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FEBRUARY 26, 1935

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Masses

75,000 Captive Miners

*First-Hand Report from the
Pennsylvania Coal Fields*

By **AMY SCHECHTER**

The Dickstein Report

AN EDITORIAL

Questions They Ask Me

By JOHN STRACHEY

What the Gold Clause Means

By JOHN IRVING

Letters from America

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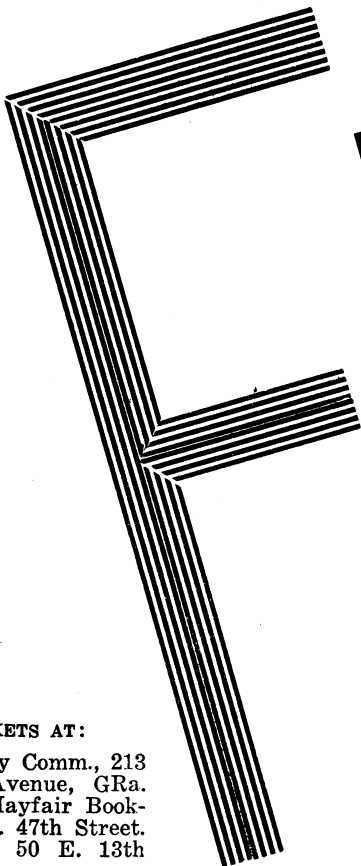
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FEBRUARY 26, 1935

AS WE go to press the newspapers carry the Supreme Court decision in the gold clause case. It is, as the headlines have it, "a complete victory for F. D. R." If we follow the exposition of the economic elements involved in John Irving's article in this issue of *THE NEW MASSES*, it is a complete vindication of this administration's policy of inflation in all its ramifications. The Court rests its legal basis for the decision on the power of Congress under the Constitution "to coin money, regulate the value thereof and of foreign coin." Any prior contract that might tend to circumvent that power, the court holds, is invalid. The notion that the gold clause of a bond obligated the debtor to pay in the same coin at all times, would interfere with the power of Congress to "regulate the value" of that coin. Furthermore, that august body reasoned, it is no longer possible to claim payment in gold coin or bullion since the free circulation of gold coin and bullion was prohibited even before the President repudiated the gold clause of bonds. But while the Court thus gave, to its own satisfaction, ample legal justification for its decision, it sought further strength in the economic emergencies, which in the judgment of Congress compelled the act of repudiation. "Whether the gold clauses do constitute an actual interference with the monetary policy of the Congress in the light of its broad power to determine that policy—depends upon an appraisal of economic conditions and upon determinations of questions of fact" the Court declared. The Court, on that score, conceded the judgment and acts of Congress as final. The "natural forces of supply and demand" may be relied upon to cooperate with Congress to transmute its now confirmed inflationary powers into higher prices for the necessities of life which the American people must purchase.

THE "trial of the century" has at last drawn to its close. Hauptmann has been condemned and the newspapermen, the trained seals, the radio announcers, the camera-men, have packed up their paraphernalia and left Flemington to the bucolic tranquility it enjoyed before it was pitched into a



ITALY FINDS ITS MANCHURIA

William Sanderson

turmoil of journalism six weeks ago. For the past weeks all other news has been crowded off the front pages of the daily press. Turning to the back pages we read of Italy carrying out in Abyssinia an aggression like that of Japan in Manchuria, we read sketchy reports of the Sacramento trials in California, the innumerable bills being passed by frightened state legislatures to repress the Reds, the gold clause gyrations, the auto code, the swing to the right on the part of Roosevelt, whose kitchen cabinet now is evidently composed of Chef Donald Richberg. We read about Huey Long dyeing shirts brown for his fascist movement and provoking the first stages of civil warfare in Louisiana; the breaking off of financial relations with the Soviet Union; the Ward Line disasters and the farcical investigations which followed; plans to militarize this country involving the expenditure of \$400,000,000 to modernize

our national defense. Millions of Americans have been waiting breathlessly for the Hauptmann jury's decision; crowds outside the courthouse howled for a verdict of guilty against the defendant while the news agencies pumped their news to every quarter of the globe.

THE kidnaping and killing of the Lindbergh child is a dramatic demonstration that the major idea fostered by our system is to grab as much money as you can—if you can get away with it. But the death of this child, the son of one of the richest and most famous parents in this country, cannot conceal the fact that the children of the poor are constantly being kidnaped by hunger and poverty. According to the statistics being issued by Grace Abbott, head of the Children's Bureau of the Department of Labor, 6,000,000 children were undernourished in 1930 and in 1933 one-fifth of



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the pre-school and school children showed the effects of malnutrition, inadequate housing, and lack of medical care. More than half a million are barred from education because the selectmen of towns and cities think it wiser to keep up the roads for motorists than to keep up the standard of education. But of course we can hardly expect the newspapers to get excited about these tragedies of millions of children; the papers belong to men who are interested only in those tragedies which bring them and their children a larger ransom each year than even Hauptmann collected.

WITH Washington openly expressing fear that the building workers' strike will lead to a general strike, with Mayor LaGuardia threatening virtual martial law and the Council of Real Estate Associations calling on Governor Lehman for the militia, elevator and service men in more than 1,000 New York City apartments and office buildings walked out at 10:30 on the morning of Feb. 18. Comfortable business men shot up to the high stories confident that their strike-breaking Mayor LaGuardia would see that they go down by the same mechanical means. But when lunch-time came they looked blankly at the silent shafts. It was walk or stay hungry. The fur and garment districts in mid-Manhattan completely stopped, and several large apartment towers were unserved. The building-service workers of New York City have time and again been put off by Mayor LaGuardia's arbitration board while they and their families have been threatened by starvation. When the mayor's board came through with its compulsory arbitration agreement, it was found that the vast majority of the workers were robbed of their demands. According to the statement of the Building Service Employes' Union, leading the strike, "of the 75,000 men prepared to strike in November, about 7,500" or one-tenth will receive the inadequate benefits. Faced with this trickery, more than 10,000 members of Local 32-B, at a meeting Feb. 15, voted unanimously to strike. Henry H. Curran, famed "friend of labor" and head of the arbitrators, pleaded with the local to keep its "word of honor" to abide by the award—a blind agreement the rank and file knew nothing of. Although Local 32-B of the building-service workers is an A. F. of L. union high A.F. of L. officials are supporting the strike-breaking measures of

LaGuardia and Lawrence V. Cummings, chairman of the Realty Advisory Board.

NOT since the San Francisco general strike have such threats been heard from official sources. A telegram from Joseph Goldsmith, realty association head, to Gov. Lehman demanding that state troops be sent to the city, declared in true vigilante language, "walkout of all elevator operators is imminent. Sinister powers at work organizing men against their will. Loss of life and bloodshed inevitable." The New Deal hastily sent its emissary, Edward F. McGrady, Madame Perkins' stooge, to confer with James J. Bambrick, president of the union (whose policies in the past have leaned most suspiciously toward "negotiations.") Mayor LaGuardia issued "Chart No. 2," the police order for 24-hour service, which has not been invoked since the I.R.T. subway strike in 1926, and announced that he would mobilize firemen as well as the police to scab on elevators in buildings higher than six stories. On the pretext that "public health is in danger," the mayor prepared to place the city under dictatorial rule. Strong-arm squads invaded the lobbies of apartment and office buildings. The New York City administration has already shown, as The Daily Worker recently revealed, that it is able to recruit the metropolitan newspaper owners in a strike-breaking drive, as was done in San Francisco last year. . . . The building-service strike is a mass uprising against long accumulated grievances and the rank and file is quite ready to fight unless defeated by the LaGuardia terror and its own untrustworthy leaders. The day after the strike was called spontaneous walkouts tied up many buildings not at first called out. But the union leaders were attempting to call off the strikers in some categories of buildings whose owners joined the "agreement" of last November. The potential force of a general building-service strike is shown by the fact that in Manhattan alone the union has 97,000 members and in the entire city nearly 200,000. Labor unions throughout the country expressed sympathy with the building strike of New York City.

IN California where there is a "red" under every twin bed a fight has been raging around the question of whether John Strachey, distinguished English economist, should be permitted to address the League of Women Voters in San Francisco. The alarm was

sounded as usual by a series of Hearst editorials, and the American Legion, which by some mysterious reasoning controls the Civic War Memorial Auditorium cancelled its contract with the League for use of the auditorium. Owners of private halls, thrown into a fit by the Hearst thunder, also refused to rent. To Mayor Rossi and his henchmen, John Strachey seemed almost as great an English menace as King George was to Mayor Thompson of Chicago some years ago. The League of Women Voters, composed of prominent San Francisco women, kept its head and decided on a referendum vote. The decision was in favor of the lecture by a majority of 32, and a body of leading citizens including members of the State Relief Commission, a director of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, the city's Methodist and Episcopal Bishops and its leading rabbi are sponsoring Strachey's appearance. The incident marks a fundamental rebellion on the part of California's liberals who have hitherto been silent on the vigilante outrages and the frame-up of the Sacramento eighteen. Undoubtedly the tremendous national mass pressure in defense of the Sacramento prisoners has brought California's liberals to life. Dean Grayson N. Ke-fauver, of Stanford University, used the Stanford hour on the National Broadcasting Company station to denounce Hearst's campaign as "part of a fascist movement to crush independence in thinking." Several heads of departments of the University of California in Berkeley, have denounced the anti-Red drive, while Bishop Edward L. Parsons issued the following statement:

The Bill of Rights is increasingly being violated. The ballyhoo of campaigns against Communism . . . is used to crush as subversive all free expression of minority opinion. The vicious criminal syndicalism law is still on our statute books, and no dead letter, as witness the Sacramento trials. The whole movement makes against all our American tradition as well as our constitutional rights. It makes steadily toward some form of fascism.

According to George P. West, Times correspondent, these protests "have elicited wide popular support." The fight for the Sacramento defendants is bringing results but mass pressure must not be relaxed. When law fails to protect workers the protest of millions has been proven again and again to be victorious.

The Dickstein Report

THE McCormack - Dickstein report obliquely titled "The Investigation of Nazi and Other Propaganda," has at last been turned in. Six pages of its entire twenty-four are devoted to Nazi activities while eleven are given over to Communism. The grandiose plan of Wall Street to hoist Gen. Smedley D. Butler up onto a white horse and to send him down to Washington at the head of a fascist army is admitted in the report to be no pipe-dream of a yellow journalist. "There is no question but that these attempts were discussed," the report says, "were planned, and might have been placed in execution when and if the financial backers deemed it expedient." Though this "March to Washington" was given only thirty-seven lines in the report, five full pages were devoted to an inquisition of Earl Browder, Secretary of the Communist Party.

In this age of "totalitarianism" the present administration cannot tolerate a state of affairs which permits the offensive against the Reds to be sporadic, intermittent, regional — waxing in some seasons, waning in others. The McCormack-Dickstein report leaves the reader certain of one fact: the government has taken the initial step in organizing terrorism upon a nation-wide scale against Communists and the entire labor movement. Washington is usurping and coordinating the functions of Hearst, Macfadden, Pelley, Father Coughlin and all the rest of our journalists and statesmen who are busily instructing the people how to goose-step their way into fascism.

The tricks and circumventions employed by the Dickstein Committee in the handling of the report are so trans-

parent that they hardly deserve notice here. It is more than evident that Dickstein and his comrades-at-arms used the alleged purpose of the investigation—the investigation of Nazi activities in this country—solely as a stalking horse when the game they were really out gunning for was the Communist Party of this country. One need only glance at the proportional number of pages in the book granted to the various objects of their inquiry.

Two and a half pages to an introduction.
Six to Nazi activities.

One-half page to two isolated instances of Italian Fascism.

One page to the Butler episode.

One and a half pages to "other organizations" such as Mr. Pelley's Silver Shirts.

One-half page to a patriotic summation.

One-half page to the recommendations.

Eleven to Communism.

For their part in the campaign against the Reds the Committee was granted the sum of \$30,000. The secretaries took down 4,320 pages of testimony at seven public and twenty-four executive hearings. Most of this testimony regarding fascist activities has been suppressed, as John L. Spivak pointed out in THE NEW MASSES last month.

Messrs. McCormack and Dickstein, protesting their lack of "preconceived notions," should be asked several questions: (1) Why did their Committee not investigate and make public the "financial backers" of "one, Gerald C. MacGuire," who, as the report admits, is proved "to have suggested the formation of a fascist army under the leadership of General Butler"? (2) Why did the Committee put this movement with hundreds of millions of dollars behind it on a par with such abortive, two-by-four

outfits as that of the Silver Shirts led by the lunatic William Dudley Pelley, the Fuehrer who "spent seven minutes in eternity"?

A partial answer to these questions may be found in the fact that an honest investigation would have led the Committee right up Wall Street to the House of Morgan and to several other offices nearby. It would have been forced, also, to question the actual rulers of this nation, the men who are ready to throw hundreds of millions of dollars into that fascist movement which will pay them dividends in wealth and power.

Everything in the report is definitely related to the real purpose of the investigation — the offensive against Communism and labor. When the report reaches Communism, it swings into the real business of howling epithets at the Reds. The Communists "foment class hatred!" The Communists "incite class warfare!" Communism is "of foreign nature!" Communism is "directed by an alien organization outside of the United States!" The Communist Party of the United States is "not a political party in the true American sense." The Committee arrived at some of these brilliant conclusions all by its lonesome, but some were inspired by a worthy predecessor, the committee of "our colleague, Mr. Fish of New York."

The Committee, however, was not fumbling around in the dark. There was logic, a method in its madness. Here is the principal recommendation:

That Congress should make it unlawful for any person to advocate changes in a manner that incited to the overthrow of and destruction by force and violence of the government of the United States, or of the form of government guaranteed to the several states by Article IV, Section 4, of the Constitution of the United States.

The burden of the report is that the



EXODUS FROM FLEMINGTON

Communists stand for "force and violence," though these spokesmen well know that our government is supported on bayonets and gas guns. Communists, as anybody who has read their literature can tell you, are firmly opposed to individual terrorism. Their program is to win power by enlisting the majority of the people to challenge and defeat the minority of the people who rule their country today from their offices on Wall and Broad streets. Communists know that no ruling class has ever surrendered without resorting to fiercest battle and utmost violence. The realistic Communists know this violence directed against them cannot be turned aside by soft answers and ballot boxes.

Messrs. Dickstein and McCormack had more up their sleeves several months ago than they finally produced. They had determined to recommend the establishment of a pack of federal police to hound down Communists, militant workers, or, indeed, anyone who dared express his dissatisfaction with the government. They had planned to deprive the Communist Party of the use of the mails. They had charted a schedule of heavy jail sentences and fines for any-

body found conducting revolutionary activities. When, several months ago, they dropped hints that these ultra-reactionary proposals would be recommended, they encountered such a storm of protest that they retreated—at least for the moment.

It would be a dangerous mistake, however, to believe that they and their supporters will let the matter drop. Hunger and poverty, the brutal insanity of our present system, the repressive measures against every working-class movement which the Dickstein Committee is evidently fostering, are building up the revolutionary movement in this country faster than any "imported idea" about the "overthrow of these United States" could possibly attain. The strike wave grows; all strata of the populace are dissatisfied, embittered. Clearly, Roosevelt has embarked upon a policy of terrorism to keep the people subservient to his class. The Dickstein-McCormack report is proof of this. Only a vigilant people, tirelessly combatting the government's plans for repression can check the drive which Wall Street, abetted by Dickstein and politicians like him, has launched.

1933, just before recognition, Roosevelt agreed with the Soviet Foreign Commissar on a basis of principles for extending loans to the Soviet Union after recognition, and agreed also to the demand that if the Soviet Union would negotiate about these debts, the United States would recognize counter-claims for the vast damage to the Soviet Union created by the White Guard armies invading that country with the financial and military backing of the United States.

Hull, however, violated that pledge by refusal to do so, and even put the question of future loans in doubt, although the Soviet Union had agreed to pay \$100,000,000 on agreed terms as soon as the future trade-loan question was settled.

For the United States, the debt-talk cancellations mean throwing away a trade with Soviet Russia which would amount to half a billion to a billion dollars yearly, and the certainty of giving employment to perhaps half a million of America's many millions of unemployed. To the Soviet Union, however, it means increased danger of attack by the most powerful capitalist countries.

It was the growing pressure of the workers that forced Roosevelt to recognize the Soviets, when after sixteen years the United States had treated one-sixth of the globe as non-existent—except when it was possible to slander the Soviets or attack them. It is equally necessary now that the workers defend the Soviet Union. Already there are signs of a spontaneous reaction nationally against the State Department's hostile acts; in New York City it has reached such dimensions that Madison Square Garden has been hired for a protest meeting Monday, Feb. 26. Congressman Ernest Lundeen, sponsor of the Workers' Bill H. R. 2827 and other prominent individuals will speak.

Official Soviet-Baiting

THE United States government makes more and more clear its determination to lend encouragement to Japanese and Nazi German aggression against the Soviet Union. Secretary of State Hull, in a conversation of four and a half minutes, abruptly ended the U. S.-Soviet debt talks. Last week, when the newest organized drive against the Communist Party and all militant labor (native and foreign) was opened with the introduction in Congress of the McCormack-Dickstein report, another phase

of the reactionary anti-Soviet campaign was launched. Representative Short of Missouri demanded that diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union be broken off by the United States.

