals of Siqueiros: the surging powerful *New Democracy,* painted in the last months of World War II, and the recent anti-imperialist mural on the theme of Cuauhtemoc, last of the Aztec chiefs, whose struggle against the Spanish invaders and ultimate martyrdom have made him one of the most revered national heroes.

I squeezed through the screens that closed off Diego Rivera's part of the shrine. The artist's familiar Heywood Brounish figure was slouched over something. He was engaged in the prosaic business of boiling a couple of eggs on a little electric plate. But my eyes were drawn elsewhere, flooded with the new mural that gleamed and sang from the wall. One of the giants of contemporary world art was painting this song of war and peace—this song of horror and hope. And even before it was finished the power of this mural had stirred and shaken Mexico.

The storm had broken the day before. The country's most reactionary newspaper, *Excelsior,* mouthpiece of the Catholic hierarchy and of the United States embassy—as it had once been of the Nazi embassy —launched the offensive. No less than three stories exploded from a single page, illustrated with a reproduction of the sketch for the mural. "The apotheosis of Communism, of Sovietism," screeched *Excelsior,* while nevertheless compelled to describe it as "the magnificent painting of the great artist."

"It seems peace is the property of the Communists," Diego—he is Diego to millions—said as he stood calmly eating his boiled eggs. "Since the entire world wants peace, even Mr. Truman (so he says), they all must be Communists. Of course, Truman wants peace via the atom bomb."

As we talked, Diego's wife, Frida Kahlo, who is herself one of the leading Mexican artists, arrived. Seeing her warm, vibrant face, one would not know that she has been an invalid for several years. Frida Kahlo, who was in a wheel-chair, cried out in delight as she looked at the mural which she had not seen for a long time. She was helped to ascend a platform, where she posed in her wheelchair for Diego, for she is part of the mural.

The mural had been commissioned for inclusion among Rivera's works to be shown, together with those of other Mexican artists, at the Exposition of Ancient and Modern Mexican Art opening in Paris May 9. After the exposition, which is jointly sponsored by the Mexican and French governments and is also to be taken to Stockholm, the mural was scheduled to be placed permanently in the Palace of Fine Arts, occupying the wall which forms a right angle with that on which the Rockefeller Center fresco is painted.

On February 26, Dr. Carlos Chavez, the noted composer and conductor, who is director of the National Institute of Fine Arts, a government institution that is in charge of organizing the Mexican end of the exposition, wrote to Rivera that his new mural could not be included because it contained "grave charges of a political nature against various foreign nations with whose government ours cultivates friendly relations." However, added Chavez, this "does not in any way alter the terms of the commission given you as it concerns the execution, termination and exhibition of the mural in our country."

FOR days the battle raged in the press, which lapped up Rivera's pungent comments on Chavez and Fernando Gamboa, assistant director of the Institute of Fine Arts. About two weeks after the Chavez letter was sent, various residents of Mexico City received in the mail a printed card:

"Diego Rivera invites you, your family and friends to the pre-inauguration of his mural, *Nightmare of War and Dream of Peace* (a realistic fantasy), executed expressly by commission of the National Institute of Fine Arts in order to be exhibited in the Exposition of Ancient and Modern Mexican Art, which will be inaugurated May 9 in the National Museum of Modern Art in the city of Paris." The invitation was for Friday, March 14, between 5 and 8 P.M.

Instead of the few hundred that were expected, some 2,000 came, ordinary working people as well as leading figures in the intellectual and cultural world. They found the mural an exciting experience. A group of

rominent persons present, includ-
ig ex-cabinet ministers, signed a
tter to President Aleman asserting
iat the mural "does not make any
iarges against any country or gov-
nment in the world," and inviting
im to view the painting personally
id then revoke the ban on its in-
usion in the Paris exposition.

The Mexican government moved
viftly. That same night men acting
nder "superior orders" cut the mu-
l, painted on canvas, from its
ame and removed it to an unknown
lace. The next morning a represen-
tive of the National Institute of
ine Arts came to Rivera's home and
ffered him a check for the money
ill due him for the mural. Since the
ainting was unfinished, he refused
accept the check. While Rivera
as discussing the matter, one of
is assistants phoned him that the
iural was gone. Together with his
wyer and a notary public, he rushed
own to the Palace of Fine Arts.
hey were refused admission to the
iird floor despite the fact that
ivera's work tools, paints, papers,
awings and other belongings were
ill there.

On the day of Diego's personally
rganized pre-inaugural, Chavez had
ritten him another letter stating
iat the government could not send
broad a mural that "exalts Soviet
atesmen and by its symbols humili-
es the peoples of England, the
nited States and France." The posi-
on would be the same, said Chavez,
regard to a mural which "exalted
nother chief of state and placed So-
viet Russia in a humiliating posi-
tion."

But something new was added. Chavez enclosed a letter he had received from his superior, Minister of Education Manuel Gual Vidal, reversing the commitment about exhibiting the mural in Mexico and declaring it could not be shown in the Palace of Fine Arts or any government building. This was tantamount to complete suppression since a mural with this subject matter is not likely to find a permanent home in a privately owned building, and even its temporary exhibition would be difficult.

Rivera called a press conference for two days later. David Alfaro Siqueiros joined in it as representative of the Revolutionary Painters Front, an organization of progressive artists, many of whose members had been invited to participate in the Paris exposition. There they sat in a small room crowded with reporters and press photographers—two titans of the Mexican Renaissance, fabulous figures whose rivalry — personal, artistic and at times political—has been productive of so many stories, true and apocryphal.

Diego sat with sad, wideset eyes in vast, inscrutable repose. Siqueiros was a contrast, his face restless under its halo of hair, a Gabriel impatient to blow his passionate trumpet. And in the rear of the room hovered the brown Aztec face of another distinguished pioneer of the Mexican mural movement, Xavier Guerrero.

These three had in 1923 founded *El Machete,* a kind of Mexican counterpart of the old *Masses,* which helped make Mexican art and political history. The following year when they, together with almost the entire membership of the Revolutionary Union of Painters, Sculptors and Engravers, joined the Communist Party, the paper became its official organ.

DIEGO began to read a prepared statement in an almost inaudible tone, his voice rising as he went on.

"In the dead of night the canvas of my mural was brutally cut at the edge of the frame with a knife or razor with the technique typical of museum thieves, and the painting seized and confiscated. . . ."

The suppression of the painting was due to "the general tendency of the government of Mexico which, in view of its inclusion in the so-called western bloc of the United Nations, could not permit the message of the Mexican people's will for peace, faithfully reflected in my mural, to become known throughout the world, thereby impairing the war objectives of Anglo-Saxon imperialism. . . .

"We all know that in our country there are no responsible ministers. The ministers are in fact and in law personal secretaries of the President of the Republic. As a result, I can have only one position: that the sole and ultimate responsibility for the action against my painting rests with the government of my country. . . .

"The theme and the only objective of my mural, the reason behind all my efforts . . . is that which constitutes the mainspring of my life at the present moment: the fight for peace. Therefore, in view of the true facts, I declare that the action carried out by the government of Mexico against the free expression of my thought through my professional medium, painting, is, irrespective of my individual personality, nothing but a grave assault on the struggle for world peace, a struggle which is beneficial more than anything else to the people of Mexico. . . .

"It is for the Mexican people to demand not only the return of this mural, its exhibition in Paris and its location in the Palace of Fine Arts but also the most absolute respect for the free expression of thought consecrated in the Mexican Constitution."

Siqueiros expressed full support for Rivera and pointed out that never before had the government assumed responsibility for the content, religious or political, of a work of art exhibited under its auspices. This, therefore, set a grave precedent. He announced that the Revolutionary Painters Front was meeting that night to plan further action in the campaign to reverse the official ban.

Both artists took the occasion to emphasize that whereas the depiction of Stalin and Mao Tse-tung was offensive to the government, Rivera's old mural in the Palace of Fine Arts with its image of Trotsky, painted at a time when, as Diego himself said, he committed "a grave political de-

viation," had been allowed to remain for seventeen years. "I am grateful to the Mexican government," Rivera remarked dryly, "for its implicit statement that Trotskyism is an efficient ally of imperialism."

That evening the mural was returned to Rivera—brought to his home. The government considered the episode closed. But certain episodes have a way of being more easily opened than closed.

WHAT kind of mural is this that is considered too dangerous for both Mexicans and non-Mexicans to see? The mural shows a street-scene in Mexico City. Men and women are collecting signatures on petitions for a five-power peace treaty. These are not imaginary signature collectors. They are all real people drawn from life, some of them leaders of the peace movement, others rank and file participants.

Here on the left is one of the foremost contemporary Mexicans, white-haired General Heriberto Jara, former Minister of the Navy, member of the World Peace Council, Stalin peace prize winner. A peasant has stopped to sign at his table, while his barefoot son looks on. Near Jara are a bespectacled youth and a slim, brown young woman, likenesses of the champion signature collectors in this area. The young woman is holding out a petition and a copy of the peace magazine *Paz* to a peasant mother with a baby wrapped in a *rebozo* (traditional Mexican shawl) perched on her back, and a little girl beside her.

In the center with other signature collectors stands Efrain Huerta, noted poet, film critic of the semi-official daily, *El Nacional,* and general secretary of the National Council of Peace Partisans. A soldier is about to sign, and beside him stands a working woman with her baby and small son. Then comes Frida Kahlo collecting signatures in her wheelchair, lovely with her black hair and flaming red dress.

On the right is the shining face of another illustrious Mexican, Dr. Enrique Gonzalez Martinez, the country's greatest contemporary poet, ex-ambassador to Spain, Argentina and Chile, and president of the National Council of Peace Partisans. Dr. Gonzalez Martinez died in February at the age of eighty, his last words being: "My only regret is that I won't live to see the end of that hateful Yankee imperialism." Here we see the fighting poet almost in the flesh, holding out a petition on the back of which are several lines from his anti-war poem, "Babel."

Above and behind all this are several related scenes which provide the international background of the activity in the street. You see the huge mushroom of an atomic explosion. Then the frightful reality of the Korean war as the Korean people know it; steel-helmeted soldiers shooting down civilians; naked children being whipped by soldiers; a civilian crucified—this is based on an actual photograph; a man and woman hanging from gallows.

And then on the upper left, dominating the entire mural, are five figures grouped around a large globe of the world: Stalin and Mao on one side, Uncle Sam, John Bull and Marianne on the other. On the globe rests a sheet of paper. Mao holds a white dove of peace in his hand, while Stalin offers a pen to the other three, asking them to sign. Rivera explained these figures as follows in his letter replying to Chavez's first communication:

"In representing the great powers I took care to use those characters which in the countries themselves, in prose, poetry and image, are accepted as representing them. That is, for France, *la belle Marianne,* the figure that is most popular and be-

Message from Mexico . . .

The famous Mexican painter, David Alfaro Siqueiros, pointing to the special significance to Mexico of the Smith Act persecutions in the United States, issued the following statement on the case of Alexander Trachtenberg, one of the 16 *now on trial in New York:*

"AT THE present moment, when the United States inquisition against freedom of expression has arrived in Mexico in the form of the Mexican government's attack on Diego Rivera's new peace mural, the trial of Alexander Trachtenberg and his 15 fellow-victims opens in New York for the crime of advocating peace and the principles of Marxism-Leninism.

