DECEMBER, 1961
50 cents

Mainstream

SOVIET WRITERS
by
Mikhail Sholokhov

✦

Mike Davidow

✦

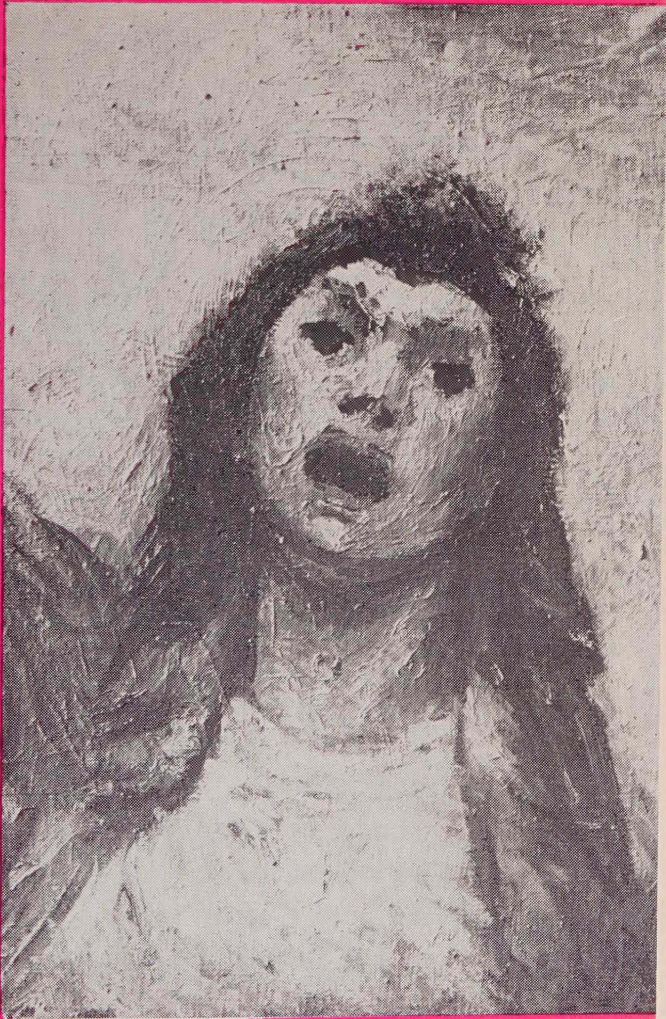
Walter Lowenfels

✦

ROBERT INGERSOLL
Reuben W. Borough

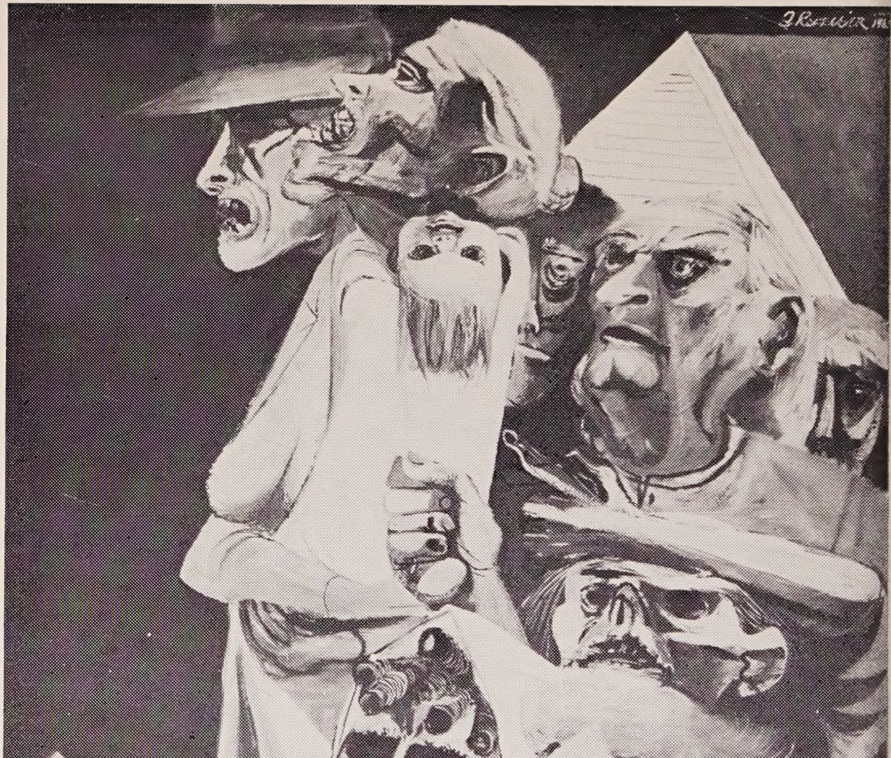
✦

REVIEWS
by
P. Bonosky



J. MUDROCH (Czech.) Partisan Woman

BOMB SHELTERS AND ORGANIZED PANIC



SEGREGATIONISTS—USA

Anton Refregier

Vol. 14, No. 12

Mainstream

DECEMBER, 1961

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Among Our Contributors

Mikhail Sholokhov is the best-selling Russian novelist who, through translations of his works into English, has won a place in the hearts of Americans as well as his own people. *Walter Lowenfels,* contributing editor to *Mainstream,* appears frequently in our pages with poems and reviews. He edited the celebrated, *Walt Whitman's Civil War,* published by Knopf. *Mike Davidow,* the popular journalist, recently returned from a trip to the USSR. *Reuben W. Borough* appeared in our pages with a study of Reverend Stephen Fritchman. He is a veteran political and journalistic figure who makes his home in California. *Reverend Stephen H. Fritchman* is the universally respected minister of the First Unitarian Church in Los Angeles. *Elizabeth Lawson* has written illuminatingly on the Civil War and Reconstruction Periods of American History. *Phillip Bonosky* is author of the working-class novel *The Magic Fern.*

Next Month

Next Month we will change our format, returning to a large sized page — which we previously used in the *New Masses.* For one thing, this will strengthen the graphic statements that appear from month to month, showing them off to more advantage. The new format will also make possible the introduction of new features, shorter pieces covering the popular media such as movies and television. The type will be larger and easier on the eye. Despite increased political repression of left progressives in the United States we seek, not to reduce, but to increase our coverage and activity in the cultural field. We feel this is the best way to help continue the best of America's democratic-humanist heritage.

in the mainstream

Tom Paine Secretary of the Interior Udall is transferring some statues in Washington, D.C. to other parts of the country and trying to drum up support for memorials to such representative American heroes as Tom Paine. It is shameful that this great revolutionary figure does not now stand in our nation's capital. But this is not a new story. Even in death he was denied a final resting place in consecrated ground. His friend William Corbett took Paine's remains to England, where he hoped to give him a suitable burial. Nothing was done, however, and Paine's bones were lost. This neglect was not accidental. It is part of the systematic neglect by America's ruling classes of our democratic and revolutionary ancestors. Local, state, and Federal government, which should take the responsibility for enshrining heroes like Paine look the other way. In 1954 a public spirited group in Greenwich Village tried to save the house in which Mark Twain lived, on 5th Ave. and 9th Street. This effort failed and another landmark of great significance was replaced by a luxury apartment building.

Walt Whitman The most recent example of the government's indifference in this matter can be seen in Brooklyn, where the building in which Walt Whitman set the type and printed first copies of "Leaves of Grass" is slated for demolition.

There is nothing on the building to indicate its history. It houses a few stores and apartments. A bronze plaque was placed on the wall in 1931 by the Authors Club but the owner of a luncheonette has since brought it inside, afraid that someone "might want to steal it." Despite official indifference, many democratic-minded Americans are working for the conservation of the building. Over one hundred students and a few faculty members from Smith College, Massachusetts, wrote a letter to the New York Herald Tribune asking that the site be preserved as a museum for Whitman's works. They acted out of no mere antiquarian sentiment, as the following paragraph of their letter makes clear.

> Whitman embodies American democratic ideals in his writings Just as the political fathers of our country have monuments to their greatness, Whitman too, whose unique talent enhances the image of our nation, who celebrates American freedom and equality, should be remembered by maintaining his home.

Poets and writers — E. E. Cummings, Marianne Moore, Arthur Miller, and others — are urging the city to preserve the three-story structure. The public generally must bring pressure to bear on the politicians to act. Just the other day Senator Javits and Representative Lindsay, both Republicans, made a big hullabaloo over the run-down condition of Alexander Hamilton's home, which *is* an official memorial, recognized and sanctified by the government. Javits and Lindsay were interviewed on television and a stir was made on behalf of the famous financial and administrative genius. No one is going to deny Hamilton's greatness in fiscal and economic matters, by which he made a significant contribution to our country. But Hamilton's disrespect for the masses is no secret. If he had his own way, the United States could have ended up a monarchy. Conservative politicians beat the drum to his memory. But who is going to beat the drum for Whitman if the American people don't? Paines bones are lost, probably forever, but his spirit is very much alive in the American democratic tradition. Paine deserves to stand on a pedestal in our capital. Whitman's building in Brooklyn deserves to be set aside as a shrine. If officials of the government are slow to realize this we must make them aware of it by joining in the movements to save our democratic heritage from extinction.

SOVIET WRITERS

MIKHAIL SHOLOKHOV

Adapted from a speech to the recent Soviet Party congress in Moscow.

THERE is little for me to add to what Comrade Furtseva has said in her speech. She stole my speech, so to say. Still, there are some things I feel it necessary to dwell on. First, I should like to say we have long dreamed of having a minister like Comrade Furtseva. And now we have one. Our dear Yekaterina Alexeyevna has everything. She has her ministry running properly because she knows and loves her work. She is lovely to look at and brings charm to her dealings with those who work in the field of culture. To meet people and talk with them, and guide the work of cultural undertakings, especially art, is far from easy, because one has to deal with highly emotional people or, to put it bluntly, spoiled and capricious people. If you do not smile at one the right way, do not greet another the way he thinks you should, do not glance at a third, they are all hurt, grievously hurt But our minister capably copes with all those things, as we can see.

I am not a minister and have no diplomatic abilities whatsoever. That is way I want to talk to Yekaterina Alexeyevna without ceremony and without omissions. All right, you said that 780 of the 1,114 Soviet plays now being staged dealt with contemporary topics. You even figured out the percentage—more than 70 per cent.

What I want to know is: what percentage of that 70 per cent remains in the repertory? Let's leave the percentages alone and take absolute figures. It will be a lucky thing if twenty or thirty plays out of the 780, or even fewer, continue running for any length of time. Now for the second question. How many of those twenty or thirty plays remain in the memory of the people who see them? I am not going to use high-flown words about their leaving indelible imprints in the minds of theatre-goers. I just want to know how many of them are remembered and how many force audiences to think. Even less! The poor theatre-goer has to pay for the creative impotence of our playwrights. That's where all the trouble lies!

Figures and percentages are tricky things, Comrade Furtseva. Be careful they don't do you a bad turn. It is better if figures stay in the Central Statistical Board. They will feel more comfortable there than in the arts.

APPROXIMATELY the same thing is taking place with prose. Large numbers of books come out that very soon go to be "melted down." The reason? You all know it. What we have is a natural gap between the low quality of the books and the high standard of the reader. But not everything is so bad on the literary front as might seem at a first and superficial glance. Something very fine is going on there which is barely perceptible to the general reader. A large group of young and genuinely talented writers of magazine stories are holding out great promise as they reach maturity. This is true of the literature of the non-Russian peoples as well as of Russian literature. I shall not give names, for they are sufficiently well known. What I want to say is that these authors should be helped in every way. They should be given a chance to work for two or three years without having to think of how to make a living, without having to give up work on the big canvases many of them have long ago conceived and for which they have real material prepared in the professional manner.

The number of such writers will increase considerably if we help not only writers in the big cities but authors in the provinces, of which quite a large number are members of the Writers' Union. They are people with a thorough knowledge of life, who have travelled much and seen a great deal. What is most important, they are talented people who unfortunately have no opportunity to get down to writing without interruption, to working on compositions big not only in size. These are the people in whom we should place our hopes! At any rate, the majority of them will not let us down, and that is already a great thing.

Some good books have come out lately, but they are disappointingly few in number. More could be put out. The fact makes us more sad than it does you, of course, comrade delegates and readers

I still believe one of the main reasons our literature does not keep pace with life and one of the main reasons mediocre writing appears is because of the deep-rooted isolation from that life of many of our writers, and their superficial knowledge of a reality that flows swiftly and changes constantly.

In her speech Comrade Furtseva quoted truly frightening figures. Just think of it. Of the 2,700 writers in the Russian Federation 1,700 are permanent residents of Moscow and Leningrad. If we add to that number those who make their homes in Voronezh, Rostov, Sverdlovsk and other big regional cities what do we have left for the rural communities?

SOMEONE who writes about collective farmers or workers on state farms should, I believe, know as much about farming as an agronomist. Someone who writes about steel mills, factory workers, engineers and technicians should know at least as much about factory production as a highly skilled worker. Those who take our army as their theme should know about things military to the same decree that Kuprin or Leo Tolstoy did. Otherwise. we can be sure of reading about "cranberries that grow on trees" and other such things. That is exactly what often happens. When it comes to love and the emotional trials and tribulations of the hero or heroine, that can be written about anywhere. It is a clear-cut theme which does not require special knowledge.

With truly feminine courtesy our minister remarked it might not be a bad thing to appeal to our young artists to follow the example of our real young people and go out to work on the construction projects of communism. Ask her if she really believes there will be a warm response to such an appeal. I'm sure she doesn't. Some artists may go out for a week just for the change and to get a breath of fresh air. Then they will start missing their warm bathrooms and the other amenities of urban life and we'll soon find them back again in Moscow.

You cannot prohibit those young creators of "permanent values" in the provinces from moving to Moscow or other big centres. They hear about the triumphant literary evenings in Moscow of our fashionable boudoir poets, where there are sure to be a detachment of mounted militia and the hysterical cries of our young style-hounds.

They also want to show off in front of uncritical young ladies in unbelievably narrow trousers and jackets with exaggerated shoulders. They also want to taste the fruits of glory. And so they flock to Moscow as the faithful flock to Mecca. Arguments and quarantines cannot hold them back. "By rail and on foot, crawling and climbing," they reach their goal.

What do men like, say, Fedin, Leonov, Maxim Rylsky or myself care whether some young chicken cries as we pass, "Look, there goes so-and-so!" To us it is an old story, "not the drink we want," to quote elderly pensioners. But if you are young you find it flattering. We frown at hearing our name tossed about so unceremoniously, but a young author dissolves at the sound of his name. One need not be lenient, yet one must try to understand what it means to be young.

Many of us have probably seen peasants in the old days spreading grain on a big screen to sift it before planting. The chaff and dust were carried away by the wind while the kernels remained. The same thing will happen in literature. The grain will remain, while the chaff will blow away. Life itself is a literary screen that does the necessary sifting.

