

**Let 'Em Eat  
Pink Slips**

**Tory Rubber Stamps  
Make Their Mark**

**ADAM LAPIN**

**Don't Burn  
the Books!**

**A Survey on the WPA  
Cultural Projects**

**STANLEY M. ISAACS**

**SYLVIA SIDNEY**

**FRANCHOT TONE**

**GEORGE SELDES**

**BENNETT CERF**

**JOHN HOWARD LAWSON**

**MURIEL DRAPER**

**WHIT BURNETT**

**ARTHUR KOBER**

**DONALD OGDEN STEWART**

**CARL RANDAU**

**LOUIS P. BIRK**

**EDWARD C. ASWELL**

**ROBERT M. COATES**

**Chicago  
Strikes Hearst**

**THOMAS RYAN**

**A Catholic Appeals  
to Lift the Embargo**

**Cartoons by Gropper,  
Richter, Others**

**ON THE COVER  
William Randolph Hearst  
TURN TO PAGE 5**

**JAN. 24, 1939**

*New*  
**MASSES**

FIFTEEN CENTS



*Wright*

THIS magazine will unveil its new club to readers and friends, Saturday evening, January 21. We've named the place the KEYNOTE CLUB, for in its gala purlieus NEW MASSES will present several times a week an unlimited variety of cultural and social events, keyed to the interests of the moment. The address is 201 West 52nd St., New York City. The christening party will feature the first playing of the records of our *From Spirituals to Swing* concert. There are thirty-six twelve-inch sides of recordings, covering the entire concert. Dance music will be played by a small hot band. Admission is 65 cents.

Joseph North, war correspondent, will be chairman of NEW MASSES' next event at the New School for Social Research, Sunday evening, January 22, when Sender Garlin, *Daily Worker* Moscow correspondent, will make his first public appearance since his recent return after three years in the USSR. The capacity is 450 and reservations still open can be made by calling us immediately. A large part of the meeting will be given to answering questions from the audience. Further details may be found in an ad on page 31.

The KEYNOTE CLUB will be the place where every Thursday night we will present the Keynote Forum, which will take up the big news of the week, with the person most closely connected with that news as commentator. Again the agenda will favor as many questions and comments as the audience can fire at the speaker. There will be a regular chairman, a regular admission of 35 cents, and an unusual chance to participate in discussions of topical urgency. We have enrolled several distinguished speakers already. Full announcement cannot be made now but the first and, at present, mysterious speaker will appear Thursday, January 26.

One of America's most impressive and original dancers, Anna Sokolow, is rehearsing her unit for her second NEW MASSES concert, Sunday evening, February 26, at the Alvin Theater. She will present for the first time in New York her original composition, *Façade Esposizione Italiana*, which was performed first at the Bennington Dance Festival in the summer of 1937. The dance has as its subject fascist culture and philosophy and their pernicious effect on the true creative genius of the Italian people. Miss Sokolow will also introduce three more original numbers. For further details see the ad on page 29.

NEW MASSES invites all writers, actors, composers, and others who feel they have something to contribute to the success of our newly formed club, to get in touch with us.

In next week's issue we will carry an important article by David Ramsey on the national economic prospects for 1939. The consequences of the tory sabotage of WPA funds affects basic economic trends so that a candid stock-taking of the situation becomes necessary.

Ruth McKenney's new book, *Industrial Valley*, will be published next month by Harcourt, Brace & Co. It is the story of the major industrial struggle that took place in the 1930's in Akron, Ohio, great-

est rubber-producing center in the world, and of what this struggle meant to the 300,000 people in Akron who make their living, directly or indirectly, from the factories of Goodyear, Goodrich, Firestone, etc.

The Writers School, established by the League of American Writers, announces that two new courses have been added to its winter curriculum—one on pulp-fiction writing with social significance, conducted by Jean Karsavina, and a four-term course on Shakespeare and his writings, taught by Bernard D. N. Grebanier. Benjamin Appel will conduct the course in the creative short story, and Kenneth Fearing will teach technique of verse. Other subjects in the curriculum include radio and labor journalism and publicity. The new term begins February 6, and registration is now being taken at Room

803, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York City.

A School of Poetry, conducted by the Labor Poets of America, opened January 18, with a schedule of six classes conducted by the school's regular instructor, Eli Siegel, and six lectures by outstanding poets including Sterling Brown, Muriel Rukeyser, John Gassner, and Alfred Hayes. Sessions are held every Wednesday night at the Ten Eyck Studios, 116 West 21st St., New York City.

And the American Artists School, 131 West 14th St., New York City, announces that registration for the spring term is on until January 28, with classes beginning January 30. Courses include drawing, painting, sculpture, anatomy, lithography, etching, water color, photography, poster design, and social satire.

Lou Hirshman, whose photo ca-

ricature of Chamberlain appeared in last week's issue, is exhibiting fourteen examples of his work, from February 1 to February 20, at the ACA Gallery in Philadelphia. Mr. Hirshman is also teaching a class in cartooning at the Philadelphia Workers School.

Friends of William Gropper are giving a party—"celebrating four decades of Gropper"—in honor of the famous cartoonist's birthday, January 21. The affair will feature such well known personages as Harold Rome, Sam Jaffe, Marc Blitzstein, Albert Ammons, Meade Lux Lewis, Si-Lan-Chen, Jack Guilford, Lillian Taiz, and Milly Gordon, and there will be "dancing, drinking, dunking, and doings." The place: Simpson Studio, fourth floor, Steinway Hall, 113 West 57th St., New York City. The time: Saturday night, at 9 o'clock.

## Who's Who

ADAM LAPIN is the Washington correspondent of the *Daily Worker*. . . Alvah C. Bessie, who occupies a prominent position as a short-story writer and novelist, recently returned from Spain where he served with the International Brigade. He is a former literary editor of the Brooklyn *Daily Eagle*. . . Tom Davin, who writes us a letter on Catholics and the Spanish embargo, is a Catholic and is editor of Sheridan House, book publishers. . . Samuel Putnam is a well known author, translator, and literary critic. . . D. J. Struik is an editor of *Science and Society* and a member of the faculty of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. . . Stephen Peabody has contributed to NEW MASSES before. . . Millen Brand's new novel, *The Heroes*, which concerns a group of Spanish-American War veterans, will be published shortly.

## Flashbacks

JANUARY 22: "This day, in 1673, was started the first official postal service out of New York. Governor Lovelace had ordered a 'sworn postman' to start once each month for Boston by way of Hartford and to return within thirty days. Only snow, or rain, or heat, or gloom of night could stay this courier." Thus reads an account of an early example of the radical phenomenon of Government in Business. The quote comes from an example of Government in Books, last year's *New York Almanac*, one of 180 volumes put out by the Federal Writers Project. *Memo*: There may be no more such books unless you give your congressman a good stiff working over via telegram today. . . Tories, recalling their recent efforts to persuade labor to die for Dies, are now trying a simpler slogan on the unemployed. It is simply "Die!" And in this week's campaign to eliminate a mere million Americans from the relief rolls, the tories remind us of the march of the unemployed in St. Petersburg, Jan. 22, 1905. Led by a priest who was a police provocateur, the hungry workers who asked for economic assistance were fired on by the czar's soldiers, who killed five hundred, wounded three thousand.

## THIS WEEK

NEW MASSES, VOL. XXX, No. 5

January 24, 1939

Let 'em Eat Pink Slips by Adam Lapin . . . . .	3
Success Story A Poem by Alfred Hayes . . . . .	4
Chicago Strikes Hearst by Thomas Ryan . . . . .	5
Editorial Comment . . . . .	9
Some Remarks on Race Hatred by Robert Forsythe . . . . .	12
Peace Grows 85 Percent by Samuel Sillen . . . . .	13
Don't Burn the Books! A Survey on the WPA Arts Projects . . . . .	15
United American Sculptors' Show . . . . .	17
Solo Flight A Short Story by Alvah C. Bessie . . . . .	18
Reader's Forum . . . . .	20

### REVIEW AND COMMENT

A Literary Pogrom by Samuel Putnam . . . . .	22
Marxist Theory by D. J. Struik . . . . .	23
Negroes Against the Confederacy by Stephen Peabody . . . . .	24
The Real Don Juan by Barbara Giles . . . . .	25
Brontë Sisters by Millen Brand . . . . .	25
A Magazine for Progressives by Joseph Starobin . . . . .	26
Brief Review by Milton Meltzer . . . . .	26

### SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

Church of and for the People by Ruth McKenney . . . . .	27
Roots of Treason by James Dugan . . . . .	27
Szigeti, Petri, and Goodman by John Sebastian . . . . .	29
Dancer's Return by Owen Burke . . . . .	31

Art work by Soriano (cover), Ad Reinhardt, Getz, William Gropper, Mischa Richter, Louis Ferstadt, Fred Ellis, Charles Martin, Chet La More, Malman.

Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification direct to us rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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Ad Reinhardt

## Let 'Em Eat Pink Slips

The Tory Rubber Stamps Make Their Mark

ADAM LAPIN

Washington.

WITH the Sheppard committee's report as their bible, the Republicans and their friends who still wear the Democratic label have launched a new crusade for honesty in government. Our tory legislators have pinned the halo of self-sacrifice over their drive to end "politics in relief."

Although as politicians they would stand to gain from the exertion of political pressures on WPA, they hold as statesmen that this would be wicked and un-American. Relief funds must go directly to the unemployed. Our WPA workers must be free from coercion and macing. They have said so in their speeches.

Even the ever popular catchword of economy to balance the budget has been more or less shoved to the background. After all, these passionate apostles of truth, justice, and other eternal verities would not want to punish the unemployed in their first substantial reduction of government spending. They are determined that no needy American shall starve. This too they have said in their speeches.

A cut of \$150,000,000 in the President's recommendation of \$875,000,000 as a deficiency grant for relief was of course only a necessary step in the cleansing of corrupt practices from the work-relief setup. Undoubtedly the senators, untrammelled by rigid limits on debate and five-minute rules in the discussion of amendments, will explain all this at greater length than the representatives.

Maybe, some day, diligent research workers

will check the forensics of these patriotic law-makers against their own skullduggery, their own machine politics, their own patronage setups. That will make a story worth reading. But as the record stands, there is no dearth of facts to show that the cellophane of old-fashioned oratory has rarely been used to package more complete cynicism or more thoroughgoing deception.

Not that the practice of using words to express their opposite is new in American politics. This art is well developed, and reached something of a zenith during the furore over the Reorganization Bill, when Frank Gannett became a champion of liberalism against the fascist scheming of Franklin Roosevelt.

It is, however, a particularly refined form of cruelty for politicians who are pursuing purely political ends in the narrowest and worst sense of the term to deprive at least one million WPA workers of their only livelihood in the name of a crusade to end politics in relief.

There is, of course, no earthly connection between firing these workers and increasing the honesty or non-partisanship of WPA administration. Assume the worst: assume that WPA is rife with corruption—there is still not the slightest reason for penalizing the unemployed workers or the workers on the rolls. The only possible argument that can be made along these lines is that politics in relief will be eliminated to the extent that

relief itself is wiped out. The reactionaries have not said this; it is unquestionably what they are thinking.

They have made it amply clear that they have no intention of adopting any practical measures to improve the WPA setup so as to end any discriminatory practices that may exist.

President Roosevelt took an important step toward raising the standards of administrative personnel on WPA. He issued an order which would have gone into effect on January 10 to place approximately two thousand employees in WPA headquarters here, and 35,000 supervisory workers in the field, under Civil Service.

One does not have to consider Civil Service the Mecca of honest and progressive government to realize the distinct advantages of this move. Every administrative worker on WPA would have to take a stiff examination. Incompetents would be weeded out. Those who made the grade could not be fired because they wouldn't do favors for some representative or senator.

The House Appropriations Subcommittee, which recommended the \$150,000,000 reduction in WPA funds, likewise recommended nullifying the President's order. The advocates of ending politics in relief voted down an amendment which would have incorporated the President's order—offered by Representative Ramspeck of Georgia, one of the sincerest advocates of actual improvement in the nation's Civil Service. Those who opposed

Ramspeck's amendment argued that it would freeze WPA's present staff into the government's employ. This is true of course. It is equally true of any extension in Civil Service. What the crusaders for non-partisan administration of relief were afraid of was a threat to their own little patronage machines back home, to their ability to get supervisors on WPA fired and hired at will.

It would be unfair, however, to assume that the eloquent orators lack a solution for the problem. They have several schemes. One, as a matter of fact, was passed by the House. Proposed by an upstate New York Republican, W. Sterling Cole, it would do no more or less than prevent any employee of WPA from influencing any other WPA employee in regard to political questions.

The meaning of this is simple enough. Workers on WPA may engage in no political activities whatsoever. Even an invitation to a meeting where politics is discussed could easily be construed as a violation of the law. To stop alleged political activities by WPA officials, the reactionaries have hit at the civil rights of the unemployed. True, the House, during the frenzied closing moments of the session which adopted the relief bill, also passed an amendment by one of the leading House liberals, H. Jerry Voorhis of California, which is aimed solely at stopping coercion by supervisory workers and foremen. Nevertheless, the Cole amendment still stands, although it may be removed in conference between the House and the Senate.

An even more handsome scheme to solve the relief problem is the official Republican panacea which has been steadily picking up support among Southern Democrats. The idea is to turn administration of relief back to the states, and let the local politicians have the gravy. The President said about the last word on the subject when he told the House in his special relief message that anyone who expects this to end politics in relief "is either insincere or ignorant of the realities of local American politics." Whatever else they may be, the take-relief-out-of-politics crusaders are not ignorant of local machine politics.

Those who view this whole problem seriously know that American politics is no rose garden. They know too that, despite all the horrifying visions presented by hysterical columnists, the New Deal does not command a vast army of federal workers running into the millions. The primaries last spring and summer proved that. The big city political machines are run by reactionaries. Patronage is unfortunately for the most part in the hands of tory Democrats.

As a study of political pressures on government workers, the Sheppard report is interesting both for what it says and what it does not say. The fact remains that a committee run exclusively by enemies of the New Deal, with a staff of twenty investigators and scores of newspapers ready to supply tips as well as publicity, found only one important open-and-shut case in WPA of large-scale

activity on behalf of a New Deal candidate. This was in Kentucky where, as Harry Hopkins pointed out, political campaigns are still waged with all the intensity of old-time feuds.

The New Deal doesn't have to coerce WPA workers to vote for liberal candidates. Reactionaries must of necessity use formidable pressures or illusory promises. There is more of this than is generally known, and the Sheppard committee was strangely silent on this phase of the problem.

Herbert Benjamin, secretary-treasurer of the Workers Alliance, sent the committee a letter in which he charged that the WPA in Missouri is "controlled and dominated by the Pendergast machine and we are disposed to believe the charges of Governor Stark that WPA is being misused in the interests of certain candidates." He enclosed a letter from local Alliance people to the effect that Matthew Murray, the state administrator, is tied in with Pendergast and was getting funds from Kansas City at the same time that he was being paid by WPA.

It didn't take a letter from Benjamin to tell the Sheppard committee that Missouri

politics are a mess. For two years WPA workers have been maced by Boss Tom's henchmen. Labor's Non-Partisan League learned about that a few months ago when it entered Kansas City politics and tried to elect a liberal mayor. But the Sheppard committee ruled solemnly that the whole affair was out of its jurisdiction.

There is one kind of politics in relief that probably cannot be curbed by legislation; it is none the less reprehensible. It is the kind practiced by a Michigan Republican, unfortunately elected to the House, who promised WPA workers \$60 a month instead of a measly \$44 if they voted for him. It is the kind practiced by diehard Tories who promised jobs to the unemployed and Townsend pensions to the aged.

It is the kind that is being practiced now in the debate on this whole relief issue. Republicans want to eliminate WPA. They want to restore a dole. They want to destroy the entire structure of New Deal laws and agencies. They want to "get" President Roosevelt on the first big issue before the new Congress. That is politics. Not much doubt

★ ★ ★

### Success Story

Ride me around in your big blue car.  
Where shall we eat tonight? At Maxie's.  
Afterwards, the premiere. The dress-suit applause.  
A quick scotch. And fast taxis.  
Then Geraldine, smiling between the doors.  
Thus our lives.

O the freedom of a thousand a week!

But those bigeyed on the curbs,  
Those flattened against the restaurant windows,  
Would they suspect  
The agony of this wealth,  
The soul hiding here and suffering under the starched shirt?  
And the headaches, the constant depression,  
The terrors of failure between rehearsal and opening night?

Of course there is my lawyer. 5 percent  
My agent. 10 percent  
My broker's fees.

The sleeplessness at night. I took a room with a river view.  
And the pains here, my heart, you know.  
I'll leave. I must get away. What shall I do?  
Do you think I would like it in Mexico?

Let us unearth restaurants with mama's cooking  
Drive the big cadillac through neighborhoods where we were young  
Exercise the simple heart under the expensive tweed.  
Nevertheless we must shave twice a day  
Nevertheless we must have three guest rooms and a car  
Nevertheless, despising these,  
There are our agent's,  
Our lawyer's,  
Our doctor's,  
Our broker's fees.