Secretary Hull assigned as a reason for breaking off the debt talks the refusal of the Soviet Union to agree to American terms regarding the repayment of credits extended to the then non-existing Kerensky "government" to equip counter-revolutionary armies to war on the newly created Soviets. Yet in Roosevelt's talks with Litvinov in



Eugene Chodrow

Limbad



Limbad



What the Gold Clause Means

JOHN IRVING

ON JANUARY 31, 1934, the United States, through an executive order, abrogated the written promise that appears in all government and most private bonds issued before that date, to pay the interest and principal of these obligations in a given amount of gold of a given degree of fineness. Actually, borrowers seldom paid these obligations in gold coin or gold bars, excepting occasionally in meeting international payments. But the number of dollars that came back was legally exchangeable for the same amount of gold dollars in weight as was specified on the face of the bond. For nearly a century, to be exact since 1837, an American dollar has meant the equivalent of a piece of gold 25.8 grains in weight, .9 pure, and the price paid for one ounce of gold of this degree of fineness by the United States mint for purposes of coinage was \$20.67.

On January 31, 1934, for reasons which we will not go into at this moment, the President changed all that.

From that day and until further notice, the American dollar was no longer to be able to purchase 25.8 grains of gold .9 pure, but only 15-5/21 of gold of that purity. In this manner the price of gold was raised by some 69 percent in terms of dollars or, if you wish it, the value of the dollar in terms of gold was lowered by some 41 percent. If the \$1,000 bond one purchased some years earlier were to fall due now, it could no longer buy 25,800 grains of gold as formerly, but only 15,400 grains.

The lender of the \$1,000 is now appealing to the Supreme Court to revalidate the gold clause of his contract; he is asking for his money in the gold equivalents of the pre-January 31, 1934 days. He claims that the President had no right under the Constitution to abrogate the gold clause part of the bond contract. In the light of the explicit provisions in the Constitution bearing on contractual obligations the lender, it would seem, is entirely in the right, and the President was entirely in the wrong. And the Supreme Court must so rule. This is the legal facet of the case.

But when Mr. Roosevelt, a year ago, devaluated the dollar in terms of gold by arbitrarily raising the price of gold, he was not thinking of the political-constitutional implications of his act. The devaluation of the dollar by this means was one of a series of steps he had been taking in order to raise the general price level in this country. This new means would also lower the price of American goods abroad. The latter would increase exports, and it might also, one suspects it was the secret hope of the President's financial advisors, induce the debtor

countries of the United States to begin making payments, now that they would use cheaper American dollars.

In theory, this species of inflation is presumed to operate as follows:

At home, there is created a new equation between prices and commodities. Before devaluation, the equation stood, one basket of commodities=\$1.00; after devaluation, the dollar is worth less, only \$.59 of its former gold self; it contains less gold than formerly; therefore one must pay more of it for the same quantity of commodities, and the one basket of the same commodities should now equal in gold pieces to \$1.69.

As it happens, however, this scheme did not work quite as expected. True, prices have been boosted, but, not so much through the devaluation of the dollar as through the processing tax and the drought, and through other price-fixing devices. Indeed, wholesale prices as measured by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics rose in 1934 only 9 percent and that almost wholly because of a rise of 28 percent in the farm product and food groups. When these commodities are eliminated from the composite, the index remains virtually unchanged.

The experiment chalked up even a greater failure abroad.

The devaluation of the dollar in terms of foreign currencies was to mean that any foreigner who has an ounce of gold can purchase thirty-five American dollars where formerly he could have bought only 20.67 such dollars. With his ounce of gold he can now purchase 69 percent more of American goods than formerly. But he also has to pay for these goods, and this, as is the law of international trade, he would attempt to do with the goods of his own country. These goods in America would fetch a pretty good price, being that prices in America have risen at the same time that in terms of foreign currencies they have cheapened.

All this would be true provided international trade flowed freely.

But this, as every one knows, is not the case. In the way of this free exchange of international commerce, stand the American tariffs. The foreigner cannot pay freely with the goods of his own country for his purchases in the United States. He must therefore pay mainly by the only other means available, namely with gold. And during the calendar year, 1934, foreigners have shipped to America, to balance their trade with us, over one billion dollars in gold. But this threatened to denude these other countries of their gold supply; and so they put up tariffs and import quotas. The result was that the foreign trade of the United States in 1934, that is during the first year of the devalu-

ated dollar, gained but little in terms of physical volume over the preceding year. And the debtor countries failed to pay in depreciated dollars as they formerly failed to pay in good dollars.

It cannot be said, however, that a Supreme Court ruling "against" the government, would merely restore the *status quo ante*; that we should merely get back to where we were before the "experiment." This is no longer possible. In the first place, in the course of this "experiment" the government created out of thin air, so to speak, by merely saying that the dollar of yesterday was worth \$1.69 today, a fund of \$2,792,859,126, which it promptly pocketed as its "profit" from the act. This sum of nearly three billion dollars would vanish in the face of an adverse decision as mysteriously as the way it was created. Also, in the case of an adverse decision, the government debt, through its own act of raising the price of gold from \$20.67 per ounce to \$35 an ounce, would automatically increase 69 percent.

And this automatic increase in the debt burden to the extent of 69 percent, also applies of course to private debtors, corporation, etc., and to the debts, government and private, owed us abroad.

A decision to reinstate the gold clause into the old contracts might precipitate a panic among the debtor class, including our own government, because payment would have to be made in gold which now is worth 69 percent more in dollars than it was worth a year ago. On the other hand, those holding bonds which have been issued since January 31, 1934 and therefore have no promises to pay in gold, would become heavy losers, because their holdings would depreciate in value. They would be thrown on the market at sacrifice prices because they would be worth 41 percent less in terms of gold. Similarly, confusing effects and counter-currents would ensue in the shares, commodities markets, and general financial relations.

Thus, a decision "against" the government might become a cause for precipitating the country into a worse financial panic than that when the banks were all closed in March, 1933. On the other hand, a decision for the government must violate the very foundation of capitalism, the sanctity of the contract. From the looks of things, the decision must be equivocal. At the same time that the court will uphold the sanctity of the contract, it will probably also give the government new broad powers to manipulate the currency of the realm. And this will give Roosevelt legitimized grounds for that expansion of currency and inflation to which all his attempts at "recovery" inevitably are driving him.

75,000 Captive Miners

First Hand Report from the Pennsylvania Coalfields

AMY SCHECHTER

DECEMBER FIRST is the opening of the deer-hunting season in Western Pennsylvania. Deputies of the Monessen Coal and Coke Company, a Mellon mine in Fayette County, came into the company patch on December first to make the third attempt in three months to evict young Joe Mullen, president of the United Mine Workers' of America local at the Alicia mine, and found a big crowd of miners gathered around the house where Joe lived with his parents. Many of the miners carried rifles. "We thought we might get a buck," one of them remarked to the deputies. For the third time the eviction was "postponed."

The attempt to evict Joe Mullen was the aftermath of a strike at the Alicia mine, primarily directed against discrimination toward union miners in the assignment of work; an episode in the struggle against the encroachments of company unionism in the Western Pennsylvania coalfields that has been going on unceasingly since the united efforts of Steel Trust gunmen, President Roosevelt, Governor Pinchot, the Governor's liberal wife, and John L. Lewis drove the men of the captive mines back to work under the company union "Captive Mine Agreement" at the close of the 1933 strikes.

The Alicia miners had brought their case before the Joint Committee of Captive and Commercial Mines, the leading committee of Fayette County rank-and-file miners, and the Fayette County Unemployed Councils. A mobilization call had gone out to the mining camps and seven or eight locals at mines in a fifty-mile radius had elected delegations, arranged dances and entertainments to raise funds. They then sent the delegations over to the Alicia mine in cars and trucks to halt the eviction.

Fayette County, lying between the Pittsburgh area and West Virginia border, takes in the Connellsville coke regions, feudal domain of the H. C. Frick Coal and Coke Company, United States Steel Corporation subsidiary. The majority of the captive mines of Western Pennsylvania, i.e., mines owned by the steel corporations and operating primarily as a source of fuel supply for their steel mills, are concentrated in Fayette County. A number belonging to Bethlehem Steel, Republic Steel, Jones and Laughlin, etc., are also scattered among the commercial mines in the Pittsburgh area.

The captive mines were the storm center of the two strikes of the 100,000 Western Pennsylvania miners in 1933, for union recognition and union standards. The operators

feared the development of a general strike in coal and steel. They crushed the movement by the first full-strength mobilization of the newly set-up N.R.A. strike-breaking machinery. Today, after a year's experience of company-union operation under the Captive Mine Agreement handed down from Washington with the personal seal of Roosevelt's approval it seems likely that the captive mines will be the center of struggle in the Pennsylvania soft coal region again this spring.

There are several reasons, or sets of related reasons for this perspective. First, because of the existence of company union or "Brotherhood" locals side by side with the United Mine Workers' of America locals. These exist in each captive mine except where union men have succeeded in completely ridding the mine of the Brotherhood. The Brotherhoods were provided for in the Captive Mine Agreement, with the connivance of the U.M.W. of A. machine. Another factor is the violence which the steel corporations are using to drive the union men over into the Brotherhoods or out of the mines; the resulting clashes and crescendo of struggle. Second, because the captive mines are not isolated, but act as centers from which the poison of company unionism drains into all parts of the coal fields, thus constituting the main menace for every miner in Western Pennsylvania, in the closed-shop union commercial mines, as well as the captive mines. Finally, because of the strategic position occupied by the captive mines as sources of fuel for the steel mills, making the captive miners the chief link connecting the miners' and

steel-workers' struggle; a fact illustrated in the recent historic conference held in Pittsburgh, February 3, to plan joint organization and action in coal and steel, where delegates from the mines owned by the steel corporations played a leading role.

The Frick Company began setting up its company unions during the early part of 1933, as soon as the powerful new swing toward organization became evident in the territory which the Steel Trust, through the perfection of its feudal company regime, the efficiency of its gunmen, and the dependability of John L. Lewis in strangling organization at its inception, had been able to keep non-union since the old Knights of Labor days. The other steel corporations followed suit.

The Frick Company called its outfit the "Miners' Independent Brotherhood." Republic Steel came out with a "Workmans' Brotherhood," with a nice blue and red button with two clasped hands; Bethlehem Steel with an "Employee Representation Plan," and so on. Mine foremen or other petty company officials were usually put in as president.

The recently published report of the Pinchot Commission on "Special Policing in Industry," which made a special study of Frick mining towns, trustingly quotes the President of Frick's "Miners' Independent Brotherhood," Alfred Engell, in reference to the objective of his organization: "Alfred Engell told us that the slogan of the Brotherhood was 'Peace, Cooperation and Work,' states the report, "and that they disapproved of strikes except as a last resort."



Philip Boisman

In the interests of this "Peace," the report further reveals, the Frick Company maintains a private army of over 300 deputies, increased as necessity arises, by half the number, again, of what the company describes as "Roving Deputies," who are "armed, but not uniformed, and traveled in groups of four and five."

The Pinchot Commission explains how the Frick Company solved its problem in the 1933 strike: "Company deputies are commissioned by the sheriff but are uniformed, armed, paid and directed by the employer on whose property they work. When Governor Pinchot revoked all the Coal and Iron Police commissions on June 30, 1931, the Frick Company and some others procured for their private police commissions as special deputy sheriffs."

The functioning of these special deputies, as well as the functioning of the Frick courts, is illustrated by the testimony of the miners before the Commission, testimony borne out by any number of statements heard in Frick territory. This 1933 strike incident is typical:

"At Rowes Run . . . a group of miners were picketing the highway near the Colonial No. 3 mine of the Frick Company. Two company deputies in an automobile were stopped by dipping an American flag across the road. When the pickets saw that the occupants of the car were company deputies the cry of "Yellow Dog" was raised. As the car went on at considerable speed one of the deputies fired a number of revolver shots, killing one picket and crippling another for life. The deputies say that the pickets threw stones at their car. The pickets say that the shooting was entirely unprovoked except by the calling of names. *The deputies were exonerated at the coroner's inquest.*"

This is the atmosphere in which the "free, impartially conducted" Federal Labor Board elections were held in the captive mines.

Elections were guaranteed for every captive mine ten days after the return to work; but were held up for weeks, in some cases for months, in order to give the companies time to lay off active union elements and fill up the mines with picked company men.

Martin Ryan, the big fighting Irishman, who led the Fayette County miners in the 1933 strike, told me how these elections were conducted at Grindstone, where fighting was sharpest in 1933 and where Ryan is today president of the black-listed U.M.W. of A. local. In the course of negotiations in the strike settlement Ryan was to some extent influenced by the demagoguery of Roosevelt who sent for him as strike leader and organizer of the march of Frick miners on the key plants of the Steel Trust at Clairton, in the Monongahela Valley, for personal discussion of the situation when every effort was being made to head off a general strike in coal and steel. Being essentially honest and a fighter, Martin Ryan learned the lessons of the strike betrayal, and today is an outstanding leader of the rank and file in Frick territory.



Philip Reisman

Frick terror forced the Grindstone miners to organize secretly, Ryan says. They met up in the hills above the mine. The company leased all the land in the neighborhood to stop the meetings, but the union men succeeded in signing up over 500 of the 687 at the mine. Before election day, however, the Frick Company filled up the mine with specially imported men, and around 900 instead of 687 votes were cast. Add intimidation and tampering with the ballots, and you have "the union of the miners' choice."

In those mines where the steel corporations were compelled to admit a majority for the U.M.W. of A., Lewis again saved the day for the Steel Trust. A system of "individual recognition" was put across, (unique in union history), which substitutes for recognition of the elected organs of the miners, recognition of the individual John L. Lewis. A handful of other machine men, designated by the companies and Lewis, purely as individuals, are empowered to represent the union membership of these "union" captive mines in all negotiations, without the latter having voice in their election, or power of recall.

In effect the one thing this recognition admits is the position of John L. Lewis as agent of the Steel Trust in the coal fields. It is one of the many recent steps toward fascist absorption of the U.M.W. of A. bureaucracy into the apparatus of capitalism already expressed in the appointment of John L. Lewis to the Bituminous Coal Board; the appointment of Lewis as United States representative to the Geneva International Labor Office; the election of Thomas Kennedy, Secretary-Treasurer of the U.M.W. of A., as Lieutenant Governor of the State of Pennsylvania (the German vice-consul was the leading speaker at a meeting of the German-American Union in Pittsburgh which endorsed Kennedy's candidacy), and his retention of his job—and its \$9,000 salary—in the miners' union while occupying his present post; the removal of U.M.W. of A. headquarters from Indianapolis, near the coal fields, to Washington, D. C.; and Lewis'

line-up with Hearst's anti-labor committee.

Frick violence against union men surged up to its highest point during the intensive back-to-work drive at the end of the last strike, when deputies and "Brotherhoods" shot at men, women and children indiscriminately, carried on wholesale bombing of active unionists' houses, and every man going on the picket line in Frick territory took his life in his hands. Today with the rank-and-file movement developing rapidly in the coke regions, and the organized fighting front of the miners growing in strength, company gunmen avoid clashes with large bodies of miners. For instance, when deputies were assigned to break the picket line of the 700 miners striking for the fourth time at the Isabella, Frick-controlled mine, last June for a closed shop and for the complete exclusion of the Brotherhoods, thirteen of the deputies, having had previous experience with these same Isabella miners, refused duty and handed in their badges.

The attacks on the union miners continue, however, whenever deputies, Brotherhoods, or the members of the Ku Klux Klan, the development of which is being encouraged by the steel corporations, and which merges into the Brotherhoods, can put over the attack without fear of encountering the miners in numbers. They waylay and slug union men when they catch them alone, sometimes union women; burn crosses near union miners' houses, and take potshots at their houses; dynamite their porches, etc.

Recently I saw the Steel Trust paternalism in action. The Frick company did, it is true, hand out a ration nicely calculated to keep its jobless employes this side of death from starvation, up until the time that the union miners organized the Fayette County Unemployed Councils and forced through county relief. By handing out these Frick Baskets, as the miners called them, and permitting the unemployed to stay on in the company houses, the company succeeded in keeping a trained and stable traditionally non-union labor force on tap in its territory, and

in doing this, as will be seen, at an actual profit.

This is how it works. The company began deducting back rent, which sometimes ran into three or four hundred dollars from each miner's pay as soon as he got back to work. Also the cost of the Frick Baskets, at fancy company-store prices. Deductions from each fortnightly pay-check thus include: two-weeks' current rent, at least two weeks' back rent; powder and caps, lamp, check-off for doctor (all hospital care and confinements extra); at some mines, blacksmith, and insurance; in the mines where there is a union local, check-off for union dues (not turned over to the local, but sent direct to the district office of the U.M.W. of A. by the company). Add to this coal at around \$3 a ton (the company shacks take a lot of heating in the frigid weather) and figure out for yourself just what the Frick miner, getting one to three days a week average, if he is a union man, or four to five days if he is a company union man, has left to feed his family on.