That, in my view, is the situation as far as young authors are concerned. The situation when it comes to the older writers is no better. What is the use of urging an urban dweller to go out to the provinces he fears so much in his old age? Besides, who needs him out there? I have personally long since given up the idea of being able to get authors to move to the places about which they write. It's hopeless! Let Comrade Furtseva take the knocks in this noble sphere of activity. I've had enough of them!

The hope has been expressed here at the Congress that we writers and other workers in the arts will continue to be kind and clever advisers to the Soviet people. It is hard, however,to give advice if you do not know life. You may hand out advice that would confuse the devil himself. Now really, how can a writer, a typical city dweller who has had nothing to do with a rural community for thirty or forty years and has long since lost all contact with the land, or who never had any such contact anyway, advise an experienced collective-farm chairman or state farm director on farming problems when the latter know those problems inside out? And when it comes to questions of morals and ethics some of those modest-looking young fellows could give lessons to quite a few of our writers. An author who cannot distinguish between winter wheat and spring wheat and confuses oats with barley should not play the part of invited adviser but should try in every way to escape with a whole skin from those whom in his foolishness he had considered to advise.

I realize myself that my speech is rather gloomy, but I cannot help it. I am beset by such a terrible longing to see more good books, and there are so few of them. That is why I grow angry, at myself and at others, but that does not help much. Such questions should be solved collectively, and without hurrying.

Here haste is hardly a reliable aid. Then there's another trouble—troubles, as you know, do not come singly. In his excellent, meaningful speech Comrade Podgorny, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Ukraine, missed what I believe was a highly advantageous opportunity. He might have mentioned the fact that writers in the Ukraine did not choose their delegates only from among Kiev writers. He could have told the writers that since they were elected delegates to the CPSU Congress in the regional centres of the Ukraine they should move there and live there in good health and write about the people of the region which elected them. If it was Poltava Region then they should write about Poltava people, if Chernigov Region then about Chernigov people. But he did not say that. And again the writers will return to Kiev, the capital, and again everything will go along in the same old way. The same might be said of the secretaries of the other regions where there are writers in plenty. They ought to invite the writers to come to far from quiet provincial towns and villages, not to live in peace and quiet there but to lead a life of activity, where they will really get to know life thoroughly and will write creatively. I still think matters can be mended.

But however it may be, our literature is forward-looking, not in ideological content alone, either. Our connections with foreign publishing houses are growing stronger. Books by our authors are published all over the world. They are read by people interested sooner in what we have to say than in how we say it, for interest abroad in our life is very great.

We Soviet writers probably have much more reason to complain about foreign critics than about our own critics. Most of our critics do not know life, but foreign critics not only do not know it. They have a very poor understanding of it. Often they make completely unfounded demands of us. They claim our writing is prejudiced. But how would they have us write?

Suppose I write about a Soviet solder, a man infinitely near and dear to me. How can I write badly of him? He is mine, all mine, from his cap to his boots, and I try not to notice that, say, his face is pock-marked or there are a few flaws in his character.

And if I do notice them I try to describe him in such a way that the reader will also love him along with those pock-marks and those flaws.

Before me are seated people who for the most part are rich in everyday and other experience. I know that sometimes the freckles on the face of a plain, snub-nosed woman suddenly become more dear to one than a face with an unblemished, velvety skin. I know that sometimes the tired wrinkles in the corners of the eyes of a beloved woman make her more desirable to one than the white-toothed, insouciant smile of a young girl. And it also happens sometimes that a woman who does not look like much will capture the most handsome around. Anything can happen, and all of you know it as well as I do. So how can a writer, unless he is a "street shoemaker" write with indifference of the people he loves?

Chekhov is said to have given the following advice: "When you sit down to write be cold as ice." That is wrong: An artist cannot be cold when he creates! You cannot create real works of art if you have the blood of a fish and a heart overgrown with fat, nor will you ever find a path to the minds of your readers.

I am all for hot blood flowing faster through the veins of the writer as he writes. I am all for his face turning livid with hatred for the enemy as he describes him. I am all for the writer laughing and crying with the characters he loves and holds dear. Only under those conditions will he be able to produce a real work of genuine art, and not an imitation of it.

But this creative laboratory, or kitchen, very likely does not interest you. I shall now consider the tasks of Soviet literature, on which I should like to dwell briefly.

There is a great deal we have to fight for, the main thing being influence over our young people. We have splendid young people. The country owes a great deal to their youthful enthusiasm and heroic work. But some of our young people, not many of them, are restless. They are looking for romance in our heroic day-to-day life and are not finding it. Yet it is there for them to seize. All they have to do is stretch out their hands and take a closer look at life. It is our duty to guard our youth from alien influences and bring work and deeds of valour within their reach in their far from easy period.

Not only will writers be faced by this problem today and in the future. The Soviet family, the morality of the new man, the gigantic work our people are doing all require embodiment in artistic images, all imperiously demand the creation of truly great works of art. We men of the arts are well aware of this and of the burden of our responsibility to the people and the Party.

In conclusion I should like to say that among those present are many delegates whom we affectionately call "beacons." That's a good word, a meaty word. I beg those whose work brings light not to forget that this light shines not only on people of their profession or trade. Those "beacons" of science, technology, industry and agriculture also shine on us men of the arts. And we gaze at them with a certain envy because in our creativity we have not yet achieved what they have. But their light falls on us too and warms us, and illuminates the twilight hours.

I am also grateful to those who accumulate the energy of those "beacons" for their warm concern for us, concern which we may not fully deserve but which I am certain we will come to be worthy of!

TWO BERLIN LETTERS

WALTER LOWENFELS

Letter for the President

I am writing you from the Berlin border as the soldiers of my country roll up their tanks and point their machine guns at the peace of the world. Across the human isthmus and the Great Divide I am my country, and I am surrounded on all sides by hundred-megaton bombs. And I am not afraid.

What's at stake for me is the survival of my United States not as a geological crater, but as a great independent nation. Naturally this is a big love affair for my life because I have no other place like home.

It's not the idea of being turned into cinders, along with Lillian and our little cottage in the South Jersey pine barrens—at 64 I don't have that life expectancy that makes such an ultimate difference. What bothers me is the shame of it, that I should be responsible, in what I haven't done, or done enough, to keep my country from becoming a vacant sandlot where the pueblo civilization of the Manhattan Islanders used to flourish.

It doesn't cheer me up that other gardens won't be pretty sights either, and I am not worried about the future of the human race—they will survive, along with interesting people from Tibet, Tierra del Fuego and the Yukon, as socialist descendants of the lemurs and dinosaurs. The amoeba in us will not be forgotten.

I suppose it's my bourgeois up-bringing, this persistance of nationalism in me, but it's the fate of my own country that bothers me most.

Humanity entire can take care of itself—that's its business and it appears well trained to the job—having already come through the fall of

Egypt, Greece, Rome, the Tang Dynasty and Charlemagne the Great.

But my poor little United States—so fragile in its 200-year polished surface, so disassociated even now, with 20 million of us—Afro-Americans—insisting "let's unite the United States!"

What will become of Abe Lincoln in his Washington memorial if they kill him again, and this time for good? Who will be as proud as Whitman was of the young men who lie in the battlefields of Gettysburg? And where in all that's left of the world's geography, will there ever be a race like us again?

From Naples and Africa and Lithuania, and all the islands, we came to kill our Indians and make their fertile land our own, and then to die because our neighbors couldn't be snuffed out like the Cherokees?

I am confessing my own weakness—it's not all humanity that's at stake for me, but the idea of what we in the United States could have been.

For what other people could have made socialism such a sport, so quickly as the boys and girls of Harlem, Chicago's South Side, the cliff-dwellers of the Golden Gate, and points north and south? It's not our obliteration as concrete physical substance that's my main drag—I will never live to report it anyhow—it's the idea of us now, that we should have gone out as a lie.

It's our entire future, as it exists, this instant, for if tomorrow isn't already a glowing day break just about to come over the horizon, we are already dead—and more than dead—the wild geese will make their arctic orbit over the Atlantic shore and never know what great ball players and mechanics and dancers used to live in Hoboken and San Antone.

I am sorry for all the snow birds and spiders and squirrels that used to love us because we left such beautiful crumbs before Times Square became a toothless skull.

I am sorry for all the hopes that Thomas Jefferson dreamed of and Nat Turner died for. And all the lovers who hid in parks and dived into the sand at Jones Beach will not save us from not even becoming a might-have-been.

We will go out—not like a light, but like a Black Death the rest of the world wouldn't let our rats spread. It's our absence from all the holidays and festivals and dances of tomorrow that is breaking my back today. For the only death is to die alone.

On the Berlin border, where the tanks are pointed at each other but still silent, and our North American dream is still alive, I am begging that one word from all of us that will make our beautiful tomorrow alive today.

LETTER TO BERLIN

Berlin
with your gouged-out eyes of your shell-shocked buildings
& your new class-conscious blocks of concrete walls with
flower pots in the windows
where the workers who built your Stalinallee apartment houses
live in the beautiful graveyard of the bombs that cleaned out
Hitler's love nest —
with your muscular women
and your amputees
and your schoolboy
soldiers
and your doubters
and half believers
and your busloads of
potato-picking school boys and girls —
with your brains cut in half by the new border
and your spinal column all screwed up
by the Friedrichstrasse
blockade point —
with the blood pumping into your veined streets from all
the billion youth of the new world —
forgive me for walking over your heartbeats and counting
your pulses with my unending questions:
with your careless careful confident courage you are
dictating
endless love songs of how it feels to be alive
on the knife edge of the peace of the world.
October 27, 1961.

A FIRST VISIT TO AN OLD FRIEND

MIKE DAVIDOW

MY FIRST view of Moscow was its birch trees. It was night and all I could see were their silhouettes; but my heart did not need daylight to feel their welcoming embrace. I met them long before I met the land of their birth.

I had heard their heart-beat in every Russian folksong. I had seen the gentle swaying of their limbs in the more pensive moments of the Russian dance. I had met them side by side with the heroes of Tolstoy, Turgenev, Gorky, Chekov, Andreyev, Sholokhov.

Let me say frankly. I did not come to discover the Soviet Union. He was an old friend I just had never met. What I did want to discover, in a personal sense, was: Why my attachment? What was he liken in "real life," this old friend of mine?

I lived with my friend for seven weeks. Not enough to really know him. But, long enough to know I'll never forget him. Long enough to feel he's a friend I never want to lose.

And so, I write as a good friend of my host. He has enemies enough in our land. I do not aim to explain him. Most certainly not to analyse him. Nor, will I describe him statistically. In that light he is well known. I merely want to present him as I finally got to see him.

I want to take you along with me, if I can—at least part of the way. I want you to meet my friend as I did, and frankly, I want you to like him as I do.

So, you are warned.

IT WAS in Leningrad I realized my friend was meeting me, too. Until then, I was pre-occupied with my own feelings.

At Piskarovskoye Memorial, we met. Sometimes, an entire life-time seems to prepare one for a few moments. Such were the moments we spent as we mourned together.

It was V-Day I was part of a U.S. workers delegation that had come to lay a wreath in tribute to Leningrad's 600,000 heroic dead. The sun shone in all its splendor, as hundreds of family groups, bearing flowers and bunches of branches of beroyozka, the traditional Russian birch tree, gathered at the huge "comrades grave" where thousands sleep together.

I recalled a scene from a Soviet newsreel during World War II; Soviet mothers throwing themselves upon the misshapen limbs of their children as their men looked on, an unquenchable vengeance in their eyes. Here they were now!

At first they regarded us with curiosity, as we approached with our wreath. Their curiosity turned to agitated interest, as the whispered word spread that it was a delegation of American workers. But when we spoke, it was no longer just interest.

They listened with great respect as our men spoke. But when Dorothy, one of our group, spoke, it was as if the tenderness of feminine emotions provided our common bridge.

A sturdy woman, tears streaming down her face, pushed her way through the crowd and embraced Dorothy. They stood, the Soviet woman and the American woman and wept together. And all wept with them. Men who had hurled Hitler's hordes to their death, women who had fought besides them, and the bright Soviet youth from whose ranks Gagarin and Titov sprang. I wept with my friend, that is how we met.

His dead were mine, and our hearts pledged life to the living. And the living besieged us, as if we were Hollywood stars. That is the quaint esteem with which our friends regard peace-loving Americans. Mothers brought forth their children for us to kiss. They pressed spontaneous little gifts into our hands, and begged us to scrawl a few words upon scraps of paper.

I had thought of how much my friends mean to me. Now I realized how much I mean to them. That is how true friendship grows.

I SAW the "Battle of Stalingrad" in Stalingrad. I had seen the film before, but as I sat and watched, I felt as if the past and present were one. The heroic survivors were on the screen, but they also sat beside me. They were my hosts.

I gazed at them. They did not look like "heroes." Heroes never do. They resembled the people I knew back home quiet, law-abiding folk I met during the "Great Depression," who became our "Stalingraders" against hunger.

Stalingraders and Americans, we renewed our alliance, as we watched the film in the beautiful, modern planitarium, the gift of the German Peoples Democratic Republic.

As the picture came to an end, dawn crept over the "sky" above us. The outlines of the new Stalingrad appeared on the horizon. Then, the bright sun lit up the heavens, as the victory bells pealed. Thus ended "The Battle of Stalingrad."

I walked the streets with my friends. Yesterday, Leningrad, today Stalingrad. I thought of the Soviet mother in a film I saw, who, holding the last of her sons, dead, in her arms, cried out: "Why is it every step we take, we pay with our blood?"

Every step I now walked upon was paid for in blood. One must respect such a price. It is the most valuable real estate in the world.

My friends pointed to the spots where the decisive battles were fought. But they pointed with even greater pride, to their new victories, the real memorial to their immortal heroes, to their new and more beautiful Stalingrad.

I never saw old Stalingrad, the Stalingrad that was destroyed but never died. I can well imagine that for many, whose childhood, youth, took root in the old Stalingrad that is no more, no buildings no matter how new or beautiful will ease the painful memories of its end.

But new memories take the place of the old. And these will be memories of a city created by an entire nation, for the whole Soviet people can truly say, "We defended Stalingrad. We rebuilt Stalingrad."

ABOVE all, I fell in love with my friend's children. And, I loved him the more for the affection and care he lavished on them.

My friend has had and still has a good deal less than we, of the comforts of life. That is no secret. But, never, even in his darkest days, did he ever forget his children. And, there are no happier, no more beautiful children than those remembered, those loved. How they remember, how they love in return!

I was a kid again as I rode with the children of Stalingrad on their railroad train. They are full-sized trains, running on a 3 mile track and completely operated by boys and girls from 10 to 16 years of age.

Nina, the cute little 13 year old "inspector" greeted us. We peeked at her through a garden of flowers. Her speech was at once a lecture and a welcome. Amid all the excitement, she maintained the dignity of her office.

"Greet the American children, for us. Tell them to come to see us. We want to be their friends." She said it the way kids invite their next door neighbors. "Let's be friends." The words of the parents, the words of their children. Let Americans and Russians ride trains together; their children's way of telling us what the people of Leningrad had told us at Piskorovskoye Memorial.