"This has special significance for us in Mexico. The great Mexican art movement, which began in the early twenties and has recently won new successes abroad, was strongly influenced by the Russian Revolution and its Marxist-Leninist ideals. Without that influence, just as without the influence of our own bourgeois democratic revolution, our art movement could not have come into existence.

"Therefore, in defending freedom of expression in art against attempts to introduce the spirit of the Smith Act in Mexico, the Mexican people must protest against the efforts of the U.S. government to silence and imprison those who, like Trachtenberg, disseminated among the American people those scientific truths which helped inspire our own art and culture."

DAVID ALFARO SIQUEIROS

oved by the French people and with hich all the great French artists, rom the time of Rude to Daumier, nd all the contemporary artists have epresented the France of Liberty. his figure rests her hands on a pade, that of France cultivator of er own soil and of the great tradi-ions of Greco-Latin culture, and of he new currents of democratic liberty and social transformation.

"England is represented by John Bull, with the dress and physiognomy with which the great English artists, Howard and Rowlandson, have consecrated him. John Bull rests his hands on a steel cogwheel, as befits England's character as an industrial country.

"For the United States of North

Message to Mexico

The signers of the following letter, reprinted here in part, are among the distinguished artists who have joined in upholding the right of V. J. Jerome to publish his pamphlet, "Grasp the Weapon of Culture," cited as the "overt act" in the government's Smith Act indictment of Mr. Jerome, now on trial with fifteen other defendants in New York.

"DEAR Diego Rivera: We greet you, a great artist and spokesman of the Mexican people, and through you we greet our fellow artists in Mexico and all of Latin America, whose progressive art tradition has enriched the world.

"In the best manner of that tradition, your art is the history of our time, giving expression to the hopes and desires of your people, which are also the hopes and desires of all the people of the world, including the people of our own country.

"Never has there been a time when there has been a greater universal desire in the hearts of men and women than there is today for peace.

"Your murals, 'Nightmare of War and Dream of Peace,' must not be suppressed. For we are inspired by them, as are all informed people to whom art and freedom are dear.

"We protest against the suppression of your murals, and we request that they be sent to Paris and exhibited there by your Government as originally planned.

"With warmest fraternal greetings,

RUSSELL COWLES, PHILIP EVERGOOD, HUGO GELLERT, ROBERT GWATHMEY, ROCKWELL KENT, JACOB LAWRENCE, JACK LEVINE, ANTON REFREGIER, CHARLES WHITE.

America, the most familiar of the self-representations: Uncle Sam. His arms tranquilly crossed, he holds in his left hand the Holy Bible. For, as you know, Mr. Director General, our good neighbor, Uncle Sam, is now stating at the top of his voice and through his functionaries that he is fighting for Democracy, Liberty, Peace, and Christian Civilization—all of which is contained in the Old and New Testaments and the Holy Gospels. On the other hand, you cannot be unaware of Uncle Sam's war budgets, for which reason he holds in his right hand a typical revolver to defend his ideals and carries an ample bag full of dollars ready for generous aid. . . .

"Since there is no national symbolic figure, universally accepted, for People's China, as there are for the other three nations, I had to employ that of the world-famous leader of his people, the poet and painter, Mao Tse-tung, who holds in his hand the white dove of peace, used as a peace symbol in China for 7,000 years.

"As for the U.S.S.R., I was in the same predicament as in the case of China and employed the figure most prominently known inside and outside the borders of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the leader of its peoples, Marshal Stalin, who offers the great powers a pen to sign a pact of peace. I am certain you have been informed by the press, radio and other means that he has been doing it for some time."

It might be added here that whatever criticism is implied in Uncle Sam's accessories is certainly far less direct and pointed than that contained in Rivera's earlier mural in the Palace of Fine Arts, which shows American mounted police breaking up an unemployed demonstration. As for the soldiers in the Korean scene, they wear no national identifying insignia—and certainly Rivera cannot be blamed if people come to conclusions as a result of the few truths that seep into the newspapers.

PEACE is the criminal here. Peace and the majestic figures of Stalin and Mao Tse-tung, glowing, sun-lit figures of the new world, offering peace. And all this painted with a magisterial hand, in rich reds and browns and yellows, with warm human beings flowing across the canvas, themes clashing and mingling as in a symphony. "The best work that he has done," said the noted art and literary critic, Antonio Rodriguez, in a television symposium on the controversy.

For me many of Rivera's murals of the past twenty years, for all their cumulative power and superb craftsmanship, are too crowded with people and objects and ideas, the impact too dispersed. But in this stupendous appeal for peace all is clear, direct and alive, an eloquence sharply focussed. Here is language that both illiterate peasant and sophisticated intellectual can immediately understand.

And what a heroic job physically the painting of it was! The prosaic egg-boiling that I encountered when

first visited the mural was a fragment of that heroism. To complete the mural on time Rivera was sleeping in the Palace of Fine Arts—he pointed out his cot in a room on the second floor—starting each day's work at 6 A.M., standing on his feet all day and into the night, climbing on platforms and scaffolds, not knocking off till midnight or later. And this at the age of sixty-five!

At this writing the battle to reverse the government decision is still on and a protest meeting is being planned. Mexico is one of the few countries in which cultural controversies, especially if they concern art, can raise public passion to the boiling point. Let it be remembered that in this case the controversy concerns an artist who has become a national tradition, leader of a movement which every Mexican regards as one of his country's glories and part of his own intimate heritage and identity as a Mexican.

Let it be remembered too that this movement, continuously fertile after thirty years, is, as Siqueiros has pointed out, a direct product of the Mexican bourgeois democratic revolution and an indirect product of the Russian socialist revolution.

In this cultural controversy the major political implications are sharp and clear, and wide sections of the public are justifiably alarmed. The physical distance between Washington and Mexico City is not very great. But politically it's only a stone's throw—or a knife's length—between the thought-control Smith Act and the thought-control act which forbids an artist to paint and people to see that which speaks — and fights — for peace.

Robeson Concert Tour

We are happy to call our readers' attention to the Paul Robeson Birthday Concert Tour which has just begun. The noted artist's tour is sponsored by the United Freedom Fund, including the Negro Labor Councils, the paper *Freedom,* the Council on African Affairs, and other groups.

The concert schedule is as follows: May 6, Cleveland; May 8, New York City; May 18, Blaine, Wash.; May 20, Seattle; May 22, San Francisco; May 23, Oakland; May 25, Los Angeles; May 27, Denver; May 29, Milwaukee; May 31, Chicago; June 6, Philadelphia; June 13, Newark; June 15, Detroit; June 20, Pittsburgh.

HIS BEST GIRL

A Story by **MARTIN ABZUG**

WHEN she worked she always ate her lunch at the machine. It was hard for her to go down to a cafeteria; her feet hurt and there was never enough time. Her feet, she sighed, were a lost cause.

She looked down at her hands as they removed the wax paper from her homemade sandwich. The hands were wrinkled and without color, as if dead. They managed to make her a living, though. The trouble was not in their appearance but the pain in them, especially on damp days when the arthritis got worse. She could still get them to respond to the machine, and that was what counted.

"Sadie, you want some coffee?" Angelina called out.

"No thanks," she said. "I have tea."

She smiled at Angelina. It was nice of the woman to ask. Angelina, one of the veteran workers in the shop, was more friendly than most of the other women. I wish they all would treat me like she did, Sadie thought.

She unscrewed the cap of her thermos and sipped the strong, hot tea. As she drank she glanced at the silent machines. There was a strange restlessness about them. It was understandable; they had just had an enforced rest of more than three weeks.

"Get those lights out!"

Mr. Danon stood in the entrance to the shop. He stretched his arms, half yawned, and repeated the order. One of the girls, Marie, got up and put out a few of the lights.

"We don't need all of them burning during lunch," Danon said. "The electric company is rich enough."

Marie, a thin, intense woman of thirty, spread her hands out towards him. In one hand there was a thick sandwich, in the other a tomato. "Can't we at least see what we're eatin'?" she asked.

"Maybe you're better off if you don't."

He dodged around a dummy and went into the office.

"Wise guy," Marie told Angelina.

jerking her dark head in the direction of the office.

"Sh!" warned Angelina as she looked at Sadie.

Sadie put her head down. It hurt her when the other women were afraid to speak about the boss in front of her. It hurt because they called her the boss' pet. She had told them that this was ridiculous. She received the same pay, the same rate per piece as anybody else. Was it her fault that Danon talked to her? It was understandable. She had been with him, in the same shop, from the beginning, more than four years ago. She had worked for him five years before that.

Danon emerged again. He rested his large arm around the dummy's shoulders and looked around, his blue eyes narrow. "Where is everybody?" he asked, petulantly.

He peered at his wristwatch and swore. "I want all of you to be in here five minutes before the hour! You have to be at the machines, ready to start on time!"

The three women who were scattered around the shop looked at him blankly.

"I mean the ones who go down! I mean the other girls!"

He sidled up to Sadie. Taking a handkerchief out of his pocket he wiped his nose. He used the handkerchief to muffle the sound of his voice. "What's wrong with them that they can't be in their chairs when that clock says one? What's the matter?"

She had to think fast. "The service in the cafeterias is terrible, Mr. Danon." she explained. "There are too many—"

"Bull," he cut in, impatiently. "They always have an excuse. All they know is how to run to the union with complaints."

He started to walk up and down between the rows of sewing machines, nervously. After a few minutes he stopped and rested his hand on the back of his neck. There was a pained expression on his face.

"I got so much work coming in!" he moaned. "The jobber chopped up twelve hundred garments in one lot this morning. Twelve hundred pieces!"

She raised her lips from the tea and smiled. "That's good! Maybe it means the season is starting."

"What's so good about it?" he grumbled. "Here we are getting busy and the damn girls don't even cooperate. At least you—you're reliable."

SHE beamed up at him. He had a nice face, so strong and virile looking, with a broad nose and prominent chin. He had always spoken to her, confided in her. She could never understand why some of the women called him a tyrant. He had always been so pleasant to her that when she was laid off she didn't even bother to look for another job. In addition, her devotion to him saved her the trouble of constantly looking for work during the frequent slack periods. It saved her sick feet.

After a few minutes the rest of

the girls began to dribble in, one and two at a time. Some of them were laughing, some singing. Henry Danon stood in the middle of the floor, his thick arms akimbo, welcoming them with his hard stare. He waited for all thirty-six to arrive.

"It's about time!" he shouted. "Where the hell were you all hiding?"

Anna, one of the more outspoken of the group, pointed to the clock on the wall. "You shouldn't curse like that, Mr. Danon. Besides, we got a coupla minutes yet."

"You work by that clock! It says after one already!" He shouted so loudly that the sound of his voice bounced from wall to wall in the crowded shop. "If you keep this up, *I'll* go to the union and complain for a change!"

Josephine emerged from the rest room as he yelled. She was a heavy, good-looking woman in her early forties. She was the forelady. "What's wrong now?" she asked in a weary voice.

Danon didn't answer. Everybody knew that he was afraid of Josephine. She was placid enough and good-humored, but when her anger was aroused her temper was tremendous. At such times she looked as if she was going to scratch the boss' eyes out. At such times he'd run from her.

Now he merely watched the women take their seats at the machines.