The Frick Company has the following magnanimous solution. When a miner's entire earnings disappear in these deductions the company may grant him a food allowance—at its discretion—not in cash, of course, but in groceries at the company store. The allowance amounts to 50 cents a day for a small family. Seventy-five cents a day for a medium-sized family (miners told me of families of nine included in this category); and \$1 for a large family. The active union man has little chance of getting these benefits. As one of them put it, "If you're a pretty good sucker they'll give you 75 cents a day; if you're a good union man they'll give you a goose-egg."

Today throughout the captive mines the union men are passing to the offensive in the struggle against the companies and their Brotherhoods. In many mines particularly obnoxious company stool-pigeon types have been forced out of the mines. In some cases the union men have forced the removal of the whole Brotherhood set-up. Even more important, they are working successfully to win over the honest but misled elements who had drifted into the Brotherhoods.

The nucleus of the Brotherhood at any mine consists of petty mine officials, professional gunmen and stool-pigeons, and that breed known to the miners as born scabs or company suckers. But a section of the membership is necessarily composed of miners who are not scab elements, but who, for one reason or another were unable to withstand the pressure brought by the company. Especially in the coke regions, many are in the Brotherhoods who arrived at indifference through bewilderment and bitterness following the 1933 repetition of the 1922 sell-out, when after the Fayette County miners had come into the U.M.W. of A. 100 percent, braved the Steel Trust terror and fought side by side with the Pittsburgh District union men for half a year, Lewis signed agree-

ments for the union fields and left the coke regions out. In other words the majority of the miners in company unions today were driven into them by the U.M.W. of A. bureaucracy.

The miners of the old union districts like the Pittsburgh District have a fighting devotion to the union as an entity, quite independent of the circumstance of machine control. This devotion was tested in a hundred Valley Forges where union men have starved and frozen through the bitter Allegheny winters in patched-up tents and flimsy barracks and watched their children starve, and faced the bullets of gunmen and guardsmen on a hundred picket lines in the struggle for the union.

To make a distinction between union and union machine is more difficult for the men of non-union territory who are not heirs to the heroic tradition of the union miners. But the existence of the rank and file challenging the Lewis clique control from inside the union, and the clear-cut fighting rank-and-file program of struggle and honest leadership, is clarifying the situation today. And today in increasing numbers Brotherhood members are coming back into the union.

The February 3 Steel-Coal Conference marked a new stage in the rank-and-file movement in the coal fields. In connection with the conference, special sessions were held of the mining delegates, who represented a hundred locals from six U.M.W. of A. districts in Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia. The rank and file movement had been growing, locally, as the men cleaned up in mine after mine. The February 3 mining conferences laid plans for a coordinated struggle in the various districts for the rank-and-file demands on a district and national scale in connection with the 1935 wage agreement, effective April 1. This is being drawn up in secret sessions of Lewis' Scale Committee with the coal operators. It is the focal point of rank-and-file struggle today, with strike around April 1 to enforce the rank-and-file demands as a likely perspective.

There is, of course, no separation of the demands for organization of the rank and file in the captive and the commercial mines (those producing for the market). The miners regard the isolation of the captive mines in 1933, and the separate Captive Mine Agreement, as one of the major crimes perpetrated by Lewis; with this separation of mine from mine in the same district (frequently with only a couple of miles between them), as the logical conclusion of the splitting policy which began with the abandoning of national strikes and national agreements, the separation of north from south, of anthracite from bituminous regions, district from district, basically responsible for reducing the U.M.W. of A. from the largest and most powerful union in the United States—second largest in the world—the "one big union" in the mining industry, to the wreck of today, one of some eight or nine mine-workers' unions in this country.

The miners' conference also planned the next steps in the fight to break the stranglehold of the Lewis clique and free the union for action in the coming showdown with the coal operators. Particularly important for the coke-region miners in this connection is the fight for autonomy of the provisional districts of the U.M.W. of A. By autonomy the union gives the miners the right of every district to elect its own district officers, a right which, at the present time, only some five, or perhaps six of the thirty U.M.W. of A. districts possess. In all others known as provisional districts, including some of the oldest like Central Pennsylvania, East Ohio and Illinois, with a century record of union organization and struggle, Lewis and his International Executive Board appoint all district officials from above.

In the elective districts, of which the Pittsburgh District is one, theoretically the membership has the right to elect its own officials. In practice, however, through use of blue-sky locals, ballot-box stuffing, and half-a-dozen assorted methods of stealing and falsifying the vote, the machine systematically keeps out of office the men elected by the union membership. In the December 11 elections held in the Pittsburgh District, for example, the Rank and File Committees in the locals carefully triple-checked the vote, which gave a clear two-to-one majority; but so far none of their elected candidates has been seated.

The February 3 conference showed the miners in favor of acting, and acting soon. All through the coal fields they see conditions sinking to captive union level. Company unionism is a growing threat in the commercial as well as the captive mines. The 1934 wage agreement for the Western Pennsylvania commercial mines, the model for the agreement now being drawn up, embodies all the provisions of the Bituminous Coal Code against which the Pennsylvania miners struck in 1933, and while formally recognizing the union, is basically an open shop, company-union agreement. As the blond young Pit Committeeman from Russelton, Ted Gall, put it, in his outstanding speech at the conference: "What the hell do we need signing up an agreement for an open shop—we had an open shop before. . . ."

The no-strike clause in the 1934 agreement outlawed all strikes and empowered the company to levy a fine of a dollar a day on every striking miner (\$2 in West Virginia) making a farce of the gain in rates the miners won over the extreme low of the period of 1928-33 when the union in Pennsylvania was disbanded. The no-strike and the hiring and firing clauses leave the coal operators a free hand to rid the mines of active union men, and to push speed-up to the limit. Speed-up in a coal mine means death, especially under conditions of mechanized mining. And mechanized mining is going ahead at a constantly increasing rate as a part of the process of concentration in mining characteristic of the present period.

Miners say that in union mines, "operators openly laugh at the closed shop," today. While district and national officials zealously support the companies in enforcing the no-strike clause, the clause on hiring and firing, etc., to the point of withdrawing the charters from locals that struck in defiance of the agreement, the terms of contracts on ratings, etc., are carried through only when there are strong rank and file local officials and Pit Committees at a mine, backed by a fighting membership. And even then the gains of the struggle are frequently annulled by a deal between district officials and mine management.

Because of this situation earnings in many mines fall far below union standards. At the big Pittsburgh Coal Company mine, Montour 10, near Pittsburgh, miners told me of scores of cases of men in this "union" mine unable to make over a dollar a day, because of unpaid deadwork—shoveling slate, bailing water, shortage of mine cars, etc., especially the active union men. Objecting, a number were told, "Take your damned tools and get to hell out of here if you don't like it." District officials backed the company, "because the company has the right to lay you off if it wants to; that's the agreement."

The miners in Western Pennsylvania see their conditions rapidly falling to the level of 1927-33 when the union was disbanded,

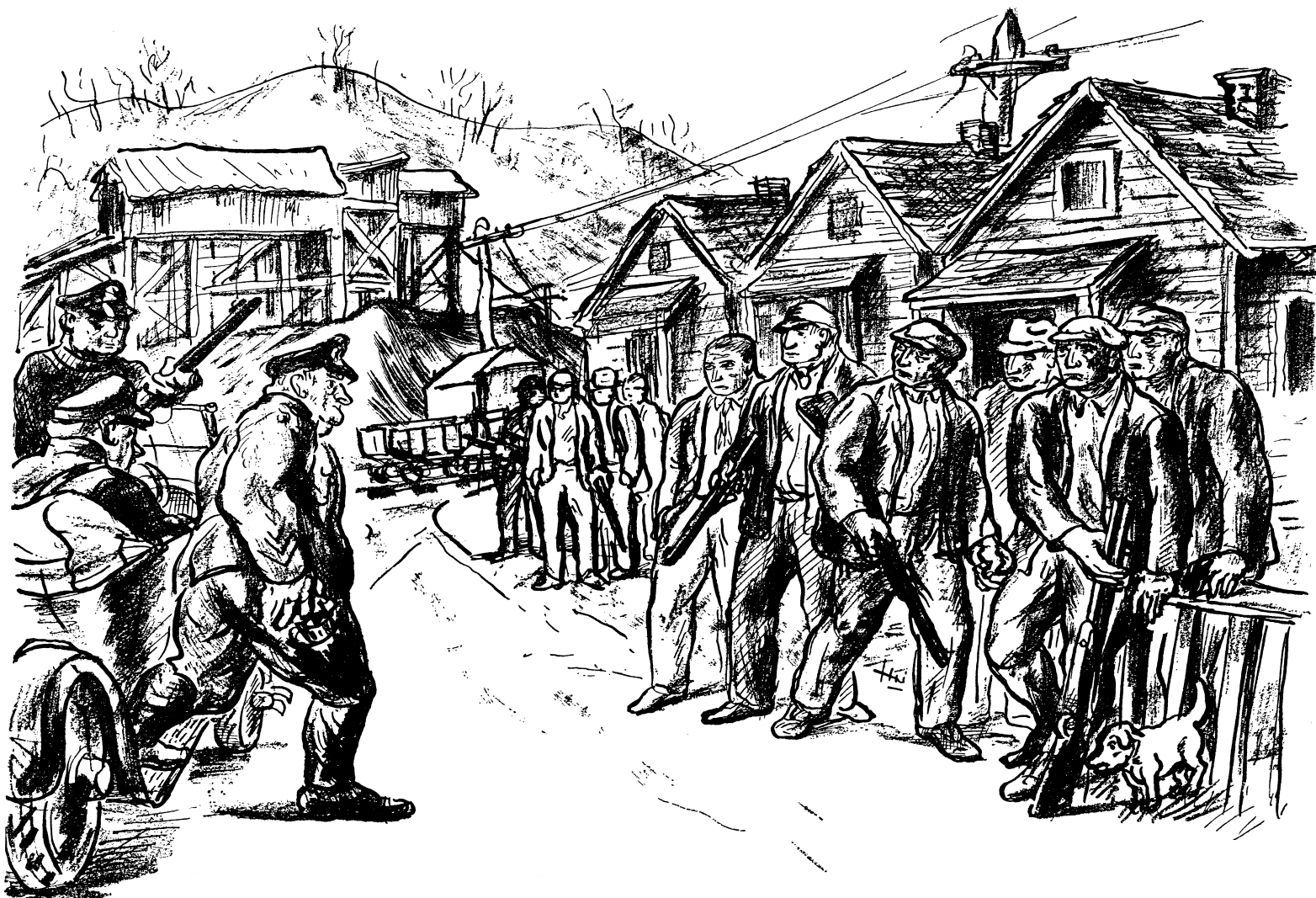
and miners lived through a hell of low pay, eleven and twelve-hour shifts after thirty-five years of the eight-hour day; and the deep humiliation of men with the decade-long Pennsylvania union tradition back of them forced to work as non-union men. The bare figures of a recent report of the U. S. Department of Labor indicate with sharp precision what happened to the bituminous miners in those years: earnings per hour for miners and loaders dropped 42.5 percent from 1929-33; half-monthly earnings dropped 54.7 percent. The hand-loaders "the most important occupation in point of numbers . . . earned an average of \$31.40 in half a month . . . \$14.43 in one week; \$4.49 per day, and 56.1 cents per hour in 1931 . . . and \$20.58 in half a month, \$9.78 in one week, \$2.94 per day, and 36.5 cents per hour . . . in 1933."

The Lewis machine becomes increasingly violent in its denunciation of the rank-and-file movement as it threatens to become the dominant force in the coal fields. The Communist miners, and there are a steadily increasing number, of course come in for the sharpest attack, but the Red Scare is not working so well any more in the mining camps. Several months ago Green's letter demanding the expulsion of all Communists came to the U.M.W. of A. locals. Some Lewis locals tried to put through the expulsions, but not with any success. A num-

ber of locals returned the letter with protests attached. Locals continue to retain in office, and to elect to office, men who are known as Communists—and known as fighters.

The authority of the Communist Party is growing as the dreams of the honeymoon days of the N.R.A. fade, and the miners see that the Communists told the truth about the New Deal, and are telling the truth today about the way out. The way the miners and the steel workers are coming to feel about the Reds is summed up in the closing speech of Ted Gall of Russelton at the February 3 conference.

"We are labeled Communists and Bolsheviks. I've been hardened to these names. I'm not frightened any more by these names. Today we laid the corner-stone of unity between coal and steel. . . . We must prepare for April 1 . . . it is worth while to sacrifice our lives for the demands of the working-class. . . . Soon my children will grow up. They will have to go down to the mill and the pit. What will they find? What are we preparing for them? We don't want any more pie in the sky, we want a decent living today, we want more of the good things of life! . . . They say we are Communists. If to demand social insurance, to demand equality of workers, black and white; to demand a decent wage means to be a Communist, then, by God, I must be a Communist too."



Philip Reisman

Notes from the Road

JOHN STRACHEY

CHICAGO.

THE experiences of a Communist drummer—for that is what I am at the moment, peddling Marxism instead of pink pills—have their humorous side.

The reactions of the predominantly middle-class audiences to whom I speak, as they manifest themselves at question time, are various and peculiar. Now let me say at the outset that, on the whole, the American middle and professional classes appear to me to be thinking far more earnestly and straightforwardly about the crisis of their system than are the corresponding classes in Great Britain.

Like every lecturer, however, I do get a certain number of the following rather distressing type of question. One lectures for an hour as clearly as one possibly can on a single proposition—for instance, that two plus two makes four. After demonstrating and illustrating this proposition in all the ways which one can possibly think of, one sits down. Polite, or even warm, applause ensues. The chairman asks for questions. A gentleman with a slightly worried expression on his face gets up. "I would like to ask the lecturer the first question," he says. "Now what is the lecturer's view on the question of whether two plus two equals four?" Such questions are undeniably saddening; but one should not, I think, be unduly distressed even by them. If the proposition which one is attempting to demonstrate is for example, the proposition that the reform of the capitalist system is an inherent impossibility, this type of question shows that one has raised in the listener's mind a vague suspicion that this proposition exists.

THE INVERSE RATIO

Another impression which my present tour re-enforces in my mind is that Americans are accustomed greatly to exaggerate the territorial differences of their country. I cannot detect any particular difference between the type of question which I am being asked in the Middle West and the type which was asked me in the East. I believe that so far as the cities are concerned, at any rate, the state of mind of the American middle and professional classes as far west as Chicago, at any rate, is almost perfectly homogeneous. What I notice is not a geographical differentiation, but a class differentiation. Within certain limits, my audiences vary in their class composition. Some of them are predominantly professional and lower middle class, with a sprinkling of workers. Some, on the contrary, are composed predominantly of upper middle class and high capitalist elements. And the standard of their political literacy, and of their general intelligence, seems to me to vary in inverse ratio to their incomes.

I was asked, in a city that shall be name-

less, a perfect example of the type of question which sometimes comes to me from the richer audiences. After I sat down there was a prolonged, hushed, pause. At last a lady, who, I was afterward assured, held one of the highest social and financial positions in the town, rose and said, "But, Mr. Strachey, what would happen to us who have only the interest on our investments to live on?" "Madam," I replied, "I am compelled to break the frightful news to you that you might have to do some work."

CANADA

One geographical differentiation which I do notice is that between Canada and the United States. But this is basically, it seems to me, a cultural differentiation. There is undeniably something subtly different in the instinctive approach to political and economic problems made by a Canadian audience. It really does seem to an Englishman that the Canadian frame of mind consists of some queer blend between the British and the American. I do not pretend to be able to define the difference clearly, but perhaps I can hint at it by saying that it feels to me as if Canada was more fertile soil for reformism than is the United States. This is not to say that Canada is doomed to go through the long, futile and disastrous reformist phase that we have experienced in Britain.

It is quite possible—indeed, I think it is probable—that the Canadian Cooperative Federation will be unable to develop into a full-blown social democratic party, owing to the swiftness with which economic events are forcing the Dominion along. Incidentally, what an extraordinary monument to the truth of the Marxist critique of capitalism is today afforded by the plight of the Dominion of Canada. It is almost impossible to remember that five brief years ago we were solemnly told that Marxism could have no application to the New World. Here is a country in what should be the early vigor of its capitalist development, with only ten million inhabitants, endowed with high technical efficiency, and spread over a vast area incomparably rich in natural resources. Yet, already capitalism has tied up this population in such a way that it is impotent to feed, clothe or house itself on any decent standard of life.

Capitalism, developing in Canada with incredible swiftness into its most monopolistic stage, has so trussed up the people of the Dominion that it holds a quarter of them permanently unemployed. Never, surely, has the law of the concentration of capital, the spiralling of the system into a great, central, consolidated monopoly, operated with the swiftness which it has in Canada. Never have all the contradictions of the system come to a head so rapidly. Never has the contrast be-

tween what the condition of people might be if they operated their natural resources for use and not for profit, and what they are under capitalism, been so tragically sharp as they are in Canada today.

COUGHLIN AND LONG

To return to the United States. The bulk of the questions which I get from American middle-class audiences are anything but foolish or absurd. On the contrary, they are the obvious, necessary questions which any intelligent man or woman, beginning to think out the causes of their troubles for themselves, must ask. They deal with such questions as social incentive under capitalism and Communism, with the problem of how the transition from the one system to the other can be effected, and with the nature of fascism.