ALFRED HAYES.



about that. And the unemployed are expected to pay for it with a million WPA jobs less in June than they have today.

So far the Republicans have gotten away with it. From their point of view, the only trouble with this pretty picture is that they have promised too well and too much. Some day those WPA workers in Michigan may come around and ask about that \$60 a month. The pensioners may ask about pensions. The people may begin to take this business of politics in relief seriously and ask that the unemployed no longer be used as a political football. That may happen before this session of Congress is over, not to speak of 1940.

★

### Dominion of Kennedy

LOCAL English Tories are still telling how the Buckingham Palace social mechanics went to work on Joe Kennedy, our St. James man.

The Duke of Kent was instructed to go up to Mrs. Kennedy at the reception, chat with her, and when she used an American slang phrase guffaw with delight, saying: "How clever of you Ameddicans. You use one phrase when we old-fashioned Britishers have to stumble through a whole paragraph. How clever. What?" The palace pentrymen would then roll up the goose-grease buckets and the royal trowel would go into action.

Chamberlain would ask Joey to come and see his wonderful tulip-beds and as they would be gandering the bulbs, Neville would whisper, "Kennedy, old fellow, I want to tell you something that I haven't even told Halifax. . . ."

The total result was that the Kennedy menage returned home walking on a continuous path of high-altitude cirro-cumulous clouds. Capital reporters are already calling him Walter Hines Kennedy.

Incidentally, this sort of social seduction is the whole secret of the British ruling-class domination. See MacDonald, Thomas, Indian nobility, Wilson, and all our ambassadors.

★

### Godesberg to Gettysburg

ENGLAND'S new political party, the non-partisan Democratic Union, is becoming the rallying point for all parliamentary figures opposed to the Chamberlain sellout.

Its program includes: individual freedom; political and religious liberty; complete disarmament; compulsory service; Air Raid Protection speedup; development of home agriculture; protection of mercantile marine; economic planning for the whole empire; refusal to surrender any colonies of mandated territories; pacts with France and the United States; stern resistance to totalitarian bullying.

The new party's motto, believe it or not, is taken from Lincoln's Gettysburg speech which insists "that government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the earth."

Watch it grow.

# Chicago Strikes Hearst

Midwest Solidarity . . . With Benefit of Clergy

THOMAS RYAN

Thomas Ryan is the pseudonym of one of the leading Hearst strikers. For obvious reasons he is unable to write under his own name.—THE EDITORS.

THE strikebreakers and the scabs sat down to the company feast. Napkins unfolded. Tiny slips of paper fluttered out. On each was mimeographed: "We hope you enjoy your free meal—from your brothers on strike."

Silence fell. Guilty glances were exchanged. Many rose and left. Few remained for the strip teases and other delights provided by the Hearst management to bolster the nerve of the finks.

The next morning, still deep in his cups, one scab sat hunched over his slip and sadly shook his head as if trying to comprehend.

The strikebreakers and the scabs, badly shaken, returned to their work the following day. They opened envelopes. White feathers drifted out. And the next day they opened envelopes containing yellow sheets of paper labeled, "This paper is yellow, too," with selections from the poetry of the ages on courage, honor, and integrity.

The famous labor leader addressing the strikers said, "You must break their nerve before they break yours." The strikers were following his formula with telling success.

It was not by accident that Imperial Hearst picked Chicago for the big push on the American Newspaper Guild. Smarting from guild strikes which had been won in Milwaukee and Seattle, San Simeon's lord laid his lines carefully for a major assault. Chicago had a history and a reputation—a history of bad politics and crime, a reputation for cracking down on workers who dared defy the dollar dynasties. Chicago was the city of the Haymarket martyrs, Upton Sinclair's packing-town *Jungle*, the massacre at Republic Steel. Police never were neutral in labor disputes. Ancient reactionaries ruled the Chicago Federation of Labor.

Chicago life was cheap. Remnants of prohibition mobs still prowled and could be rallied quickly for genteel use of blackjack and rubber hose. Chicago was ideal.

The guild, organized in 1933 among editorial employees, voted in 1937 to broaden its base and attempt to give collective bargaining to all workers in newspaper plants who did not have the protection of legitimate trade unions. The guild went CIO after a year in the American Federation of Labor.

Chicago has two Hearst newspapers. The *Herald and Examiner* greets the dawn. The *American* closes the day. On both, guild or-

ganization went forward rapidly. In July 1937, the management of the papers fired 150 persons, on the plea of economy. Purely by coincidence of course, most of the active guildsmen in the plant were among those let go. The guild spent six months in reorganization. And then the management fired 140 more. Strike votes were taken on both papers. In forty-eight hours, contracts covering the editorial departments were signed. The guild also claimed others in the Hearst plant who were not represented by the mechanical unions. The management said, "Go to the Labor Board for the right to bargain for them."

The guild went to the Labor Board. On the second day of the hearing, three men arose. They claimed to represent the employees. They based their claims on lists of signatures. They did not even have names for their organizations, which, obviously, were company unions hastily assembled by the Hearst management in the attempt to defeat the guild. Their position was bad, very bad, and so the noble top leadership of the AFL, which prates sanctimoniously about dual unionism, stepped in and granted to the three petitioning groups, fused into one group, a federal local charter under the name of the Commercial Associates.

Before the Labor Board could study the representation-case evidence and set a date for an election, forty-two more workers were fired and others were coerced and intimidated by overt and subtle means until terror pervaded the plant. The guild asked for and obtained complaints against the management. Violations of many sections of the National Labor Relations Act were charged. Hearing on the complaint cases opened. Evidence was entered to show how the company unions were formed, how select individuals active in the company unions received pay increases and promotions. Witnesses against the management were either fired or demoted. The management began studious violation of the editorial-department contracts. More than three-score such violations took place. Negotiations were in vain. (On December 11, an intermediate report by the Labor Board examiner held that the management had violated the Wagner act by interfering with employees' organizational activities and discharging an employee for union activity. Reinstatement of the employee with full back pay was recommended.)

Finally, after boasting of huge circulation and advertising gains, the Hearst management, again on the plea of economy, fired seventy-five more men. The strategy was ob-

vious. Hearst was determined to wipe the guild out of the plant before the Labor Board election, so that there would be few remaining to vote for the guild. The guild realized that if it was to live it must fight. Fight it did, by voting to strike on December 5.

Six hundred went out. Six hundred, with few reserves, stepped forward to fight the vast economic power of the Hearst empire. Behind that empire stood mines and lands and banks and great corporations and political and publicity control. The six hundred realized that to defeat Hearst in his un-American attack on the rights of his workers they must rally to their aid all the decent public opinion of a nation long grown weary of Hearst abuse of the press.

Support came quickly. The CIO asked for all possible help from its four million members. The Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen answered the call. The independent International Ladies Garment Workers Union responded. And, although the Hearst interests tried to make the fight with its workers a jurisdictional dispute between the CIO and the AFL, powerful federation bodies came to the support of the guild.

The *New World*, official newspaper of the Archdiocese of Chicago, editorially advocated the strikers' cause and said: "A Happy and Blessed Christmas to all our readers and a special prayer and word of encouragement to the Hearst employees who are on strike." Mgr. Reynold Hillenbrand, a director of the Chicago Archdiocesan Labor School for Priests, addressed the strikers in their headquarters in a Loop office building. He said: "We Catholic priests are behind you 100 percent. Your work of organizing the unorganized is splendid. All working men should be organized." He told the strikers that to win their fight they must "match power with power."

Failing to smash the guild by forcing it to strike, Hearst then tried more ruthless methods. A back-to-work movement caught a few weaklings. Others stood solid. Then came the fascist assault on the picket line by hired thugs—the Hearst method at Cerro de Pasco, at Homestake, in the sanguinary Chicago pressmen's strike many years ago. Strike leaders were pointed out to the police by the publisher representing the two papers. The thugs closed in. The police swung clubs. The strike leaders went to jail. The picket line held. Strikers were waylaid and beaten by armed thugs as they went to their homes. Automobiles were smashed. Wives and children of strikers were threatened. Protests to Mayor Kelly and State's Attorney Courtney and the La Follette committee piled up. The mayor received so many protests from all over the country that he had a special form letter printed to answer them. The police became more gentle, although two of the officers involved in the Republic Steel massacre stood on the picket line.

On Christmas Eve a mass picket line of one thousand appeared at the Hearst plant.



*The Scab*

Police reserves were rushed up. The mass line dispersed in the late afternoon. The police went into the building, opened tunics, undid holsters, relaxed. Then came word that the picket line was reforming. Police rushed out, hastily buttoning coats, getting clubs conveniently ready in side pockets. The picketers came—one hundred children of strikers carrying signs proportionate to their size. One sign read: "'Twas the night before Christmas and Hearst is a louse." Another: "My daddy is no scab." They chanted "Don't wead Hurss." The police were greatly chagrined.