The freight door banged and a truckman wheeled in a load of large bundles on a handtruck. Danon pulled his sparse hair. "Look at this lot! Is this what they call twelve hundred pieces? There must be two thousand here if there's one!"

Some one laughed. The girls, seeing the bundles roll in, whispered to one another. The boss complained when he had no work and complained if he had too much!

Danon turned on them. "Let's go," he pleaded. He tried to joke with them, to cajole them. Failing, he threatened them.

"Slavedriver!" Angelina cried under her breath but loudly enough for the others to hear. Even the machines, whirring into action, seemed to hear her and took up the cry like a plaint.

Henry Danon glared at them. He glared at their faces, which were turned on their work, glared at their bent backs. He stumbled over a bundle of cut goods lying on the floor and scratched his head in bewilderment. Sadie, watching him guardedly, couldn't help feeling sorry for him.

THE following day another load of work came in. The jobber began to call for delivery; the stores needed the merchandise and he appealed to Danon to rush it through. Danon argued that he had received the first lot only two days before.

The jobber refused to listen. Produce, he said. Produce or else.

"Produce!" Danon snarled as he hung up.

It became the slogan of the day.

Faster and faster, more and more... until another day, at some unknown point in the future there would be a word uttered over a telephone and bang! No bundles, no work, no rushing, no girls . . . nothing but a despairing shake of the head. The theme "Produce" would no longer be mentioned. The theme would become "Don't need, no orders. . . ."

Danon pushed with all his strength. He hired operators for the three plain sewers that had been idle for nearly a year. He increased the production, but it was still not enough. The jobber was driving him mad.

In desperation he held a conference with Josephine. She had no new ideas of getting more work out of her people. She explained that she was doing everything she could.

Reluctantly he concluded that there was only one thing left to do, the thing he dreaded above all else. He would have to work overtime.

When Josephine told the women, most of them were glad. Those who had children to care for were not too happy over the news. They preferred to leave earlier and get to their homes.

The shop worked overtime for several days but still did not produce enough. When the bookkeeper handed him the new figures Henry Danon was furious. There was no help for it; he would have to stand over the women every minute of the day and watch each one.

Sadie was one of the last to be observed. He stood behind her, making loud clucking sounds with his tongue. It was a damp day and her hands were not responding properly.

"What's the matter with you, Sadie?"

"Here it comes," Angelina whispered to Marie across the low table that separated their machines. They looked at each other, significantly. They knew that the ax was about to fall, boss' pet or no. Stripped down, all bosses were the same.

"What's wrong, Sadie?" he insisted. "You're not giving the work out fast enough."

She lifted her head, but seemed unable to look at him. "Who knows?" she said tearfully. "My hands aren't working right today—my arthritis—"

"A lot of good that does me! Why don't you see a doctor?"

"A doctor?" Sadie smiled wanly. "I've gone to every doctor in the city. Don't worry, Mr. Danon. I'll be all right. It will pass."

"I hope so!"

"I had it before and I know. It comes and goes."

"I was wondering about you," he said with a dry, hollow laugh. "I've been watching you fall off for the last few weeks but I didn't know the reason. I see it now. You're slowing up, Sadie!"

She started to answer him, to defend herself, but changed her mind.

"What am I going to do with you?" he demanded.

HE WALKED away before she could answer and planted himself behind somebody else. After work he waited near the office for Sadie to come out of the rest room.

She was slow in dressing; most of the other women had already left when she appeared. Her face was powdered, filling her wrinkles somewhat, and there was a jaunty smear of rouge on her lips.

"You look healthy now." He grinned. "Maybe you're only sick when you work. Maybe working doesn't agree with you."

"I like to work," she said. "I have to like it. My daughter needs help. My husband can't do it alone."

"I heard your daughter is well off."

She made a sour face. "Who told you that?"

"What's the difference? All I know is—I'm in a bad spot." He dropped his voice, confidentially. "You've been with me a long time now and I trust you, Sadie. Tell me just one thing—what do you expect me to do? I've been losing money steadily—now that I have a chance to recoup a little I don't want to miss! That's why every hand in this shop has to be good. I won't take learners and I won't take soldiering!"

She looked at him in disbelief. He suddenly seemed to be a different man. Maybe the women were right when they called him a tyrant. His last statement had proved it. She was certainly no learner.

"Do you think I'm soldiering?" she cried, her voice cracking.

He quickly changed his tactics. He hated tears, whether they came from his wife or from the women that worked for him. Tears were disgusting—they reminded him of the fact that he had to deal with women all day long.

He took her arm and drew her aside. She leaned against the metal partition that separated the shop from the trimmings room.

"Do me a favor, Sadie. I know you won't turn me down. After all, I've been very good to you all these years. It's true I had a reason to treat you well. You were always my best girl." He forced a smile. "We always trusted each other, didn't we? I know you'll be honest with me. Nobody is around to bulldoze you now. You can tell me the truth."

She sighed. "What is it?"

"Why aren't they putting out for me? Why are they laying down on the job?"

"They're not laying down," Sadie said, wearily.

"Then why can't I get more production?"

"I don't know, Mr. Danon."

He felt a wave of pity, not so much for her but for what he was thinking. Even as he spoke he began to figure out how he would get rid of her. After all, she had been faithful.

"Good night, Sadie," he gruffed. "I'll see you in the morning."

HE SPOKE to the whole shop the next day. He made the women sit at their machines before they left for lunch. He spoke to them as if they were pupils in a classroom. He told them they were all nice people but business didn't consist of being nice. It consisted of making money. The only way to do this was through

production, and that was what was needed. He began by being friendly and ended in a blaze of fury, accusing them of laying down on their jobs.

The girls were equally furious. Angelina, who quickly emerged as their spokesman, tried to argue with him, but some of the others restrained her.

The meeting ended in bitterness. Most of the women didn't show up the following morning. Henry Danon was frantic. He went over to Sadie, who was feeding the needled mouth of her machine with two parts of a dress.

"Where are those damn girls?" he moaned. "Maybe you can tell me?"

Of course she could tell him but what was the use? He also knew where they were. She didn't want to add fuel to the fire. She would only aggravate him, and aggravation was bad for a man.

"Why don't you answer when I talk to you, Sadie?"

"I—I don't know where they are."

"You do!" he shot back. "You know they're either playing sick or playing holiday."

He turned and ran out of the shop. She didn't see him any more that day. When she came to work the next morning he was standing in front of the elevator door, glumly greeting each girl that entered. He asked each one where she had been.

"It was St. Bonaventure's."

"I didn't feel good."

"It was a holiday."

Danon couldn't contain himself any longer. "You had a holiday only last week!"

"That was different. That was St. Augustine's—"

"I never saw anything like it!" he exploded. "Every time it's another story! St. Joe's, St. Mary's—what goes on here? I need production—not religion!"

He paced the floor in great agitation. He knew why they had stayed home the day before. There were a few who were still absent. He realized that those who had returned had done so only because they needed the wages.

"Sadie, can't you go any faster?" he demanded, whirling on her.

She was so stunned that she looked up at him without answering, her bluish lips parted.

"What's happened to you, Sadie? Your hands move like turtles! Are you alive? Wake up, for God's sake!"

He walked away from her and shut himself in the office. He had thought of a plan. He phoned the union and asked to see the delegate immediately. Within an hour the delegate, a suave, well-dressed man named Russo, who looked more like a boss than Henry Danon, arrived. Danon told him about the soldiering of the girls, their frequent holidays, about the fast-fading Sadie.

"One second," Russo said. "Take it easy. Number one: you can't stop people from worshipping, eh? As for the soldiering . . ." he paused and waved a slim, manicured finger at Danon. "You certainly got no kick coming. They're as good as any set I know. So don't complain."

"Believe me, I don't want to complain," Danon said, craftily. "But what am I going to do about the old one, that Sadie? She drags the whole shop down with her, Mr. Russo. I can't stand watching it any more."

Russo squeezed his lower lip with his fingers, as if in deep thought.

"We'll get together on that one," he finally said.

Danon pounded his back. "Good boy! She don't need the job anyway. I hear she's got a daughter who can take good care of her."

They agreed on the terms. Sadie was to leave at the end of the week and receive an extra week's pay.

WHEN Friday arrived, however, Danon couldn't summon up the nerve to speak to her. He decided to let her stay another week. He was not required to give her separation pay and would consider an extra week's work a kind of separation pay.

He hovered over her all week, looking for an opportunity to berate her, as if he needed justification in his own mind. There was none. The weather had cleared, her arthritis was better, and she worked with her old time speed.

The rest of the absentees returned, one after an unsuccessful search for another job. Still, with the whole shop going full blast there was not enough production to satisfy Henry Danon. He decided to weed out the three or four other slow people.

Sadie was relieved to see that he was leaving her alone again. She concluded that the man was moody. She did not suspect that a trap had been set for her, that he was quietly sharpening his ax. She assumed that the reason for his calm was the fact that he was making money again. Dresses were rolling out in greater numbers.

He waited until Thursday. He had decided to talk to her on Thursday because he didn't want to spoil her Sabbath. He would go to the trouble of paying her off separately and let her go home. It would have to be this week or never. It would hurt a little, but what could he do? His own neck was at stake, his existence as a businessman. If he failed this time he would have to go back to being a worker.

He waited until the end of the day, girding himself. He was lucky that she was slow to leave. He had more time to try to figure out a way to soften the blow.

"Sadie," he said, beckoning to her as she emerged from the dressing room, "come here." He couldn't understand why there was a tremor in his voice.

"Yes, Mr. Danon?"

"I want to talk to you. Let's go into the office."

"One second," she said, cheered by his pleasantness. "I have to get my kimono. I want to take it home to wash."

He went into the office, lit a cigarette, and waited for her. She came in a few minutes later. She stood before him, her tired hands folded on her stomach.

"How old are you, Sadie?"

She laughed, without sound. "Old

enough. I'll be fifty-two next month."

"Is that a fact? You don't look it."

You look much older, he thought.

She smiled. "Thank you, Mr. Danon."

He drew on his cigarette. He wasn't used to smoking and was clumsy at it. He blew short, nervous puffs of smoke into the linty air.

"Fifty-two years old. Isn't it about time you gave up working, Sadie? After all, you're a mother. You have responsibilities, you keep house."

She looked embarrassed. "What—what difference does that make?"

"It makes a big difference! You're also a grandmother, aren't you?"

"Of course." She beamed. "Don't you remember when my Elaine got married? She came down to the shop and the girls gave her a party."

"Sure," he said. "Sure I remember."

She opened her purse and drew out a large photograph. "This is my grandson!"

He gazed at it, uneasily. He was grateful that everybody else had left the place. There was only the sound of the boy sweeping the floor around the machines.

"He's some kid," Danon said, distantly. "He's handsome, all right."

"I'll say he is!"

HE LOOKED away from her, out of the window. The window faced a dark, narrow alley. Where was his nerve? It seemed to have disappeared. He had never feared any one.

"Your husband's a waiter, isn't he? I hear he does all right."

"Not bad. He works only on weekends. He makes more than I do when I work five days. They have a good union."

Henry Danon quickly jumped into the breach. "Then why do you bother to knock yourself out and run to work? Can't you take it easy after all these years? You're not well—"

"I have to help my daughter Elaine," she explained. "She's having a hard time of it."