It is a great privilege to me to be able to discuss these questions with American audiences. On this last question of fascism, I observe a sharp change since my tour here in 1933. It is hardly too much to say that at that time if one described Father Coughlin as a Fascist, no one knew what one meant. If one does so today, everyone knows what one means. I fancy that that egregious demagogue, intoxicated by his own rhetoric, has moved to the right rather more rapidly than he could afford to do. His World Court exploits exposed the real nature of his propaganda to some extent, at any rate. People no longer find it incredible when one classes him, unhesitatingly, with the forces of the right. This is not to under-estimate the enormous danger which Father Coughlin represents. His influence amongst millions of people, both working and middle class, who do not come to lectures, who have hardly begun to think at all politically, is no doubt still growing. But it is something, that he is beginning to expose himself to the thinking minority. It is an inescapable duty to expose the real nature of his propaganda to the whole nation.

If many Americans are "getting on to" Father Coughlin, the same can not be said about Senator Long. It seems to me that most Americans still grossly under-estimate the potential power of Long. The Senator does not seem, as yet at any rate, to have made the same mistake as the priest. He is still, as far as appearances go, well to the left; and in this, of course, lies the greatest danger. For however much Senator Long appears now and for some time to come to champion the many against the few, there can be no doubt at all that it will be the interests of the few against the many that he will finally espouse.

FERMENTATION

Generally, then, my impression is that political fermentation among the American middle and professional classes goes on, and has considerably deepened since I was here in 1933. The Communist Party has enormous opportunities in front of it; but it will need the most consummate political skill to seize those opportunities to the full.

Opium—For the People

HAROLD WARD

BY ONE of those good intentions with which it is steadily paving the road to a consummate imperialist hell, the League of Nations decided, in 1931, to "control"—in fact utterly to destroy—the illicit traffic in narcotic drugs. Thus, following the time-honored precedent of its numerous "disarmament" Conferences, and with the moral support of forty-four signatory Powers, another colossal world evil was corrected.

Very fine. Everything, once more, was for the best in the best of all possible worlds.

In May, 1934, a most disconcerting report was submitted to the Opium Consultative Commission of the League. This Report, prepared by Stuart Fuller (U.S.), C. P. Sharman (Canada), and Russell Pasha (Egypt), showed, beyond the possibility of doubt, that the fascist government of Bulgaria is the center of an illicit drug trade reaching to every point of the world—including, of course, the viciously exploited Chinese market. Specifically: There are in Bulgaria not fewer than ten secret laboratories and plants engaged in the production of heroin, an opium derivative eight times more potent than morphine, whose medicinal value has been sharply questioned by authorities. Most of these plants were transferred from Turkey when, in 1932, Kemal Pasha got tired of bootleg narcotics; one of the proprietors is a former Bulgarian police chief and another a former health officer of the same government; a third is the notorious international smuggler, Fethy Bey, who might be described as the Zaharoff of the Opium International. Financial aid has been granted to one producer by no less respectable an institution than the Bank of Macedonia.

The report disclosed that the aggregate annual production of these ten known plants is three tons of heroin: *twice the 1934 estimate of the world's legitimate needs* and sufficient, according to the indignant Portuguese delegate, Dr. Augusto de Vasconcellos, to kill three million men. That these figures are correct appears from the sales in Bulgaria of an industrial chemical known as "acetic anhydride." The only substances in the manufacture of which this chemical is now used are aspirin, dyestuffs, rayon—and heroin. But Bulgaria has no plants for the making of the first three: yet her imports of acetic anhydride rose from 70 kilograms (a kilogram is 2.2 pounds) in 1930 to 6,000 kilograms—over 6 tons—in 1933: sufficient to yield, at full capacity, a quantity of heroin four times the world's annual needs.

As for raw opium, Bulgaria is reliably known to have increased her production from about five tons in 1931 to 80 tons in 1933: one-fifth of the estimated world needs for the

King of Narcotics. But this figure is exceeded by Yugoslavia, whose opium production reached, in 1928, more than 200 tons; in the same year British India yielded nearly 300,000 kilograms, and Japan had increased the area under poppy cultivation from 740 hectares in 1923 to 1,520 hectares (1 hectare is 2.47 acres), resulting in a 1928 opium yield of nearly 14,000 kilograms—a 400-percent increase over that of 1923. Furthermore, in 1933 a Japanese "trade mission" to Ethiopia, in addition to securing from Ras Tafari the right to grow cotton on 1,600,000 acres of land, obtained also for Japan the *exclusive* right to cultivate the opium poppy in that kingdom. This was two years after the 1931 Opium Convention—from which, by the way, the signature of Japan is conspicuously absent.

This fact is merely another proof that the Opium Problem is the problem of the Far East. In view of the recent Japanese advances into Jehol and the Chahar region of Inner Mongolia, it is interesting to note that an American representative reported to the League of Nations in November, 1933, on the enormous increase in opium production both in Jehol and in Manchuria. Confirming this, a high Chinese official stated that the annual illegal production of opium in China now amounts to the staggering figure of 12,000 tons—seven times the quantity produced in all other countries combined. Here also the tell-tale chemical acetic anhydride points to heroin: huge imports to a country devoid of plants for the making of aspirin, dyestuffs or artificial silk are sufficient to yield, in one year, heroin to fill the world's needs for two years. As if this were not enough for a bitterly harassed country, news despatches last September revealed that three distinct "Opium Rings," with headquarters in the Japanese concession of Tientsin, are actively engaged in an illicit drug trade throughout the "demilitarized" zone between that city and the Great Wall. Transported by river from Jehol under strong military guard, huge supplies of opium and other narcotics are being literally forced upon a starving and desperate peasantry—so that, with the later arrival of machine guns, bombing planes and a select cast of diplomats, generals and missionaries, the Chinese people will be in a proper condition to appreciate the benefits of modern civilization.

You think the picture overdrawn? These gigantic stocks of opium and narcotics are, perhaps, used to stoke furnaces, drive powerhouse turbines and make jolly bonfires on freezing winter nights? Well—

Last August the Nanking (Chiang Kai-shek, Kuomintang) government arranged for the establishment throughout Kiangsu Province of 105 opium *wholesale* shops, or "hongs."

Under the plea of "greater revenue" these narcotic centers will supply a network of carefully located retail opium dens estimated to reach the number of 1,000. Each of these dens will be under strict "government" supervision, and the luckless consumers will be properly registered—in order, no doubt, to make sure that none of them stays away too long—or goes off to some "illegal" den from whose operation the government derives no revenue.

The Japanese are even shrewder. It is common practice with the 5,000 or so opium merchants in the Kwantung Leased Territory of what was once Manchuria to start off their future customers by giving one injection free (an injection is far more potent as a habit-former than a mild smoke.) A rigidly controlled opium monopoly, heroin and drug plants operating without any inconvenient League of Nations agreements, Japanese drug traders under the full protection of the police—all this easily explains why the annual per capita consumption of both morphine and heroin (91 and 33 milligrams respectively) in Manchuria is the highest in the world.

In this game of systematically poisoning the Chinese people, the Japanese are brilliantly seconded by the Kuomintang military. Whenever one of Chiang Kai-shek's turbulent generals obtains control, however temporarily, of a new district, he proceeds at once to "regulate" the opium traffic. In order, naturally, to ensure funds for himself and for Chiang's imperialist creditors, who see nothing wrong in exchanging one kind of contraband—armament—for another—narcotics. Also, behind most of the Kuomintang armies is a caravan of trucks loaded with opium: not for the soldiers, who have other dirty work to do, but for the peasants, whose houses, farms, meager property and strength all alike literally "go up in smoke," from fire, sword, and opium. Shanghai hospitals tell something of the ravages of this drug and its derivatives: in 1927 there were 400 deaths registered as the result of opium, in 1928 more than 700.

The traffic in opium, of which the above are but a very few of the indications, cannot and will not be stopped by any conventions, pacts or agreements based on a humanitarian demagoguery. Narcotics are as essential to the preservation of the capitalist system as Armaments, Unemployment and Religion.

In a celebrated passage the English writer, Thomas De Quincey, declaimed with great feeling on the theme, "O just, subtle and mighty Opium!" There are millions who have good reason to know the bitter truth. But "just"? That is a word which could be used—and repeated—only by hopeless romantics.

LETTERS FROM AMERICA

How They Gyp the Teachers

TEACHERS have been much talked about but they themselves have talked little. As an ex-teacher no longer afraid of losing my job or afflicted by the traditional hocus-pocus called professional pride I intend to tell a tale out of school. The experiences of the small school where I taught are typical of the entire country. They threaten a nation-wide collapse of the free public school system, supposedly one of American civilization's crowning glories.

After a hot summer spent in the ante-rooms of employment agencies I obtained a contract to teach high school English in Sutton, Mass., a small village near Worcester. This in return for a fat commission.

A few days before I was to report, a letter informed me that I was to teach book-keeping in addition to English because the schedules of other teachers were full. Then, the day before opening I was presented with a bouquet of courses consisting of plain and fancy language, assorted history, geography, drawing, geometry, biology, physical education and a special project class. Most of the texts we had to use were published before 1890. They had nothing on the school building, style 1880.

The depression worked havoc with even this antiquated status quo. The town treasurer's son had been delivering teachers' pay checks twice a month on Fridays. There came a month when there was only one such Friday, and then a succession of months without any such pay-days. After a series of

meetings in which teachers were warned by the superintendent that they were expected to share their "fat" salaries with starving families, the teachers contributed two days' pay each. This was eventually used to buy the district nurse a new car. Everyone was made to sign a personal statement of the amount he would contribute with the reasons for not giving more, whatever the amount offered. At this time their salaries were already months in arrears.

Many of the women teachers were tied to the town by property and the necessity of supporting grown children. Their salaries averaged a thousand dollars a year. At a bewildered meeting with the superintendent they passed a resolution turning back to the town 10 percent of half a year's pay.

In due time I was offered my contract for

a third year of employment. It stipulated that 10 percent of my salary must be returned for the first four months of the semester if that is deemed necessary by the school committee, throughout the year. In addition the school committee reserved the right to shorten the school year.

One of the committeemen informed me that I would be on tenure after my third year. \$1,450 minus 10 percent, minus one week's salary, minus 5 percent for an old-age pension fund. This left less than \$1,200 for me and my wife to live on. And no guarantee that we would not be weeks without payment. I did not return. I assumed that with the tobogganing standards, of "intellectual" workers, it would be worse, not better.

BOYD WOLFF.

Stretch-out in the Army

FOR some strange reason soldiers always assumed that when the Democrats were in power they benefited. The New Deal has taught them they are wrong.

As you know, the bulk of the army consists of privates. We draw the large sum of twenty-one dollars a month. Out of this we have to meet all current expenses, barber bills, pressing, cleaning and tailoring of uniforms, purchases of polishing material for the preservation of government brass and leather equipment. Besides this, we pay for personal toilet articles and, if necessary for dental and optometrical services. This comes to an average of 36 percent of our pay, leaving \$13.50. Out of this we have to pay for every game of pool we shoot in the day-room, for the antiquated movies they give us, or even when we break a dish. These miscellanies are subtracted from our meager income. Normally, it is an exceptional private who leaves the orderly room on payday with over five dollars in cash.

The New Deal brought us a 15-percent cut. Ten percent was returned piece-meal but in the interval it worked a hardship upon the lower grades in the Army and 5 percent is still withheld. Up to June 30, 1933, it had been the law to pay re-enlistment bonuses of seventy-five dollars to all grades below staff sergeant and one hundred and fifty dollars to those above sergeant. On that date the administration declared this superfluous—there were too many unemployed for the government to encourage enlistment. This bonus had been one of the few tangible ways in which a soldier of the lower grades could get hold of a lump sum.

A person outside the Army would have

thought that the slashing could not go further but it did. When a soldier enlists he is allotted a clothing allowance. It is broken up into an initial allowance credit and annual credits for the clothing that he draws from the government. What he draws is charged against these credits. The soldier has to have certain specified items but if he



William Sanderson

is careful, he would, at the end of his enlistment, have a sum to his credit which would be paid him as "clothing credit." This encouraged men to be careful of their clothing and it gave them a lump sum to look forward to at the end of three years. Under the New Deal this was slashed to virtually nothing.

We have had other cuts. For instance, the law provides fifty cents per day per man for food. The actual money allowed from month to month varies but seldom goes above twenty-five cents per day per man. Again, enlisted instructors throughout the United

States on duty with National Guard units have in the past been allowed \$35 per month as a rental allowance; this because most of them are located in cities where the rentals are normally high and also because most of these men are married and have families. The New Deal cut this over 40 percent.

These facts relate only to the pay and allowances of the soldier. But we are also being speeded up like any factory worker. First, the administration of the forced labor C.C.C. camps was turned over to the Army. Sergeants, corporals, privates were sent out to these organizations to instruct the men and not receive additional pay although this duty was closely comparable to the work of mobilization of an army; in fact, they in most cases received less pay than the C.C.C. men they were instructing.

Also, these soldiers had been taken from regiments, from units that had been instructing the National Guard, the O.R.C., the R.O.T.C., the C.M.T.C., etc. As a result the men left behind in the regiments had additional work to do; they were already working overtime preparing the C.C.C. material and camps. Many of the states lost almost 50 percent of the enlisted instructor personnel with the National Guard.

It was stretch-out in the Army. However, for the officers it was a god-send. There had been a lot of clamor about superannuating many of them prior to the C.C.C. The forced labor projects proved a stop-gap to this and the officers blessed Roosevelt. It is true that all the officers screamed lustily about the paycuts (don't the wealthiest always scream first?) but for many of them this "emergency" was what kept them from the scrap heap.

The cuts were initiated during a period when literally billions were being donated to the bankers and other capitalist parasites. They were enforced while the total appropriations for the Army leaped upward. But the increase was used to mechanize the Army and improve its fighting strength. The imperialist New Dealers are seeking new markets and the war clouds hang low. The C.C.C. itself is nothing but a nucleus ready for enrollment and for use against imperialist rivals as well as against the workers if necessary. The workers in the mills and the factories do not know that their comrades in the Army have also taken a licking under the New Deal. But in the present administration's march toward imperialism abroad and enforced idleness at home, the soldier in the ranks has also been made to feel the whip.

J. ARNOLD WILLIAMS.

Organizing Wall Street

ON the corner of Wall and Nassau Streets, facing the Sub-Treasury Building, with the New York Stock Exchange and the House of Morgan on opposite corners across the way, a white-bearded preacher stands in wait for the white-collar tide that turns into Nassau Street at noon. He has been a fixture on the corner for years; a group of fifty to a hundred has always stopped to listen out of habit. But one day about six months ago another speaking stand was set up about a hundred feet beyond the old man and all but a dozen faithful moved promptly way from him.

The new speaker was an organizer of the Wall Street Section of the Office Workers' Union. Soon the crowd swelled to five or six hundred white-collar men and women. During a lull the neglected preacher turned toward the Union audience and cried, "Americans won't listen to Communist agitators. They believe in Him." But the Americans went right on listening to the Union speaker's discussion of their own worries and problems—and they turned out two thousand strong when Heywood Broun was the speaker a short time later at one of the now bi-weekly street meetings.

There have been scattered efforts at organization among Wall Street workers in the past; a few spontaneous strikes have taken place; but a definite union of these workers exists for the first time today. The Wall Street Section embraces all employees of financial institutions, brokerage houses, banking, insurance and title companies. The members come from every corner of the country and offer a revealing cross-section of the sons of middle-class America. Among them are scout masters, Sunday school teachers, national guardsmen, C.M.T.C. men, etc. The Union is still a new idea to them, but the seriousness and sincerity with which they conduct their meetings and carry out their assignments commands respect and inspires high hope for white-collar America.

Probably the most abused are the brokerage-house employes, with title workers running a close second. The first category makes up the largest part of the unemployed Wall Street workers today.

Hornblower and Weeks, one of the most elaborate firms on the Street, employed over 900 in the boom days. Now they have 230 on the payroll. Stone, Webster & Blodgett have cut their staff from 200 (in 1929) to 50 today. De Coppet & Doremus had more than 1,000 employes early in 1934; now they have under 500. Mergers are throwing additional thousands into the streets.

Direct wage cuts have been dealt out by

every brokerage house in the city. The minimum cut appears to have been 20 percent, the average from 35 percent to 40 percent. Cashiers have been cut from \$125 a week to \$50, margin clerks from \$60 to \$25, purchase and sales clerks from \$45 to \$20. Runners are getting \$15. Dyer Hudson made an additional 45 percent cut on December 1st of last year. J. S. Bache & Co. have put through another cut of 30 percent.



William Sanderson

Indirect wage cuts through the stagger system, known in the Street as "Scotch weeks," are common. Jaquelin & De Coppet require each worker to take off two weeks each month without pay. In some firms it takes the form of two days off each week. At Livingston & Co. the workers lose every second week. At Winthrop, Mitchell & Co. it is one month off and one on. This amounts to an extra 25 to 50 percent wage cut. It is estimated that 75 percent of the offices are using the "Scotch week."