A coffin was carried through the Loop and down busy State Street. There were two hundred mourners. The coffin bore signs reading: "We are carrying out Hearst's anti-union policies—feet first." Chicago stood and gaped.

The strikers grow more solid daily. The old routine is something of the past. The new life—the striker's life—is the normal one. The transition was painful. Now it has been accomplished. These men are brave. With their dependents they number more than fifteen hundred. They must eat to fight. They must

publicize their strike. They must fight the vicious Hearst control of all publicity facilities. To do that they need the help of all decent citizens. They deserve it. They are fighting the battle of all America against fascist forces, against a man who, said Prof. George E. Axtelle of Northwestern University, "represents all that is evil in American life."

The press of Chicago—with the exception of the Catholic *New World* and the left-wing *Daily Record*—and of most of the nation is silent on the strike. The Chicago daily newspapers have refused paid advertisements that tell the strikers' side. The large radio stations of the city have been closed to the strikers. Even the Postoffice Department has refused to permit passage of postcards urging advertisers to withdraw their support to the papers until the strike is settled. The strikers publicize their cause through printed handbills, an expensive process. The mailing cost of reaching large sections of the citizenry is very high. It costs these men \$4,000 a week to carry on their fight.

Out of the fight, they hope, will come a



*The Scab*



*The Scab*





*Business at the Old Stand*



*Hearst's Merry Christmas*

**Four Cartoons From a Series  
by Hearst Artists on Strike**

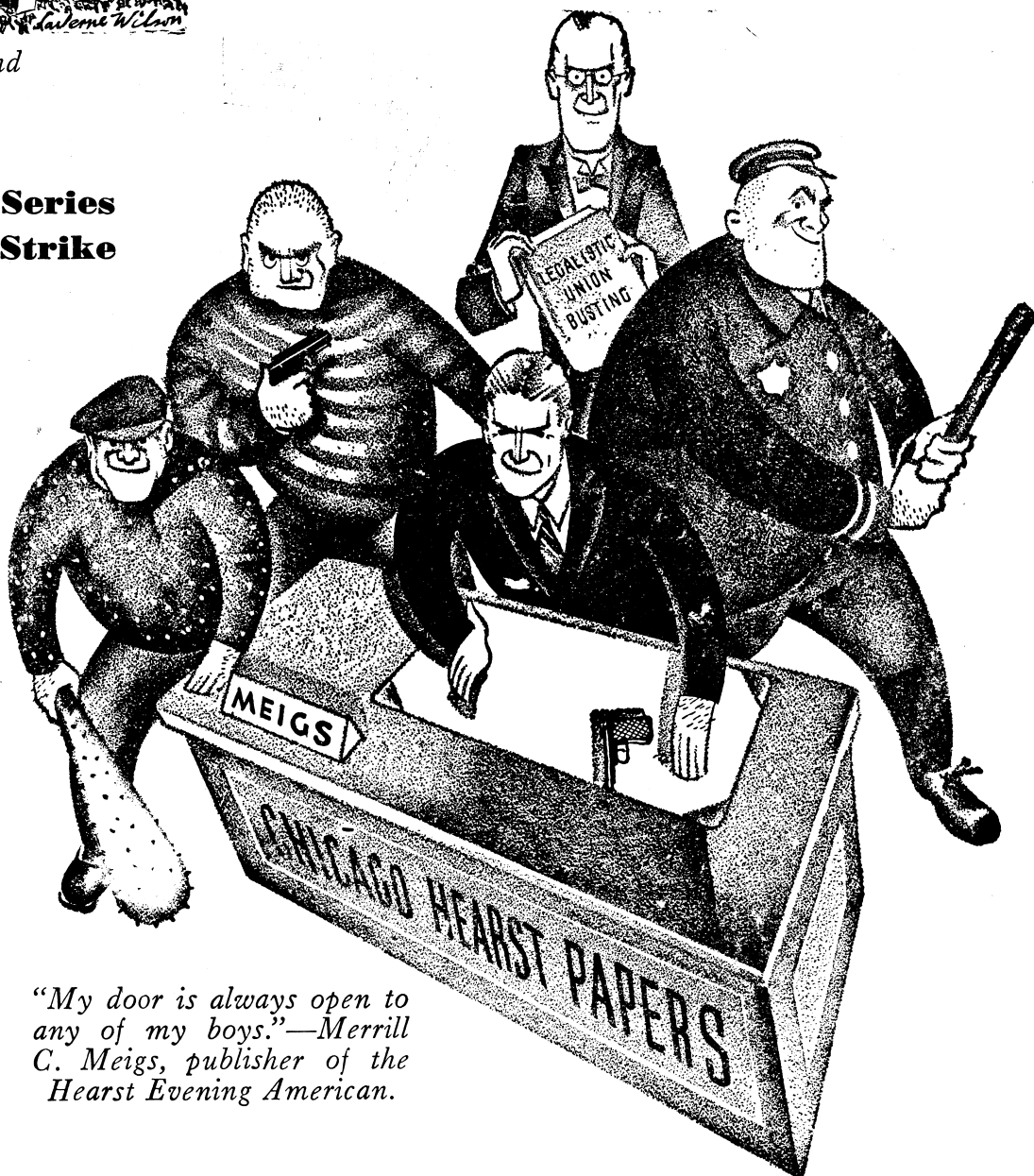
better Chicago, a greater understanding between the disparate branches of the labor movement. Out of the fight will come a cleaner Chicago press, for these men can never again show the bias in reporting the news that they have in the past. They now are living under that "freedom of the press" which should read "freedom to oppress."

Harold J. Laski, professor of political science at the University of London, writes:

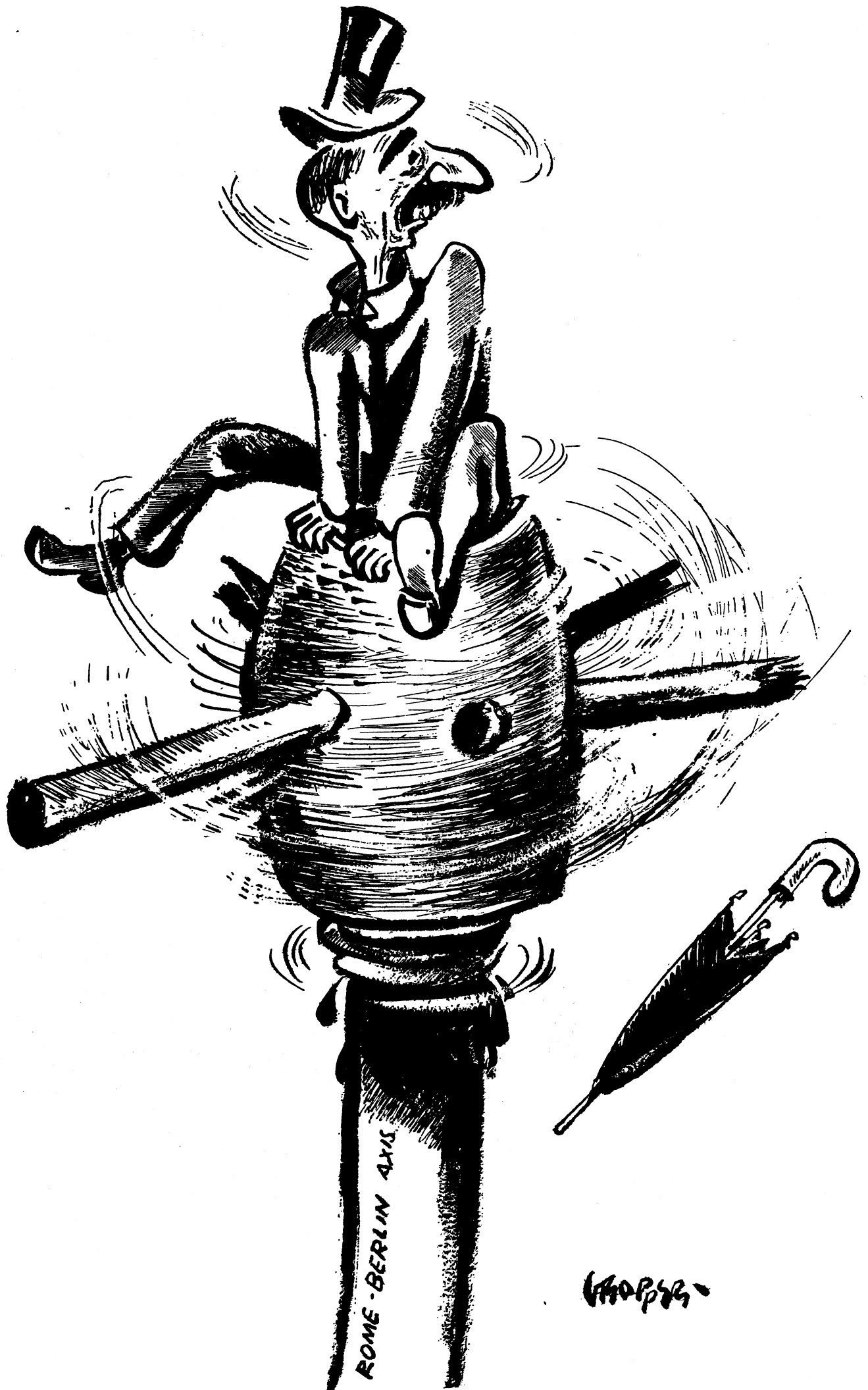
The mere fact that you are fighting the evil influence he [Hearst] has so long exerted on the American press would itself win for you the sympathy of all liberal-minded people; but the circumstances in which your fight is being waged make it all the more essential that you should secure the warm support of all persons of good will.