He looked at her in surprise. He had heard that her daughter was prosperous. Or was that a rumor that had been cooked up by one of the women?

"Hasn't she got a husband?"

"She certainly has. He's a fine young man but he doesn't make a living yet. He still goes to school."

Danon stiffened. He squashed his cigarette under his large foot. "Aren't you tired of working, Sadie?"

"What if I am? I can't do anything about it."

"Let's be honest with each other, Sadie. After all, we're not strangers. It's eight years—"

"Nine," she said with a sigh. "I'm working for you nine years now."

"All that time I was good to you, right? We got along swell, didn't we? So when I talk to you it's not just to anybody! You're not like one of those dagos who—"

"Don't call them that!" Sadie flared.

"Why not? You're not like one of the others who hates the hand that feeds her. You can understand when I tell you that I can't carry you any

more. It's not your fault—everybody gets old. You just can't work any more! Let your husband take care of you."

She floundered and looked for a place to sit down. There was no chair nearby. Her hand found the desk and she leaned against it for support.

"Don't do this to me, Mr. Danon!"

"I—I'm sorry."

"Why are you pushing me out? Tell me why!"

"I just explained it to you, Sadie."

"You can't do it!" she shouted desperately. "The union won't let you!"

"They can't help you any more, Sadie. When somebody doesn't produce up to standard the union can't do a thing."

"It's not fair!" she insisted. "I'm so weak—you took the starch out of me. Look at my hands—how they're shaking."

"You'll be all right. I'm doing you a big favor—you'll see!"

She looked squarely into his face. She could hardly believe what she saw. His face looked as if it had been transformed. His once handsome features suddenly seemed vicious, his broad nose grotesque. The women were right—he was a devil!

"Is that what I get?" she gasped. "Is that my end? I worked with my heart—with my sides. With my blood I worked!"

"You got paid for it!" he said, red anger rising to his cheeks.

"So did the other girls! But who did you go to with all your troubles? Who listened to you, encouraged you?"

"You listened to my troubles?" he cried. "That's a hot one! You got more nerve than brains! What other contractor would've kept an old bag like you on the payroll? Tell me that!"

Trembling, she gathered her remaining strength and spit into his face. Then, before he could recover, she staggered out of the shop.

A FEW people on the street glanced at her pityingly as she pushed her aching feet towards the subway. She heard a familiar laugh and saw Angelina and Marie walk out of a big bright candy store with yellow boxes in their hands.

Angelina stopped laughing when she saw Sadie. It was unnecessary to ask what the matter was. It was written all over the older woman's strained, wrinkled face.

Sadie stumbled as if she was going to faint. Instinctively she put out her hands and held on to the women. Their support reassured her, gave her new strength.

"That goddam boss—" Angelina began.

She looked at Sadie, apologetically.

"It's all right," Sadie said quietly. "You can say it."

RiGhT FaCe

The New Geography

"In blunt fact, it would be inaccurate to say that the Eisenhowers live in 'France.' They live at a comfortable American Army post that happens to be in French territory."—*John Gunther likes Ike in* Look *magazine.*

Hold That Line!

"The private university must endure because it is the strongest defense against plausible arguments for mass education."—Dr. Harold Dodds, president of Princeton University in a letter to all alumni as reported in the Trenton, N. J., *Times.*

Authoritative Source

"Tonight's KDKA program (9:30) will be commended by John Foster Dulles for exposing vermin who prey on people who want to help worthy causes. These crooks misrepresent themselves as agents for deserving funds. Mr. Dulles' statement denouncing 'rackets in the name of suffering humanity,' will be read on the air. He is head of 'American Relief for Korea, Inc.' "—*From the Pittsburgh* Press.

Refutation

"When asked to comment on charges that U.S. germ warfare in Korea has cost a million lives, Dr. Brock Chisholm replied: 'A million. That's nothing. Nobody would use biological warfare to kill a million people. You can do that with an atom bomb.' "—The head of the U.N. World Health Organization talks to correspondents.

Don't Take Our Word

"Dr. Buttrick warned against the propaganda techniques of communism as applied in India. '. . . Russia talks peace," he said. 'We in America deeply and genuinely intend peace but we talk war. The tragedy is that India takes both of us at our word.' "—*From the New York* Times.

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

Fighting the

HAYMARKET FRAME-UP

By PHILIP S. FONER

"YOUR Honor," said August Spies during the Haymarket trial of 1886, "if you think that by hanging us you can stamp out the labor movement—the movement from which the downtrodden millions, the millions who toil in want and misery, expect salvation—if this is your opinion, then hang us! Here you will tread upon a spark, but there and there, behind you and in front of you, and everywhere, flames blaze up. It is a subterranean fire. You cannot put it out."

Immediately after the verdict was announced, sentencing seven of the defendants to be hanged and the eighth to be jailed for 15 years, the movement to save the condemned men flamed into life. Many who were at first blinded by hysteria to the real significance of this classic anti-labor frameup had their eyes opened during the trial.

For the trial had been a travesty of justice. The jury was stacked. The witnesses for the State were the police and their tools who were paid for testifying. Years afterward, in attempting to defend himself against indignant critics, Judge Gary described his own conduct of the trial in these words: "If I had a little *strained the law.* . . . I was to be commended for so doing."

The trial had made it clear that those accused of the bombing in Chicago's Haymarket were being condemned for their ideas and not for any deeds. Albert R. Parsons, the militant mid-western labor leader who was one of the defendants, summed up the nature of the frameup in a notebook, hitherto unpublished, which he kept during the trial:

"According to the instructions of the court to the jury they were to consider labor agitation in organizing labor in defense of its rights as murder." Parsons added: "These men had an interest in finding us guilty. We the defendants held opinions that the working class were being wronged by the monopolists, capitalists, etc. The employers of labor held the opinion that laborers had no right to such an opinion."

During the trial more and more sections of the labor movement had come to realize that the actual throwing of the bomb was not important to the employers. What was important was that the Haymarket affair provided a good excuse for

the destruction of the movement for the eight-hour day and the labor movement as a whole. A Chicago manufacturer said:

"No, I don't consider these people to have been found guilty of any offense, *but they must be hanged.* . . . I'm not afraid of anarchy; oh, no, it's the utopian scheme of a few, a *very* few philanthropic cranks, who are amiable withal, but I do consider that the *labor movement must be crushed!* The Knights of Labor will never dare to create discontent again if these men are hanged!"

The employers had spoken: *"They must be hanged!"* The higher courts hastened to comply. The defense appealed, and the State Supreme Court, unable to ignore completely the trial's open irregularities, pointed out to the lower court what these "irregularities" were and how to correct them, and then confirmed the verdict.

The defense tried to appeal the case to the United States Supreme Court, but that august tribunal, as it did later in many cases involving frameups of white and Negro workers, refused to review it. In this final appeal for a new trial, Leonard Sweet, the old law associate of Abraham Lincoln, joined the defense attorneys, but even his distinguished sponsorship made no impression upon the Supreme Court.

This article is from a chapter dealing with the Haymarket Affair in the second volume of Dr. Foner's *History of the Labor Movement in the United States* to be published this fall by International Publishers.

MEANWHILE, the defense efforts in behalf of the eight men gathered momentum. The United Trades of New York passed a resolution urging organized labor all over the country to hold protest mass meetings. The powerful Central Labor Union of New York endorsed a similar appeal, signed by fourteen well-known labor leaders, including Samuel Gompers and Frank Ferrell, Negro leader of the Knights of Labor. The document urged that a great public demonstration be held simultaneously throughout the country by all representative labor organizations to "save our country from the disgrace of an act that can be considered in no other light than as a judicial murder, prompted by the basest and most un-American motives. . . ." In answer to this appeal, mass meetings were held in cities all over the country.

The American Federation of Labor at its convention passed a resolution pleading for clemency. "In the interests of the cause of labor and the peaceful methods of improving the condition and achieving the final emancipation of labor," wrote Gompers, the A. F. of L. president, "I am opposed to the execution. It would be a blot on the escutcheon of our country." In his autobiography, written in the 1920's, Gompers advanced the following significant reason to explain his action in behalf of the framed Haymarket martyrs: "Labor must do its best to maintain justice for the radicals or

find itself denied the rights of free men."

The victims of Haymarket were supported, morally and financially, by many local and district assemblies of the Knights of Labor. However, the opportunist national leadership of the Order took no part in the defense movement, and actually threatened to suspend or even expel a district assembly taking action. A resolution dealing with the case was drawn up by Victor Drury and presented by James Quinn of District Assembly 49 at the Richmond convention in 1886. It was rejected by the conservative leadership, headed by Terence V. Powderly.

The official stand of the Order, dictated by Powderly despite the obvious sympathy of the rank and file Knights for the victims, aroused the contempt of many workers, and was an important factor in hastening the decline of the Knights of Labor.

Among the prominent Americans who protested against the verdict and petitioned for a commutation of the sentences were William Dean Howells, Robert G. Ingersoll, Daniel De Leon, Lyman Trumbull, who had been a judge of the Illinois Supreme Court and 18 years a U.S. Senator, Henry Demarest Lloyd, the noted liberal writer, Stephen S. Gregory, later president of the American Bar Association, Murray F. Taley, then chief justice of the Illinois Circuit Court, Lyman Gage, later Secretary of the Treasury, and John Brown, son of the great emancipator.

Deeply troubled by the frameup which he called "the greatest wrong that ever threatened our fame as a nation," William Dean Howells wrote a letter to the New York *Tribune* urging all "who believe that it would either be injudicious or impolicy" to execute the condemned men to join him in petitioning the governor to mitigate their punishment. The novelist's letter provoked some of the papers to abuse him, he told Thomas Perry, "as heartily as if I had proclaimed myself a dynamiter." Howells' biographer points out: "His wife, in spite of her anxiety for their children, and especially for their invalid daughter, faced the possible loss of his position with him, and upheld him in his efforts."

THE defense movement transcended national boundaries. Eleanor and Edward Marx-Aveling, the daughter and son-in-law of Karl Marx, called upon the British workers to "strengthen the hands of their American brethren by holding meetings and passing resolutions," and at scores of mass meetings English workingmen and women voted in favor of "a protest against the murder of the labor leaders."

On October 14, 1887, Southplace Institute in London was crowded to the doors, and beyond, by an enthusiastic audience which unanimously adopted the following resolution:

"That the English workers in this meeting desire earnestly to urge on their fellow workers in America the great danger to Public Liberty that arises from suffering citizens to be punished for re-

ing attempts to suppress the right of blic Meeting and Free Speech, since ight that the people are punished for forcing is evidently thereby made no ht at all, but a crime.

"That the fate of the seven men now der sentence of death for holding a blic meeting in Chicago at which cer- n policemen were killed for attempt- g forcibly to disperse the people and ence the speakers, is of deep concern us as English workers, because their se is the case of our comrades in Ire- id to-day, and is likely to be ours to- orrow unless the workers from both les of the Atlantic declare with one ice that all who interfere with the ghts of Public Meeting and Free Speech t unlawfully and at their own peril.

"We cannot admit that the political ews of the seven condemned men have ything to do with the principle in- lved; and we protest against their sen- nce, which, if carried out, will prac- cally make the holding of meetings by orking-men in their own interests a pital offense throughout the United ates of America, since it is always pos- ble for the authorities to provoke a owd to reprisals involving danger to fe.