In the banking group wage cuts average 10 percent. But here, again, the rate of work has doubled and trebled for each worker following wholesale firings. The Chase National Bank, with an organization of 8,000 workers scattered among forty-three branches and hundreds of departments, conducts its firing with much secrecy. Workers are sent to the main office and disappear.

In the title companies the slump arrived late in 1931. By the middle of 1932 fully



William Sanderson

50 percent of the title workers were unemployed. The Big Three—the Title Guarantee and Trust Co., the New York Title Insurance Co., and the Lawyers' Title Insurance Co., which figured so prominently in the recent title certificate scandals—set the pace for wage cuts, speed-up, call lists and stagger systems. Examiners' salaries now range from \$18 to \$27; formerly they were up to \$65. Clerical workers all receive \$15. Employees who have been with the company for fifteen and twenty years are now getting \$17 and \$20 a week. Old-timers are fired and replaced by \$18-men or are rehired at less than half their previous salaries.

Since the curtailment of the Home Own-

ers Loans last December, close to one-third of these workers are unemployed again. The Union is organizing these unemployed and already delegations have visited slum-clearance projects which employ title examiners to demand an allotment of jobs. The delegations were told that no further appropriations could be made, but a week later the Big Three title companies were handed twelve square block of slum-clearance titles in Williamsburgh for examination. These companies are getting far higher rates for this work than they receive for Home Owners Loans examinations. Not a single additional man has been hired by these companies and the speed-up is terrific.

The Wall Street Section of the Office Workers' Union, now autonomous, has not yet won its spurs in action, but it grows. Public headquarters will shortly be opened in the Wall Street district. A regular publication will be issued. Growth and preparation are important, because the police have begun to interfere with distributions; and the Wall Street money-changers have bestirred themselves. J. S. Bache is clamoring for protection by the Red Squad. The police have obviously received their instructions. But the organization of the awakening white-collar man in the heart of financial America goes on.

JOHN STONE.

Eisler, Maker of Red Songs

ASHLEY PETTIS

SINCE the advent of Hitler to power, many celebrated German musicians have taken refuge in America. For obvious reasons they have remained strangely inarticulate in the midst of their exile, in spite of the fact that they all unquestionably have much to say and many are known to possess definite social consciousness. The fear of reprisals upon relatives remaining in Germany has been responsible for the silence of some. This fear of the Hitler terror is so great in the minds of the refugees, that one world-famous musician explained to me, upon saying he could not talk for publication, "And above all things, do not write that I said I cannot tell anything!"

The attitude of Schoenberg, one of the most influential of modern composers, was quite another matter. Typical of the "artistic" head-in-the-clouds attitude, pretending to himself and others, that he was completely cut off from mundane concerns, he declared, that the composer is unconcerned with socio-political matters—he merely goes ahead with his work. Schoenberg's compositions bear eloquent evidence of his state of mind and the atmosphere in which he works.

But with the arrival of Hanns Eisler, the famous revolutionary German refugee composer, one is confronted by what is no less than a phenomenon in contrast to the musician type mentioned above.

Hanns Eisler is far from being a "late arrival" in the revolutionary field. Born in 1898, in Leipzig, he was raised and educated in Austria. At the outbreak of the World War, although hating and protesting against war, he was compelled to enter the Austrian army, in which he served until 1918. Still a very young man—only twenty years of age—he returned to civilian life in a world of poverty and chaos. Largely self-taught up to this time, he became a pupil of Arnold Schoenberg, who has had a far-reaching influence upon many leading composers. Eisler's train-

ing under Schoenberg was extremely valuable for background and foundation. During this period he composed chiefly for esthetes and the socially elite.

But a growing awareness of social reality and of the vital considerations facing the sincere artist soon forced him to abandon his esthetic compositions and the Schoenberg school. As Eisler himself says:

"I was faced with the reality of composing for the millions . . . and a complete change in my method of composition. . . . It meant facing a problem of completely re-educating myself and entering a new period of study."

Undoubtedly his attitude toward the war, as well as his participation in it, had prepared him both in ideology and action, for work with the masses. His social consciousness had been greatly stirred by Karl Liebknecht. Hence he emerged, not a detached musician, but one prepared in every fibre of his being to build a new type of music for the working class. In 1926 he moved to Berlin, where he became active in various workers' organizations. But what concerns us primarily is the enormous influence and popularity Eisler has attained throughout the world for his creation of mass songs for the working class.

Eisler spoke at length on the expulsion of the finest musicians from Germany, not only Jewish artists, but many whose only crime was their unwillingness or inability to conform to the stifling restrictions of the Nazi philosophy. He pictured the cultural collapse of Germany—all the more appalling because of its former high cultural level. He talked at length of Hindemith—an outstanding German composer of modern times. Hindemith has long been changing in his ideology from the traditional, false attitude of "music for music's sake," realizing the necessity for expanding the social functions of music. He was a modern "materialist" musician, but not a dialectical materialist. He was unable to give in to fascist tendencies. For a time he

even tried to curry favor with the Nazi regime by his religious, mystic opera *Mathias der Maler*, which did not serve to bring him closer to fascism for the moment. The total collapse of German culture was in itself not a greater calamity than the discouragement of the younger generation of German composers, epitomized in the treatment accorded Hindemith, who was the greatest influence in their lives. They now have recourse only to the ultra-reactionary tenets of non-productive Nazism, to the romantic musical standards of 1880. Richard Strauss alone of the musically great of Germany remains—in his dotage, impotent, completely acquiescent, unquestioning, unprotesting in the face of expulsion of his most illustrious colleagues; a relic of imperialist Germany—a perfect Nazi! Concerning Arnold Schoenberg and his place in modern music, Eisler made the following statement:

"Schoenberg is my teacher. I am immensely thankful to him for what he has done for me. I consider him the greatest modern bourgeois composer. If the bourgeoisie does not care for his music, I can only regret this fact, for they have no better composer. Schoenberg's music does not sound beautiful to the uninitiated listener, because he mirrors the capitalist world as it is, without beautifying it, and because out of his work arises the visage of capitalism, staring us directly in the face. Because he is a genius and a complete master of technique, this visage is revealed so clearly that many are frightened by it. Schoenberg, however, has performed a tremendous historical service, in that the concert halls of the bourgeoisie, when his music is heard there, are no longer charming and agreeable pleasure resorts where one is moved by one's own beauty, but rather places where one is forced to think about the chaos and ugliness of the world, or else, to turn one's face away.

"Schoenberg has performed another great service, as the teacher of generations of young

composers. For a long time yet, one will be able to learn from his works, even when they will no longer be listened to for enjoyment. In another domain, Einstein's theories, although they are of no practical use in the immediate present, are historically of great significance. So with Schoenberg; for the past forty years his versatility has been of such significance that we who do not share but reject his political opinions, can admire him as an artist. It is as Marx puts it: 'No matter what he thinks about his own situation, or what his views are—the important thing is to study his actual work, that which he has concretely done.' Therefore we can say that Schoenberg's production is historically the most valuable production of all modern music. Young composers, and above all, young prole-

tarian composers, must not listen to and copy him uncritically, but they must have the strength to differentiate the content of his work from the method.

"That this man, sixty years old, and no longer in good health, after a life full of the severest privations undergone for the sake of his art, should be driven homeless throughout the world, is one of the most frightful shames of capitalism in the sphere of culture today.

"One will always learn from him, when other composers, who are today fashionable, will have been long forgotten."

The masses of American workers together with the intellectuals have a great opportunity to express in practical action that word which is so frequently used: *Solidarity*—one which Eisler has so eloquently set to music. His

songs, which are sung by the masses the world over, in the Soviet Union—even to distorted words in the camp of the enemy—in France, England, the United States—wherever workers are uniting in common cause, are to be performed at a concert to be held at Mecca Temple, Saturday evening, March 2, at 8:15. A great chorus of 1,000 voices, made of worker's choruses, was rehearsed by Eisler himself.

On this occasion a new and remarkable composition, which Eisler has just procured, will be performed for the first time. It is a song, the words and music of which were written in a German concentration camp by a political prisoner. It is of the utmost simplicity, so much so that Eisler remarked he could teach it to all present in five minutes. We hope he will do this.

Three Southern Sketches

From an Organizer's Notebook

BORIS ISRAEL

THESE weren't very many crowding this small, one-room shack. The glow of the pine-knot fire made it seem more, somehow, throwing high, unwieldy shadows on the wall, pasted over with old newspapers.

In the center a young Negro girl, secretary of the Union, took down minutes with the stub of a pencil. She sat in the center of the room, close to the fire, so that notes could be thrown into the flames quicker than one could say, "Share Croppers' Union." A huge rain-stained and rusty Holy Bible lay ponderously unopened before her.

Opposite, an old lady strained forward in a rocker, her wrinkled, dark brown hand cupped to one ear and a pair of faded overalls sprawled across her spread lap. A dark blue patch remained half sewed, with the needle hanging loosely to the thread.

This is the Share Croppers' Union. In just such tiny, unassuming groups lies the strength of ten thousand members of "the Union" which, starting scarcely four years ago with the banding together of a few heroic Alabama Negro croppers, has spread into Georgia and Mississippi, has carried on struggles which have had echoes in far places, has effected a united front with the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union in Arkansas, and which is now planning even greater advances for the white and Negro farm and plantation toilers of the South.

Jim Carter is speaking. The old lady who leans forward so intently hanging on his words of struggle is remembering the slave days, I know.

Jim Carter is speaking and we all lean forward, his scars hovering in the backs of our minds. "They killed my brother, and

they may kill me yet, comrades, but they cain't never kill our Union no more. We got that. We made it ourselves and they cain't take it away from us."

We all think, too, of Jim's brother George, one of the first small band, one who was murdered in the Camp Hill landlord attack on an organization meeting similar to this one.

The dogs suddenly tear into the woods with their sharp barking. Mary Jane gathers the notes swiftly and someone throws another pine knot on the fire. Aunt Ella, slowly rocks and sews the patch on with strong stitches. Jim opens the giant Bible to somewhere in Judges, and from the shadows right behind me another starts humming a religious song.

As it swells through the room, I follow the comrade beside me through the back door. A third comrade is on my heels and I see him take the shotgun off the rusty nails over the door as we slip out behind the house to wait.

It is really nothing. Two young boys, the oldest not more than ten, run up breathlessly and are suddenly panting there before us in the darkness to tell us it was only a rabbit the dogs had scared up.

II

For two hours we had been traveling through the red-dirt country of southern Alabama. Now, bumping slowly over the deep rutted wagon tracks, we counted the gray shacks set out among the dead, picked-over rows of cotton stalks.

At a fork we stopped and I sat up on the floor of the back seat. Now we were down

in the hollow and darkness was fast spreading over the desolate, poverty-stricken country. A lean, ragged figure swung up the road, swinging a stick.

"You live in this country?" Ben asked, as the long, deeply lined, serious face of the Negro came up next our auto.

"Yassuh, boss. Right down yondah way a piece."

"You know Tom Scott?"

"Tom Scott?" He looked slowly down at the end of his stick, stuck into the road clay of the road, pondered, then looked leisurely up again. "Now I reckon they used to be a Tom Scott lived somewheres about here."

"We're friends of his," I said. "Al Jackson said we'd find him down this road, the eighth house on the left. We missed count somehow," I explained.

Again there was a pause, and the dark eyes studied us in the half light.

"Right down here to the right," he decided, pointing the carved stick. "Second shack."

We talked small talk about the price of cotton, then Ben asked, "You a member of the union?"

"What union?" our informer wanted to know, watching us all the while, seeming to look only at the stick in the dirt but missing no slightest gesture. "I don't know nothing about no society at all, 'cepting the church society. Never heard tell of no union," he said, and turned to go on.

At the second shack, Ben climbed the tall bank and went up on the long, unrailed porch that sagged across the front of the shack. He disappeared in the dark of the open corridor that cut the house in two.

A few minutes later he came back with

Scott. We shook hands and I felt the quiet determination of this dark brown, young but already mature man, whose voice was soft and caressing but firm and sure, not ingratiating.

"So long," Ben waved and he threw the car into gear, moving on. I thought of him driving past the general store at the juncture with the main road, and the white landlord watching him, noting that two men were sitting in the front seat, just as there had been when the car drove into the hollow. That was why I had been sitting on the floor, in back.

Tom Scott and I traveled through the swamps, across the dead fields, into this sagging, board hut and that, always by night. Daytimes, we sat indoors before the fireplace, talking and planning. Croppers would come by ones and twos to sit for a while and ask questions of the organizer from Birmingham.

"When do you reckon it's coming, comrade?" one young worker asked, twisting his torn cap in gnarled hands, cracking his knuckles.

I spoke of the impossibility of prophecy, of the many factors involved, of the necessary work and struggles to come first. But I couldn't help but see that final conflict myself, not too far away, with toilers like these ready to fight it.

One long afternoon there were just three of us—Tom Scott, the lean, dark man we had met on the road, and myself. We discussed the practical problems of building the Share Croppers' Union, the successes of the Chinese Soviets, the problems of collectivization in the U. S. S. R., and the principle of democratic centralism.

On the road he had "never heard tell of no society." He had been the bowing, half-witted "black boy" the southern white ruling class expects, and exerts every means in their power to maintain. Now, knowing he was with comrades he was sharp, clear, dynamic—more informed on world questions, economic, social and political, than any landlord I had ever met in Alabama.

The information, represents ingenuity, sacrifice, hardship. To get hundreds of copies of The Southern Worker into the Alabama Black Belt each month, to get them distributed, to build up and maintain an underground apparatus that can do this and that can collect penny by penny to help pay for these papers, this is not only a feat of Herculean proportions, it is an indication of the value which is placed upon this only southern paper which these toilers have ever been able to feel their own.

We discussed an article in a six-months old issue, torn and maddened from having been buried against raiding parties, worn out from reading, still too valuable to be thrown away.

III

It is impossible to forget a "call meeting" in the woods where sixty to seventy sharecroppers and their wives came together for a

Lenin Memorial meeting. The very air of the woods was tense with the new feeling of unity between white and black. Some had walked miles for this meeting.

One of the speakers slowly, haltingly read a short sentence or two from a ragged and torn pamphlet. When he looked up from the page his eyes shone with respect and gladness and there was a hushed silence broken only by cracking twigs two hundred yards away where a lookout was watching for anyone who might approach. "This is Comrade Lenin speaking. I ain't telling you this only—this is Comrade Lenin speakin'."

"For every hundred mistakes," Lenin, the greatest of all working-class leaders, said in another place, "there are 10,000 great and heroic deeds, the greater and the more heroic for their simplicity, for their being unseen and hidden in the everyday life of an industrial quarter or provincial village, performed by men who are not used to (and who do not have the opportunity to) herald their achievements to the world."

It is from the strength and determination of these "unseen and hidden," these unheralded and unsung heroes in their "call meetings," their demonstrations, their resolutions and activity, that our hope and our example lies. Thousands have dared the lynch rope or the fascist bullets to join their voice with the great roar. Thousands have given of the food out of their mouths, have tramped in soleless shoes, to collect the pennies for leaflets and campaigns to enable the fight to continue. And they continue, gaining new recruits into the vast army with each step forward. Out of such stuff will a Soviet America be built.

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—BROOKS ATKINSON, *N. Y. Times.*

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Correspondence

Against Japanese Imperialism

TO THE NEW MASSES:

I want to call to the attention of your readers an event of the greatest importance. A meeting protesting the Japanese Imperialist Invasion of Northern China is to be held this Friday, Feb. 22, at the Central Opera House, 205 East 67th Street. The growing invasion of China by the Japanese is part of their program for war against the Soviet Union.

All readers of THE NEW MASSES ought to avail themselves of this opportunity to inform themselves of the situation in the Far East.

EDGAR J. MITCHEL.

A Call for a United Anti-Lynch Exhibition

TO THE NEW MASSES:

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has issued a call for an anti-lynching exhibition to be held in New York City. While we are entirely in sympathy with such an exhibition, we feel that the purpose of the N.A.A.C.P. is not only misleading, but even harmful.

The Wagner-Costigan Bill which their appeal advocates, and which does not even include death penalty for the lynchers, is harmful in that it tends to prevent a militant struggle for a real Federal Anti-Lynch Bill, which is the Bill for Negro Rights and Suppression of Lynching. It attempts to separate the struggle against lynching from the struggle for civil right of the Negro people. (The Wagner-Costigan Bill carries no provision for civil rights of Negro people.)

The N.A.A.C.P. proposal definitely denies a participation in the exhibition to the I.L.D., National Scottsboro-Herndon Action Committee and other such organizations which are leading the struggle against lynching. Moreover, the N.A.A.C.P. has completely ignored the Scottsboro Case, the most outrageous crime against Negroes of our time—a crime which has aroused the condemnation of the entire world. The N.A.A.C.P. exhibition is misleading inasmuch as it evades the whole question of the oppression of the Negro people.

For this reason the John Reed Club, the Artists Union, and the Artists Committee of Action, supported by the League of Struggle for Negro Rights propose a united front exhibition including all the organizations honestly fighting against lynching.