And United States Sen. Sherman Minton: "If I have an opportunity to strike a blow for you, I shall be only too happy to do so. . . . My heart is with you."

The Chicago Hearst strikers feel sure that your heart, too, is with them. They are fighting your battle against fascism. Help them win!



*"My door is always open to any of my boys."—Merrill C. Meigs, publisher of the Hearst Evening American.*



# NEW MASSES

ESTABLISHED 1911

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## Stop WPA Cuts

IN THE vendetta against President Roosevelt's request for an \$875,000,000 deficiency appropriation for relief, the tory snipers are after even bigger game than WPA. They view this as the opening battle in a war to rout the New Deal from every position it has won, preparatory to storming the Presidency in 1940. And it must be said that in winning the first round of this battle in the House the coalition of reactionary Republicans and Democrats displayed teamwork and precision which the progressives might well emulate.

Let us be clear about the immediate issue. The sum which the President requested in his special message on relief does not represent any increase in WPA appropriations. On the contrary, it would mean an actual cut. It envisages the dropping of no less than 300,000 workers off WPA rolls between February 1 and June 30. The CIO, the Workers Alliance, and the United States Conference of Mayors, speaking through Mayor LaGuardia, all agree that a larger appropriation is necessary. Yet despite this the House voted a further reduction to \$725,000,000. If the Senate does likewise—and the big-business-minded Garnerites and Hooverites are determined that it shall—this will mean the eventual slashing of WPA rolls by about one million. Apart from the human suffering that this will entail, the experience with the retreat from WPA after the 1936 elections has demonstrated that the present recovery movement cannot survive the shock of this sharp reduction in purchasing power. In other words, the welfare of the entire nation is at stake in this fight.

The strength of the reactionaries in this battle is only relative. They have been able to have their way thus far only because the progressive camp has lacked cohesion and

aggressiveness. It is said that Mayor La Guardia urged on the administration that it take the issue to the country rather than rely merely on parliamentary maneuvers. Certainly this is the line that needs to be followed. But apart from what the New Deal may do, every progressive organization, every individual who is something less than an industrial tycoon can help supply the power to turn back the tory hosts and save WPA and recovery. Telegrams and letters to Sen. Carter Glass, chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, and to the senators from your own state, may yet turn the tide.

## Remember Madrid

THIRTY THOUSAND shells a day still fall in Catalonia and Franco advances. But it is a slow advance, costly, netting few prisoners, no gains in materials, nothing but deserted villages and shell-torn farmlands without farmers. Pocket-generalissimo Franco once again "bids the loyalists surrender," and once again the tory world press nauseatingly plays up his side of the war. As though he did not "bid the loyalists surrender" at Madrid and at Teruel and at Valencia and in the Aragon and on the Ebro. For thirty months now Franco has stormed the headlines and, as usual, carried them. Again the war "is about to end."

But what is the reality? The loyalists face a stupendous amount of material; they have withdrawn their armies, slowly, in orderly manner, to stronger lines of defense. Their fronts have shortened so that more men can defend a given kilometer of battle-line. No decisive cities have fallen; no decisive land has been won. The Associated Press reporter in Barcelona, as well as Herbert L. Matthews, reports good morale. The Barcelona newspaper *Frente Rojo* mentions the arrival of new material. The government expects the battle to continue for weeks. And, everybody knows, thirty thousand shells a day cannot keep falling for many days. Not unless Italy and Germany have emptied all their stocks in Franco Spain. Franco's men are tired; he has not fresh reserves to throw in their place. And, most significant of all, the government has counter-attacked in Granada. It is still taking territory in Estremadura. Puerto Caladar has fallen to the government—a town beyond Monterrubio.

## This Is Our Front

AS MATTHEWS writes, more dangerous than Franco's gains "would be a feeling abroad that the war is all over." Spain's friends must not fall for such propaganda, for pessimism, in effect, stultifies their work, negates their energies. The principal fight

on a world scale still is to lift the embargo; provide the loyalists with what is rightly theirs—the opportunity to buy arms on the open market.

France sees this more clearly than ever; strong sections of Daladier's party, the Radical Socialists, stump for aid to Spain. The strong Federal Union of War Veterans have demanded that France rush supplies to the Spanish government. The letter in this issue by Catholic democrat Tom Davin reveals the rapid shift of Catholic opinion on a worldwide scale toward republican Spain. For such reasons the reactionaries in the church labor overtime to stop the movement to lift the embargo. Therefore, Father Coughlin rants over the radio to flood Washington with telegrams that would aid Franco—and through him Hitler and Mussolini. But the Gallup poll has shown that 76 percent of the American people—including Catholics—stand for loyalist victory. Washington must not be stampeded by the pressure of the well organized minority. It is not representative. It is hostile to our best national interests—not to speak of our humanitarian aims. The will of the Americans is to lift the embargo. And the adherents of republican Spain must leap to the task with energy at least equal to the misguided followers of Coughlin. While the loyalists put up a brilliant defense in Catalonia, democrats must put up an equally able attack in Washington. In that way—and that way alone—will we help our fellow democrats of Spain to stop the hosts of reaction that in the long run—and not so long a run at that—threaten us.

## Social Security

THE need to extend and speed up the benefits of old-age and unemployment insurance is plainly stated by the President in his special message to Congress on social security. Following the recommendations of the Social Security Board, Mr. Roosevelt urges Congress to give insurance protection "to all of our people as rapidly as administrative experience and public understanding permit." He stresses particularly the desirability of affording greater old-age security and greater protection to dependent children. Old-age payments must begin sooner than 1942—the board specifically recommends that monthly benefits begin in 1940—and the benefits to be paid in the early years must be liberalized. The President further recommends that the states be required to maintain a merit system for the selection of administrative personnel.

Another important phase of social security will be covered in the bill for a national health program soon to be introduced by Senator Wagner. In a radio address last



week, Senator Wagner insisted that "the health needs of our people no longer can be ignored." It is difficult to see how any responsible American can disagree with him. Yet there is sure to be reactionary opposition to the allotment of \$850,000,000 which the recent National Health Conference proposed for the program. It is of vital importance to organize support for this measure and for the President's Security Act message.

## The Brass Check

**F**REEDOM of the press is impossible when "the counting house holds the whip hand," Secretary of the Interior Ickes told the radio audience in a debate with Frank E. Gannett, on the evening of January 13, and his thesis was neatly borne out on the morning of January 14. An understandable and sagacious lack of comment, as of reporting, greeted the speech, and it was not until five days later that the New York *Herald Tribune's* scholars dug up a few factual errors, most of which were not in Mr. Ickes' prepared statement, and proceeded to light into a speech of which they had reprinted one sentence to every two of his opponent's.

The speech itself was a fine, well documented essay on the great bulk of American newspapers. Citing example after example of business-advertising influence on news coverage, or lack of coverage, Secretary Ickes gave amply sustaining evidence to his conclusion that the state of the press "is the most serious threat confronting our democratic government."

Inasmuch as he was debating the publisher of a large newspaper chain, Ickes, for the most part, confined his criticism to sins of commission and omission in the Gannett papers. Gannett, of course, is a leader among anti-New Dealers, chairman of the tory League to Uphold Constitutional Government, and his newspapers have always been at the service of his allies.

Secretary Ickes' speech was fine and courageous, and it put the finger on a central problem of democracy. A complete and ready survey of the subject is to be found in George Seldes' recent *Lords of the Press*, which Ickes commended to his listeners. Freedom of the press, as Ickes indicated, is a state which can be realized only by counter-organization of democratic forces against the already organized publishers.