"We look to our American comrades, f all shades of political opinion, to de- and the unconditional release of the even men in whose persons the liberties f all workers are now in peril."

William Morris and the young George Bernard Shaw were among those who addressed this meeting. The account in *The Commonweal* of October 22, 1887, states: "George Bernard Shaw (Fabian) disclaimed ny sympathy with Anarchism or Anarchists, but emphatically sup- ported the view that this was a ques- ion alone of freedom of speech and pinion. The case of these men today, omorrow might be of any one of us, of any political sect or party, who made himself obnoxious to the Government of the Day."

In November, 1887, William Morris wrote to Robert Browning urging him to sign an enclosed appeal for mercy and to do what he could "to save the lives of seven men who have been condemned to death for a deed of which they were not guilty after a mockery of a trial." He continued:

> "I do not know if you have taken note of the events, the English press has practically boycotted the subject, nor can I give you a full account of our view of the matter. But I will ask you to believe me as an honest man when I say that they have been made to pay with their lives because of their opinions. . . ."

A group in the French Chamber of Deputies, on October 29, telegraphed protests to the Governor of Illinois, as did the Municipal Council of Paris and the Council of the Department of the Seine. The petition called the impending executions a "political crime" which would be an "everlasting mark of infamy upon republicanism."

Meetings of workers were held in France, Holland, Russia, Italy and Spain, and many contributed out of their scanty wages for the Haymarket defense fund.

As the execution date, November 11, drew near, a flood of resolutions, letters, and memorials poured in upon Governor Oglesby urging a reprieve. They came from workers, liberal intellectuals, trade unions and radical societies all over the world. But these

voices of hundreds of thousands of workers and their allies were drowned out by the cry of the employers: *"They must be hanged!"*

Still the huge defense movement did have its effect. Governor Oglesby commuted the sentence of Fielden and Schwab to life imprisonment.

One of the younger defendants, Louis Lingg, committed suicide (or was murdered by police guards). Parsons, Spies, Engel and Fisher were hanged on November 11, 1887.

THE Haymarket martyrs fought capitalism to the last. On the very scaffold they proudly defied their executioners and affirmed their faith in the working class. Parsons cried: "Let the voice of the people be heard!" Spies said: "There will come a time when our silence will be more powerful than the voices you strangle today."

On November 13, there moved through Chicago streets a strange procession. Five hearses with waving plumes bearing five black caskets were followed by 25,000 working people. Five bands with muffled drums beat funeral marches to the grave. The procession moved slowly through the streets where thousands of men with bare heads bowed and weeping women stood.

To his father, Howells wrote: "All is over now except the judgment that begins at once for every unjust and evil deed, and goes on forever. The historical perspective is that this free Republic has killed five men for their opinions. . . ."

As Howells indicated, the Haymarket Affair did not die with the burial of the five martyrs. The struggle for amnesty for Fielden, Schwab and Neebe continued, and many thousands from all over the world urged clemency upon Oglesby, and upon his successor, Governor Joseph Fifer. But it was not until John Peter Altgeld, fearless and honest young liberal, became governor of Illinois that a victory was at last won.

On June 26, 1893, Altgeld issued his famous pardon message in which he bitterly denounced the frameup. In pardoning the imprisoned labor leaders, Altgeld stated bluntly that they were completely innocent and that they and the hanged men had been the victims of packed juries and biased judges.

Although the capitalists raged at the pardon and the Chicago *Tribune*, the New York *Times* and other newspapers heaped invective on Altgeld's head, the workers and their allies rejoiced. The trade unions and Populists distributed 50,000 copies of the pardon message.

A monument to the martyred labor leaders was unveiled June 25, 1893, nearly six years after their judicial murder. But a greater monument to their memory is the fact that the words "Haymarket Martyrs" have become a symbol of May Day. The world-wide campaign to save the lives of the Haymarket heroes helped to establish May First as the glorious expression of international labor solidarity.

HEADLINE

JURY IMPANELLED TO PROBE FIX

JURY IMPANELLED TO PROBE FIX
OF JURY IMPANELLED TO PROBE FIX

—probe of the probe of the probe of the probe—

but where where is the ultimate, innermost fix?
and who who will probe it?

oh people people people of the United States
WORKING PEOPLE
probe probe the fix of the fix—
deeper and deeper until you stand,
black and white and men and women,
hand in hand and invincible,
face to face with the fixer of fixers,
monster of monsters enthroned at the heart of
the present system,
slaughterhouse sanctuary at the center of the
New York Stock Exchange,
the walls of the sunless room dark with old blood
and bright with the new blood of the man who is
killed in Korea right now as we speak—
and the blood of Mr. and Mrs. Harry T. Moore—

quickly, quickly—
let us impanel ourselves into the incorruptible jury
that shall probe and expose and destroy the innermost fix—

and then we shall wash down the walls and make a window
and then we shall bring fresh flowers
and we shall place them—oh yes, surely, in time, we shall
place them
on the scrubbed and sunlit floor of the monster's citadel,
directly at the center—
flowers on the bloodstained floor of the Stock Exchange
in memory of the dead who worked for a living.

ETTORE RELLA

ON EARL CONRAD'S NEW BOOK

A SWAMP OF "FRIENDLY" SLANDER

By SAMUEL SILLEN

EARL CONRAD, the author of *Scottsboro Boy* and *Harriet Tubman,* has written a new book dealing with Negro life in America. It is called *Rock Bottom.* The title is supposed to suggest the condition of the Negro people. It more accurately describes the outlook of the author.

For the book, published this month by Doubleday, is a crude falsification. It reeks with white chauvinism. It defames the Negro people, particularly Negro women. And the caricature is all the more monstrous because it presents itself as an act of sympathy.

This is why it needs special examination and protest. Here is a white author known as a supporter of the Negro liberation movement. This is the basis of his literary reputation. And here he issues a book which has been branded as a hostile fraud by a number of outstanding Negro leaders whose pre-publication criticism he insultingly rejected.

To begin with, the very form of the book shows a colossal arrogance. Conrad sets out to speak as the voice of Negro womanhood. His book poses as the autobiography of a Negro woman, Leeha Whitfield, but the claim of veracity is belied by the actual content. Conrad has invented a sort of "composite" Negro woman through whom he presents his own superior judgments of Negro life.

It is of course most desirable and necessary for a white writer, basing himself on truth, to present what he has learned from the Negro people. But this is very far from what Conrad has done.

Success, or an unprincipled longing for it, has apparently gone to the author's head. In *Scottsboro Boy,* Earl Conrad enjoyed a by-line with Haywood Patterson. Conrad said in a foreword that all the information in the book, "every fact, each episode," was provided by his co-author. I am in no position to question this, though I do think that the book now merits re-examination. In any case, Conrad has advanced beyond this co-authorship stage. He has appointed himself as Negro spokesman.

His mythical narrator describes :r life from 1915 to the present. ıe tells of her escape from a Mis-ssippi plantation ("a mire of mixed hildren"), her adventures in "The luck" of Florida's Everglades and ı "The Big Muck" of Harlem. 'here is a range of geography and variety of occupation, but there is o change whatever in the endlessly eiterated slander of the Negro people.

I will not soil these pages with the ile details of larceny, mayhem, rape, nurder, indiscriminate sexuality, anatical superstition, and even feces-ating which Conrad depicts. No tem in the exhaustive catalogue of K.K.K. slander is overlooked. All the Negro men that Leeha Whitfield knows, Leon Thomaston, Henry Larence and the rest, are portrayed as gamblers, crooks, pimps, drunks, wife-beaters, rapists; the Negro women, like Mrs. Gooskin, Hermione, Jenn, are shown as thieves, dipsomaniacs, who can't "stay out of bed."

In trying to make such a gross fantasy credible, it is understandable that Conrad should hit on the autobiographical device. But he has merely succeeded in compounding his insults. Bad enough were Conrad in his own person to describe Harlem in terms of "rackets, hypes, dope, pimping." Even worse, if that is possible, to have him thrust his libels into the mouth of a Negro woman.

Would the author dare put in his own direct words the ugly attacks on her own people that he attributes to this woman? I doubt it. But does the transference of responsibility to his invented Negro woman modify the crime? On the contrary, it deepens the crime. It makes it all the more serviceable to the oppressors of the Negro people and the enemies of everything progressive in American life.

THE essence of the crime is this: it is the depiction of the Negro people as a people reduced to the status of animals. "They got like animals," says the narrator. "Not easy for me to say that of my people anywhere, anytime. But in that place the white had them hemmed in so, there was no other way they could be. White folks would be the same in prisons, concentration camps, and like that."

This passage deals with the "little" Muck of Florida, but it is a key to the thinking of the book throughout. One could repeat on every page the images of animality and the "friendly" afterthought that of course whites would become like dogs too if they were treated like dogs.

"We were just garbage put with the garbage," says the narrator concerning the Negroes living on a dump in Norfolk, Virginia. But if the Bourbon oppressors put Negroes with garbage in Norfolk, Conrad reduces them to garbage everywhere else. The only character with any suggestion of dignity and a spirit of struggle is Leeha Whitfield, who says: "One thing about me, I was young, held my head right up, and looked

for better all the time."

But even that is merely said, and it is negated by what is actually portrayed. The dignity assigned to her by the author consists in calling the white cops when her husband smacks her ("That's the way of many young Negro couples"), in equating the abuse of Negro and white men ("What it really is, a black woman, she catch it from men of both colors"), etc. Her "militancy" has its main expression in a struggle to defend her body and soul from her own people.

Genuine love of people for one another is nowhere present in the book, with a single exception, and this exception only underscores the distortion of the book as a whole. While Leeha Whitfield does miss her own child left behind in the South, she pours out her love for the child of a white woman for whom she works in New York. This white supremacist cliché is typical of the book.

YES, some may say, echoing Conrad, but doesn't all of this add up to an indictment of the white oppressors?

No doubt Conrad does show the plantation bosses and the white employers of the North heaping indignities and humiliations on the Negro people. But it is a peculiar species of "exposé" which strives to achieve its effects by degrading the oppressed.

The "good will" of *Rock Bottom* is not too different from Gunnar Myrdal's *American Dilemma.* Myrdal's "vicious circle" thesis is that oppression has degraded the Negro people and made them in fact inferior, which in turn explains the discrimination and segregation.*

More recently the same argument has appeared in psychoanalytical terms in the pseudo-scientific *Mark of Oppression* by Kardiner and Ovesey. This Freudian study also claims to be against oppression but in fact peddles the Big Lie of the ruling class that the Negro people have been stripped, regrettably to be sure, of dignity, will, collective strength.

As Lloyd Brown pointed out in his critique of this book (*M&M,* October, 1951): "In Negro life, that which determines the national psychology of the Negro people is not primarily the fact of oppression and its 'marks': rather it is the people's reaction to oppression—an unceasing and invincible drive toward freedom."