I thought of the distorted image of their fathers and mothers that is impressed on the minds of our people, yes, on the minds of our children, whom they wholeheartedly invite to ride on the trains they run.

I thought of my Joey, aged 11. I remembered how over-joyed he was when I brought home his first electric train. How Joey and his friends would jump at their invitation. And maybe even be "railroaders" for a day.

I suddenly felt terrible homesick, and I did what all homesick fathers do. I took out Joey's picture.

Now, I was no longer an honored guest. I was more important. I was just Joey's father. Ninotchka snuggled closer to me. I felt less homesick now. We shared something, or rather someone in common.

As we said farewell, the "inspector," threw her arms around me. "Give our greetings to the American children," she repeated. "And, tell your son to write to me," she blushed slightly.

Tell my son. . . . We have a lot to tell our sons, and our daughters too.

IN Stalingrad I met the Volga at last. Even more than the birch tree I knew it. I heard its songs of sorrow, as a child, from my mother. When she sang of mother Volga, it was her heart not her voice I heard.

My mother knew only the Russia of the Tsars, the Russia of pogroms. That is why she sang of the Volga in America. Yet even in the darkness of old Russia, she felt and loved the great heart of its people.

I felt a sense of guilt and sadness, on the Volga, without my mother. My mother would hear its new songs from me, when it is she who should sing them.

Now the river widened. On one side, the shore-line was dotted with dachas, summer homes. On the other, industrial plants appeared. Our captain was singing over a microphone, all the immortal songs of the Volga. It was as if he relived the sorrows of its legendary boatmen, the struggles of its deathless peasant heroes. But, he too, added to the glories of the Volga. He is a Stalingrader.

Gorky, Chekov, and yes, our own Mark Twain came to my mind. Mark Twain, the poet of the great Mississippi. He would understand the Volga. He would have seen much in common in our two great rivers, and between the peoples whose histories were irrigated by its waters.

And Chekhov! How he would weep with joy at the rich creative life that flows like the Volga through his beloved land, today. For he, more than any other Russian writer, cried out against the tragic waste of human beings in old Russia. Uncle Vanya, Ostrov, the Three Sisters, how they would spring to life! Foma Gordeev, the philosophical tramps that Gorky understood so well, whose tears overflowed the banks of the Volga like the torrents of a bitter spring, how joyously they would sing of their Mother Volga now!

I SEE Stalingrad's battlefields, its hydro-electric power station, the world's biggest, its modern aluminum plant, its very talented, permanent theater company of 200, its beautiful wide streets and boulevards, and its idyllic waterfront that embraces the bosom of Mother Volga.

But, above all, I'll always remember a bus ride. I'll ride that Stalingrad bus as long as I live. This I know.

Our delegation was escorted into the theater of one of the Palaces of Culture where a play was about to begin. As we entered, there was dead silence, then thunderous applause. A young voice pierced the quiet that followed "Mir eyee Druzba. Peace and Friendship," it cried. The theater echoed the slogan.

But the seats, the stage, the curtain stood between us. After the performance the barriers were gone. The audience did not go home. They waited for us, as they would for their favorite artists. They held us until the lights were dimmed.

We boarded our bus. For awhile they stood, shouting greetings, pressing our hands through the window. We stared at each other like dear friends saying farewell at a railroad station.

They clung to our hands as the bus started to move. Then a pretty young girl hopped on the bus. A boy with a blond, bushy lock of hair cocked jauntily over an eye, gave out with one of those piercing, Russian whistles. It was the signal. They took the bus by storm like real Stalingraders.

On the bus we grinned at each other like bashful kids. Then they sang. I love Russian folk songs. I have heard them sung better but never more beautifully.

They sang like they never wanted us to forget. I don't think I will. Then, they waited for us. Show us your country, show us your people, they seemed to say.

For a moment we felt as if we represented the entire U.S.A. We never felt more American in our lives than on that bus ride in Stalingrad.

We wanted them to see our people, not our war mongers. We wanted them to have confidence in them as we did. We wanted them to hear our great rivers, to share our pride in our heroic history. We too sang as we never sang before.

I guess there are those in our country who would consider it a subversive bus ride. I can only say I'll never forget that Stalingrad bus, and I'll live for the day when my Stalingraders can ride the friendship bus with us, as our guests.

WHAT do the youth of the Soviet Union do? Among other things they build youth cities. There are dozens of such cities built largely by the young all over the country.

Volski is a youth city on an old river. It is Stalingrad's young neighbor. Stalingrad sits on Mother Volga. Volski rests on the "Quiet Don." The dam of the biggest hydro-electric power station in the world joins the two rivers together.

Volski is 10 years old. It has the freshness of newness, but not the newness of rebuilt Stalingrad. Stalingrad will never be new no matter how its body shines. Volski like most of its builders has little of a past. It has however, a great future. I felt that as I listened to its city "fathers," who looked more like city "sons." Even as they spoke of the present they thought in the future tense.

It's a strange feeling to walk the streets and rarely come upon an old person. I found myself suddenly much more conscious of my gray hairs.

I visited Volski's City Hall. Involuntarily, I compared occupants, not buildings. I remembered the city halls I visited at home during the depression with delegations of hungry and desperate unemployed. It wasn't the police, brutal as they were, who horrified me. It was the terrible indifference of our "city fathers"; an indifference that was not born of innate meanness. It was just that they led different lives. So different in fact, they simply did not understand real hunger. There were exceptions, of course, and I thought of the irrepressible LaGuardia. He would get a kick out of Volski.

Volski's "fathers," there are 113 of them, and 84 "mothers," are the guts of the town. Of its 215 deputies to the city council, 99 are workers from the shops. And its young lead the young; 30 per cent are from 18 to 25. Here before me, were the living "statistics." We spoke different languages, but I felt more at ease with them than my own city leaders. I take no pleasure in making this confession. Their pride in their city was not Chamber of Commerce whoopla that never fully drowns out the cash register. For there is no cash register to ring for them. It rings for Volski.

Their pride is the very ingredient that replaces the incentive of the "almighty dollar." Dollars or Volski's pride—which is the greater spur to progress? I'll put my money and my pride on Volski

In Baku I saw a museum that depicted the most complete story of man I had ever seen. Each room led me, volume, by volume, through the history of Azerbadjan, from antiquity to socialism

It was like a thrilling novel that carried me chapter by chapter to an inevitable conclusion. And it had what every reader really longs for, a convincing, happy ending.

I lay down the book with a contended sigh and went out to meet Socialist Azerbadjan. I had not far to go. Azerbadjan stood before me in the person of the beautiful, young woman who was the director of this unusual museum.

One of the most tragic and heroic pages of the history through which she had just guided me, was written in the blood of her grandfather. He was one of the 26 Baku Commissars who gave their lives in 1918 to the White Guardists and British invaders, to write the happy ending for their long-suffering country.

I pondered over this question. It is a question faced sometime or another by all who know there is a price to be paid for happy endings. Henry Winston and his comrades knew it. My director's grandfather who never lived to see his granddaughter lead American visitors through the bright new "wings" of the history of his once backward country, knew it.

I thought of our modern museums that were not quite as modern as the one I viewed in ancient Azerbadjan. I thought of our still "vacant wings."No one but history has the right to speak for the martyred dead. And history, in this case spoke with poetic justice.

In a mountain village in Azerbadjan that Pushkin might have described, I danced with three burly Soviet militia-men. "Cops," as I know them. I had a funny feeling at first, I must confess. Not that I was dancing with them. By now, I had accepted this custom of the people of the Caucasus.

Our people don't dance with their policemen. Ever since I was a kid I learned the word that goes with police is "fear." And during the depression, when they overseered evictions, and their massed bodies stood as a wall to imprison the hungry within their circle of misery, I learned another word, "brutality."

That's why I found it difficult even in the land of socialism to place my arms around them, let alone dance with them. I doubt whether the generation that overthrew the Czar felt any differently about dancing with their first socialist cops.

As the evening wore off, I forgot who they were. And it was not simply that I became accustomed to them. It was because of the way their fellow villagers accepted them.

The people of Azerbadjan live in the wild grandeur of their sky-piercing mountains. If not their bodies, their souls soar like Gagarin into space. The poetry of the mountain peaks is in their speech, their song, their dance. It is in their militiamen too, who sing rapturously the songs of their great 12th century poet, the predecessor of Omar Khyam, Nizami. When our cops can sing the songs of Walt Whitman, when we can "dance" in spirit with them, we too will forget our fear and our hate.

IN Georgia, man and nature blend in beauty. It is the kind of beauty that once invited the rapacious, a beauty that once brought with it, tragedy. A garden to be despoiled, lovliness to be ravished. The pain of such beauty is in their songs. The pride and fierce love of such beauty is in their dance.

It is no longer a curse for Georgia to be blessed. I saw this happy blessing in gay, lovely Tbilisi, where at night you lounge over delicious Georgian wine at one of the many restaurant retreats perched on the peaks that surround the city, and look down into a starry sky.

I saw it in Tbilisi's Children's Palace of Culture, formerly the private palace of one of the richest families. Now its countless "guest rooms" resound with delighted squeals of discovery. The sons and daughters of the new and permanent guests are discovering the magic of their feet, the limitless creativity of their hands, the fertility of their growing minds, the strength and flexibility of their young bodies.

I saw it in the industrial sinews of once industryless Georgia. I saw it in ancient Kutaisi, 3000 years old, which had almost no industry before the revolution. It now has a big auto plant, chemical, textile, silk, glass, cannery factories.

I saw it in the huge, modern steel mill in 12th century, Rustavi, which now employs 10,000 workers. Above all I felt it at a banquet in the City Hall of Kutaisi.

Georgian hospitality is rightfully famous. It warms, it exhilirates, it overwhelms.

I was quite exhausted when I reached Kutaisi, not just physically tired, emotionally drained as well. I didn't want to be gay. I didn't want to eat and drink. I just wanted to rest, to simply do nothing. I think all of our delegation felt the same way. But they felt just the opposite. They had waited for us not merely hours, days, but years—3000 years for a delegation of American workers like ours, the Mayor of Kutaisi told us. They had not only waited to see us. They had waited for us to see them, to see their garden, to hear the songs of their poets, to know the new Georgia. And they poured the ancient and modern treasures of their small but wondrous country before us. It gushed forth in song. It burst upon us in ecstasy of their dance. It overcame us in the poetry of their greetings Georgia embraced us! It was the embrace of one who offered his heart but asked for yours in return. We gave ours willingly.

I WANT to tell you about a doctor I met in Sochi.

I have the utmost respect for our American physicians. Professionally, they are the equal, and in some respects the superior of their Soviet counter-part. But our doctor is separated by a very thin line from the average successful business man.

Vera is the head of one of the rest homes I visited. She is no business man. Her pay is about that of an average skilled worker The difference between Vera and her more affluent brother in our country, is the purity of her relationship with the sick. Illness has no price tag in her country. Sinclair never Lewis met Vera, but he dreamed of her in "Arrowsith."

At 42, she looked older than her years, but she had a sense of sincerity that one only associates with the young. The aging lines and the youthful glow are the story of her life.

The Nazi bombs were falling, as Vera at 22, took her doctor's exams. That same afternoon she began her internship at the front. In her four years of service she participated in operations upon almost a division of soldiers, 12,000 cases, often for 72 hour stretches, knee-deep in freezing water. She was wounded three times, and still suffers from their effects.

After the war, she continued her struggle for life. Only the front changed. She married, bore a son, then lost her husband.

One day she brought her 12 year old son to our room. Alexei had a book in his hand, and the excited yet fearful look of the school-boy on his face. Vera had brought him to us for an English lesson.

The boy read well for a beginner. He was obviously studious. The doctor listened and watched with poorly concealed pride. "Alexei, pay careful attention to what our American friends say. It is their "language," she said sternly. The boy nodded, his eyes fixed on us in concentration.

I suddenly felt a sense of pride in "my language." Simple English words I usually swallowed or slurred over I now pronounced with poetic relish. I rediscovered the beauty of my mother tongue during an English lesson with a school boy in Sochi.

The youthful glow now erased every painful line in Vera's face. "How beautiful it sounds," she exclaimed. Then, turning to her son she pleaded: "Alexei, remember, remember." His eager eyes promised. But, I also noticed a sad look steal over her.

After the "lesson," I complimented the student's mother. Again that sad expression. I prodded Vera. "He is lonely. He has no brothers or sisters," she explained. He is lonely!

I felt the terrible weight of the years of her internship in her voice. It was not Vera alone who cried out. I heard the anguished cries of that huge army of husbandless wives. I felt the yearning of those who were robbed of their husbands by death. I understood the awful burden of those Soviet statistics, 58 percent of the population are women.

These are statistics beyond human planning. They are figures only nature can adjust. They are the special price Soviet women paid to save their sisters.

I am no engineer. I looked at the factories I visited as a tenant would a prospective apartment. How would I like to work in them?

I, like most workers, counted the minutes in my shop. At quitting time, we ran from it like the plague. In the mornings, we returned, sullen and glum, to sweat it out until the hour of liberation struck again. Friday was our day of deliverance. We lived for the week-ends

I think the most beautiful sentence in the entire new program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union is the one which describes the condition where work will be "a genuinely creative process and a source of joy." How that would expand living! Life, like the week would begin on Monday, and the day at 8 A.M. instead of 5 P.M.

I saw some of this, a sort of prevue, in the factories I visited in the Soviet Union. Not yet the finished product, but in the process of refining and refinishing.

I saw it in the ball-bearing plant in Moscow, in the immense flower pots that adorned its automated machines. A garden in the heart of a factory! I saw it in the libraries in the Moscow Auto plant where workers leafing pages with grimy fingers, read novels, studied physics or just thumbed periodicals. I saw it in the new comfortable homes built by the Leningrad longshoremen a few minutes walking distance from their jobs, which rented neat, well equipped 4 room apartments at 4 to 5 rubles a month, including utilities. I saw it in their modern polyclinic attached to the port installations.

I saw it in the over night rest stations set up near factories, for workers not yet sick enough for hospitalization or a long stay at Sochi, but tired enough to need refreshing.

I saw it in the technical schools near most large plants, that were turning out a new type of skilled worker, more and more approaching the level of an engineer.

I saw it in the shop bulletin boards that were adorned with photographs of a new kind of a hero, a "hero of labor." They also had blunt jabs at those few who were the laggards.

I saw it in the personal yet collective pride of the young scientists and engineers in the hydro-electric power station at Mingachaun, which inside looked like an art gallery.

I saw it in the beautiful Palace of Culture in Stalingrad, which was club, social center, theater, music hall, ballet theater, all rolled into one.

Everywhere the factory is the center of construction and culture.

Everywhere it is a place to live in as well as labor.

But, above all, I saw it in the faces of the workers at work. That is the one time no face can lie. It was not the appearance of tiredness, fatigue, I sought. All work is tiring. It was that tenseness, that grayness, which is the hallmark of the American worker, as battle fatigue is to the soldier. It is a tenseness from which he seldom unwinds, a tenseness bred by insecurity and fear in the midst of plenty. It is a grayness that with all his fin-tailed cars and unrivaled gadgets, reflects the bleakness of his cultural existence.