Subject—Any aspect of the struggle for the liberation of the Negro race. The joint struggle of the black and white workers. Share-croppers Union, Scottsboro and Angelo Herndon. The treachery of the N.A.A.C.P. leaders, and of the Negro bourgeoisie. *Medium*—Any form of black and white. *Time*—All work to be delivered February 20-24 inc. Exhibition opens March 2 to 17. *Place*—The A.C.A. Gallery, 52 West 8th Street.

All work to be delivered to the gallery.

A jury composed of Negro and white representatives from labor organizations and art groups will select and arrange the exhibition.

The following artists, several of whom have refused the invitation of the N.A.A.C.P., upon the above grounds, have endorsed, and will participate in this exhibition:—

DANCE

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Superman's Burden

TO THE NEW MASSES:

I don't know whether Robert Forsythe realizes it or not, but his was a sort of superman's burden in carrying on a genuine, analytical appraisal of the film scene, the intelligent, revolutionary approach. We here out in the hinterlands of the country look to THE NEW MASSES for the continuation of such an effort.

His review of *Resurrection* proves that our feelings are correct. Here was missing the flippancy evident in a former review of *The Fountain*, to the value of the review. The purpose of this note, in case Forsythe hasn't guessed it yet, is that we want more of the type in the Nov. 20 issue. We not only want it, we demand it! And I think that he is competent to give it to us.

Ann Arbor, Mich.

J. C. SEIDEL.

More About Roth's "Call It Sleep"

TO THE NEW MASSES:

It seems to me that your reviewer missed the good things in Henry Roth's *Call It Sleep*. I thought that Roth caught, with considerable sympathy and humor, the "pre-political" thinking of childhood, the stage of development wherein we follow much the same patterns of magic as Frazer outlines in *The Golden Bough*. The great virtue of Roth's book, to my way of thinking, was in the fluent and civilized way in which he found, on our city streets, the new equivalents of the ancient jungle—a parallelism which culminates magnificently when the electric current in the car track takes the place of the lightning that struck down Frazer's sacred oaks. Insofar as the propaganda of Communists is an attempt to give the people new meanings, I think that Communist critics should show special concern for such a book as Roth's, which deals fluently with the psychological phenomena of orientation and "rebirth." And insofar as children are pre-political savages, living in a world of symbolism and magic, I question whether any realistic philosophy could properly condemn a writer for reviving such a picture of childhood, particularly when he accomplishes his task with Roth's sound mixture of soberness and fancy. I grant the reviewer's statement that the book would have profited by cutting. Nonetheless, just as it stands, it should be saluted not only for its great promise, but also for its attainments.

KENNETH BURKE.

Bourgeois-Critical Exploitation

TO THE NEW MASSES:

As one who has not yet read Henry Roth's novel I confess myself non-plussed by the difference in reactions even among left-wing critics. I do not wish to question your reviewer—his evaluation may be right—I suspect that I should agree with it. Nevertheless his cavalier dismissal of a book which has commanded such lengthy treatment in the bourgeois and liberal journals bespeaks a necessity for some additional discussion in THE NEW MASSES. I believe that it would be helpful and interesting if one of your reviewers would extend the discussion of *Call It Sleep* by an analysis of not only the book's specific faults and virtues, but of the reason why this work by a proletarian author who is also closely associated with the revolutionary movement has been so generously welcomed by the bourgeois critics. I recall a somewhat similar

phenomenon last summer, when Tess Slesinger's novel was analyzed conclusively from precisely this viewpoint of bourgeois-critical exploitation in an article by Joseph Freeman. ALVAH C. BROTHERS.

[A further critical discussion of Roth's novel will appear in an early issue.—THE EDITORS.]

At Cattaro

TO THE NEW MASSES:

One morning in January of 1918, I saw the red flag on several battle ships of the Adriatic fleet stationed at Tivat, a few miles from the city of Cattaro. Two days later I was forced to march with a group of naval school students to witness the execution of the rebels. By such action the military governors of Boka terrorized the populace, as a warning against further uprisings.

However, the real motive behind the sailors' revolt was hidden from the public. We were told that the revolt was organized on behalf of South Slav unity and against the Austrian oppression. In our naive minds as students of the naval school we wondered whether the red flag was to be the national color of the future South Slav State.

The following year the Yugoslav governors organized a huge memorial meeting. The murdered sailors were proclaimed as national heroes and fighters for Yugoslav unity. Our school marched in the procession and we carried flowers. But the red flag did not fly on this occasion. Instead it was persecuted as before. The bourgeoisie tried to distort history and steal the working class heroes. Mr. F. Wolf has preserved this episode in the revolutionary movement. It is a fitting tribute to the cause for which the sailors revolted.

Berkeley, Calif.

G. P.

"Thomas Boyd, Communist"

TO THE NEW MASSES:

In my article on Thomas Boyd in THE NEW MASSES of Feb. 12, I stated that Boyd personally collected the larger number of the signatures that were necessary to put the Communist Party on the Vermont ballot. I was misinformed, and I wish to correct the statement. The vast majority of signatures were collected by the workers and farmers of the state, to whom the credit should certainly be given.

GRANVILLE HICKS.

A Correction

TO THE NEW MASSES:

In justice to Professor Schapiro as well as to myself, I should like to point out an error in the printing of my review of his life of Condorcet. Paragraphs four, five and seven were direct quotations from the book reviewed.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

The Fetish of Being Outside

IN times like these, points of view are important; they represent what you will be called upon to act from tomorrow. They are not static or simply curious parlour flora any more. I would like therefore to give my position too on some of the problems brought up by Horace Gregory in a recent issue of *THE NEW MASSES*. I have also been struggling with these problems and look forward to the impetus of a communal discussion of them at the Writers' Congress in May.

Every point that Horace Gregory raises is extremely vital and indicates a middle-class malady I believe, a sickness common to all of us nourished on rotten bourgeois soil. These are important because it may be from these peculiar maladies that we break the old forms of psychic reaction to an old society and create a new nucleus of communal interaction.

I would like to say first that I believe an act of full belief very difficult to the bourgeois mind, a reflex from nineteenth-century romanticism, Darwinism, etc. and that this belief is the action, the function of the writer, this is his peculiar and prophetic function to stand for a belief in something that scarcely exists, as Mr. Gregory points out, but the writer must create from this belief the nucleus of a new condition and relationship of the individual and society and all the problems involved in that new orientation. Of course this is moving in the chaotic dark of a new creation, admittedly, but it is exactly this movement that is the "action" of the creative worker. This I believe pertinently brings up the various points Mr. Gregory states and is related to them all, the individual and the group, the objective fetish of the old literature, being outside and at the same time inside, being above or removed from "splits" and party lines, etc. and left and right "deviations."

As for the individual and the group: Joining has always been obnoxious to the bourgeois artist because of his false orientation to the middle-class groups and because such groups in an exploiting world are spurious and false groups, an accretion of individuals. An organic group pertaining to growth of a new nucleus of society is a different thing. You do not join such a group, you simply *belong*. You belong to that growth or you do not belong to it. As a matter of fact you cannot simply attach yourself to the Communist philosophy. It is a hard, difficult, organic growth away from old forms, into entirely new ones. You cannot "join" it in the ordinary middle-class sense as you can join the Rotarians or Kiwanis or any similar group. There are no organic groups in middle-class society because all groups are

a subtle hypocrisy since capitalism is based upon the exploiting ability of every individual against every other one. So I feel strongly that this holding off of the artist from a group is artificial, a hangover from an old society.

Growing from this subtly and connected, is the assumption that the creative worker is not an economist and cannot understand deviations, and political theory. This again is something entirely different from understanding or participating in the political theory (if any) of say Hoover and ilk or the economics of the donkey or the elephant. This again I believe is a hangover, a curious infantilism and exhibitionism of the bourgeois artist. (These are instinctive in us and difficult of removal and should be looked at, I believe, in a clear light as being tendencies of us all). We have put on this infantilism as a cloak because we could not function in the merchant world, or rather didn't care to function, and had to keep ourselves out of it by appearing childish or strange or macabre creatures, like Hawthorne going out only at night, or Poe taking refuge in strangeness or the Stein infantile inarticulateness—these of course are extreme, but the extreme is the only way to prove the fallacy of middle courses. If you have to have some excuse for not entering the counting house, being a child or eccentric are both good. Why shouldn't the artist be in the vanguard in a well integrated society, the most mature, with the greatest powers of psychic synthesis and prophecy and the fullest grasp of vital tendencies toward life or toward death in that society?

In this crisis political and economic activity are no longer specialized and theoretic classroom sociology. They represent an accumulation of forces, a direction of energies and tendencies that show whether you are going to get enough to eat, get married, whether your child will be born alive or dead, or whether you are going to be thrown out on the streets tomorrow. They have become highly integrated emotional, contemporary facts, happening to a lot of people, making the contemporary composition. The artist can no longer take refuge in infantilism, or the supposition that he has not the kind of mentality to understand economic thought because this is the dynamic stuff of the composition of our time and he cannot take a double course and be part of it and still apart from it. It is impossible and the closer we approach the crisis where these elements come together in dynamic clash the more this will be so. You cannot be both on the barricades and objective or removed at the same time. I suppose you can but you are

likely to receive the bullets of both sides.

For myself I do not feel any subtle equivocation between the individual and the well disciplined groups of the Communist Party. I do not care for the bourgeois "individual" that I am. I never have cared for it. I want to be integrated in a new and different way as an individual and this I feel can come only from a communal participation which reverses the feeling of a bourgeois writer. What will happen to him will not be special and precious, but will be the communal happening, what happens at all. I can no longer live without communal sensibility. I can no longer breathe in this maggotty individualism of a merchant society. I have never been able to breathe in it. That is why I hope to "belong" to a communal society, to be a cellular part of that and able to grow and function with others in a living whole.

This leads of course directly to the problem of objectivity. This also has something to do with the writer's precious naivete about party lines and splits, comes possibly from his fetish of being an outsider. I feel strongly that this being outside the demarcations of economic and political positions (which directly had to do with the betrayal of the Austrian workers, with men tramping over the snow, with women shooting from the roofs of the Karl Mark House in Vienna and all these undoubtedly individuals, and perhaps even objective individuals to themselves) represents a real deviation of emotional and psychic hangovers and difficulties of a new orientation to the writer who has always been alone in a merchant society, which boils down to a desire real and definite enough to take a middle course, very dangerous and from which our life and death of the future will emanate. Objective writing can never provide will or purpose and is related to the liberal formal ideal of neutrality and disinterestedness. This of course is only carrying Gregory's position to its dangerous conclusions.

I cannot understand or sympathize with the subtle equivocation that exists in Horace Gregory's entire position. Why want to be an outsider when you see and admit sight of the promised land as Gregory does; why choose to walk around the walls of Jericho merely? Yes, it seems equivocal and dangerous and I mention it bluntly because I am sure he, like the rest of us from the middle class, has a difficult orientation to make; but it seems very dangerous to me to want at the same time to be in and to be out. . . . You must accept the discipline of the party and yet you must be objective and individual and outside. You must act and yet *you* must not act, you must be individual and again objective. This is like saying I will fall in love and I will not fall in love, I

will remain outside, cunning, keep my head, etc. And just as disastrous to any final heat of creation or action. He says also he cannot write in the heat of conflict. I don't think anyone demands this but what we do demand is heat. "Objective" removed "individual" writing at this time doesn't give birth to anything.

It seems to me Gregory's position shows a dangerous hangover integration with his class still. Not actually of course but these half equivocations lead by a devious route straight back to all the old alignments. Even nationalism. He says he is a nationalist. Believes in America. So do I, not knowing any other breast for nourishment, but to believe only in difference smacks too much of the nineteenth century scientific thought that dissociated and dissected every living organism and left us a horror of parts and broken pieces and—equivocations.

Double entendre, equivocation, a subtle hypocrisy under an apparently frank ideology seems to me dangerously akin to the habits of the middle class.

My stand is that I feel that all this old ideology is dead. I have always felt this subtly, internally, but now it is proven, stands in broad daylight, as an actual physical decay. I see it now. It is known. Everyday I see people rotting, dying in this dead class like plants decaying in a foul soil. I feel I, myself, have rotted and suffered and threshed in this element of the bourgeois class like an organism in a decaying pool with the water evaporating about you and the natural elements of your body and desires in stress and your hungers decaying and rotting and stinking to high heaven.

I have felt the impossibility of growth both as an individual and a creative worker in that class, and how all these ideologies are reversed now and do nothing but strangle one

and diminish the possibilities of integration and growth.

I, too, like Gregory, have wanted to be a writer of fine poetry. So do we all, like a fine bloom but you cannot grow a fine bloom by equivocation, by only half growing a fine bloom. This is where the "action" of the writer or creative worker of any kind comes in. It is an action of belief, of full belief. There is some kind of extremity and will- ingness to walk blind that comes in any creation of a new and unseen thing, some kind of final last step that has to be taken with full intellectual understanding and with the artist, a step beyond that too, a creation of a future "image," a future action that exists in the present even vaguely or only whispered, or only in a raised arm, or a word dropped in the dark but from these, because of full belief, he will produce a movement, even a miraculous form that has not hitherto existed. Even the lowest forms of life are able to step out in this belief into a new element and grow a new orientated fin or organ that makes creative alignments.

It is difficult because you are stepping into a dark chaotic passionate world of another class, the proletariat, which is still perhaps unconscious of itself like a great body sleeping, stirring, strange and outside the calculated, expedient world of the bourgeoisie. It is a hard road to leave your own class and you cannot leave it by pieces or parts; it is a birth and you have to be born whole out of it. In a complete new body. None of the old ideology is any good in it. The creative artist will create no new forms of art or

literature for that new hour out of that darkness unless he is willing to go all the way, with full belief, into that darkness.

You cannot blow a trumpet by only half putting it to the lips or even a fraction of an inch away from the lips. You can only blow a trumpet by putting it completely to the lips.

Of course as Gregory says we see no strong victorious worker. Most of the time in the past we have seen nothing but the horizon of prairie out here with Chicago, the hog butcher of the world, thrusting a bloody head out of misused Illinois corn soil. Our song is as he says "broken, truncated," but important to the writer is to go off the deep end (heaven knows it ought to be as easy as stepping off a rotting Ward liner that is sinking a mile a minute).

To be willing to do any less leads to an abortive birth, to fascistic tendency in writers, to reformism, back into the old ideology, into the enemies' camp, into preserving a stinking individualism, objectivity, retreat, and even leads finally to the abortive creation of oneself as an artist and individual.

You can't have a unity with the nether world and the dangerous dust that falls from bourgeois ideology.

Belief is an action for the writer. The writer's action is full belief, from which follows a complete birth, not a fascistic abortion, but a creation of a new nucleus of a communal society in which at last the writer can act fully and not react equivocally, in a new and mature integrity.

MERIDEL LE SUEUR.

New Form and New Content

BLACK CONSUL, by Anatolii Vinogradov. Translated from the Russian by Emile Bouras. Viking Press. \$2.75.

THE question of content and form has again become a literary issue. Proletarian writing has arrived at such a degree of maturity that it can afford to raise the question for itself. It has demonstrated the variety and intensity of the class struggle as material for literature. It can begin to explore formal devices suitable to this material. The outcries of bourgeois critics that proletarian literature is a destroyer of literary canons will soon have to be directed against other objects.

The question is relevant in a discussion of this book, which is distinguished both by novelties of form and at least as significant novelties of content. How have the bourgeois critics dealt with it? They have discussed chiefly one of its innovations of form and have paid little attention to its content, which offers a new view of the French Revolution and new portraits of the notable figures of the revolution, in fact a new focus for seeing this event which brought about a reorganization of society in the Occident.

The formal innovations are two; although bourgeois critics have seen fit to comment

only upon one of them, the use of documents in direct quotation—speeches, decrees, letters and diaries. I find myself in agreement with bourgeois critics that this documentary material is over-used, especially since Comrade Vinogradov has been so influenced by it that it has affected his style and he writes with the formal elegance of the eighteenth century but with the stiffness of one wearing a costume.

The other more important innovation which has drawn no comments that I have seen from the bourgeois critics is that the action is social and the conflict upon which the action turns is the class struggle, not the psychological conflict of a constrained individual. The characters are all historical figures and they become the principals according to the shifts of the action. There is no one protagonist. Marat and Robespierre, the scientists Lavoisier and Cabanis, the mulatto leader Oge and the Negro leader Toussaint L'Ouverture, the writer, Chateaubriand, the adventurer, Napoleon Bonaparte, the adventuress Savinienne, and others, become the chief actors when and as long as the action requires their presence in the foreground. Such a disposition of characters in a novel is something new and impressive, and writers who have thought of presenting in their fic-

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tion a unity other than that of the integration of action around the career of a principal character would do well to study the structure of this novel.

For the general reader, however, the innovation in content is far more important. A new French Revolution is presented to them in this book; a revolution in which social and economic forces have their correct role, and in which the tragic contradiction upon which it wrecked its chief hope is made burningly clear.

How does the bourgeoisie present the revolution which set it in power? It comes close to disowning it. It presents the revolutionary leaders as fanatics driven into excesses and punished finally by outraged public opinion. The adventurer and renegade, Napoleon, becomes a saviour and a national hero because, though he destroyed more men on the battlefields than fifty revolutions, he established society on a bourgeois base. The "excess" that the bourgeoisie found unforgivable was not that of the Terror in which the bourgeois leaders Tallien, Barras, Fouché and others figured as the chief blood letters, but the approach the Revolution dared to make to the abolition of private property. It is that which keeps the bourgeoisie estranged from its own revolution and from all revolution.