All of Negro history, and certainly Negro life today, resounds with the cry of *struggle.* In the period covered by Conrad's book nothing in American life has been more heroic and inspiring than the militant upsurge of the Negro people's struggle for national liberation. There is nothing in the book that remotely suggests this major fact of American life. There is nothing to suggest the political maturity of the Negro people, the role of the Negro worker in the labor movement. There is nothing to

* For a refutation of Myrdal's apologia for imperialism see Herbert Aptheker's *The Negro People in America,* International Publishers, 1946. 48c.

ggest that the American masses nnot make an inch of progress in e fight against fascism and war thout the strength, understanding, d full participation in leadership of e Negro people. Far from suggest-g such basic truths, the book un-rmines them.

And particularly does it attack the uth about the Negro woman. As laudia Jones has pointed out:

"An outstanding feature of the pres-t stage of the Negro liberation move-ent is the growth in the militant parti-pation of Negro women in all aspects the struggle for peace, civil rights, and onomic security. Symptomatic of this ew militancy is the fact that Negro omen have become symbols of many resent day struggles of the Negro peo-le. This growth of militancy among legro women has profound meaning, oth for the Negro liberation movement nd for the emerging anti-fascist, anti-mperialist coalition. . . . The bourgeoisie ; fearful of the militancy of the Negro oman, and for good reason."*

Triply oppressed, as Negroes, as vorkers, as women, Negro women re among the front-line fighters for rogress in America. To quote Miss ones briefly on the period covered y *Rock Bottom*:

"The sharecroppers' strikes of the '30's were sparkplugged by Negro women. Subject to the terror of the landlord and white supremacist, they waged magnificent battles together with Negro men and white progressives in that struggle of great tradition led by the Communist Party. Negro women played a magnificent part in the pre-C.I.O. days in strikes and other struggles, both as workers and as wives of workers, to win recognition of the principle of industrial unionism, in such industries as auto, packing, steel, etc. More recently, the militancy of Negro women unionists is shown in the strike of the packinghouse workers, and even more so, in the tobacco workers' strike—in which such leaders as Moranda Smith and Velma Hopkins emerged as outstanding trade unionists. . . ."

WHERE in Conrad's book is even the faintest glimmering of such magnificent leadership by Negro women workers? Where does one find the slightest reflection of the indomitable spirit of Rosa Lee Ingram, Amy Mallard, Bessie Mitchell, Rosalee McGee? Where is the movement in Negro life symbolized by Charlotta Bass, Halois Moorhead, Victoria Garvin, Claudia Jones, Eslanda Goode Robeson, Louise Thompson Patterson, Pearl Lawes, and so many other outstanding leaders of the American people's struggle for peace and democracy? Where is the faintest glow of the images of Negro life depicted in the writings of Alice Childress, Beulah Richardson, Shirley Graham, Margaret Walker, Gwendolyn Brooks, Gwendolyn Bennet, Lorraine Hansberry, Yvonne Gregory?

The leadership of these outstanding women consists in their expressing the fundamental qualities of Negro womanhood, qualities that have deep historic roots. Earl Conrad was for years a reporter for a leading Negro newspaper, the Chicago *Defender*. Has he never entered a Negro home, a Negro church, a Negro civic club,

* "An End to the Neglect of the Problem of the Negro Woman!" *Political Affairs*, June, 1949.

a trade union local? Has he never been inspired by the dignity and devotion, the pride and wisdom of Negro mothers?

Instead we have decadence, "The Muck" and "The Big Muck"!

Conrad *extends* the white chauvinist practice noted by Benjamin J. Davis: "Tendencies to treat the Negro people as mere victims of oppression, without seeing their unique positive and revolutionary role in the struggle against capitalist reaction are a patronizing form of white chauvinism."* In *Rock Bottom* the victims are no longer even *capable* of such struggle. They have been trapped. They can only wait helplessly for a benevolent white author to expose their disfigured humanity to a pitying audience of white bourgeois readers.

Pity they may perhaps bestow, saying: "Isn't it deplorable that we have brutalized these people? Aren't we all guilty? But now that they are brutalized—see how they cut themselves up, how even children waylay white people who come to Harlem, how the women sell themselves!—mustn't we protect our lives and property? How terrible if the brute were to get out of his cage!"

The oppressors' ancient argument in a new form. Conrad may deny that this was his intention, but the objective service he performs for reaction is the fortifying of this argument by ostensibly "progressive" means.

It is not the oppressed but the *oppressors* who are debased. The rotten, bestial people in this country are the white ruling class and its agents —the lynchers, the war-mongers, the corrupters of culture, the promoters of literary filth. The depth to which white chauvinism, the ideology of oppression, degrades those who imbibe and spread it is shown in the authorship of a book like *Rock Bottom.*

THE ruling class, driving to war and fascism, is trying desperately to head off the Negro liberation movement. It is straining to break up the developing alliance of the Negro people and the labor and all other progressive forces. It is seeking for ways to justify the oppression of the Negro people, to justify genocide. A book like *Rock Bottom* must be judged in this context.

After reading it one is led to agree with Maxim Gorky: "There are very serious grounds for asserting that the sense of social responsibility is far less developed among literary men than among other masters of culture. One might even ask: Does the writer recognize his responsibility to the reader, to the epoch, and to society?"

If Earl Conrad is concerned about his responsibility to the struggle against war and fascism, he will examine the objective meaning of his book and join those whose criticism of its racist and male supremacist character, its pornography and sensationalism, he scornfully rejected.

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* *The Negro People in the Struggle for Peace and Freedom,* New Century Publishers, 1951.

Clearly it is not the Negro people alone who are hurt by such a book. It is a serious blow against the American people as a whole, against all who are engaged in the life-or-death struggle for peace and democracy.

For white progressive writers and critics in general there is a profound lesson to be learned. We have not fought the poisonous ideas of white chauvinism with anywhere near the strength and persistency and clarity that is required. We have not rooted these ideas out among ourselves. We have not carried the fight to the enemy. The result is that we have permitted a climate of opinion to prevail that made such a shame as *Rock Bottom* possible. True, the literary Left, unlike the bourgeois literary world, does conduct a battle against the white supremacy slop that pollutes American life. But we have yet to wage it as a battle for life. The time is right now.

On Slander

"Fellow citizens: We have had, and still have, great wrongs of which to complain. A heavy and cruel hand has been laid upon us. As a people, we feel ourselves to be not only deeply injured, but grossly misunderstood. Our white countrymen do not know us. They are strangers to our characters, ignorant of our capacity, oblivious to our history and progress, and are misinformed as to the principles and ideas that control and guide us, as a people. The great mass of American citizens estimate us as being a characterless and purposeless people; and hence we hold up our heads, if at all, against the withering influence of a nation's scorn and contempt. . . .

***"What stone has been left unturned to degrade us? What hand has refused to fan the flame of popular prejudice against us? What American artist has not caricatured us? What wit has not laughed at us in our wretchedness? What songster has not made merry over our depressed spirits? What press has not ridiculed and condemned us? Few, few, very few. . . ."*—From a public statement of New York Negroes, 1860, included in *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States*, edited by Herbert Aptheker.**

RACISM and the REVIEWERS

By LLOYD L. BROWN

LET'S begin by reading this letter from the book review department of the New York *Herald Tribune*:

"Dear Miss——:

"Frankly, we did not review *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States* because reports we got of it from the historians we consulted were not good and it came out in a season when our space seemed better employed by reviewing better books.

"You 'hope' that we are not biased in the matter. I presume you mean prejudiced against Negroes, and I assure you you are quite wrong in any such assumption. We review many books by Negroes—any in fact that seem good—and we have a number of Negroes among our reviewers.

"If you want a really good book on the subject of the Negro in the United States I suggest you read Saunders Redding's *They Came In Chains*. Mr. Redding, himself a Negro, is a distinguished novelist and student of the history of his race. There are, of course, other good books on the subject but this is one of the best and the most recent that I know.

"Sincerely,
Irita Van Doren
Editor"

Well, we Negroes long ago learned that some of our Best Friends are enemies. Here is a case in point. And it is worth discussing because the treatment of Dr. Aptheker's recent volume by reviewers sheds some light on what is happening in our country.

Miss Van Doren's letter is much more revealing of the morality and methods—and the abysmal racism—of the monopoly press than was the explanation by the New York *Times* Sunday book section for *its* silence: "We try to select those [books] which will be of most interest to our readers."

We can pass over without comment the suggestion that the *Tribune* wanted to spare the *Documentary History* an unfavorable review, permitting ourselves only a small sigh for such delicate compassion. But about the matter of the "historians"—well, that's something else.

For it happens that the preface to this book was written by a man who more than a half century ago had won distinction as a historian and who is today pre-eminent in this field. Merely to describe, without attempt at evaluation, the scholarly work of Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois in his long career would take up all our space—but that is not the question.

In his preface Dr. Du Bois wrote

that this work "is a dream come true," commended the "painstaking and thorough scholarship of Herbert Aptheker," and concluded by saying: "I hasten to greet the day of the appearance of this volume, as a milestone on the road to Truth."

But according to the *Tribune's* book editor and her unnamed historian-consultants, Dr. Du Bois doesn't know what he is talking about; the foremost Negro historian cannot tell a good book on this subject from one undeserving of review! Their judgment is "superior" to his, and since Dr. Du Bois' stature is a matter of record, it must be that the only basis for their greater knowledge is . . . the color of their skins.

What barbarians!

True, for the purposes of hypocrisy, a Negro authority is cited, indeed, recommended. But gagging past Miss Van Doren's presumption that the Big White Folks know what is "best" for the Negro, we see, in the clumsy attempt to "use" the name of a Negro writer to cover up the *Tribune's* reactionary practice, the deception that is involved.

All right, there is Mr. Redding and his book, *They Came In Chains*. Did Miss Van Doren read that book? If so, she must have noticed that in it Mr. Redding generously acknowledges his indebtedness to the works of other writers, and most extensively to Du Bois, Carter G. Woodson—and Aptheker!

But maybe the *Tribune's* book editor and her "historians" did not read the "really good book" she recommends as a substitute for the *Documentary History*.

However, since Mr. Redding is "a student of the history of his race" Miss Van Doren might have bethought herself as to what *he* might have to say about the *Documentary*. Mr. Redding is a book reviewer too: his column appears weekly in the *Afro-American* chain of newspapers. The chances are she didn't think of that, or perhaps she dreaded—delicate soul—to face the possibility of another negative report on Dr. Aptheker's book.

Too bad. For had she but given the command, her office boy could have come up in a matter of minutes with Mr. Redding's review of the book in question that was published in the *Afro-American* months before Miss Van Doren wrote her letter! Then she would have read Mr. Redding's considered judgment that the *Documentary* is a definitive work of historical scholarship. "Nothing important is left out," wrote Mr. Redding, pointing out that its "assiduous research will solve certain research problems for a generation of students. . . . Here," he concluded, "are the Negro people."

Down flutters the last fig-leaf!

RACISM, for this is a book in which the Negro people speak for themselves (without the aid of Those Who Know Best); and Red-baiting, for its editor is a Marxist—that's what is involved. Reviewing what he termed "this unrivalled set of human documents" in the *Na-*

tional Guardian, Dr. Du Bois forecast the silent treatment it would get from the big money press:

> ". . . It will not be reviewed in the commercial press. Why? Because Herbert Aptheker is an editor of *Masses & Mainstream* and has ideas about democracy and justice which some folk do not like. His ideas do not interfere with his scientific accuracy or breadth of research, but they may interfere with American business and war. To this depth has the Land of the Free sunk."