I did not see that look in the Soviet factories. Nor did I yet see the face of the Communist man of which the program of the CPSU speaks. But I did see his father . . . How I long to see his son!

IN Moscow I met a most refreshing theoretician. A man reflects his occupation, and one who lives in the realm of ideas often acquires a dryness, almost a mustiness, as if he too has been gathering dust on a bookshelf. The man before me, the editor of an outstanding theoreticial magazine was gathering no dust.

His words were juicy, full of the sap of life. His ideas soared higher than the boldest dreamer dared to climb, but they had the scientific sureness of a Gagarin or a Titov in space.

He was speaking of the little "plants" of Communism, the budding offshoots that were the heralds of the Great Spring ahead.

Communism is the creation of the millions and as such, it is far richer than the thinking of even the most brilliant few, he was saying. The tasks of theoretical science is to see the plants of communism that have their source in life not in ink, and bring them to the attention of all. Thus like a proud gardener he displayed one of his most precious plants.

The Communist Party of Leningrad made an experiment in raising socialist consciousness to a higher level. They eliminated all cashiers on pay day at the Kirov factory, formerly the historic Putilov plant. Pay day, as usual, the workers lined up. There on the table lay the pay envelopes. Next to them were the pay lists. No cashers in sight. One by one, a worker approached the table, took an envelope and signed for it.

At the end of the day a check up was made. All had gone well with one exception; one worker was missing his pay. He had been ill and someone had taken his envelope and forged his name. The experiment was still a great success, but even one case of dishonesty had put a damper on everyone.

A couple of days later a remorseful worker entered the manager's office. He sheepishly placed the money on the table. It was a few more rubles than he had taken, a kind of "interest" on the theft. But he was not let off that easy. His "interest" was brusquely returned. An accounting was demanded. He had robbed his fellow workers of—more than money—their confidence in each other.

Squirming, he told his story. His wife had the habit of going through his pockets when het got his pay. He had wanted some extra money for a spree. What a miserable two days he had!

And now, said our gardener, it is six months and the plant has taken firm root in the Kirov soil. It is time for other seeds to be planted.

I must confess until my visit to the Soviet Union I didn't fully grasp what it means to build a communist society. Theoretically, I understood the difference between the stages of socialism and communism. But, it was simply the "next" stage.

In my mind I often idealistically attributed some of the characteristics of a communist society to socialism. I think it is a common error of those who never see socialism in life.

I got my first jolt to reality in a rather humorous way, on a night train to Leningrad. In the compartment next to mine was a Soviet worker returning home from a visit to Moscow. A man in his thirties, he was sitting in his shirt sleeves, on a bed, relaxing. I had studied Russian for only a year but the opportunity for a direct conversation with a Soviet worker made me daring.

As I hoped, he was very forgiving of my halting Russian and readily supplied the missing words. I was in seventh heaven. My first real discussion with a Soviet worker!

I asked him if he was familiar with present developments in my country. He honestly shook his head in the negative. I was a little taken aback. Conscientiously, I proceeded to inform him. He listened politely for awhile, his eyes wandering. Finally, with a sheepish grin he interrupted me. "Listen, friend," he said, "I'll tell you. I'm not really interested much in politics. You see, I just like sports."

So, even in the most politically advanced country in the world, you still had people "who weren't interested in politics." In our country such workers are of course quite common. In the Soviet Union such thinking is a relic of the past.

Ask any visitor to the first land of socialism what impresses him most? He will answer without hesitation: "It is not what, it is who." It is the new Soviet man, the most valuable product of 44 years of socialist living.

But some of the old still lives in them, in some more than others. There is still the existence of inequalities in income, almost meaningless as they are in comparison with our "free enterprise society." There are still differences in cultural levels though ever narrowing and the differences between mental and manual labor these are all still remnants of man's past.

I grasped for the first time the full grandeur of the historic leap that is communism, the society of the most cultured, most complete man, living in abundance and full equality. The pioneers of socialism have truly new frontiers to conquer. As my good friend said to me one day in Moscow: "We will soon be discussing the elimination of the remnants of the stage of Socialism."

Ours is probably the last American generation that can still ask, with that knowing look, the question of questions: How do their living standards compare with ours?

It's a fair question, if it is asked objectively—if it does not disregard history. Such an approach would remember Czarist Russia, would remember that more than one-third of the 44 years of the Soviet Union's existence was spent in fighting for its young life or in restoring the ravages of war.

I asked myself the question. I honestly sought a proper comparison. I thought in terms of people in my class and social position, of the life and problems of my friends, my shop-mates, my neighbors. My conclusion is that in what we call personal living we are still considerably ahead. As a whole we have better housing, more room, more modern conveniences. But, crowded as they still are in their big cities, no where did I see anything like our depressing slums. They are crowded but clean and their streets hold no terrors for parents

We can still buy our groceries, our clothes, our furniture, our appliances, and, of course, our gadgets more cheaply. We can buy them in greater variety and in more accessable and better stocked stores. Our restaurants are more numerous, more varied and more luxurious. And, of course, they have nothing like our bars and cocktail lounges. They have very little of personal ownership of cars, so there is really no comparison. Nor, do they visualize competing with us in this respect. They view with horror, our choked streets, our waste, reflected in unused cars parked most of the day, and the terrible expense of maintainance. Their outlook is one of car pools that will be a sort of drive-it-yourself or taxi service.

All in all, life in the U.S. in a personal sense is still more comfortable even though this has to be greatly qualified. Certainly, this cannot be said of the poorer paid sections of our working class, and especially of our minority groups, Negro, Puerto Rican, Mexican.

But in public service, a vast and growing part of life in the Soviet Union, we invite no comparison. I thought of the nursery I saw in Stalingrad, which is typical, where a staff of 23, including doctors, nurses, teachers, dieticians care for 75 children from 8 A.M. to 8 P.M. daily, at a cost to their parents of 2 to 8 rubles a month. Without this, I asked myself, could there be the Soviet women doctors, engineers, scientists who are the envy of the world?

I thought of our latch-key kids and their mothers who worry as they work.

I thought of the palatial rest homes I saw in Sochi and Kutaisi run by the unions. For 28 days of the finest medical care, comfortable quarters and three nourishing meals a day, the patient pays only 30 per cent of the cost, about 30 rubles in a sanitarium, and 20 rubles in a rest home.

I thought of how sudden illness strikes at our savings like sudden death.

I thought of the budding engineers I saw in Moscow, their maintainance, books, all provided free in addition to free tuition.

I thought of my boy and the youth of my friends to whom college means the double burden of part time work and study, and years of strain to their parents. I thought of the rich cultural life, that flows through the Soviet Union's huge body, carrying this life-blood through its veins to the smallest hamlet. I thought enviously of the four per cent of their income that goes for rent and utilities. The end of the month holds no terrors there.

I thought of riding to work in a Moscow or Leningrad subway. How hard it is for a New Yorker to imagine beauty in a subway.

I thought of the people I had seen strolling in the streets and in the parks in the late hours of the night just as they do in daylight.

I thought of our streets and our parks that turn into jungles in the darkness.

I thought of the most wonderful thing of all that I saw, the absence of fear for the future. I thought of that periodic plague of joblessness that haunts even the most secure of my friends.

I thought of the brotherhood of the 42 nationalities I had seen in Cumsaid, Azerbadjan, that is a way of life. I thought of brotherhood, that we proclaim one day a year. I asked myself:

Is not all this, also, part of a standard of living?

But, even the advantages we do enjoy today, you can see are temporary.

I saw the Soviet statistics in action. Our cynics can cry "pie in the sky" about the goals set by the new program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. But it is a pie whose contents I saw being mixed.

It is a pie to be baked in the ovens of peace. It is a pie looked forward to with great anticipation, because many of its delicious ingredients have already been tasted.

MY friend now has many faces. I can see Grant Manosovitch, our interpreter, looking at me seriously through his tortoise-rimmed glasses. I can hear his precise but quaint English.

There are expressions in our language that will never sound quite the same to me ever since they were uttered by Grant. He simply loved the sound of "naturely," almost all his sentences were introduced by "the matter is" and he resolved the most difficult problems with "it's up to you." "It's up to you" it turned out, in the case of determining the limits of your host's hospitality at banquets, means "if you dare."

Watching him at work, I had no doubts as to the complete fulfillment of the Soviet Union's 20 year plan. Whether it was lunch or an intensive week's tour, it was organized to the last detail and checked like a five year plan.

Grant met the severest test to which an American can submit a foreigner, our sense of humor. At first he lifted his eyebrows in bewilderment at our ribbing, but soon he laughed more heartily than anyone else, as we mimicked his pet phrases. That won us over completely. From then on, Grant Manosovitch was almost an American.

We made an important discovery. We laughed together at the same things. Through our common laughter we opened our hearts to an exchange of deeper emotions. As he translated our words, he seemed to penetrate more and more into our souls. At times we felt, as if there was no need to speak.

I felt the warmth of his own tears he swallowed to make intelligible our choked words at the Piskorovskoye memorial in Leningrad. It was his favorite city even though he was born in Baku.

He was a student in Leningrad when the war broke out. His battered and bruised body had helped provide the ring of human steel that withstood the 900 day siege.

After our common tears in Leningrad, we knew each other like soldiers whose days at the front are more binding than the years of strangness that preceeded them.

I can hear Galli, singing in her appealing voice what became our theme song, "Moscow Nights." Galli was our other "voice." She had never spent a day out of her country, yet her English was phonetically perfect, her sentences a model of construction, her speech fluent.

In her presence, we chose our words more carefully, enunciated each syllable clearly, and became painfully aware of the existence of English grammar. I am certain a few years in the Soviet Union under Galli's supervision and we would all learn to speak our language fairly well.

In Galli I got closest to the soul of the Soviet woman. I had met her sisters in novels, I had seen them depicted with emotional depth on the screen. I had formed the image of a soft, warm strength, of almost inexaustable endurance, of the purest sincerity.

Neither the conditions or the experiences existed for me to really test these qualities in Galli, but I saw enough to sense that they were there. What I liked in her was what she liked in us. Galli felt a deep pride in and love for her country. And it was clear how much she wanted us to understand and love her country too.

But it was the honest emotions of a true friend not the effusive exclamations of an obliging guest that Galli sought in us. She made us conscious not only of the correctness of our English, but of the honesty of our hearts. She found what she looked for in us because it was there. She was understanding enough to see it not only in our tears, but in our laughter, even when it contained a note of criticism of some of the ways of our hosts.

I will never forget the expression on her warm, attractive Slavic face the night we sang in that Stalingrad bus. I saw that look again, as she sat beside me at a performance of Tchaikovsky's opera, "Eugene Onegin" at the Bolshoi theater. Only, this time it appeared on the stage, on the face of Pushkin's personification of the purity of soul of Russian womanhood, Tatiana.

I see Igor whose delightfully dry sense of humor would be at home in any New England town.

I see Freida whose intimate knowledge of and love for American literature made us appreciate more fully the real treasures of our country.

I see Natalya with her "dark eyes," sad in repose and indescribably vibrant and joyful in mobility; Natalya, whose beauty and efficiency seemed to symbolize the new Georgia.

I see the Georgian "professor" with his irrepressible, mischevious twinkle, his New Yorkish wisecracks, that did not conceal the man of profound scholarship and deep emotional attachments he was.

I see Saville, the engineer, the new woman of Azerbadjan, whose soft serene face retained her country's poetic grace.

I recall Keats' lyrical protest against the mundane limits of reality in his "Ode to a Grecian Urn";

"Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard are sweeter."

I cannot say this of the melodies I heard. Still less of the melodies we will one day hear in our own gifted and beautiful land.

ROBERT INGERSOLL: WICKEDEST MAN IN THE WORLD

REUBEN W. BOROUGH

The opinions and conclusions in this chapter are the author's own. The facts are drawn chiefly from *The American Lyceum* by Carl Bode (Oxford University Press); the painstaking biography, *Royal Bob,* by C. H. Cramer (Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc.); and Ingersoll's published speeches.

HELL was under fire in the United States in the closing quarter of the nineteenth century.

The proclaimants of Eternal Damnation, with its vengeful God and his fork-tailed Adversary, were surrendering, inch by inch, their sacred ramparts. With Hell falling, Heaven, itself, was under siege. The shining Miracles glimmered into fading mirage. The spiritual debacle was pierced with cries of frustration and rage.

The controversy had its innocent beginning a full century earlier. In 1776 Watt, observing the tilting of the lid on his mother's tea kettle, made a novel acquaintance: Natural Law. The result was dynamic and heretical—"engines" (invention of Watt and his experimental contemporaries), operating in obedience to Natural Law, began to retire God from the business of running the World. God might still make little apples grow but He did not make the machines run.

The shift in the idea content of the human brain could hardly have been avoided. The hunger and necessity for science—for an orderly and dependable knowledge of the mysterious energy sources—was widespread, especially marked among the new-come industrialists and their apprentices. In the United States the need was met popularly through the science lectures of the Lyceum (founded in 1826 by Joseph Holbrook, Yale graduate), an institution which by pre-Civil-War days commanded three thousand platform outlets.

Holbrook was an educational revolutionary. He insisted upon taking his Lyceum audiences into the laboratory. He harped upon the effectiveness of "demonstrations," which required "apparatus for illustrating" (including the familiar "cabinet of minerals"). To raise the level of the "topics of conversation" in the "daily intercourse of families, neighbors and friends," he urged that "subjects of science, or other topics of useful knowledge, take the place of frivolous conversation or petty scandal. . . ."

The Lyceum struck at the dominance of the theologians in yet another way. It helped in the development of a conscious and literate citizenship. In addition to utilizing the burgeoning scientists, amateur and professional, of the day, its platforms engaged the services of eminent participants in the nation's cultural and political life, including its social dissenters and reformers. At the Lyceum one might hear the controversial novelist, Nathaniel Hawthorne, whose "Scarlet Letter" had been denounced by the clergy for its "French immorality"; the pontifical rolling periods of New England's eloquent, ubiquitous statesman, Daniel Webster; the spiritual and economic heresies of the Concord naturalist, Henry David Thoreau; the brilliant dissertations of the transcendentalist philosopher, Ralph Waldo Emerson; or the goading anti-slavery indictments of William Ellery Channing, Theodore Parker, William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips. The orthodox sermon, with its "next-world" concerns, was replaced by "this-world" concepts and issues.

But all this did not spell victory. War, itself, had not even been declared. Science and religious orthodoxy went their parallel ways—separate when they were not hypocritically intertwined. The revelations and implications of Natural Law were shrouded in compromise. The Myths remained. Heaven and Hell were still on hand, with their bearded God and their Horned Devil. They flourished alongside work-time mores and a rationalist ideology in the secular activities of the town, the village, the neighborhood. The family, itself, was often schizophrenic: the mother "saved," the father "lost," the children divided between Heaven and Hell. Sunday was a morbid violation of the easier and saner week-day proprieties. How could the mind of man function effectively, unapologetically, purposefully, in a world of fact while this went on?