So far as bringing effective freedom to all the humanity within its range, the French Revolution floundered upon this contradiction—that it desired also to preserve property rights. Robespierre, ardent and incorruptible though he was, doomed himself by the attempt to stand between the enemies of private property and the bourgeoisie. He advocated that limitation of private property which more than a hundred and thirty years of history has proved unfeasible. The crux of the question was the position of the Negroes in the French West Indian colonies.

They were human beings, and according to the principles of the French Revolution, should be free. But they were also property. Robespierre carried through the enactment of their freedom; but in those of its West Indian colonies which the bourgeois reaction recovered, slavery was reintroduced. It was in Haiti that the Negroes by their own revolution led by the Negro Toussaint L'Ouverture, perhaps the greatest man of his time, won freedom.

What defeated the French Revolution finally, as the writer shows, was the alliance between the peasantry and the merchants. The crown lands and the estates of the nobility and the clergy had been sold to the peasantry for almost nothing, payment being made in depreciated paper money. The rev-

olution allowed the peasantry to "enrich themselves" and considered the land question solved by that means, but the enriched peasantry soon turned conservative. As property owners they felt their interests at one with that of the owners of industrial property and the bankers, brokers and bondholders. They were ready to give power to the grafters of the Directory, and to the egomaniac Napoleon because they stood as guarantors of private property.

By making these forces clear and by making them dramatic this first Marxist historical novel (first, that is, in dealing with other than Russian history) is as important in its field as direct Marxist history which has clarified many of the most perplexing problems of history. ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

Dead Flowers in Lovely Vases

THE HARSH VOICE, by Rebecca West, Doubleday, Doran and Co. \$2.50.

THE ELAGHIN AFFAIR, by Ivan Bunin. Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.50.

OF these two collections, Miss West's "four brilliant, mordant little novels" seem, perhaps, the more remote, although three of her stories are set in an American conscious of the economic crisis, and one even takes us into a Senate investigation and lets us look at Mr. Pecora. The characters are impressive too; one hero is an automobile manufacturer, one promotes holding companies, a heroine runs a railroad system. Occasionally they speak of their labor policies. But under the glossy finish these things have no meaning one way or the other. For even when occasionally thoughtful persons like Rebecca West or Bernard De Voto use it, *The Saturday Evening Post* manner is completely anaesthetic. It makes the brightest contemporaneity merely something to buy a little brief credulity with.

In *The Harsh Voice* the backgrounds are very luxurious and suitable for illustration; the characters are given lives and pasts that their emotions may seem plausible; the emotions, in turn—mixtures of love and hate as conventional and unhuman as the "brittle soul" mysticism of magazine verse—are concocted for the purposes of the plot; and the plots are classroom models of Reversal and Discovery. One is aware of this artificiality not because, as in the usual figure, the machinery creaks, but because it is all so smooth and controlled, more like a resplendent, bisected engine running silently under glass at an automobile show. Every few pages are planted with good epigrams or observations. The descriptive details are rather more meager: in two stories, suspicious fingers are run along bannister grooves testing for dust; in two, middle-aged men fighting against age put their palms to the floor without bending their knees.

In *The Elaghin Affair* it is entirely different. In these fifteen stories written between

1911 and 1926 there is impressive richness of description and experience, expressed in many forms and subjects: peasant life, fairy tales, "creepy" stories, religious fables, murder trials, the little adventures of cheap hotels and five-o'clock amours. The vigor is in sensation, in fatal struggles against snow storms, in the fragrance of the countryside in the hot summer sun, in the twisted lives of impoverished drifters. But there is little youth, and no hope. The only young protagonists that Bunin gives us are murderers and suicides. *The Dry Valley*, perhaps the best thing in the volume, is told through a young mind, but it is a reconstruction of a family past, experienced indirectly, and at a distance. It has the autobiographic flavor of *The Well of Days*, and like it describes the pre-revolutionary decline of sections of the landholding class. In its essence of decay, insanity and sadism, *The Dry Valley* suggests Faulkner, describes a hideous life of

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floggings, rapes and hunger, appropriate material, perhaps, for some white-guard nostalgia.

The intelligence and sympathy in these tales is completely neutralized. There is not even the social suggestiveness of *The Gentleman from San Francisco*. Bunin flogs up feeling as the action intensifies; as the action dies, he lets feeling drain away into natural beauty, or spend itself in questioning. Beyond the often consummate technical form of these pieces, the only sustaining unities are a feeling for the past, and an easy mysticism. In the introduction the translator says, "He can extract the honey of bitter poetry even out of the brutal and brutish death of a peasant. . . . Yet the accusation of morbidity would hardly hold

against him. Once more the reader is referred to *The Cicadas*: is there anywhere a more eager paean to life?" The reader is interested in affirmations and paeans to life, and dutifully does turn to *The Cicadas*. He slips past references to the "Oneness" and "the vanity and vexation of action and constructiveness" looking for the final philosophy. The next to the last paragraph ends, "There is still a something which is stronger than all my over-wisdom, my philosophizings. Still as desirable as a woman is to me this watery, nocturnal bosom . . . God, let me be!" And the last paragraph (There is too much sun on the lids of my eyes to be listening): "And the cicadas sing on . . . and on." **OBED BROOKS.**

of "worldly" things, notably race antagonisms. This philosophy which informs Werfel's interpretation of the Turko-Armenian or German-Jewish relationship, is the third and weightiest reason for the success of *The Forty Days*.

God is made responsible for everything. "Men want what they must. The vast supernatural ties of empire are loosened. It only means that God has swept the chessboard clear, and begun a new game against Himself." (My emphasis.) The man through whom the Lord will "judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth," Gabriel Bagradian, is cast into the usual bourgeois, Messiah mold. His ancestors have always been the notables, the benefactors of the Valley; he himself, although honored in France for his riches and his learning, has never felt at home among the "aliens"; when suddenly faced with his own people he has the usual "deep ancestral stirrings" à la Lewisohn. He assumes leadership, we are asked to believe, not because this is his only chance of saving his own life, family and property, or because he has a streak of daring and a taste for risk, or because he is a fundamentally brave and generous human being, or for any combination of these natural human motives, but because he is the chosen one of God, the paschal lamb of his people apprised of his Destiny on the Mount of Olives. To make the Lewisohnian chord complete the sex-race note is discreetly struck in the person of Iskouhi, personification of the outrage done her people, soul of Armenia, with whom Bagradian finds a peace and a plentitude (of course) that he had never known with Juliette, his French wife, the woman of the Gentiles. The latter, for her part, has her own powerful blood-stream on which she "insists relentlessly."

Secondly, there are the agencies which aid Bagradian—Allied intervention, historical in

A Holy Wafer for the Starving

THE FORTY DAYS OF MUSA DAGH, by Franz Werfel. Viking Press. \$3.

ACCORDING to the bourgeois critics, *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh* is an enduring masterpiece. It is a Book-of-the-Month Club choice and it has sold 114,000 copies at \$3. For us only these facts lend importance to the book. As a work of art it is neither great nor new. The unlikelike characters are built up by old-fashioned naturalistic devices. The style is pompous, over-decorated, calling for its images on outworn philosophies. Melodrama and pathos are squeezed out of situations which are tragic or comic. In the opening two hundred and fifty pages the boring catalogue of houses, gardens, faces, objects, are scarcely atoned for by a few passages of fine but dramatic narrative.

There are, however, three good reasons for the enormous success of this book in bourgeois circles. Turkish Armenia in 1915 is so exotic a subject that an uninspired book about it is more interesting than a similar book about America in the same period. People with leisure for 832 pages and \$3 to spend are in the market for escape—as witness the huge success of *Anthony Adverse*, *Death in the Afternoon*, *I Claudius*,—and Werfel's Armenia is made an exciting refuge.

More important, the fate of the Armenians at the hands of the nationalistic and militaristic Young Turkish "Revolution" forms an obvious parallel to that of the Jews under Hitler. To cover up their defeats, the Young Turks introduced the "treachery by a foreigner within our borders" motif into politics. The "treacherous" Armenian race must be exterminated. Greed for Armenian land and goods was aroused in the Turkish peasantry. Religious hatred added its fuel to the political fire. Town after town of Armenians was emptied, the able-bodied men conscripted into labor battalions and shot after their labors, the young women sold into harems, the rest led to the desert to die. If the phrase "starving Armenians" has become a cliché for abject want here is the reason. But although the Turks arrested an Armenian lawyer here,

and beat a mayor there, it is true that the rich, cautious, chauvinistic Armenians in the big towns often got off, ostentatiously shunning their "rebellious" brethren to preserve their own skins. Whether they went so far as the German Jewish bankers and paid Enver Pasha, the Turkish Hitler, Werfel does not say.

There was little resistance except by the five thousand inhabitants of the peaceful and flourishing valley of Musa Dagh who went up on their mountain, resisted the Turks for forty days and were rescued by Allied ships. This masterly defense was organized, according to Werfel, by one Gabriel Bagradian, the richest man of the district, lately returned from Paris, a man of refined education and a reserve officer in the Ottoman army. The battles, like everything in the book which is more factual than imaginative, are thrilling. Everything else in the book is distorted by Werfel's false thesis of predestination, salvation through suffering and the immutability

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this instance. Allegorically this strikes a responsive string in the bourgeois Jewish heart. (Although, for opposite political reasons the Allies did nothing for 30,000 Jews evacuated as "traitors" by the czar's armies.) One will recall the tragi-comic insistence of prominent Jews that "France, England and the U.S.A. could stop the Nazis if they wanted to!" The other agency is part of the basic tissues of Werfel's thought: order and religion. All Werfel's Armenians are resigned to the existing order. Turkey is their "destiny." Their only form of resistance is a struggle for the right to die decently. That they should enter political life as a solid minority group and by a patient conscious effort more heroic than a brave death overthrow the Turkish over-lords—this to Werfel's mind would not be "truly Armenian" (or "eternally Jewish"). His Armenians are tragically calm in the face of persecution, patient before the jealousy of barbarians and doomed to that suffering and defeat in which Werfel glories, and which, he believes, smelts their souls pure. When they go up on the mountain they put themselves unquestioningly in the hands of their mayors, their priests and their commander.

In order to make his meaning quite clear, Werfel puts a "revolutionary" party on the mountain. Their leader is a pathological case, curiously recalling the White Guardist Bunin's dream-revenge on Bolshevism, "Comrade Dozorny"; they themselves deserters, bandits, even "murkier" individuals. Of course their attempt at insurrection is fool-

ishly destructive, ignominiously crushed; their leader takes refuge in suicide. To further crush the infidel Werfel has the rescuing ships drawn to Musa Dagh by the flaming altar which the "revolutionary" brigands have blasphemously fired. The priest murmurs in ecstasy: "The evil only happened to enable God to show His Goodness."

The symbolism here is consoling to the Jewish bourgeois, for it shows that both God and the Allies are on their side. The Messiah, his mission accomplished, dies in lonely grandeur on Musa Dagh—Moses' Mount—where he has received the sign of his election. The lesson of this allegory—that salvation for the bourgeois Jew and all the bourgeoisie lies in Religion, Authority, the bourgeois democracies and, when all else fails, "the Inexplicable in us and above us"—is the key to the formidable sale of "The Forty Days of Musa Dagh."

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The Theatre

THERE are certain theatrical producers who from time to time fall victim to a curious bourgeois malady called success. As soon as they get "hits" something happens to them. Among other things they lose their taste for **THE NEW MASSES**. They care as much for a **NEW MASSES** review as they do for below-zero weather. In a word, we're forced to buy seats.

It's bad enough to lay out good revolutionary dollars for a seat but when the play turns out to have as much zip as Mr. Hearst's conscience, and when the seat is not only in the gallery but behind a pole that suffers from elephantiasis, and when **THE NEW MASSES** is crying for space in order to print reviews that are really important, this reviewer, although prepared to give his life for the movement, feels this is asking too much of his play-scourged body.

Not that *Accent on Youth* is a bad play. Far from it. It has some funny lines in it. It's profound in a terribly subterranean way. It's well made and well acted. The only trouble with it is that I saw it last month only when it was called *Ode to Liberty* or *Point Valaine* or something. They changed the actors. They changed the name, but the whipped cream inconsequence goes on forever. But not between these covers!

MICHAEL BLANKFORT.

Current Shows

Sailors of Cattaro, by Friederich Wolf. Civic Repertory. Far and away the most important full-length play in New York. The story of the Feb. 1, 1918 rebellion by rank and file sailors in the Austrian fleet. Its moments of masterly drama are impressively acted against the magnificent set by Mordecai Gorelik. Full of provocative problems for the revolutionary theatre. Attendance required of all **NEW MASSES** readers. Cheapest seat 30 cents (tax free).

Dostigayev. Artef Theatre (247 West 48th St.). Second part of Maxim Gorky's trilogy about the interesting, complex class forces that led up to the Bolshevik Revolution. The acting, scenic designs and translation (into Yiddish) are all one could want, but the tempo of the production prevents it from being wholly satisfactory. Followers of the Yiddish drama, however, should not miss it.

Recruits, Artef Theatre. Brilliant analysis of social forces in the Ghetto during the 1800-1850 period. If you understand Yiddish make sure to attend. An exquisite production.

Post Road. Ambassador. Inexpert claptrap about a kidnaped infant hidden in a tourist roadhouse. Weary wisecracks and surprise twist register a perfect zero.

Personal Appearance. Henry Miller. Intimate glimpses of a Hollywood artiste with enough superficial debunking to make the audience feel oh-so-iconoclastic. In its "150th crowded performance."

Rain from Heaven. Golden Theatre. The Theatre Guild's production of S. N. Behrman's play about the troubled house-guests that sponge on Lady Wingate. White Guard, German music critic exiled for being a Jew, American millionaire fascist promoter, his baby-doll wife—make a grand verbal mess with their views on Fascism, Communism,

Liberalism. And the playwright doesn't do much to clear the air unless it be tacit support of the very liberalism he takes pains to blast. Frequently brilliant but more often boring. All but the millionaire fascist give mediocre performances.

Waiting for Lefty. Fifth Avenue Theatre. (Broadway at 28th Street). March 3. The Press League presents the Group Theatre in Clifford Odets' powerful revolutionary one-act play about the 1934 taxi-drivers' strike. This program, which includes a number of divertissements, is arranged for the benefit of the Taxi Drivers Union at whose headquarters (108 W. 56th St.) tickets are on sale.

Laburnum Grove. Booth Theatre. Affable British suburbanite played well though sometimes overplayed by Edmund Gwenn, throws his household in a panic by casually describing his trade as counterfeiting. A drop of dramatic situation diluted to make three acts of middle-class banality which London theatre-goers kept going for fourteen months.

The Dance

WITH the presentation of her third recital of the season (Feb. 10, *Guild Theatre*) Martha Graham requires new considerations. Since her November program she has made a valuable indirect contribution to the revolutionary dance in the work of three members of her group: Anna Sokolow, Lily Mehlman and Sophy Maslow, whose performances were brilliant accomplishments in the Workers' Dance League programs. There is hardly a doubt that Miss Graham is to a degree responsible for the technical excellence which left-wing dancers have now attained even though she has had no connection with left-wing groups and even though her contribution is purely a matter of craft.

Her two new numbers are curiously indicative of her present position. "Praeludium" falls into a category of her work familiar to devotees: it is a deft, brief pattern communicating an isolate mood, in this case youthful excitement. Unlike "Praeludium," which adds little to her accomplishments, "Course" implies a new departure. It teases by hints of broader social meanings. Is there any significance—however tenuous—in the careful division of "characters" into "Three in Green," "Two in Red," "Two in Blue"—groups that preserve identity throughout the development? Is there sociological implication in the separate pursuits of these color-

groups, racing in competition of a kind, to the impulses of driving, relentless music? Or is it no more than a superb choreographic design flowing in rich and brilliant color with genuinely thrilling instants? If "Course" is a new departure Miss Graham has not clearly communicated her meaning. But if, despite this failing, it is a first reaching-out toward sociological expression one may look to her future compositions for a crystallization and for unequivocal meanings.

Meanwhile her program as a whole leaves one with the annoying knowledge that America's most brilliant dancer continues to deprive herself of the enormous potentialities which revolutionary awareness would offer her. As always the musical settings are a refreshing delight. As always she uses costume masterfully, balances plastic design in the group-dance ("Celebration") with flawless control, handles certain themes with terrific power. And she has added to certain repeat numbers a new, welcome lyricism. Taken separately most Graham items are successful, but their perpetual avoidance of clear and large meaning ("Dance in Four Parts") deprives them of that much added power. They make a surprisingly narrow totality.

Such an esthetic audience as the one which assisted does not care about these facts; but if Graham is to become a broad cultural force her work will have to break through its present willful limitations. "Course" may be the beginning of her new direction—tentative venture of an artist aware of revolutionary currents around her, whose creative objectives are as yet undefined but who feels very definitely that exquisite virtuosity is not enough.