But there are Americans who are not silent, and though the voice of the Left, progressive and honestly liberal press is small, it has spoken out for this truly great book. Not some of the most self-advertised liberal journals, to be sure: not the *New Republic,* not the *Nation*—not a word. "The only reason," says the *Nation,* "is lack of space . . . sorry."

The Negro press had space, oh yes. Indeed, some future documentary historian of our times could show in this case how the pattern which made Dr. Aptheker's present work a necessity continues till today. The official "historians" falsify the Negro people, but the people themselves speak out, insistently, in their own words, in their own press. *They* decide what is good for themselves, and fight for it.

The great metropolitan press ignores this book published in that very metropolis, but down in New Orleans the *Christian Advocate* hails it as "a monumental work" and says that "no person should attempt a treatise on the Negro in America without perusing its pages." And the entire review is reprinted as the leading editorial in the Jackson, Miss., *Advocate!*

The word monumental occurs again in the title of J. A. Rogers' review in the Pittsburgh *Courier.* Mr. Rogers, a diligent champion of Negro history for many years, sees the book as "an immense service not only to Negro history, but to documentation in a generally neglected phase of American life."

It is judged to be "an important work . . . a significant reference tool," by the *Crisis,* official organ of the N.A.A.C.P. Here the reviewer was quite unhappy about the Marxist views of Dr. Aptheker, but he went on to point out that "the biases of the author do not diminish the importance of the Negro protest movement which he has ably presented."

THERE is something to think about in all this: Is it possible for a book to be both monumental and too poor to review? Can a work have both value for a generation of students and not merit space in one week's issue of a liberal weekly?

Of course not. And it seems to me that those of us who know the truth in this case have a responsibility. To tell others. To foster the reading and study of the *Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States.* Never to cease in the struggle against the oppressors of the Negro people.

books in review

Jeremy and His People

A LANTERN FOR JEREMY, by V. J. Jerome. *Masses & Mainstream.* $2.50.

THE appearance of V. J. Jerome's *A Lantern for Jeremy* is an event of major literary importance. The novel is a distinguished work of art, a sensitively shared experience which deepens our sense of reality—because the truth and beauty which it communicates are not abstractions about humanity-in-general: it brings us truth in terms of the impact of the class struggle on human beings in a specific social situation; the beautiful quality of the work—and it is really a thing of consummate beauty—rises from the hearts and souls of oppressed people, from the heart's love and the soul's courage in the battle against oppression.

Thus the book's value as literature is directly related to the author's personal and political experience. His life-long devotion to the working class explains the passion and clarity of his creative writing. It is, of course, inevitable that there should be such an interrelationship of life and art. We may say of any artist that his work is the reflection of what he has lived and learned. The creative product cannot transcend the consciousness from which it springs, and consciousness is shaped by practical human activity.

But this simple principle, all too little understood and applied by progressive artists, has a special significance in the case of V. J. Jerome. *A Lantern for Jeremy* appears at the moment when Jerome and other Communist leaders are defending themselves against the threat of long prison terms for alleged violation of the Smith Act. The book has a vital bearing on the issues of the trial. It illustrates the Communist approach to culture. It throws a much-needed light on the creative efficiency of Marxist-Leninist thought in the practice of the arts. It helps to answer troublesome questions concerning "art and politics."

It is no longer unusual in the United States for the publication of a book to coincide with the author's arraignment or imprisonment for holding or expressing "dangerous thoughts." Wall Street's attempt to stifle criticism of its treasonable conspiracy against the peace of the world is forcing Americans to painful recognition of the truth of Pablo Neruda's statement that "Poetry, like freedom, is linked with prisons."

In *A Lantern for Jeremy,* Jerome strikes back at his accusers with the

weapon of culture. At the same time, he provides a useful lesson for those intellectuals—and there are unfortunately a great many—who hesitate to "grasp the weapon of culture," separating their political activity as "citizens" from their professional work in the arts or sciences. The weakness of many recent novels and plays by supposedly progressive authors may be traced in large part to reactionary pressures. But theoretical errors concerning the alleged incompatibility of art and politics play an important role, in justifying opportunism and in leading well-intentioned and talented artists into an esthetic blind alley.

It is not an accident that this gentle novel of a childhood in old Poland comes from the pen of an outstanding Communist leader. Similar contributions to culture have been made by leaders of the people's struggle in many lands, proving in their writing as in their daily political work that art and politics are indissolubly bound together. The link that binds them is human experience and aspiration, the wonder and power of human beings fighting for a better life.

A Lantern for Jeremy embodies the meaning of Socialist humanism. It is afire with hatred of suffering and cruelty, but it burns even more brightly with love of people, respect for the human personality and faith in its limitless potentialities. The life of a Polish ghetto in the period of the Russo-Japanese war is seen through the eyes of a boy from the age of 7 to 9. The child's viewpoint is consistently maintained. The lyric quality of the narrative, its golden freshness and humor, derive to a considerable extent from the author's ability to see into the child's mind, to translate the awe and surprise that accompany his awakening perception of people and events.

Many writers have explored a child's consciousness in terms of dreams and fantasies, an escape from reality into a world of the child's own making. The twentieth century has seen a veritable plague of so-called "stream - of - consciousness" novels, about neurotic adults and occasionally about neurotic children.

In *A Lantern for Jeremy,* as its title indicates, the boy's mind is always turned outward, seeking illumination. Here are no Freudian horrors, no bogus psychic probings, no sick fears. Jeremy has a lively imagination, but his reveries grow out of his attempts to understand his environment. He has a child's acuteness of judgment. He has no desire to escape life, because he is preparing to live. In order to live, he must learn where to find honor and truth; and he must learn to fight for what is honorable and true. He moves in the stream of history, and historical forces are reflected in his consciousness.

Although the book never goes beyond Jeremy's immediate vision, it shows the impact of the 1905 Revolution on the little village community the growing co-operation of Jewish and Polish workers, the stirring of the movement of people that would eventually bring freedom to Russia

ınd Poland.

The structure of the story lacks the formal organization and complexities of personal drama that usually characterize the novel. The simplicity of the narrative, the flow of day-to-day incidents, often highly dramatic in themselves but apparently without formal connection, give the book a quality of realism which seems deceptively casual. But underlying the diversity of incidents is a profound sense of social movement which gives the story a dramatic unity and climactic development seldom achieved in more conventional story-telling. The structure of the book deserves careful analysis as an unusually subtle and cohesive handling of personal experience in its relationship to political, economic and social forces.

Some of Jeremy's adventures relate to his own immediate interests and duties. For example, there is the talk of his mother and father in London, the messages to and from England, and his departure to join his family at the end of the book. There are problems of apprenticeship and education —the delightful comedy of his examination as a Torah-scholar by the learned Reb Noosn Bender, or the unforgettable scene at the school when he is forced to stand in "The Circle of Shame" and remains standing alone in darkness, afraid to move, after the teacher and pupils have left.

These purely personal experiences, poignant as they are, are interludes in a series of scenes which place Jeremy in the role of an observer of adult situations. He never observes passively. His feeling of partisanship makes him increasingly eager to play some part.

The book opens with the establishment of the personal story. There is a delicately etched portrait of Jeremy's aunt, with whom the boy lives. He wonders about the reasons for his having been left by his father and mother when they travelled to England. In the second chapter, we come to the economic basis of the family's life. Bringing food to his uncle at the tan-yard, Jeremy delivers his aunt's message: she needs half a rouble for food. The request for this small advance brings a violent tirade from the owner of the tannery, which is answered by the bitter resentment of the workers. This experience is followed by Jeremy's first contact with the far-off war between Russia and Japan: a Russian soldier is quartered in his home, and the boy is touched by the man's friendliness. "Soldier, soldier, why are your eyes sad? Where are you looking across roads and fields and brooks? Where is the village that's your village, and where is the house that's your house?"

In the next chapter, Jeremy occupies the center of the stage. He is desperately trying to answer the absurd metaphysical questions designed to test his religious learning. The adventure in sophistry prepares the way for the powerful scene at the synagogue. Jeremy visits the women's gallery with his aunt, and sees the sixteen-year-old Frimmet, "her dark eyes like doves with their wings resting," refuse to speak the prayers

acknowledging woman's obedience and inferiority. "I'm not a worm," she cries out, and Jeremy sees that "the doves in her eyes are wild crows now." Frimmet's defiance, her stormy departure from the women's gallery, brings the first mention of the organization of the Sisters and Brothers, of which Frimmet is a member.

The great issues that face the people of the town—grinding poverty, starvation wages and arrogant employers, the Russo-Japanese war which increases the suffering of the people and takes the men to die in a distant land, the authority of the synagogue, the secret organization of the Sisters and Brothers—all these are established with extraordinary simplicity, and in terms of intensely personal and emotional experience, in these early chapters.

The youthful figure of Frimmet, destined to attain heroic stature as the story develops, is introduced with poetic charm. Yet in her rebellion against the stultifying prayers is the seed of the future struggle in which she will assume leadership. And the struggle is foreshadowed poetically, with beautiful economy of language: as Jeremy leaves the women's gallery, he remembers the prayer which he repeats every morning:

"Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, that thou has not made me a woman.

"The wild crows of Frimmet's eyes swoop down on the words, scattering them."

The scene at the synagogue is followed by the incident of the arrival of the first train at the town, and Jeremy's getting on board and narrowly missing being carried away when the locomotive suddenly starts. After this, the war intrudes again—more threateningly. Big Fulke is drafted into the army. He rebels and almost kills the sergeant and headman who come to take him. His mother's pleading restrains him; he is led away with his hands roped and a revolver at his back.

From this point, the events in the town, and Jeremy's observant partisanship, build with increasing intensity, always with homely interludes that vary the rhythm of the action and give it a sort of musical structure of mood and tempo. Through the paper-thin wall that separates his home from the house next door, Jeremy hears a strange conversation: Faivish has escaped from prison and is hiding there in Sad Rivka's house. Through the wall, the boy hears a confusing argument about politics, about the Czar, about unity of Jews and gentiles.

Then there is the wonderful incident of the Purim Players; then the scene in which the people gather to say goodbye to Shimmen as he goes to war and he attempts to smash his hand to avoid military service.

One cannot recount all the events that crowd upon us. The madness of Jeremy's aunt's sister, her being sent to the poorhouse, the death of little Khaiml because no doctor is available, the talk of a strike at the tanyard, the encounter with Polish boys

Jeremy and Zelda are gathering owers for Pentecost and the brutal hipping of the girl. Then the meet-g of the Sisters and Brothers in eremy's house, and he copies down e song that Frimmet sings—

mprison and kill us, O tyrants!
New fighters will rise with the dawn . . ."

Jeremy is surprised that Yanek, e Pole, is there with them: "It's range to hear a Pole singing in our ewish house." There is talk of Frim-et's going away, and another voice ins the singing from the other side f the wall, the voice of Faivish in iding.

The deepening awareness of class nflict seems to give place to a pas-oral mood in the walk with Ilse ith her hair in shining braids, as e drives the sheep to the pasture. ut the moment of sentiment cul-inates in tragedy, in Ilse's sudden eath in the thunderstorm.