WHAT humanity needed was a spiritual declaration of war upon Blind Faith—not the brute verbotens of counter dogma, not the insolent decrees of First Consuls and their marching armits of "liberation." The weaponry must be words: free, winged words, defiant, stinging, challenging, that would shock the conscience and rouse the mind and heart of man; words that would banish fear and sow the seeds of doubt and speculation; expedient words, too, suited to age and place, exalting the middle- and working-class virtues of loyalty to home and wife and children. Yes, sometimes, even purple words, cloyed with the sweetness of roses and maidens' lips! The call was for a nineteenth-century American orator of the people. Fortunately, such a man came.

Robert Green Ingersoll was born August 11, 1833, in Dresden on Lake Seneca, New York State, the son of a peripatetic Presbyterian preacher. In his more than forty adult years he was lawyer, soldier, politician, lyceum orator and agnostic, bon vivant, and adored head of a happy family. The story of his life is the story of America in the second half of the nineteenth century: an America under the compulsions of an expanding industrialism, ruthless, without sense of guilt, in its endless exploitations; an America discarding an obsolete slave system and striving to revive and perpetuate its Declaration of Independence; an America demanding and achieving, despite the combined opposition of bigotry and privilege, a literate and potentially free mind for its functioning citizenry.

In 1854 Ingersoll became a lawyer much as Lincoln, out of necessity, became one. With his brother, Ebon, he read Blackstone in a private law office, passed a perfunctory examination, received the required certificate of good moral character, and was admitted, by motion in court, to the bar in Mt Vernon in dismally backward southern Illinois. In his practice he gravitated to the civil litigations of the contentious private enterprises, by-passing in the main the more spectacular, but less lucrative, triumphs of the criminal law.

A year of courageous and conscientious, but by no means illustrious, service as colonel in the Union Army wound up with the defeat of his volunteer Illinois regiment by the Confederates, his capture in battle near Jackson, Tennessee, his parole and return to the Union Army, followed by his resignation from the service in 1862.

Resuming his legal practice in Peoria, Illinois, he became a successful "corporation lawyer," numbering among his clients railroads (he was president of two) and other privilege-seeking special interests. The climax of his court-room career came in June, 1883, when his skillful use of legal technicalities, rare ability to turn complex and conflicting testimony to his own purposes and his emotional appeals to a primitive jury won the dismissal of the notorious Star Route Cases. With this victory came freedom for Ingersoll's chief client: Stephen W. Dorsey, a former United States Senator from Arkansas, who with his associates had been arrested for conspiracy to defraud the United States Government through illegal and exorbitant charges for contract mail delivery on Western frontier rails, trails and wagon routes. Ingersoll's ultimate pay, fixed in a court settlement of claims, was 1,500 shares (par value, $150,000) in the Palo Blanco Cattle Company, New Mexico, capitalized at $2,000,000, and an elaborate ranch house ("log cabin") on the vast estate in which the Ingersoll family in the fall of 1884 lived the life—to quote the triumphant attorney—"of old English barons."

INGERSOLL early developed skill as a political campaigner but it was not until 1876, when he was forty-three, that he emerged from regional to country-wide status. In that year, in a flamboyant speech nominating James G. Blaine for the presidential candidacy, he swept the Republican National Convention in Cincinnati into a pandemonium of frenzied delight. Careless of fact, he pulled all the forensic stops. Blaine, whose tarnished political career had been widely exposed, suddenly became "spotless as a star"—the "grandest combination of heart, conscience and brain" beneath the flag.

In a bombastic finale (which almost placed his candidate on the ticket) the orator declaimed: "Like an armed warrior, like a plumed knight, James G Blaine marched down the Halls of the American Congress and threw his shining lance full and fair against the brazen forehead of the defamers of this country and the maligners of his honor. For the Republican Party to desert this gallant leader now is as though an army should desert their general upon the field of battle."

The orator's partisan activities in the years to follow teemed with the absurd credal formulations of America's industrial and financial rulers—in a cutting judgement Clarence Darrow, an ardent admirer, labeled them "superstitions." On the stump Ingersoll, without shame, propagated the three major myths of post-Civil-War Republicanism: the "protective" tariff, "sound" money, and imperialist "manifest destiny. . . ." Without "protection" there could be no industrial capitalist and without the industrial capitalist no well paid "American labor," either of "brain" or "muscle. . . ." Money was "a product of nature"—not a medium of exchange—"you might as well attempt to make fiat suns, moons and stars as a fiat dollar . . ." "I want America to be the mistress of the Pacific. . . . I want to go North and South. I want Canada—good people—good land. I don't want to steal it but I want it. I want to go South with this nation—there is only air enough between the Ishmus of Panama and the North

Pole for one flag. A country that guarantees liberty cannot be too large."

These narrow class concepts grew out of Ingersoll's naive acceptance of an "American" economic order which theoreticaly afforded equal opportunity to all and which—again, theoretically—brooked no intervention by the state! He was against "socialism" and "public ownership"—he feared the "power" of the state and the corruption of officialdom under that regime. His sole major break into heterodox economic opinion was his temporary acceptance of the tax on land values ("single tax") and his support in 1886 of the candidacy of Henry George for mayor of New York City.

THERE were, however, big items on the credit side of his political advocacy, which were to stand out with astonishing significance three quarters of a century from utterance.

Ignoring the charge of "bloody shirt waving," he passionately defended the Union and the Civil War, lately won, whose fruits were soon to be hacked away by Republican compromise with Southern ex-slave owners and Ku Kluxers. He was for "free speech" for both Whites and Blacks in the South as well as the North and demanded that the federal government protect it. He was contemptuous of the White Supremacists of his hour—he scathingly assailed General Winfield S. Scott, Democratic candidate for president in 1880, for refusing (while heading the Department of the Gulf in the South) to protect the Negro's civil rights because that would bring "nigger domination." He called upon the North to compel an "honest ballot" count in the South.

"Now, honor bright," he asked, "which section of this Union can you trust the ballot with? . . . Can you trust it with the masked murderers who rode in the darkness of night to the hut of the freedom and shot him down notwithstanding the supplication of his wife and the tears of his babe? . . . Can you trust them? Can you trust the gentlemen who invented the tissue ballot? Do you wish to put the ballot box in the keeping of the White Liners, of the Ku Klux? Do you wish to put the ballot box in the keeping of the men who openly swear that they will not be ruled by a majority of American citizens if a portion of that majority is made of black men?"

In his defense of freedom for the Negro, Ingersoll, the humanist, (like Lincoln before him) proclaimed revolutionary concepts as to the inviolability of the basic right of labor and the wickedness of those who lived on the toil of others. (He stopped short of specific implementation.)

It was from bases in this curious realm of contradictory legal and political advocacies that the great orator erected a dazzling structure of dialectical fire works whose brilliance was to illuminate the minds of millions of his fellow Americans in the nineteenth century and the decades to follow. It was the supreme mission of Ingersoll—no scientist but an effective science popularizer—to liberate vast areas of the nation, still largely provincial and unsophisticated, from the fear of a literal Hell of Fire and Brimstone and a vindictive personal God. With that fear dethroned, the doors were open for the infiltrations of the Higher Criticism; the quiet acceptance of the "parable" interpretations of the Scriptures; and the more general acknowledgement of the Reign of Natural Law. The Nebular Hypothesis became respectable and Darwin's theory of the descent of man was hospitably entertained in the homes of the social and cultural elite—and even rapturously embraced by the economists of laissez faire.

This task of emancipation was accomplished in a quarter of a century of lyceum addresses numbering into the thousands and reaching out over the entire country, two states in the South excepted. The "talking business"—as Ingersoll familiarly referred to his lectures—contributed so importantly to his annual income (roughly, between $50,000 and $75,000) that in the slump in his law practice during the Panic of 1893 he turned to it as the major support of his luxurious family living.

Ingersoll's platform technique was unique in its easy popular approach. He banned the formal introduction, thereby offending the local big-wig eager to display his own forensic talents. A large and genial gentleman (much over-weight in his later years), he advanced deliberately and alone from the side wings and began conversing with his audience as he reached the center of the stage. Of middle register, his voice was ample in power but lacking in the conventional oratorical ring. His most frequent gesture, a curved flourish of the right hand, was often accompanied by an emphatic nod. These, with the flashing inter-play of irony and wit and the running music of clear, liquid phrase, held his listeners enthralled through a wide range of discourses, frequently repetitious, on such matters as "Hell," "The Mistakes of Moses," "Skulls," "Ghosts," "Gods," "Human Rights," "Thomas Paine," "The Great Infidels."

It was an amazing performance—such was the verdict of the orators and cultural leaders of his age including such diverse characters as Henry Ward Beecher, Andrew Carnegie, Albert Beveridge, Mark Twain and Eugene V. Debs. It was impossible to resist him!

Although a forthright evolutionist it was with no Darwinian formula of the "survival of the fittest" that he demolished the deadly dogmas of orthodoxy—he did it with the "sacred" (a word of which he was very fond) virtues of tolerance, kindliness, love. Imposing his own higher social ethic, he "out-Christianed" the Christians, shaming them into a rejection of God's inexorable cruelties and, in some cases, into a repudiation of God, Himself.

As to Hell, he said: "Reverend Mr. Spurgeon says everywhere in Hell will be written the words, 'for ever.' They will be branded on every wave of flame . . . forged in every link of chain . . . seen in every lurid flash of brimstone . . . Every body will be screaming them. Just think of that picture of the mercy and justice of the Eternal Father of us all!"

Contrast must drive home the blessedness of salvation: "The sight of the torments of the damned in Hell will increase the ecstacy of the saints forever . . . the groans of the tormented are music to them. . . . Some of the old saints—gentlemen who died in the odor of canstity and are now in the harp business—insisted that Heaven and Hell would be plainly in view of each other."

But Ingesoll was an optimist: "We are getting more sense every day —we begin to despise these monstrous doctrines."

Rejecting the appeal of "pie in the sky," he argued: "If you want to make better men and women, change their conditions here. Don't promise them something somwhere else. One biscuit will do more good than all the tracts ever peddled in the world. Give them more whitewash, more light, more air."

The orator was sure that the God that made Heaven and Hell must be abolished. As to the God that made the intimate physical world and directly or indirectly ran it he was not positive but he had his predilections.

"I prefer," he confessed, "to make no being responsible. I prefer to say: if the naked are clothed, man must clothe them; if the hungry are fed, man must feed them. I prefer to rely upon human endeavor, upon human intelligence, upon the heart and brain of man. There is no evidence that God has ever interfered in the affairs of man. The hand of earth is stretched uselessly toward heaven. . . ."

AND with God, the vanishing superintendent, went the orthodox concept of Creation and the Miracles: "If the world was created, what was it made of? . . . If the Lord created it what did He make it of? Nothing. That's all He had—no sides, no top, nothing. Nothing had ever happened—all at once He made something. What did he make it of? Mr. Talmage—" prominent theologian of the time—"says if I knew anything I would know that God made this world out of His Omnipotence—He might just as well have made it out of His memory. What is Omnipotence—is it a raw material? . . . I don't believe this. I believe this universe has existed throughout all eternity—everything. All that is, is God . . . I am a part of this universe and I believe that all there is, is all the God there is."

The Miracles he spoofed with irreverent drollery: "Doctor Talmage doesn't think Jonah was in the whale's belly—he says (Jonah) was in the whale's mouth. . . . He says he *might* have been in the whale's stomach and avoided the action of the gastric juice by walking up and down. . . . Imagine Jonah sitting on a back tooth, leaning against the upper jaw, longingly looking through the open mouth for signs of land!"

The loaves and fishes that fed the hungry multitude, the water turned into wine, the Red Sea that parted for the children of Israel, the sun that stood still in the sky so that Josua might slaughter more of his enemies—all these fell before the easy colloquial satire of this master of rhetoric. Of Josua's sun he said contemptuously: "The man who wrote that thought the sun was two or three feet in diameter and could be pulled around like the sun and moon in a theater."

In a sweeping affirmation of the basic tenet of religious humanism he endorsed the "Descent of Man": "I had rather belong to a race commencing at the skulless vertebrate, producing the gentleman in the dugout, and so on up, than to have descended from a perfect pair upon which the Lord had lost money from that day to this. I would rather belong to a race that is going up than to one that is going down."

In this frame of mind he stood in rapturous adoration of the world's intellectuals: its philosophers, scientists, poets; its creators of the great classics of music and art, and its political and social revolutionaries. In the imposing list were Bruno, Voltaire, Hume, Spinoza, Goethe, Burns, Shakespeare, Tom Paine—and not least among them the founding American forefathers, Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson, "to whom we are indebted for a Constitution without a God in it" and "under whose direction and leadership . . . our fathers retired Jehovah from politics."

Finally, this portentous rebel against religious orthodoxy was a proud and worshipful conformist in the "moral" realm. He was the ideal family man of the literate, sentimental middle classes of his day: a loving husband and father who was fantastically adored in his own home.

"I think it is better to love your children than to love God, a thousand times better," he explained, "because you can help them and I am inclined to think God can get along without you. I believe in the religion of the family. I believe that the roof tree is sacred from the smallest fibre held in the soft moist clasp of the earth to the little blossom on the topmost bough that gives its fragrance to the happy air. The family where virtue dwells with love is like a lily with a heart of fire—the fairest flower in all this world."

HE WAS —as has been often observed—a bon vivant. His large income lavishly spent enabled him to play that role in his spacious domicile in Peoria, Illinois, and later, in New York. He was a lover of good food and extolled the excellences of French cuisine. He had praise for the fragrance and flavor of fine tobaccos and fine wines but was dubious about the hard liquors. In New York—out of his boundless enthusiasm for music and the theater—he was an inveterate first-nighter.

It is a regrettable commentary upon his day—the day of the jostling, rising, exultant (and crass) enterprisers of business, politics, religion—that he fell victim, as did they, to a complacently accepted vice: overeating. He boasted jocularly of his girth, which, by the time he had entered his sixties, had grown out of all proportions to his medium height—his weight had risen from the 180 pounds of early manhood to 255 pounds. A mild heart attack during a lecture warned him and he began, too late, to reduce. During the year the attack was followed by others. He died July 21, 1899, at the age of 65 years, in the Dobbs Ferry home of his railroad—and banking-magnate son-in-law, Walston Hill Brown. His beloved wife was present. There was a smile on his lips. . . .

TROUBLES OF AN ART LOVER

KAZIMIERZ BRANDYS

From *Letters to Mme Z*, printed in *Nowa Kultura,* No. 21.