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Art

Mural Painting in America

BY common definition a mural painting is "a painting on a wall." From the viewpoint of broad classification it is distinguished from other forms of painting by its size and location. But these qualities do not in themselves serve adequately to differentiate mural from easel painting. There are easel paintings which are as large or larger than many mural paintings, yet are essentially easel pictures. The essential difference consists not in size and scale, but in the *public character* of the mural.

In the past, and particularly during the Renaissance in Italy when it had its most widespread development, the mural was associated predominantly with public buildings where it glorified the ruler of the day and served the Church as a vehicle for religious propaganda. The recent Mexican mural movement, was almost entirely a public institution, devoted to the dissemination of social ideas. But during the last few years of American capitalism the mural has been subjected to multiple abuse.

To begin with, the public character of the mural has been perverted; under our system of private property individuals have segregated the mural from the public. Since only the wealthy can afford to own murals they are shaping the mural character either directly by dictating the subject-matter or indirectly by selecting an artist who will "out of his own choice" produce the kind of painting desired. This latter method is most effective in moulding the artist, because the nature of the process is hidden by the capitalist market.

The second abuse consists in the capitalist class' utilization of the mural for its own propaganda in public and semi-public places. Ranging from such blatant stuff as Arthur Covey's "Worcester War Memorial" (in the recent exhibition at the Grand Central Galleries), a typical example of the romanticization of war for profits, under the guise of

patriotism, this propaganda includes paintings which paint forthright lies glorifying Big Business, such as Dunbar Beck's decorations for the Ever-Ready Label Corporation. Beck's work deserves examination, since it typifies one of the ways in which business uses art. The Ever-Ready Label Corporation announced a competition for these decorations, one of the obligatory themes being "The Loyalty of Labor to Industry." Beck delivered the goods, and handsomely. A horizontal panel, divided into three sections; on the left, "Unemployment," depicted by several huddled figures; on the right, "Strikes" with some fiendish-looking fellows doing the striking; in the center, two fine upstanding men, one a worker and the other "Industry," shaking hands like good democratic fellows, while God with a white beard (or maybe it's the old man "Loyalty" in this case) banishes both "Unemployment" and "Strikes." And so capital and labor get together and solve that nasty bad depression.

Other painting typical of capitalist propaganda finds expression in school book versions of history. Benton's Indiana mural may not be as saccharine in form as the above two cases but his American history is just as false an idealization. Then there is a large category of work which totally evades the social responsibility of the mural painter. Finally, by virtue of its ownership of the public walls the capitalist class exercises a censorship which is all the more effective because it operates under the cover of "free choice." Artists who worked for the P.W.A. were in most instances told to choose their own subject, but when a certain Philadelphia artist decided to carry out a revolutionary theme he was viciously attacked; and when Paul Cadmus painted a politically-innocent portrayal of some sailors "on shore leave" the Admirals rose in high dudgeon and denounced his slander of their navy, refusing

to permit his sacrilege in the group exhibited in Washington, D. C. Artists working on the C.W.A. mural projects know how much chance an artist has of doing a painting of even faintly-revolutionary meaning. Only when an event like the destruction of the Rivera mural by Rockefeller becomes public does one get a chance to observe the workings of this subtle capitalist censorship.

The hysterical cry of "propaganda" by the capitalist at the sight of revolutionary art is of course merely an attempt to cover up the fact of his own propaganda.

STEPHEN ALEXANDER.

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Stuff of Life

ROBERT FORSYTHE

AUGUSTE ESCOFFIER, master chef, died at Monte Carlo on February 12 at the age of eighty-nine. Doris Duke, richest young woman in the world, was married on February 13 to James H. R. Cromwell, son of Mrs. E. T. Stotesbury, of Philadelphia, and left at noon on the Italian liner Conte di Savoia on a trip which will take them around the world. Frank de Martino, who had deserted his wife and five children because he could not support them on \$7 a week, returned to his Brooklyn home on February 14 and was arrested promptly on a charge of abandonment.

M. Escoffier, the "Chef of Kings," was famed for a thousand dishes, among them peche Melba, sauce American Escoffier and quiche Lorraine. He cooked for kings and emperors, for Rothschilds and the Duke of Westminster, for Harrimans and Goulds and the Kaiser of Germany who had a penchant for ornate dishes. For King George of England, Escoffier used to prepare a special cream cheese of his own invention, and often went especially to London to supervise its preparation in the Savoy kitchens. In memory of the assassinated Princess Elizabeth of Denmark, he named one of his greatest creations soufflé Elizabeth, and the Danish state decorated him for his services. The French Republic made him a chevalier of the Legion of Honor and Italy bestowed upon him the title of Knight of the Crown. Royalty of all lands delighted to do him honor and grand dukes sought him out in the steam of kitchens to tell him their appreciation of his artistry and give him crested cuff links and ribboned crosses.

Food, it has been definitely established, is a delightful ingredient of life. There are those, and M. Escoffier's clients belongs among them, who need the stimulation which comes from great culinary art, and there are others who are grateful for food. What M. Escoffier failed to leave behind was a recipe for beans which would make them as palatable on their seven hundredth appearance as on their first.

But if M. Escoffier has not felt the need of solving the problem of the non-dukes, the

obligation has not been overlooked by others. The practice is not so prevalent as during the years immediately following 1929 but in those happy days any dull Monday morning was sure to see a food plan offered by a department of Columbia University and inaugurated at a banquet attended by Mrs. Roosevelt. The purpose of these gatherings was to prove that any worthy family of five could get along famously on \$1.19 a week. A sample meal would be eaten by the Lady from the White House and assembled guests who could be certain of reinforcements upon leaving the groaning board, and the menus for the week would be published in conjunction with the story. The menu for Monday would read as follows:

- Breakfast
- Oath of allegiance to the flag and a trace of gruel
- Luncheon
- Hominy grits and prayer
- Dinner
- Beans

With this diet it was maintained that hunger would flee the land, along with the inhabitants. The government, through its more distinguished representatives and assisted by ladies from Park Avenue who could always be counted upon in a public cause which had to do with getting the poor fed cheaply, was prepared to back Columbia with the weight of its authority. If it should at the same time feel the need of destroying the potato crop, that might be set down to the necessity of carrying out an agricultural plan calculated to make the worker proud of the resourcefulness of his native land.

The general policy of inventing diets which could utilize the waste products of coal, mineral oil and leftovers from an A. & P. Saturday night has given way to more specialized advice on the virtues of fine food. It was only last week that Dean Gildersleeve of Barnard College announced to an alumnae luncheon of two hundred graduates that the old school had "gone domestic." According to The New York Herald Tribune,

this was "her jesting way of announcing the publication of 'Barnard's Own Recipe Book,' which is to be sold at 25 cents a copy for the Alumnae Fund."

Among the recipes was the following:

ROAST SQUAB At the Deanery

Choose a medium-sized squab, not too small. Do not split it but leave it whole, tying the legs close to the body. Cover it with dripping (from chicken, if possible), salt and pepper and put in a frying or roasting pan in a quick oven for about ten minutes, leaving it for about one hour in a slow oven. When cooked put about a teaspoonful of good brown gravy over the breast and serve on hot buttered toast.

—VIRGINIA GILDERSLEEVE, '99.

Aside from the difficulty of snaring a squab in any but the outermost reaches of Long Island, there might be the further necessity of urging the Consolidated company to restore the gas for one more meal, but it could be granted that Dean Gildersleeve had pointed the way out of an embarrassing social dilemma. It is to be admitted that an undercurrent of discontent has been prevalent lately among guests invited to homes on relief. After the usual canapes and cocktails, there was the certainty that beans would follow and only a guest trained in the stern school of social behavior and steeled by contact with the Salvation Army could be expected to bear indefinitely with such fare. The substitution of squab, washed down if needed by a magnum of Mumm's Extra Dry, would be a welcome innovation and one sure to give the host eminence in his immediate circle.

As for Miss Duke it may only be said that her nuptials were celebrated most fully in the pages of The New York World-Telegram, which gave its second and third pages complete to the event, after trying hard to outface the Hauptmann trial and the mobilization of Italian troops on the front page. Frank de Martino appears only as an incident in history.

Hollywood Makes "History"

COSTUME films (Hollywoodese for historical films) have always been used principally to bring romance into our lives, and a sense of honor and honesty and pride of our noble bourgeois institutions. This ideology has been the driving force behind every historical film since *Quo Vadis*.

And ever since Ernst Lubitsch scored a hit with his German-made *Du Barry* (released here as *Passion*) the French Revolution has been a source of inspiration for celluloid historians. In practically every case the Revolution was utilized as a backdrop for the romantic exploits of a pair of lovers—a film version of a Music Hall tableaux—which was true of even the most sympathetic bourgeois film on the subject, made the pre-Hitler *Danton*. The procedure was very clear: both by the omission of honest historical detail

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and by the use of innuendo the French peasants and workers were discredited and attacked.

But even historical films have got to keep up with the times. Thus Alexander Korda (who put the British film on the map with his *Private Life of Henry VIII*) now presents us with the most brazen and offensive costume film that has come out of any studio to date. *The Scarlet Pimpernel* (United Artists) attacks the French peasants, the workers and the Revolution with an openness and class-consciousness that should make the French Royalist, Russian White Guards, Hitler, Mosley, and Hearst eternally happy. It took four men to write this screen drama from the cheap novel by Baroness Orczy: Korda's two historical robots, Biro and Wimperis, Robert Sherwood and S. N. Behrman (author of *Rain from Heaven*).

Leslie Howard as Sir Percy is the leader of a group of young and noble British gentlemen devoting their lives to saving culture and refinement (the nobility of the French Court) from the cruel and savage hands of those unspeakable aborigenes, the French workers and peasants. There is nothing subtle about this film: it says very emphatically (as does Hearst) that there is nothing so low as a proletarian. As for Mr. Howard, all that can be said is that the role gives him a chance to strut his stuff in the manner of *Berkeley Square*. In a couple of years people will be comparing him with George Arliss. And then he will be dead.

PETER ELLIS.

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Between Ourselves

NEW MASSES readers and friends in Omaha and Council Bluffs are invited to the weekly meetings of the newly organized NEW MASSES Club, at the Studio Inn, 19th and Jackson Streets, Omaha, every Sunday evening at 6. The Inn serves a special 35c dinner at this hour, but those who wish may merely come in for the business of the club, which is to carry on discussions on the basis of NEW MASSES articles, to sponsor NEW MASSES lecturers here, to push the circulation of the magazine, and to carry on campaigns endorsed or urged by THE NEW MASSES.

Meridel Le Sueur's statement of her literary position is the third of a series of discussions on literature and the revolutionary movement.

Jacob Burck, formerly art editor of THE NEW MASSES, is the author of *Hunger and Revolt*, a volume of cartoons just published by The Daily Worker. We believe that this record of proletarian history in terms of art is one of the most remarkable volumes that has appeared in years. A detailed review will appear in an early issue.

New Masses Lectures

Friday, Feb. 22—John L. Spivak on "Wall Street's Fascist Conspiracy" at Royal Mansion, 1315 Boston Road, Bronx, N. Y. Auspices: Branch 116 and Schule No. 35 International Workers Order.

Sunday, Feb. 24—John L. Spivak on "Wall Street's Fascist Conspiracy" Junior Order Hall, 33 Smith St., Paterson, N. J. Auspices: Anti-War and Fascist Group.

Sunday, Feb. 24—Edward Dahlberg and Leon Dennen, A Symposium on "The Jew in America," Co-op Auditorium, 2700 Bronx Park East. Auspices: Co-op Library.

Monday, Feb. 25—John L. Spivak on "Wall Street's Fascist Conspiracy," Cultural Federation, 266 East 78th St. Auspices: Yorkville Branch American League Against War and Fascism.

Monday, Feb. 25—Isidor Schneider on "The Writer Turns Left," at Jack London Club headquarters, 224 West Front St., Plainfield, N. J. Auspices: Jack London Club.

Tuesday, Feb. 26—John L. Spivak on "Fascism and Anti-Semitism," Woodside Labor Temple, 4132—58th St., Woodside, L. I. Auspices: Queens Forum.

Wednesday, Feb. 27—John L. Spivak, "Fascism and Anti-Semitism," at Y.M.H.A., 4910—14th Ave. Auspices: American League Against War and Fascism, Boro Park Branch.

Thursday, Feb. 28—John L. Spivak, "Wall Street's Fascist Conspiracy," at Hunts Point Palace, 163rd St. and Southern Blvd. Auspices Hunts Point Branch American League Against War and Fascism.

Friday, March 1—John L. Spivak on "Wall Street's Fascist Conspiracy," Casa D'Amor, Mermaid Ave. and West 31st St., Coney Island. Auspices: Rose Pastor Stokes Branch I.L.D.

Friday, March 1—George Sklar, co-author of *Stevadore*, and *Peace on Earth*, on "Theatre and Class Struggle," Brownsville Youth Club, 105 Thatford Ave., Brooklyn.

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PROGRAM

FRI. MARCH 1

10 A. M.-3 P. M.

POTEMKIN (Eisenstein)
 DESERTER (Pudovkin)

3 P. M.-6:30 P. M.

STORM OVER ASIA (Pudovkin)
 DAY IN MOSCOW (short)
 UNLUCKY TRUCK (cartoon)

6:30 P. M.-11:30 P. M.

END OF ST. PETERSBURG (Pudovkin)
 OLD AND NEW (Eisenstein)

SAT. MARCH 2

10 A. M.-3 P. M.

ROAD TO LIFE (Ekk)
 MOROZKO (short)
 NEWSREEL

3 P. M.-6:30 P. M.

IVAN THE TERRIBLE (Tarich)
 DORVOZ (short)

6:30 P. M.-11:30 P. M.

MOTHER (Pudovkin)
 THREE SONGS ABOUT LENIN (Vertov)



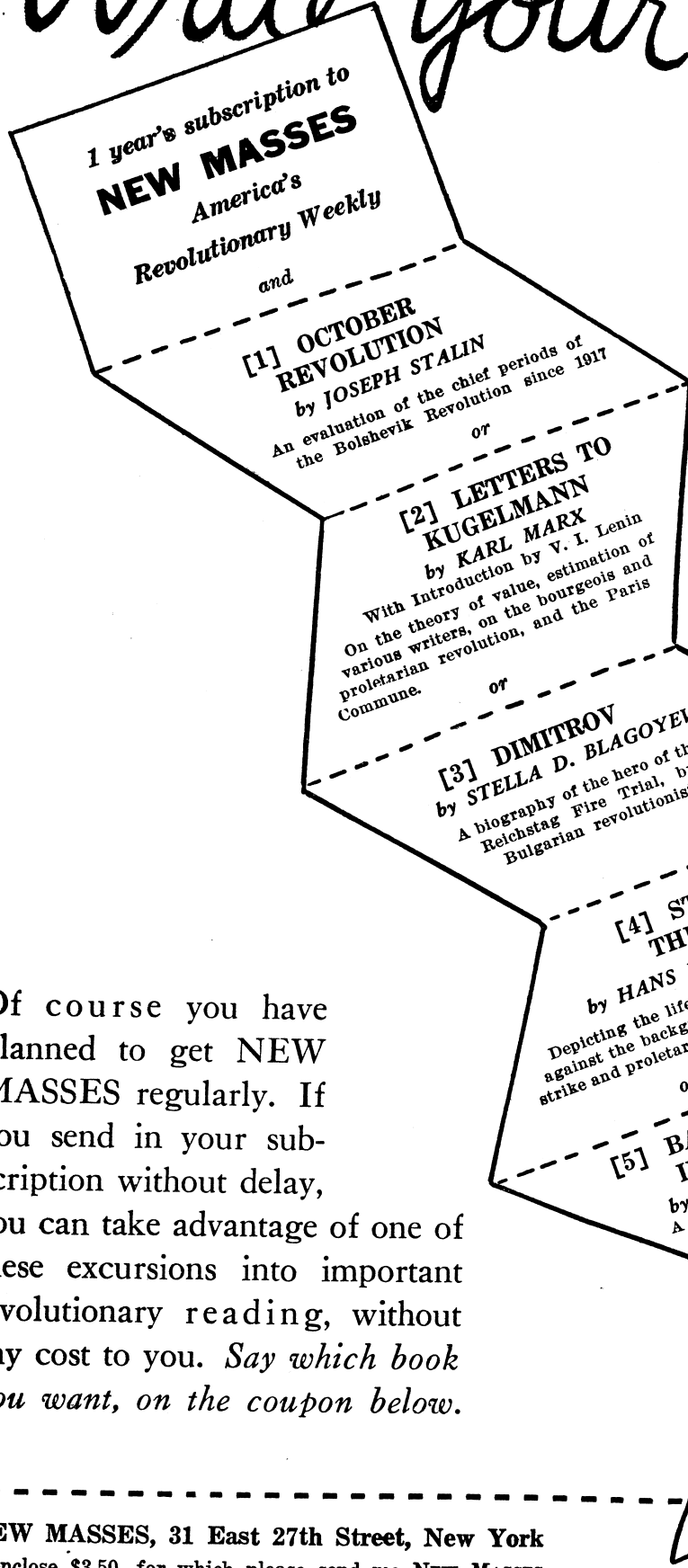
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