## Greetings to Gropper!

**A**T FORTY William Gropper seems like the oldest and the youngest artist in the progressive movement. His work hangs on the austere walls of the Metropolitan Museum; it is distributed in leaflets on the picket line. He organized for the IWW in

1919; his posters decorate the newest union halls. Gropper studied under George Bellows in 1921. Along with Bob Minor and Art Young and Boardman Robinson he made the *Liberator* sizzle with social significance. He created an international incident with his cartoon of a Japanese emperor. He has even had the privilege of walking out on a Hearst newspaper job.

The man's versatility is amazing. Murals? Look inside the Hotel Taft in New York someday, or the Department of the Interior Building in Washington. Paintings? He's in the Whitney Museum in New York, a museum in Los Angeles, the Museum of Western Art in Moscow. Political cartoons? See NEW MASSES any week or the labor press any day.

Happy birthday, Bill. One lifetime ends at forty. Another begins.

## Hearst Provides the War

**I**N THESE days the men of the newspapers not only report history; they make it, too. The Hearst newspapers in Chicago afford the spectacle of reporters waging a war like soldiers on a battlefield. Hearst—as in 1898—provides the war. This time he has recruited gangsters, strikebreakers, corrupt city officials to assault the picket line of the newsmen striking for a decent life.

The stirring article in this issue by Thomas Ryan tells the story. No further comment is needed. Except this: 1,500 striking newspapermen and their dependents are living as precariously as striking miners in a Kentucky coal patch. It costs a minimum of \$4,000 weekly to provide the barest necessities for the reporters and their dependents.

The sinews of this type of war—granted the will to fight—are the old pocketbook. Chicago labor, the Catholic Church, professionals have lined up behind the strikers. They have nobly supported the good fight; but \$4,000 a week is a lot of money. As Mr. Ryan points out in his article, this strike has national significance. Help must come nationally. The address is Hearst Strike Headquarters, 188 West Randolph St., Chicago. Need we say more?

## Missouri Misery

**O**VER a thousand evicted sharecroppers, Negro and white, struck deep into the American imagination last week when nothing short of the physical opposition of the landlords made them move from the land that gave them their living. Clustered in small groups over miles of United States highways, in the vicinity of Sikeston and New Madrid, Mo., they held out for six days and nights, during which they were besieged by winds, rain, sickness and death,

boss propaganda and force, while they stoutly maintained their right to live and work.

Their battle was a demonstration of the essential unity brought forth by necessity, born in common struggle. The real issue was the attempt of the landlords, with no notice whatsoever, to change over the system of sharecropping to one in which they would simply employ labor by the day when and as they thought they needed it. The landlords talked much of their oppression under the New Deal, of how they had been forced to eviction by unforeseen circumstances, but the 'croppers were from Missouri. They knew, as they told newspaper reporters, that the bosses were doing everything possible to silence publicity and ward off possible government intervention. What was shown, however, was the inability of the landlords to handle their own problems and the inadequacy of our present farm program to control the landlords in the interests of the people who work our farmlands.

## For National Defense

**P**RESIDENT ROOSEVELT's message on national defense confounded the stargazers who had predicted a program of astronomical magnitude. Instead of the darkly rumored billions, the President asks for an appropriation of \$552,000,000. Of this, only about \$210,000,000 would actually be spent during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1940. This is in addition to the \$1,126,000,000 allotted for national defense in the regular budget.

The new program is primarily a plane-building program and is apparently a counterpart of the naval-expansion bill enacted last year. Of the proposed \$552,000,000, \$300,000,000 is to be appropriated for the purchase of about three thousand new planes. This would bring the total of fighting planes to more than eight thousand, which ought to be adequate for all conceivable contingencies in the near future.

The problem of increased American armaments is one which must be squarely met by all who are concerned both about the danger of foreign fascist aggression and the danger of native militarism and the sway of the militarist mind. This problem cannot be solved either by repeating the pacifist shibboleths whose logic is rooted in a period that is past or by blind reliance on arms and more arms to protect democracy. As NEW MASSES has emphasized, increased armaments are necessary in the post-Munich world, but they will serve their purpose only if they are the instrument of a foreign policy that seeks to mobilize all the economic and political resources of American and world democracy to frustrate every aggressive venture of the fascist dictatorships. This means:

revise the misnamed Neutrality Act to bar economic aid to the aggressor and provide it for the victim. It means: lift the embargo on Spain. It means: strengthen and extend the democratic front created at Lima, in order to include the peace forces of Europe and Asia, among whom the most prominent role is being played by the Soviet Union.

## What Happened in Rome

THE Rome conversations between Prime Minister Chamberlain and Mussolini were carefully shrouded in mystery. The correspondents on the spot did not have an easy job. Most of them took refuge in the sort of speculation which mutually cancels out. But three things of interest did emerge. We know that the talks covered a very wide range of subjects, from the war in Spain to loans for Italy. Another was the unmistakable effort to give the impression that Chamberlain "stood up" to Mussolini, even to the point of resistance. Finally, this bit of optimism was more than compensated for by equally strong statements that nobody really knew what happened between the two conspirators. What we do know is that Mr. Chamberlain came back to London in a happy mood and the fascist press let loose another blast against France.

The talks were obviously not as fruitless as the British Foreign Office strenuously tried to convey. The greetings between Chamberlain and Mussolini were more than polite; the mutual flattery was sickening. Moreover, such meetings would never be held at all if the British government were drifting out of the orbit of the fascist axis. Too much prestige is staked on them. "Failure" would indicate bad preparation and Mussolini has always opposed negotiations in which "success" is not assured.

All the signs are ominous. The campaign for "some" concessions to Mussolini is well under way. These concessions include the sale of the French-owned Jibuti-Addis Ababa railroad, conversion of Jibuti into a free port, admission of more Italians to Tunis under special dispensations, and large British loans to Italy. These concessions are taken so much for granted that the conversations broke down, according to reports, only because Mussolini wanted much more. The fact is that these are an excellent start, from his viewpoint. Especially is this true of the proposed loans. Chamberlain may feel it inadvisable, since Barcelona holds out, to grant belligerent rights to the rebels but loans to Mussolini are almost the equivalent in outright aid. The war in Spain has drained the Italian treasury so low that Mussolini desperately needs an end to the war. The only other alternative is help to his treasury. The

British have chosen this positive way of rescuing the axis, while handing out sanctimonious denials that they are giving belligerent rights to Franco.

The Rome conversations, from any viewpoint, were a direct continuation of Munich. Coming events, no doubt, will tell us how much was really betrayed. Meanwhile, we need have no illusions that another betrayal was consummated. When the British people make their government "stand up" against the fascist axis, Britain's prime minister will not need to do that in Rome. He will refuse to go at all.

## The Church in Mexico

"THERE is no persecution of the church today in Mexico." This statement was made by the United States Ambassador to Mexico, Josephus Daniels, at a press conference last week. "The churches are open throughout Mexico. In some respects, indeed, they set an example to us in church attendance," he added.

This authoritative statement of our government's representative, made after consulting the Catholic hierarchy in Mexico, should do much to allay the lying campaign of those who would welcome a fascist invasion à la Franco south of the Rio Grande.

A prolific source of this calumny on our sister democracy has been Frank M. Kluckhohn, Mexican correspondent of the *New York Times* and the only rival to William P. Carney as an international liar. As we go to press, the *New York Herald Tribune* announces that Mr. Kluckhohn is leaving the country he has been sabotaging, by request.

## The Mountain Eagle

WHEN Lenin died on January 21, fifteen years ago, millions of men and women in every country knew that there had passed out of the world one beside whom those who were ordinarily called great seemed dwarfed. The mountain eagle, Stalin has called him. And truly he was an eagle of a man, in whom mind and will were powerfully fused to make him the greatest "maker" of history the world has ever known. Lenin's greatness, however, lay not merely in his exceptional personal talents, but in the fact that all his work was geared to the movement of society and had as its foundation the science of Communism which Marx and Engels had developed before him. In Lenin the deepest aspirations of mankind were personalized and made articulate. He was great not because he was godlike, but because he represented the best of that which is intensely human.

It is impossible in a brief space even to list Lenin's gigantic achievements. For us

today, who are faced with an enemy even more ruthless than Russian czarism—fascism—it is well to remember that one of his great characteristics was his ability to combine unwavering devotion to principle with the utmost flexibility of tactics. Misguided "purists" who see in the People's Front tactic an abandonment of Marxist principles—just as they saw in the introduction of the New Economic Policy in Soviet Russia in 1921 an abandonment of Socialism—need to recall the words of Lenin in *Left-Wing Communism, An Infantile Disorder*:

It is possible to conquer this more powerful enemy [capitalism] only by exerting our efforts to the utmost and by more necessarily, thoroughly, carefully, attentively, and skillfully taking advantage of every "fissure," however small, in the ranks of our enemies, of every antagonism of interests among the various groups or types of bourgeoisie in the various countries; by taking advantage of every possibility, however small, of gaining an ally among the masses, even though this ally be temporary, vacillating, unstable, unreliable, and conditional.