On Monday evening I went through the warm April rain to a vernisage at the artists' club and spent over an hour in a small overheated room with a dozen or so canvases on the walls. They were the work of a talented, popular painter who recently had successful editions abroad. Dealers in Paris and New York are showing an interest in his pictures and they are already fetching a good price on th market there. Monday's vernisage was attended by about 100 people—artists, writers, art critics and architects and their camp-followers: young women, diplomats, journalists and enthusiasts, spending an evening with modern art in an atmosphere of understanding and sympathy. Nowadays openings are held in a similar atmosphere all over the world; in this country the less likelihood there is of a sale the greater the intimacy. As there are few purchasers in general, the more reason there is to surround the occasion with an atmosphere of warm appreciation. I stood among a hundred people, with well-fixed smiles on their faces, blocking each other's view, and was steeling myself to go up to the artist with a few well-chosen words of appreciation.

On such occasions one usually tries to form a definite impression of the exhibited works. Does he like them or not? If so he can congratulate the artist with a clear conscience; if not he must search for the most tactful expression of his reservations. Often too his attitude is subconsciously fixed beforehand; in going to an exhibition he wants to like it and such wishes usually come true.

I inspected the pictures dispassionately, with a disinterested curiosity, experiencing a familiar anxiety and impatience, checked at once by a feeling of being out of my depth. These were abstract paintings, presumably some variant of tachisme.

I am told that there is a strictly defined terminology in these cases, but I prefer to describe them as a layman. They looked to me like parts of a weathered wall on which years of rain have left grey and umber marks; their colour was that of earth, stones and leather with just the odd touch of something brighter thrown in. I should not have been surprised to hear that they were geological models or enormous enlargements of sections of bark. The longer I looked at them the more clearly I felt that to say "I like them" or "I don't like them" was completely pointless, and I realized that in this room I was again called upon to make up my mind whether I have any definite attitude to modern art; whether I have anything to say on the subject or whether I must admit that it is as much beyond me as biochemistry or microphysics.

You realize that such moments are somewhat painful. For someone who wishes to regard art as a personal experience, who has grown used to this response and feels that it is something to be poud of this moment of alienation has something degrading about it. There are two devils fighting inside you; one is out to humiliate you: "If you can't grasp the meaning of an art recognized by the majority of painters, there is something wrong with you. Try to understand it! Make yourself understand it!" Half of you takes this line, and gradually you reach a state which is neither understanding nor lack of understanding, but simply the performance of some sort of ritual. In this way you regain half your peace of mind.

But the other half of you remains part of that crowd which refuses to accept this new state of affairs. The second devil starts whispering: "If you can understand Rembrandt, Courbet and Matisse, but don't understand the contemporary abstractionists, that means that there is something wrong with them. So don't give in; get indignant and derisive about them; and even if you do feel something vaguely disquieting, whatever you do don't let on!"

These two opposed reactions battle it out inside us; they have their own progress charts with their ups and downs. Five hundred years ago art delighted the masses, today it torments them. It has become a cryptic spectre at which one hurls questions and which refuses to answer. I know people who are stung by modern art as if it were a personal insult and go white with fury and humiliation, and others, bogus to the core, who infuriate one with their perverted connoisseurism. Van Gogh was unable to sell his pictures during his lifetime because they were not understood, so let's buy up everything that's not understood now, and there will be a rich premium in the future. The bourgeois's cars draw up in their thousands in front of art dealers where their owners pay stiff prices for job lots of "unrecognized" artists who have become all the rage. This wholesale trade, this new method of wallpapering, is the posthumous vengeance taken by those whose canvases in the Salon des Indépendants were slashed in rage by the outraged grandfathers of today's buyers. It is also a trick played by nature on those know-alls who, having at last found the best place to dive, have failed to notice that the river-bed has moved and the water at this spot is shallow and muddy.

All this passed through my mind as I moved among and talked with the invited guests who had come to the opening to feel that they were associated with art, to qualify as cognoscenti in the eyes of others; in the last resort, to test the solidarity of their milieu. Artists are the last group in Poland to retain the guild-like structure of their coterie; they have not lost their clannishness and are very much concerned with each other as persons and artists. This gives them the peculiar charm of child-like holy men playing with colour, glue and canvas, hungry and pure of heart — sometimes a little absent of mind, but on the other hand not standardized or stereotyped. These guiltless characters have found themselves in the midst of a mighty drama — they were the first to detect the rumblings of the new movement; it was from under their feet that tre artistic ground first began to slip; and they were first to size up the situation.

The tremors came in several waves and the last of them tipped almost the whole of visual art in one direction. This was almost in a panic, wholesale and blindly. There was a crash of collapsing techniques. All objects were removed from the pictures; there are no no people, light, landscape or still life. On hundreds of thousands of easels throughout the world, in a flash there mushroomed coloured stains and smudges; squirts and smears multiplied in countless unexpected combinations. It took the habitues of Exhibitions and Salons by surprise, and the idioms of painting got mixed up as a deluge of paint flowed through the capitals of art. It was squeezed straight from the tube onto the canvas, it was shot from pistols, drowned by chemical baths so that canvases could be immersed in it. Artists worked to the smacking of connoisseur's lips, the uneasy obsequious whispers of the snobs who were delighted by the afct that they understood nothing and were not obliged to understand anything.

You asked me what I think of all this; now I will tell you. First I was furious, then I took no notice. But for some time I've been stirred again. I ask myself what will come of all this. This is the only attitude that I can take towards the inarticulate, which I cannot understand, and by which I am not moved, but which has engaged a huge milieu numbering tens of thousands of people from all parts of the world. I find it painful to admit that I can only state the matter in such no-art terms. I look at a work of modern art thoughtfully, but I expect almost nothing from it. It gives me a few winking signals to wait. It mumbles something about the future and that it ought to be taken on trust because, though it cannot speak yet, it will some day. I stand before it and think — not about the picture itself for that means nothing to me but about the times which have produced it, our times of preparation. I stand looking at it with annoyance: I am angry that it is no longer what I was accustomed to regard as painting and that it makes obscure allusions to some future coming. The most irritating thing is that I might be wrong and the picture right. For the second time in my life I have to ask myself how much I count for in the face of the new and whether my resistance does not come from being behind tht times. Contemporary painting mangles me like a piece of underwear; it saps my belief in myself. For heaven's sake! I muster my arguments: laboratory of new forms, all this will find its way into architecture, will be part of interior decoration, in fact fabrics just like these canvases are already being produced, so there's no need to worry, you must only learn to look. . . .

I once had the misfortune to let drop a few remarks in this vein in the presence of several artists — to their disgust. My tactlessness lay in daring to suggest that they should enter into partnership wih architecture. They pronounced this word contemptuously to show how deeply I had wounded their feeling; I was left speechless. I had always thought that architecture was a heaven-sent opportunity for a painter. If I were a painter I should dream of ceiling and walls; but with them it was just the reverse and I had goofed; they want to be philosophers of canvas.

It is a very delicate question. There is in fact no room in art for discussion — there are only different types of imagination. What am I trying to prove to them? That I don't like their paintings? They could acknowledge that with a tolerant smile. Each new style in painting during the last century has been greeted with loathing. It is not that I have no arguments; I have, but I am not sure of them. I know their arguments too. But I am not sure of them either. I find now with increasing frequency that I lack any opinion on questions of art, that I find no argument convincing. I find with increasing frequency that I am sure only of what I have done myself and then only in a sense that, since I have done that, presumably I could not have done anything else. This is the line I must take with others. This is a measure of respect; it is easy to respect Titian but this is not a respect for art. A respect for art means respecting the artist's risks, and even those of his hopes which are not fufilled; unqualified approval should be given to a certain initiative regardless of its success.

If you really want to find your attitude to the new art you must define your own method of approach. My advice:

See as much of it as possible. Look, observe and compare. Build up a steady relation with modern art.

Don't for a minute lose contact with the old art. This will be your haven of safety in the storms and shifting winds. Without it you will lose your criteriums and values. Keep on looking at the old masters!

While you are fraternizing with modern art keep your views to yourself. Do not air them or at any rate don't let yourself get drawn into discussion. That is when the greatest nonsense is spoken for in discussion we defend our positions instead of searching for the truth.

Do not try to reason too closely or think logically. We get nearest to the truth in moments of mental vertigo, when something is thinking in us and not when we ourselves are thinking.

It is best to learn in silence, keping one's own counsel. Do not put your views at the mercy of the polemicists — contemplate — gain experience.

When you have been doing this for some time there will come a day, apparently no different from any other, when you will suddenly look and see. What has worn you out by its uncommunicativeness will suddenly become startingly clear. And what a relief that will be: the new art will have opened its arms to you, nothing will then separate you; the years of training will not have been in vain. . . . You will fall asleep happy and wake up to find that what yesterday was the new art is now outworn and out-of-date; the artists off on a new quest and you must start all over again.

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I am told people once considered art to be one of the purest things in life and honored the artists as saints. In our age it is science which is so honored. Artists are not much appreciated now; too many things have been achieved in which they had no part; they still find purchasers but they no longer attract a following of the faithful. I do not now what lies at the bottom of all this. Perhaps it is that we are living through a period of pressure from the blind forces of nature which mankind is struggling to hold at bay with the help of science and technology, expecting none from art. The artists realize their lack of importance; but they find it quite possible to get used to it, particularly as there are many other things which are not well. Mistakes are made in art but there are no victims in consequence; in other fields mistakes end with the digging of mass graves. An artist can destroy only himself and if he threatens anybody it is only by appeals to the conscience. At the same time he himself is oppressed by a great fear of losing his way in a muddled and uncertain world which has so little to hold against him and which despite, or even because of that, looks at him suspiciously.

"I did what I could," said a painter at his vernisage. "God too was only successful with horses and spring."

Translated by Barbara Przestepska

CIVIL DEFENSE, THE BOMB SHELTER, AND ORGANIZED PANIC

REVEREND STEPHEN H. FRITCHMAN

Because of the deep concern of Americans over the problem of survival in a thermo-nuclear war, and the controversy that has arisen over bomb-shelters, we are reprinting here the text of a sermon delivered by the Reverend Stephen H. Fritchman on October 8, 1961, at the First Unitarian Church of Los Angeles. Reverend Fritchman's provocative sermon has already gone through two editions (available through The Church at 2936 West Eighth Street, Los Angeles, ten cents per copy) and is one of the best discussions on the subject which we have read.

I SHOULD like to open our thought on the announced subject of "Civil Defense, the Bomb Shelter and Organized Panic" with these words from the Old Testament, from the 4th chapter of Genesis. Let me quote three or four verses to remind you of the familiar story:

"And Cain talked with Abel, his brother, and it came to pass when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel, his brother, and slew him.

"And the Lord said unto Cain, 'Where is thy brother Abel,' and he said, 'I know not. Am I my brother's keeper?'

"And the Lord said, What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground, and now thou art cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand . . . thou shalt be a fugitive and vagabond in the earth . . . and Cain said unto the Lord, 'My punishment is greater than I can bear . . . and it shall come to pass that everyone that findeth me shall slay me.' "

ON this Sunday when we turn the first soil to make way for a new church school and youth building, to be known as Hugh Hardyman Center, it is proper that you and I together consider the import of the proposed civil defense program of our federal and local government officials. We want construction, not destruction! As I. F. Stone said in Washington so simply last August, watching the Holifield Subcommittee of House Government Operations present the civil defense program: "It was like watching a lunatic nightmare!" Added Mr. Stone: "The purpose of the hearings is to make the great deterrent credible, to make our 180 million citizens believe that bomb shelters, public or private, will protect them from thermonuclear war on our own soil."

A Bismarkian mystique is being offered us which is nothing more than an invitation to national panic and a betrayal of every decent principle we ever learned, at mother's knee, or in the church school, or from our own study of the lives of great men in every past culture worth preserving, from Laotze to Albert Schweitzer.

I consider even the phrase "civil defense" an absurd euphemism, a delusion helpful only to bemuse the innocent from a normal skepticism.

I am opposed root and branch to the presuppositions of the civilian defense program and its shelter proposals. The blood of the Abels of this generation who would surely die by the scores of millions here and in other lands in a thermonuclear war is my concern today. I am my brother's keeper. With Senator Stephen Young of Ohio, I say "Civil defense is a myth. In a nuclear age there can be no realistic civil defense program. We must devote our efforts to the utmost toward finding a peace-solution to the world's problems. This is our only permanent shelter."

During recent days, along with all of you, I have been subjected to the most arrant nonsense and lunacy ever spread across the pages of our press, or sent by radio and television into the innocent air above our heads. Advertisements for home bomb shelters have blossomed in the newspapers day after day. Supermarket chains have spread columns of advertising in the papers for what they call "patriotic pantries" with just the right canned goods, colas and dried fruits needed for two weeks' rations underground. The Glendale News Press assured me that bombs were no threat to our underground water supply and the Sevennth Day Adventists announced that their church-organized civilian defense committees were getting into high gear. One suburb offers fun programs to women's clubs for shelter socials.

A Roman Catholic priest was reported over the radio as saying that in was not a violation of divine law to use a rifle against neighbors who might storm a bomb shelter at the moment of Conelrad alert. Happily a Jewish professor in Cincinnati, a few hours later, contradicted him with a devastating quotation from our commonly shared Scriptural tradition. Some of you, I know, saw on September 29 the television show in Rod Serling's "Twilight Zone" series, dealing with a false alarm of a nuclear attack with its dramatic conclusion in which one character declares: "I don't know what normal is any more. We were spared a bomb tonight but I wonder if we were not all destroyed without it."

I am not much interested this morning in proving to the last skeptic that a minority or a majority of our fellow human beings on earth will survive a thermonuclear war, for a few weeks, or a few months or years. I am interested only in saying that we are being slaughtered emotionally and morally right now by all those who ask us to prepare for self-survival, no matter how any millions will surely die around us. This is what I mean by "organized panic" Cain slew one man, his brother, Abel, and wandered the earth as a guilt-ridden vagabond thereafter, according to the ancient Jewish folktale. We Americans are seriously discussing, in the Holifield hearings and at the Rand Corporation and in our press, the systematic slaughter of scores of millions of men, women and children with weapons devised for no other purpose than this murder of our kind, a hydrogen cannibalism vaster than anything ever considered since time began.

I am asked, in letters and to my face, "But are you not interested in saving even a few lives . . . a few million children?" Of course I am, and that is why I must say "Disarm, negotiate and leave this hypocrisy of the shelter, and its monstrous immorality once and for all." In saying this I am no eccentric radical, far out on the edges of reality. Civlization demands rational leadership, moral agreements and a respect for human life. Whatever plays havoc with these things is of the devil.

Governor Robert Meyner of New Jersey said it plainly: "There is only one way to assure the survival of 180 million Americans. We must have peace. Not a cringing, cowardly, 'peace at any price' peace, but a peace predicated on strength, dignity and reason." And he added: "The proponents of bomb shelters suggest we find peace of mind in a bleak hole in the ground where we would cringe in a state of fear and futility. In any metropolitan area a nuclear attack would turn these primordial caves into nothing but mass burial vaults.

EXPERTS such as Dr. John Fowler and Dr. Ralph Lapp, both prominent physicists, feel the circumstances which would insure survival are unlikely to occur; rather the probability is that damage would be swift, extensive and sustained. It is the cruelest deception to create the impression that shelters are an adequate defense.