The story gathers momentum. The eople of the ghetto begin to draw ore closely together. Their anger gainst oppression forces them to see hat is at stake, and slowly, warily test their own strength. A convoy f chained prisoners is marched rough the streets. Frimmet is mong them. Hoodlums start a po-rom on the day of the Fair: but the elf Defense is on guard in the reets and the Polish Organization omes to their assistance. Yanek, the ole, is killed defending his Jewish rothers and sisters. Frimmet gets eleased from jail. Jeremy sees Frim-met and her friends sewing the strange red flag with black Polish letters on it. At Yanek's funeral, Poles and Jews walk together, and Frimmet speaks beside the grave.

Again an interlude—the letter from London which arranges for Jeremy's early departure — followed by the final and climactic development of the people's movement, rising to growing consciousness of the power that lies in the unity of Jewish, Polish and Russian workers. The struggle reflects the forces unleashed by the 1905 Revolution in Russia, and foreshadows the future victory of the Russian and Polish people. As Jeremy leaves for London, his future is also foreshadowed. The child has seen, and chosen, the path that the man will follow. His friend and mentor, Pinyeh, says at the leavetaking:

> "I have no worry for you, Jeremy. You will not forget the bitter bread of affliction for which your Uncle Volfke toiled with his sweat and blood. You will not forget this poor Jewish hut with the crooked walls and the leaking roof, and the floor without boards, and with only the love that is in it. . . . You will not forget. You will get your learning from the English schools and use it for the people."

I have dealt at some length with the events of the story, in order to suggest, however inadequately, its dynamic movement and unified structure. The brief outline hints at two aspects of the work which require extended critical comment—its portrayal of women, and its contribution to our understanding of Jewish culture.

It is not only Frimmet who emerges as a heroic figure. All of the women are three-dimensional personalities, portrayed with an understanding and respect almost completely absent in current American fiction.

The book also has a feeling for Jewish life and culture which contrasts strikingly with the libelous misrepresentation of Jewish customs and traditions in certain recent novels. Jerome touches the humor and tragedy of Jewish life, the "picturesqueness" of many customs, the special quality of language; these aspects of ghetto existence are treated with socialist realism, a creative insight that makes every line and incident a tribute to the greatness of the people and the enduring beauty of their heritage.

I cannot conclude without paying tribute to *Masses and Mainstream* for its remarkable achievement in the field of book publishing. Lloyd L. Brown's *Iron City* was the most important novel to appear in 1951. It is appropriate that it should be followed by such an outstanding work as Jerome's *A Lantern for Jeremy*. The magazine has announced other books to appear under its imprint. *Masses and Mainstream* has made a proud beginning in the publication of creative writing. It points the way to a new and rich development of an American people's culture—a culture serving the needs and embodying the aspirations of the working class and the Negro people and their allies.

JOHN HOWARD LAWSON

Music and Meaning

HOW MUSIC EXPRESSES IDEAS, by Sidney Finkelstein. *International Publishers*. $1.50, cloth; 90¢, paper.

A FEW months ago, in a New York auditorium, a concert was sponsored by a musical organization which once had an honorable record of fighting for a place for American composers on American concert programs. Among the "compositions" performed was one called "Music for Twelve Radios." It enlisted the talents of twenty-four performers, two to a radio.

In front of the performers stood the composer in the role of conductor. At given signals, the members of the ensemble twirled the knobs of the radios. News broadcasts, recorded programs, weather reports, live performances—whatever happened to be on the individual stations tuned at random — constituted the instrumental parts of the players.

Not only did people pay money to listen to this incredible hoax, but a critical evaluation by one of America's best-known composers subsequently appeared in a leading musicological quarterly. And this is but a sample of the pass to which music has come in this country.

Accompanying the production of harsh and ugly sounds for every possible and impossible combination of instruments, musician and non-musician alike are confronted with a high-powered propaganda campaign to explain, justify and sell this deliberate nonsense in the name of art

id "free" art at that. The fact that udiences either stay away in droves, r are puzzled by what their ears ceive, does not deter the salesmen f present-day "Western" culture.

Into this stifling atmosphere of ultism, gibberish and out-and-out aud, Sidney Finkelstein's *How Mu- c Expresses Ideas* comes as a wel- ome breath of fresh air.

This book demolishes such cur- ently fashionable theories as: (1) Composers were never appreciated by heir contemporary audiences, and herefore wrote for posterity. (2) Music is a "pure" art, expressing no deas, only unconscious feelings. (3) Music is a "pure" art containing no motional experiences common to or- ganized groups of human beings, but s rather an intellectual exercise in ones. (4) All techniques of past music are worn out and must be re- placed by new systems. (5) Juke box music is what it is because this is what the public wants. (6) The so- called primitive music of earlier his- torical periods was the product of immature human beings.

How Music Expresses Ideas does more than expose such theories. It states boldly and unequivocally that all great art, music included, was cre- ated to be understood in its time as well as in the future; that music is, and has always been born out of the experiences of people in a constantly changing organization of social forces; that music has a specific role to play in reflecting and influencing the dy- namics of change; and that music, whether folk or composed, popular or

unpopular, ancient or contemporary, can only be understood and evaluated in these terms.

Before entering into a more concrete examination of its content, it is important to state what the book does not attempt to do. It is not a comprehensive history, nor a quick course in music appreciation. It does not mention every important composer or school of thought. It properly leaves to qualified indigenous historians the vast subject of African and Asian music except to the extent that European and American production of the last five centuries has been influenced by interchange and the forcible transplantation of whole peoples. Nothing is therefore easier than to point out innumerable omissions. To do this would be to miss the purpose and essence of the undertaking.

The book starts with a brief examination of the relationship of music to speech and body movement, and its intrinsically social development summarized in the phrase human imagery—"the product of innumerable acts and discoveries, each adding to the other, and each tested by its meaning to a community of people." There is an excellent explanation of specific terminology such as pitch and rhythm. Then Finkelstein takes the reader on a rather rapid journey, stopping temporarily at historical moments when qualitative leaps occurred. He shows, for example, how the violent struggle between spiritual and temporal power in the Middle Ages was expressed in sacred and secular music, by the peasantry, the guilds, and the church composers themselves.

Relating musical development to the rise of capitalism and its eventual consolidation of power, the book enters into a more detailed analysis of content and forms through the works of Bach, Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven and other major composers. One of the interesting aspects of this part of the book is its treatment of the interacting effects of vocal and instrumental developments with forms such as fugue, opera, symphony, and sonata.

It is here also that a basic critique is established for the later evaluation of the bulk of contemporary music; namely, the placing of the crystallized major-minor tonal system in its proper and irreversible perspective.

The core of the book emerges with a truly brilliant analysis of Beethoven. One may quarrel here and there with some formulations. But on the whole Finkelstein really comes to grips with the meaning of realism, and Beethoven towers in his full stature, shorn of mystery, representing not only the best that was produced under capitalism, but its more advanced achievement which was subsequently suppressed.

It is in the examination of the 19th century that some misconceptions arise. While developing a valid thesis on the national question in relation to Verdi and the Russian Five, the omission of the Czech school represented by Dvorak and Smetana must be questioned. The treatment of the early romantics, Schumann and Chopin especially, leads to a far too nega-

ve evaluation. While it is true that ıe can trace back some of the bour-ːois 20th century degeneration to ːrtain elements in early 19th century ıusic, it is the objective conditions ː one hundred years of subsequent ıistory which are the decisive factors, ɔt the trends manifested in this ıusic.

Most untenable in this section is ıe equation of Brahms and Wagner, ːith the result that neither emerges ːith a correct estimation. With all ːis weaknesses, Brahms' music did not ɔandon certain real values carried ːom past heritage, nor did he lead ɔ directly to anti-human goals. Fur-ıermore his constant interest in and se of German and Hungarian folk ıaterial gives his music warmth, com-ıunicativeness and perhaps lasting alues.

Once into the 20th century, Finkel-ːein is on firmer ground. The clear nk between the nature of imperial-ːm and the music it spawns is shown. ˈhe rubbish of what passes for theory ː exposed, the phony religious revival haracteristic of all the so-called schools" is sharply etched. What is ıore, the current approval of incom-rehensibility, noise and emptiness, eliberately fostered by the powers-ıat-be, is shown to be a weapon in ıe hands of the enemies of progress.

In his discussion of socialist realism nd Soviet music, for which he ex-resses deep admiration, Finkelstein eals in an illuminating way with hostakovich, Prokofiev, Khatchatu-an. But this chapter and the final ıapter on the U.S. suffer from the demands of brevity. One can only hope that sometime in the near future the stimulating section on music of the Negro people, and indeed that of progressive America in general, can get the extended treatment Finkelstein obviously wishes to give it.

That the book is somewhat marred by a few historical inaccuracies, one or two incorrect definitions, and a tendency to generalize too sweepingly, does not negate its main thesis. Finkelstein has waded right in where precious few have even taken off their shoes. The vast areas opened up for investigation by the Zhdanov critique of music have been pretty studiously avoided in America, understandably by those attacked, less understandably by those who welcome truth and clarity in the battle of ideas.

How Music Expresses Ideas refers directly to the Soviet discussions only in one chapter, but the book breaks ground in using these discussions throughout as a weapon for historical examination and re-evaluation. Many others should enter the fray and contribute individually and collectively to the urgent job of developing a realistic theory of music. Finkelstein is to be thanked for putting this responsibility squarely up to us.

LUCY BROWN

"Gold Through the Trees"

IF YOU live in New York or can get to the city, make a beeline for Harlem to see, hear, and *feel* the dramatic review, *Gold Through the Trees.* The vibrant talent of Alice Childress, author of this new presentation of the Committee for the Negro in the Arts, combined with a remarkable cast of actors, dancers and singers, makes for an evening of exciting beauty and power.

The theme is the Negro liberation movement, crossing oceans and centuries, from ancient Africa to the West Indies to America then back to the South Africa of today's headlines. The past and present are joined by the thread of narration, voiced by the magnetic Clarice Taylor (who also directed the show), and by a succession of gripping scenes.

To this reviewer the highlights of the production are the Harriet Tubman sequence, with Hilda Haynes, Hope Foye and Helen Martin, and the singing, drum-beating finale by Osborne Smith which virtually lifts the audience from its seats.

In contrast to CNA's *Just a Little Simple,* in which the songs and dances were out of key with the significance of the production, the singing of Miss Foye and Mr. Smith —surely two stars of our time—and the dynamic grace of Allegro Kane's dancing are fused with the rest of the program and add greatly to the richness of the evening.

In the Harriet Tubman scene and the delightful West Indian rehearsal scene, we have Alice Childress at her best and surest level of writing: warm, poignant, earthy, the rhythms of folk speech, spontaneity, humor and militancy. Less successful was the dialogue in the "Africa Wounded" scene which seemed over-stylized and strained. The final scene in South Africa lacked a dramatic conception and limped until Osborne Smith took over.

"Martinsville Blues," with lyrics by Mrs. Childress and music by Mr. Smith—who sings it—is a show-stopping work. It might well be a model for some of our lyricists and song writers who too often pain progressive audiences by their Tin Pan Alley banalities in handling tragic and meaningful subjects.

Gold Through the Trees surpasses the high level of previous CNA productions—and that is to say it offers the best theatre in New York today.

Time: Monday through Thursday evenings (until May 28).

Place: Club Baron, Lenox Ave. at 132nd St.

L. L. B.