And far from rejecting the struggle for democracy, Lenin held that "on the contrary, just as Socialism cannot be victorious unless it introduces complete democracy, so the proletariat will be unable to prepare for victory over the bourgeoisie unless it wages a many-sided, consistent, and revolutionary struggle for democracy."

It is well to recall too the long, uncompromising struggle which Lenin waged against Trotskyism and all other alien class tendencies within the labor movement. The fight against Trotskyism and its allies did not, as is popularly supposed, end with the revolution. On the contrary, during the first years of the Soviet Republic, Trotsky, Bukharin, Piatakov, and their ilk were repeatedly in opposition to Lenin. And as the last Moscow trial revealed, Bukharin and Piatakov, with the connivance of Trotsky, even plotted Lenin's assassination.

In the accelerated movement of history fifteen years can embrace an epoch of experience. Fascism, still in its infancy at the time of Lenin's death, has grown into a world power and a world menace. But what have grown too are the strength and stability and influence of the Socialist Republic which Lenin established, fortunate in that another great man of thought and action, Stalin, has carried on where Lenin left off. And there have also grown the numbers of those who in all lands have been stirred into activity in defense of democracy and peace. Lenin had faith in the people, knew that history was on their side. For the American people, to whose achievements in democracy and industrial technique he frequently paid tribute, and for the people of all lands the teachings of Lenin point the way to democracy, Socialism, and lasting peace.

# Forsythe's Page

## Some Remarks on Race Hatred

NOTHING is more terrifying than the realization that evil has an attractiveness of its own. During the height of Hitler's fury against the Jews, following the assassination of vom Rath, I discovered more anti-Semitism than I had ever known before in America. Outwardly the country was united in denouncing the Nazis, but beneath it all was a venomous current of hatred against the Jews, expressed by people who had hitherto seemed untouched by the problem.

I am not qualified to explain the psychological reasons for such an attitude. I can merely report it. The further circumstance that the fiercest prejudice came from people who had the least contact with Jews is perhaps understandable under the general theory that such racial hatreds grow on superstition and false reports. The usual thing to say is that one would also hate the Jews if he met them every day in business, but this happens not to be my experience. For instance, there is almost no Jewish influence in such fields as steel or coal, and yet among people of those sets I find the most ferocious anti-Semitism.

On the other hand, I deal with Jews every day in my work and have no resentment whatever against them. Since there are many Jewish writers, I am in direct competition with them and should therefore feel strong animosity toward them. I feel nothing of the sort and am always amazed to talk with decent, friendly individuals who scarcely know the Jews at all and yet consider them personal enemies. My work brings me closely in touch with the theater and the movies, both strongholds of the Jews, and yet I feel no gusts of rage welling up within me from anything I have noted in those professions.

There are good Jews and bad Jews, just as there are good Scots and bad Scots. Because Moe is a bum is no reason why Lou should be a tramp. I may be naive but I have never understood anti-Semitism. At school we used to yell "sheenie" at the Jewish kids and I suppose I should be ashamed of that now, but it really made little impression on me. At least I haven't grown up to use "kike" as my favorite term of insult.

But the hatred is there and there is no sense in ignoring it. Last week I had dinner with a seemingly sane man I know and my astonishment was all the greater when he got on the subject of the Jews and began denouncing them. His point seemed to be that they were going too far in their struggle against Hitler. It could only ruin them in the

long run, he said. People were getting tired of hearing about their woes.

Then he lowered his voice and began telling me of a secret investigation being made in Washington which was going to prove that the Jews controlled the press of America and were using the power to get us into trouble with Germany. When I asked him what publishers he referred to, he mentioned Stern and Sulzberger in New York and Annenberg in Philadelphia. It happens that my friend comes from Pennsylvania and he was particularly concerned at the thought of Stern and Annenberg being so strong in Philadelphia.

Even if Jewish influence in newspaper publishing were much greater than it is, this would not of itself be evidence of diabolical activity. Nor am I of the school which believes that Americans, Jewish and non-Jewish, have any obligation to keep silent in the face of Nazi outrages. It happens, however, that there are very few Jewish newspaper publishers in this country. In addition to the ones I have named, there is Paul Block and his small chain of papers, and Cohen in Atlanta. Beyond that I can't think of a single one. I haven't looked it up and am writing this from memory, but it is certain that neither Patterson with the *New York Daily News* (largest circulation in America) nor McCormick of the *Chicago Tribune* (largest in the Midwest) is a Jew. So far as I know there are no Jewish publishers in Boston or Washington; none in Chicago, St. Louis, Kansas City, or Los Angeles. None in Memphis, Fort Worth, Dallas, Houston, Seattle, San Francisco, or Portland; none in Minneapolis, St. Paul, Omaha, Des Moines, or Detroit. Neither the Hearst chain nor the Scripps-Howard papers are run by Jews.

As a matter of truth, the predominantly Jewish interests in this country are confined almost entirely to the dress-goods business, retail selling, the movies and the theater. Banking is dominated by the Morgan and Rockefeller combines. Are there any prominent Jews in United States Steel or General Motors? Are the du Ponts Jews? The Jews are not prominent either in General Foods or Standard Brands. They are not dominant in railroads, with the exception of those guided by Kuhn, Loeb. There are almost no Jews in coal or oil—and, most important of all, the Jews are only a minor element in Wall Street, where the real power in this country lies. For that reason the fact that Sarnoff is in radio is of only secondary importance. The real control of this important medium is in

the hands of the bankers—and this is true of every large industry.

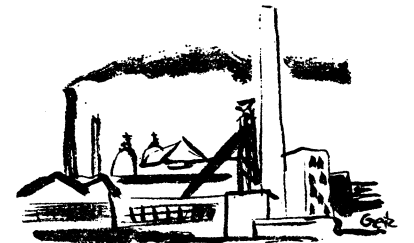
So what has caused this fear and virulence? Good, steady citizens who for years have lived by the side of Jewish neighbors and have found them honest and law-abiding, suddenly discover that they have always hated the Jews. By some strange and horrible quirk of nature, the very indecency and hideousness of Hitler's actions seem to win him friends among people who would not otherwise stoop to Jew-baiting. People who would be horrified at the sight of a bully striking a smaller man seem unmoved at the spectacle of the great German people trampling on a defenseless minority. If on no other basis, I should think that good sportsmanship would prevent such a feeling. If it were a prize fight even the toughest spectators would be yelling: "Stop the fight." It is no contest; it is sheer brutality against a foe with no defense.

The despoilment and murder of the Jews in Germany is the most cowardly act in history. When Jew-baiting apologists attempt to excuse Hitler by telling me of the misdeeds of a Jewish clothing manufacturer in Albany, I can only listen to them with disgust. What a puny sort of sham they have adopted. If they want to hate, why don't they pick out a foe who is able to strike back!

Perhaps I'm not making my points properly; perhaps I shouldn't be defending the Jews in this defeatist manner; but that's how I feel about my so-called "Aryan" associates. I am everlastingly amazed at the meanness of their hatred. I am just as disgusted with Jews who feel they can ride out the storm by hiding their heads from it. To hell with cowardice and evasion. If I thought I could keep my job only by eliminating the Jewish competition, I would be ashamed of myself. Whenever I find a Jew seeking to conciliate his enemies by catering to them, I am ashamed of him.

I think it is sound to say (and at least it is my experience) that the people who are most anti-Semitic are also the most anti-liberal. You can't separate such things. If they are anti-Jewish, they are anti-labor, anti-New Deal, anti-progress. First they try to prove that the Jews are a greedy and obnoxious race; then they seek to prove that all Jews are radicals; hence all radicalism is greedy and obnoxious and un-American. That trick is too simple for me. I like the Jews, I think anybody who fears them is himself a cheap punk, and I can point out to you as many Jewish reactionaries as there are Jewish radicals. In other words, the whole Jewish scare is a fake—and I'm not easily taken in by such nonsense.

ROBERT FORSYTHE.



# Peace Grows 85 Percent

## The Fifth Congress for Peace and Democracy

SAMUEL SILLEN

Washington.

**P**RESIDENT ROOSEVELT read his fighting message to the 76th Congress on January 4. Two days later, the American Congress for Peace and Democracy gave an effective demonstration of popular support for the President's statement on national and social security. The proximity of the two events underscored the convergence of American attitudes toward war and fascism during the past year. The growth of unity in the peace movement was reflected not only in the underlying similarity in the views of the administration and the American League for Peace and Democracy, but also in the unanimity, never before so apparent, among the hundreds of groups affiliated with the league. This Fifth Congress accurately registered the swing of American opinion from a policy of self-defeating neutrality and isolationism to a policy of active resistance to fascism.