I shall not quote his longer paragraphs but they deal with the predicted results of a thermonuclear attack—the deadly canopy of radioactive particles contaminating food and water, the heat and light, with the blazing fireball, and the temperatures equal to those at the sun's surface, the necessity in any shelter of long-term quantities of manufactured oxygen. No thinking man or woman reading this material could hold to any rational hope of survival.

Dr. Robert Oppenheimer, father of the first atomic bomb, said a year ago in the N. Y. Herald Tribune: "What some of us know, and some governments have recognized, is that if a next war occurs, none of us can count on having enough living to bury the dead." Several of you have brought to my attention the words of Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt a year ago: "I think it is nonsense to build bomb shelters. It is quite evident from all we are told about nuclear war that the shelters would be useless. We had better bend our efforts to preventing nuclear war and not worry about how to preserve our skins."

If you reject this judgment by an aging woman known to favor peaceful alternatives to war as she testifies on this subject of the heavy odds against our survival, I would then remind you of the report prepared for our Congress by the Institute for Defense Analysis in Washington which stated: "If the targets of nuclear attack are metropolitan complexes rather than airfields the mortality figures are 80 percent for 5000 megatons." That is saying that 80 percent of the population of the United States would die And we should absorb that fact in the context of Dr. Ralph Lapp's statement that both the Soviet Union and the United States have a nuclear strike capability of 30,000 megatons, six times that needed to kill 80 percent of our people. Mrs. Roosevelt has reason indeed to say we had better work to prevent the war and not to try to dig ourselves into holes in the ground. Some of you may remember that Major General William Creasy, former Chief Chemical Officer for the U.S. Army, said in 1959: "If we go around gearing up our civil defense with underground shelters, to protect against the atomic bomb, we may find it will be instead a guided missile with a chemical or biological warhead. As you go underground, you must have ventilation and as you put in ventilation fans you simply guarantee that they will draw in the sickness or death that chemical warhead carries."

THE stark truth is that there is no defense! When the war begins we are lost. The scientific authorities have made this clear again and again, so that he who runs may read. I wish every skeptic would look again at the photographs taken by our government, during the Marshall Island tests of the 15-megaton H-bomb in 1952, showing the total vaporizing of an island 12 miles long which left only a hole in the ocean floor 175 feet across, where the island had once been! That picture should be hung in the 300 shelters in Los Angeles County, alongside the oft-published statement by Dr. Edward Teller so cruelly promising us that 90 percent of us can survive an atomic attack.

Mr. Martin Hall of this church, in a September 1 article in the York, Pa. Gazette, quoted the Los Angeles Times interview with Keith Dwyer, Civil Defense Coordinator for Riverside County, in which Mr. Dwyer said: "If Los Angeles were bombed, 150,000 refugees would jam the San Gorgonio pass area and probably try to take over Riverside's food and water supply." He then displayed a large can of dehydrated food at the bottom of which was a 45-calibre pistol. Brandishing the gun, Mr. Dwyer cried out: "Get one of these and learn how to use it."

I think again of Cain and Abel, and of the words in Rod Serling's TV drama last week: "I wonder if we were not destroyed tonight—without the bomb." Certainly the attempt is being made to destroy the decency, the brotherhood, the compassion and the reverence for human life which constitute the core of all great religions. Why are we shocked at juvenile crime and violence in our cities when we set such merciless examples as adults; not only the Dwyers of Riverside, but the men in high places who seriously propose using far worse weapons on people anywhere, who say, in effect: "Get an H-bomb and learn how to use it!" The late Pope Pius XII at Easter in 1958 declared "Every day is a melancholy step forward on this road to death and destruction, and the human race almost loses hope of being able to stop this suicidal madness." I am glad that his successor, Pope John XXIII, is working less fatalistically to roll back the brinkmanship of world leaders, as must any man who takes his principles of humanity seriously, be he a Catholic, Jew, Unitarian, Buddhist, or otherwise. The great lie of civil defense must be exposed to scores of millions of people now.

We must begin, of course, with exposing the naked greed of men, who, vulture-like, want to make a handsome profit on the bomb shelter business. Martin Hall, in the Gazette article previously referred to, quoted one California contractor who blandly declared: "Of course, I'm not building a shelter for myself I know that they won't do any good, but why should I refuse the business of those who want them?" Why, indeed, if one cares more for dollars than for people? Yes, there are some who would want to go down into oblivion enjoying a bonanza, but there are others, I trust ourselves among them, who prefer to work at preventing the disaster, believing it is not a fool's errand, that what man can conjure up in engineering the end of humanity can also be rejected by the sanity of the masses who do not want death.

If I were simply delivering a diatribe against coining gold out of man's misery and fears, I would stop here. But there is much more to the organized panic of civilian defense shelter-building. The purpose of the present high pressure campaign about shelters seems to be twofold; first to make the Russians believe we are ready to risk our population rather than give way on Berlin, and second, to make our people believe that shelter may cheaply and easily be made available to protect them from thermonuclear war. It is an exercise in what Frank Ellis, the new director of Civil Defense Mobilization in Washington calls "the National Will . . . that intangible ingredient which changes the environment of our daily life, which makes the difference between a leader of nations and a second-class power."

WHAT I am criticizing in this Civil Defense program is an emotional mobilization of our people. It is a part of the war of nerves which can all too quickly erupt into a shooting war. A more intense stage of the cold war requires this evidence of emotionally charged people seen building home shelters and voting scores of billions for public shelters. Dr. Herman Kahn of the Rand Corporation explained this phase of civilian defense as "convincing the Europeans as well as the Russians that we are resolved to prevent appeasement, or even an undue degree of accommodation."

Shelter-building is not only a deception in its promise to save your children from destruction, it is a political weapon to prevent an "undue accommodation" in diplomatic bargaining between the major powers. This many Americans need to learn at this late hour.

I have been seeking evidence of similar European and Russian hysteria about bomb shelters and still await it. Dr. Edward Teller claimed, in a recent news story, that the Russian were better sheltered at this point than ourselves. The New York Times in mid-summer ran a story by its Moscow correspondent saying that he found no evidence of widespread civil defense preparations, and shelters at all. It seemed to contradict the Santa Monica Outlook's recent assertion that Russia had a twelve-year lead over America in this area.

Visitors returning from the USSR and Europe tell me that they find only amazement and anger there regarding our shelter propaganda. I remain unconvinced that this present campaign for American shelters is more than a brutal tool in the present struggle over Berlin and the other unresolved issues of foreign policy.

I am not for one minute today denying the peril of an actual nuclear war. Sufficient examples of what the Bible calls "wars and rumors of wars" come to me from serious and apparently responsible sources to make me tremble for the months immediately before us, but I am saying that our task is to roll back the trend toward a military solution (which risks the destruction of mankind) and not waste our precious strength digging holes in the earth from which even survivors would not want to emerge if they knew what awaited them. I am unalterably opposed to what amounts to a selective shelter program; which means shelter for a few, not available to all people.

This denies our guiding American principle and our values as advocates of a universal religion of man. And even granting the premise (which scientists do not) that shelters save people for a future existence on earth, I cannot accept the plans of Civil Defense Director Ellis to save a fragment, primarily the military and the missile makers, and let the rest die in their beds or in their offices without a chance.

It is folly to assume that we can live underground and escape a nuclear holocaust; it is morally degenerate to advocate seriously such a program of fractional survival. If we mean what we say about the moral value of men and women, of little children in our homes and schools, we will take this parable from the Book of Genesis I read earlier and start practicing what it says. I am my brother's keeper, I will buy no rifle to shoot down my neighbors, I will not even build a shelter which promises only a post-war world (if there is any) of genetically damaged children with no emotions but that of monumental hatred for their species.

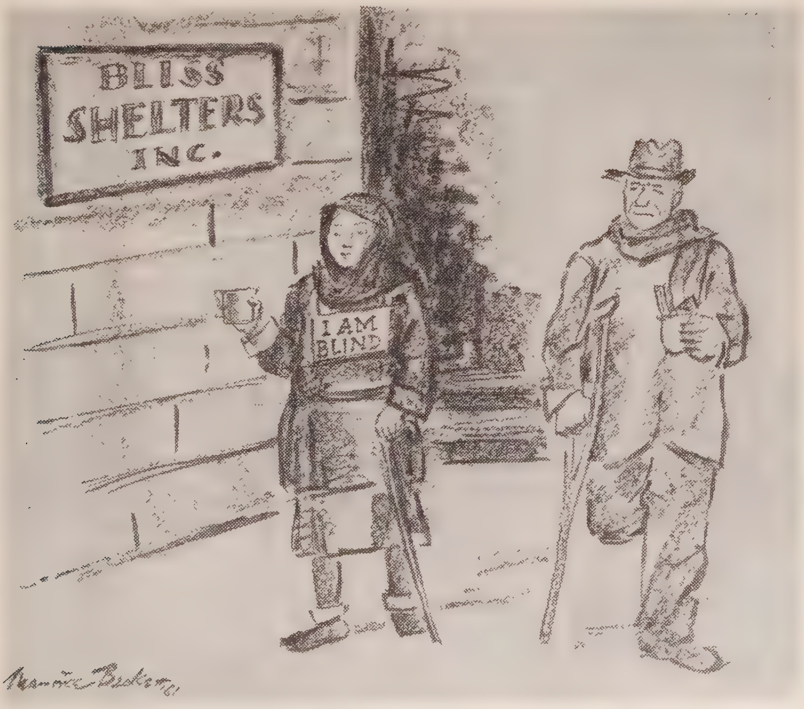
I am told that the John Birch Society is sending millions of letters and telegrams to the White House urging a far tougher and more uncompromising stand for "Berlin and freedom" than President Kennedy is even now advocating. For all of his talk of shelters and civil defense and readiness for war, I believe the President is prepared to negotiate the issues now under discussion with Mr. Gromyko in Washington, which I hope later will be discussed face to face with Mr. Khrushchev. For all of his revival of testing in Siberia, I think Mr. Khrushchev is willing to find a peaceful settlement which includes further accommodation.

THERE is only one appropriate line of action I can conceive of for an American, or Russian, an Englishman or a Frenchman, a Japanese or a Chinese at this hour: to lay aside any temptation to take a shovel and dig a hole, and to write, wire, walk, fly or drive to his nearest

Congressman, Senator, President, Commissar, Party secretary or Premier and say "In the name of humanity, sit down and settle your differences around a table, and don't get up until you have signed the first stages of an agreement. There is no other alternative."

The future within our grasp is rich in promise for ourselves and our children ready to enter into its estates. Only lunatics will press the buttons for atomic death. Only madmen will destroy man's belief in himself and his possibilities to build for life and for freedom. Let sanity prevail. The blood of Abel cries out from the soil of history: "Thy brother's blood be on thy head!" It is not too late. The mandate of scores of millions must be for love and life, not the sheltered misery of hate and death. Let none fall on sleep this night who have not once more written or wired the President in Washington, and the Premier in Moscow. You are the people. Let your voice be heard!

Maurice Becker



RighT FaCe

RARE BIRDS

"The Congress and the public must face up to the present and deepening crisis in music and the performing arts. Our prognosis of this creeping national disease of indifference gives the American musician not many more years until he is as extinct as the dodo bird."—Herman Kenin, head of the American Federation of Musicians, urging Governmental subsidies for the performing arts.—*New York Times*

WINDOW DRESSING

Carlino (R-Nassau) was a leading figure in the fight to push the $100,000,000 fallout shelter program through this month's special session of the Legislature. He came under fire yesterday with the revelation that at the time he was a director of a firm manufacturing fallout shelters.

Carlino, who made his denial in answer to a charge by Assemblyman Lane (D-Manhattan) yesterday, said he had no financial interest in the firm and was only on the board of directors for "window dressing."—*New York Post*

KIND WORDS FOR KRUPP

ESSEN, Germany, Nov. 20—The House of Krupp celebrated its 150th anniversary today.

Everyone who spoke had kind words for the House of Krupp. President Heinrich Luebke sent a message defending the company against what he called the "wrong clichés" still lingering about the one-time arms makers.

Dr. Heuss, the main speaker, said nothing "basically sinful" should be seen in the manufacture of arms in the past. Only "Hatred spurred by war," he said, had created the image of the Krupp company as an "annex to hell" while the management of similar concerns abroad was pictured as being "in the hands of heavenly angels."—*New York Times*

NEW TWIST IN WASHINGTON?

WASHINGTON, Nov. 14 (UPI)—The White House firmly denied today that President Kennedy or anyone else danced "the Twist" at a party there last Saturday.

"I was there until 3 A.M. and nobody did the Twist," the press secretary, Pierre Salinger, told reporters.

Mr. Salinger said he did not know how the report arose that the Twist, an energetic new step, had been danced at the function. *New York Times.*

STERLING IN BLOOM CHRISTMAS PRESENT

The roses that bloom forever, in Tiffany sterling Vermeil. Ten inches high. Full-blown, eighty five dollars. Half open, seventy-five dollars. Rosebud, sixty-five dollars, Prices include federal tax. Ad in *New York Times.*

Last One In Is A . . .

The Robert Kennedys' anniversary party at their Virginia home was one of the most memorable events of the year. One of the highlights occurred when Ted Kennedy leaped fully dressed into the swimming pool, followed by Pierre Salinger and Peter Maas, the magazine and TV writer.

Leonard Lyons in the *New York Post*

communications

Editor, *Mainstream*:

MAY I avail myself of some of your space to re-enter a controversy which I probably started?

In the Sunday *Worker* of March 19 Mike Newberry wrote a completely uncritical review of Irwin Silber's "Civil War Songs," a Folkways record album. My own criticism of the collection appeared in the Sunday *Worker* of April 2. In the September issue of *Mainstream*, Lois Barnes continues the discussion with a review of Mr. Silber's book "Songs of the Civil War," which contains the songs appearing in the record album as well as a great many other Civil War songs. In *Mainstream's* November issue, Mr. Silber refutes Miss Barnes's criticism, and, by inference, my own criticisms also, since in the main Miss Barnes seems to agree with me.

Mr. Silber attacks Miss Barnes's review on the ground that he does not feel, as she does, that Confederate songs should be eliminated. Miss Barnes's opinion on this matter is mine also. Perhaps the inclusion of one or two Confederate songs is permissible in a book for advanced students, to illustrate the sheer viciousness of the pro-slavery cause. Even there, however, the editor, if he is to serve the Negro liberation struggle today — the continuation of the Civil War in another form — should, in my opinion, make clear beyond question his own anti-Confederate point of view. I feel that in a song album for popular consumption the inclusion of Confederate songs is outrageous. Whose cause is served by the perpetuation of a song containing these vicious lines:

> "Three hundred thousand Yankees lie
> stiff in Southern dust;
> We got three hundred thousand
> before they conquered us;
> They died of Southern fever and
> Southern shell and shot;
> I wish it was three millions instead
> of what we got."

To make an analogy with the present day, I do not believe that a collection of the songs of World War II should include — and thus popularize — the anti-Semitic "Horst Wessel Lied."

Mr. Silber remarks: "In a book which attempts to give a picture of the songs of the Civil War — *as they were sung* —it would be unthinkable to censor out materials because the editor does not agree with their viewpoint." (The emphasis is Mr. Silber's.) But why? We censor certain words and phrases out of our language, witten and spoken, because they tend to degrade races and peoples. We fight for the removal from our schools, of text-books which foster chauvinism and racism. Progress requires partisanship. We are for deocracy; we are against fascism. We are for the full equality of the Negro people; we are against everything that hinders the achievement of that equality, including the making of a record album which contains Confederate songs. In his introduction to the album, Mr. Silber says that he is not a "neutral" scholar, but in his piece in the November *Mainstream* he seems to revert in some degree to a position of "neutrality."

Reactionaries in the United States are today making full use of Confederate traditions. Pro-segregationist rallies fly the Confederate flag — literally — and supply their followers with Confederate banners, buttons, caps, and what not. To judge by publishers' lists, Robert E. Lee, not Abraham Lincoln, has become the hero of the Civil War era.

Song became a political issue early in the Civil War when Union General George B. McClellan, whom Lincoln later removed from command, ordered the Hutchinson family of Abolitionist singers evicted from his camp, an act which Karl Marx denounced in the *Vienna Presse* of March 3, 1862.

Behind this whole controversy over a record album and a song book is the incontrovertible fact that although the Civil War is over, the promise of the post-Civil War Constitutional Amendments, the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth, remains largely on paper. Anyone who believes otherwise cannot have spent much time on the Woolworth picket line; he can hardly have followed the columns of the *New York Times,* let alone the Negro press, telling the story of sit-ins, demonstrations, arrests, and beatings which have been a part of the struggle for full equality in the United States. The national Centennial celebration has, so far, been a bust, because the rulers of America are still fighting to hold the Negro in subjection. Dr. Martin Luther King this year appealed to President Kennedy for a new Emancipation Proclamation — one hundred years after the opening of the Civil War!

May I repeat one or two things I wrote in the Sunday *Worker,* since it is unlikely that all your readers saw my letter and still less likely that they remember it in detail? The record collection is a valuable one; it contains many of the fine songs of freedom born of the Civil War. I criticized it on the ground that it contains also several songs like "I'm a Good Old Rebel," songs which are an insult to the Negro people and to the many white fighters for Negro liberation, and an insult to the memory of the Grand Army of the Republic. The recording of these songs today is a continuation of white supremacy and racism. It shows that the United States regards lightly the freedom and dignity of human beings. How deep this trend runs is illustrated by the resurrection — in 1961 — of Confederate songs, even by people who support the fight for Negro rights, but who unconsciously, on occasion, fall into the racist trap. What are "people's songs?" They are the songs of freedom. The songs glorifying the Confederacy are dead. Why resurrect them? One of the outstanding contributions of the Communist Party is the revival and popularization — accomplished also by Negro people's organizations — of the Negro people's culture.

Sir Charles Percy Snow, the British scientist and novelist, in an article entitled "The Moral Un-Neutrality of Science," published in the *New Hungarian Quarterly,* April-June, 1961 argues against "the doctrine of the ethical neutrality of science." He denounces it as "a moral trap." Is this not also true of literature, of art, of music and song, which shape the souls of men?

ELIZABETH LAWSON

books in review

IN THE MIDST OF LIFE by Thomas Bell, Atheneum, 1961, New York, $4.50.

ALL THROUGH 1960 Tom Bell knew he was dying and doubted very much that he would see Christmas. We know this because he kept a journal of his last year, up almost until the very end; and it is this account of his dying which we read now in the short book, *In the Midst of Life,* a unique testament to a man's belief in love and courage in the face of death.

He had wanted to know, when he learned it was fact, the question then arose, what should he do about it? Nowhere is it written how a man should die. "There are as many ways of facing death as there are men. How shall I face mine? With dignity, I hope, and the least trouble and discomfort to those nearest me. And not too afraid."

And so, "with dignity," Tom Bell faced and fought death, in all its meanings, in the months that followed the moment when he knew. "I don't think I am capable of rising to heights of heroism," he says of himself, at the same moment performing a great act of heroism; for he teaches us, in this moving and modest last work, something about the meaning of life. Death had no charms for him. What is so stirring, in fact, in the entire narrative is that we find ourselves constantly in the presence of a healthy, unneurotic mind, poignant only because the battle of consciousness against anonymity, nothingness, is a losing, terribly desperate struggle, with no hope. This is, perhaps, what is most notable about Tom Bell's dying — that he refused to let himself be reduced to "gibbering idiocy," but remained true to himself to the very end.

So the book reflects Tom Bell's life as he lived it in his dying. He cannot free himself of concern for the fate of the world, though his own is already sealed. "Mad as so many of the world's rulers seem to be, I don't think they'll be allowed to start another war. I think they'll be stopped in time — and my guess is that it will be the people of Asia, of the colonial and socialist countries of the world, who will do the stopping. . . ."

Helping to tend a small book and gift

shop with his wife in a small town in California, where he came after leaving New York, he remained concerned about world and local affairs, and he is capable of indignation at the blundering of the engineers who fouled up a river channel clearing job; and wonders about floods "next time when we really have a wet winter." And then he adds, as an afterthought: "But that too will be after my time."

Thomas Bell considered himself a failure as a writer, though he had written at least six full novels, among them the memorable *Out of This Furnace* and *All Brides Are Beautiful,* as well some fine short stories, including *The Man Who Made Good in America,* first published by *Mainsteam.* What he meant by "failure," I suppose, is that he couldn't earn enough money to support himself and his wife — his wife had to work for both of them in his early days and later too; but also, I suppose, his feeling of being pushed aside by a mean-minded and brutal critical dictatorship which could not endure, for a moment, such a modest voice speaking about ordinary but wonderful people. He didn't know how to spit on them, or spill out their entrails, or hang them up by their heels for public view. Read his credo, which he penned at the summing-up moment of his life, and there is no further evidence needed. "I sometimes feel as I contemplate my country and my time, that I am watching a once rich and noble house being looted by its heirs, heirs intent on despoiling it of everything valuable and getting out before the house itself collapses and buries them in ruins.

"So perhaps I should say that what I have in mind is less a new hero for Americans than a new standard of honor, a new ideal: the honesty of the ceative impulse and the integity of the fine mind."

He cannot leave without saying: "I wish . . . to help make America a country, a civilization, that a mature human being can live in without experiencing the recurring spiritual discomfort, verging on nausea, that its present civilization too often induces. . . . For in a society where everything from a pin to a human being has its wholesale and retail price, a society in which one man's misfortune is frequently another man's profit, where honesty is a luxury and integrity a positive handicap and the truth revolutionary — in such a society your dedicated artist-intellectual is far more likely to be regarded (and treated) as a rebel and an outcast than as a custodian of truths or savior of society."

Tom Bell was born in Braddock, Pennsylvania, across the river from my home town, of Slovak immigrant parents. His father, like everybody else's father, worked in the steel mills. Braddock was, and still is, a dreary company town, as all the towns up and down the Monogahela and Allegheny are, and have been for half a century and more. The fortunes of Morgan and Mellon were coined out of the blood and sweat of immigrant workers, who were housed in high-priced shanties, and cheated every day of their lives by those same Mellons, Rockefellers, Fricks, Morgans and Carnegies and the rest of the now-respectable murderers and thieves. Like anybody else from there, Tom Bell could not pass the luxurious Frick gallery here in New York without a bitter pang of memory — for those wonderful art objects inside the marble walls were all bought out of the blood of men like his father. He told that story in *Out Of*

This Furnace. For to those workers, no matter how many museums, art galleries or opera houses they put their names to, they will remain primarily what they were: ruthless exploiters. And art galleries that they finance run with unseen blood: covered with non-objective paintings. . . .

How he ever escaped the fate of the steelworker is a minor miracle of its own; and how, having escaped, he remained true to his origins, to his socialist consciousness, is something to be marveled at, and probably accounts for his "failure" as a writer, since it was in a world alien basically to himself that he had to try to "sell" his true vision of life.

Through it all Bell remained true to his beliefs, and, as he said in the very beginning of his book when he knew what he was facing: "Where others . . . must make their peace with God, I must make mine with myself." He remained a materialist, a Marxist, to the end: and his book is a quiet document of human courage, so rare in this world of complainers and whiners, and so characteristic of Bell's proletarian origins, and just as important, his loyalty to them. How characteristic of him, too, that he should see his last book as way of making a little money for his wife — at work to the end.

PHILLIP BONOSKY

AWAKENED CHINA by Felix Greene, Doubleday, $5.95.

RARE is the book today that attempts to give a reasonable picture of People's China. The subject itself is a red flag which is likely to set all of the China lobby bulls roaring and pawing in every direction. There is even the geater difficulty that in America China has been officially defined as temporarily occupied American real estate, which President Roosevelt somehow "lost" off the islands of Quemoy and Matsu and what is sometimes referred to as Formosa, and sometimes, depending on how "sensitive" the situation is, Taiwan. *There* — surrounded by the United States Seventh Fleet — is real China, we are told, and its democratic head is that — in General Stillwell's words — "peanut," Chiang Kai-shek, and his tender wife whose love of mainland real estate is so profound that she has publicly declared it ought to be freed of the people on it with a few well-tossed A-bombs.

Although it has 650,000,000 people in it, and covers about one-fifth of the world's surface, the United States still does not recognize it: and yet, in spite of that, it goes on growing and living and working and playing a greater and greater role in the affairs of the world. It is impossible to live with it, and impossible to get rid of it. What's to be done?

What Americans know and think of China as of Cuba has never been a matter for themselves to decide. That question was decided for them. Most Americans must by government decree believe that China is one vast commune ant-heap concentration camp, that it is a society regimented from top to bottom, including every detail of home life, from the choice of tooth-brushes to the choice of wives and husbands, that the people are brain-washed on a gigantic scale to hate America, that they are starving to death, that they are about to attack the Soviet Union in a war of ideological hatred, that they work from sun-up to sun-down for a handful of rice, that their children are snatched from their mothers' breasts and sent out to barbed-wire kindergartens . . . and so on and so on. The level between what the Hearst and Luce press feeds the people and what the *N. Y. Times* or *Harpers* feed the intellectuals hardly differs a syllable.

And what is the truth? Well, it's difficult to tell the truth; easy to tell a lie. The liar, by definition, feels no responsibility to tell the truth; he can be bold, he can mix half-truth and quarter-truth, he can invent out of whole cloth, he can "interpret" to his crooked heart's content, and no one will punish him, no boss will rap his knuckles, no Harvard scholar will say *tsk-tsk.* History has yet to show us a case of a man who has made his career lying away his immortal soul, in all things concerning the workingclass, ever being punished for it by his employers or "public opinion." In this war against humanity, every means is right, every stick is useful for beating, and the division of labor is so ramified, departmentalized, sub-divided and expertized that no simple John Smith can ever hope to find his honest way by his own efforts. A man who works all day in a factory or shop cannot hope to beat at his own game an educated hoaxer who spends his life weaving the complicated fraud.

SO when a man comes by who tries, he finds himself up against a formidable task. Felix Greene is that man and he goes to work with a full sense of his burden. "Factual information is hard to come by . . . no resident correspondents . . . to fill in on the background . . . diplomatic corps . . . see less of China . . . And, of course, with statistics you can never win. If you quote them, they will be 'unreliable.' If you do not, your report will not be 'factual' enough. . . ." And then: "There is another reason why China is difficult to write about: the intense partisanship which China evokes, especially among Americans, and the partisanship evoked by America among the Chinese. Out of this mutual distrust has come a tragic and almost total breakdown of communication . . . Nothing today, it seems, can be written about China which is not controversial. Even to *discuss* China seems perverse to some people; and to question our present policies, to analyze the structure of the Chinese government, to try to learn what it is that is moving the Chinese people to such extraordinary effort is, to many, positively subversive. . . ."

So, because he is trying to be honest and to tell the truth, Mr. Greene gives us a picture harassed by that restriction. His picture of China lacks the simple acid color of those who report it in hatred, and instead his colors are mixed, and he does not hesitate to confess that the reality of China finally escapes him, as it must any single man who comes to see it just for a few months. Especilly because that enormous country is in constant dynamic flux and change, without precedent, constantly involved in huge problems that time alone will solve.

Mr. Greene is constantly aware that he is addressing, primarily, an American audience and this hampers him considerably; for he must take time out to simplify and organize his remarks in such a way that the "average" brain-busted American will not be offended, or what is worse, suspect that he is being "propagandized" — than which really nothing *is* worse. Without that choking and crippling distortion his story, I am sure, would have been freer and fuller and even more exciting.

BUT as it is, it is the only book on China, written by an American resident (Mr. Greene is a British subject) with an American point of view in mind, to come our way recently. Mr. Greene takes us through old and new Peking, visits to communes and creches, to factories and mills to prisons, to schools, to old capitalists, to the Yangtze, and caps it with an interview with Chou En-lai, which, by the way, appeared on television both here and abroad. Particularly useful to readers is his chapter entitled "The Chinese Case" in which he puts that case in the words of a hypothetical Chinese. It covers almost every possible issue that has arisen between China and the U.S.A. — from the Chinese attitude toward the question of Taiwan and Tibet to the reason for its entrance into the Korean war (which will surprise many readers). In this book answers, or the reason why there are no answers, to almost every question concerning China, gets its due. No reader can afford to be without it if he wishes to know what China is like today. It is neither a "yellow peril" nor a paradise. It is a "people trying, with great effort, to lift ourselves from a state of poverty and feudalism into a modern nation with equal opportunities for all."

No greater — nor more futile — crime in modern history can exist than the attempt to reduce this nation again to what it once was — a supine country of ignorant people, drugged with opium forced on them by the British, robbed, humiliated, and degraded. To welcome China would mean a return to sense and sanity again. Felix Greene's book goes a long way in that direction, and he deserves great credit for honesty and courage.

PHILLIP BONOSKY

MOTIONS & NOTIONS, Leslie Woolf, Hedley, $1.00. Inferno Press, 704 Market St., San Francisco, Cal.

IT'S a well-known truism that if you can say it in half the words it is twice as good. The Pacific Coast poet, Leslie Woolf Hedley, has achieved this delightful ambition in a 34-page pocket-size booklet that is of more consequence, I believe, than its title indicates, "Motions & Notions."

It consists of 113 numbered paragraphs ranging from short shorts such as "Cowards move faster than events," to an average size of "Every day I warned my fellow-writers that every day neo-fascism was growing in North America was another day too late."

This booklet should have a potential audience of millions because all those who shudder at the word "poetry" will find that Hedley's paragraphs are in prose.

I don't agree with everything Hedley says; I find him obsessed with a discovery that dates back to the First Egyptian Dynasty—that the world of the professional scribes is poison; occasionally his brevity brings him close to triviality; but over-all this book gives a close-up of a sophisticated, contemporary and compassionate mind whose creativity should be known to literate persons.

WALTER LOWENFELS

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