The American League may properly take a share of the credit for the realistic turn of public opinion. It has, for the past few years, consistently advanced a program of unified struggle against fascism at home and abroad. It has broadened the base of the anti-fascist movement by stressing the common objectives of the majority of the people. The most obvious measure of its success is the measure of its numerical growth. Two million Americans were represented at the league's Third Congress in Cleveland; four million at the Fourth Congress held in Pittsburgh at the end of 1937. This year, 1,255 delegates from over a thousand national, district, and state bodies were present. They represented 7,500,000 people, a gain of 85 percent.

The really remarkable growth of the league was emphasized by the fact that 70 percent of the delegates at Washington never attended a league congress before. The widely representative character of this year's congress was the best testimony to the importance of the league in helping to prepare and organize the powerful opinion which made itself felt through the President's message.

But the basic reason for the change in public sentiment was the grim experience of the past year. Munich was an expensive lesson; it was also an unforgettable one. The Nazi pogroms, the strengthening of the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo military alliance, the penetration of fascism into the Americas, and the brutal consequences of our un-neutral neutrality with respect to Spain and China have taught millions of us who were previously confused that in self-defense, and in defense of humanity, we must adopt a positive policy toward fascism. The Lima Conference, the labor Anti-Fascist

Congress in Mexico, and the growth of the movement to lift the embargo on Spain and to impose it on Germany, Italy, and Japan, expressed our determination to safeguard democracy and peace through united action.

The four major points in the peace program approved at this congress are rooted in these experiences. The league demands a foreign policy based on: (1) the distinction between the aggressors and their victims; (2) the denial of our economic resources to the warmaking, treaty-breaking aggressors; (3) the granting of our economic resources to victims of the aggressor nations under conditions designed to remove the risk of our being drawn into war; (4) the promotion of concerted action to withhold from invading aggressors the means to make war. The league favors the extension of the program of Pan-American cooperation adopted at Lima. It opposes using armaments increases as a substitute for the development of a positive peace program, and it advocates a greater democratic control of our armed forces.

In his stirring address to the congress, Dr. Harry F. Ward, national chairman of the American League, insisted that the campaign to lift the embargo on Spain was the first and most important action to be taken in behalf of peace and democracy:

A free Spain [Dr. Ward said] would be more effective for the defense of this hemisphere than many battleships. . . . What are we waiting for? If the Spanish democracy wins despite our violation of treaty and disregard of international law, the blot will never be removed from our record. If it loses because we would not sell them what they need, how can we escape the damnation of those who with their life blood will have to save the world we have helped to wreck?

The correlation of foreign and domestic policy was repeatedly stressed at this congress. Meeting in the opening days of one of the most crucial legislative sessions in American history, the delegates approved a comprehensive program for social security. The congress opposed any change in the National Labor Relations Act. It called on Congress to prevent any reduction in WPA rolls. It advocated a federal anti-lynching act; public ownership of utilities, railroads, and the munitions industries; extension of the National Youth Administration; a national health program; the continuance of the La Follette committee; the creation of a Federal Bureau of Fine Arts; and other progressive measures.

No Gallup poll was needed to estimate Mr. Dies' popularity at this congress. As Dr. Ward pointed out in a sworn affidavit, the Dies

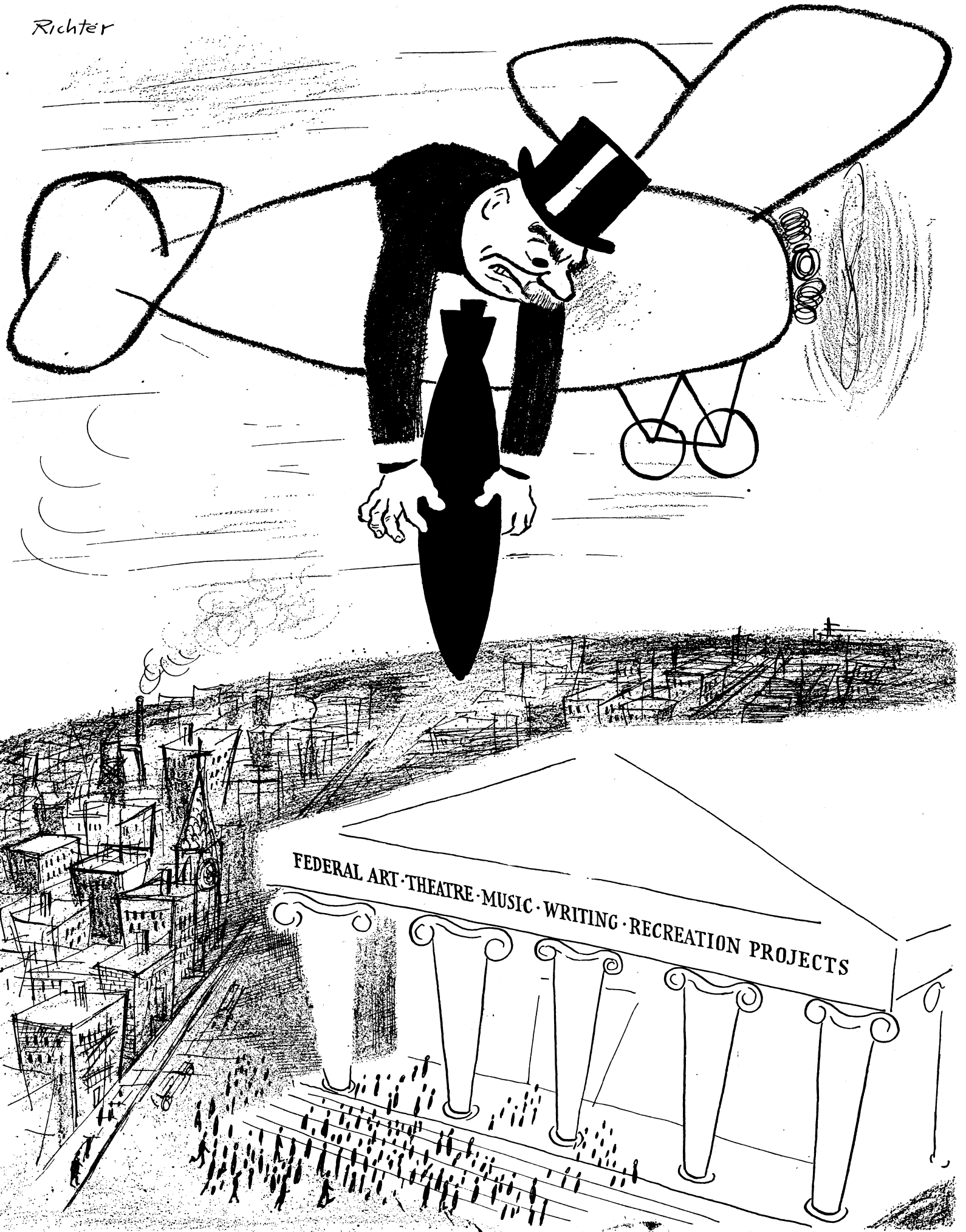
committee refused to permit the league to submit any facts. It relied on the testimony of "witnesses" whose charges are exploded by Dr. Ward in his carefully documented affidavit. And finally, the composition of the league itself reduces to absurdity the claim that it is a Red organization.

Consider, for example, the labor representation, which was particularly strong at this year's congress. Delegates from sixteen international unions were present. Among the speakers were representatives of diverse organizations: Beryl Whitney of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen; James Carey, president of the United Radio, Electrical, and Machine Workers Union and executive secretary of the CIO; B. F. McLaurin of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters; and Jerome Davis of the American Federation of Teachers. Altogether, 275 labor organizations were represented. Scores of powerful religious, youth, fraternal, Negro, women's, and cultural groups sent delegates to the congress: the Baptist Young People's Union, for example, with a membership of 1,500,000; the Washington Commonwealth Federation, whose spokesman, Howard Costigan, made a very impressive speech; the National Negro Congress; the Croatian Fraternal Union; the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods; the Methodist Federation for Social Service; the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League; and so on. The geographical spread was equally striking. To apply the Red label to an organization so broadly representative is virtually to characterize the whole of American life as Red. It must be pointed out, incidentally, that the farm representation was extremely small, and it is to be hoped that the league will make greater gains in the rural areas.

The congress did not fully utilize the possibilities for dramatizing and humanizing social issues through other techniques than the ordinary platform speech. Rockwell Kent's imitation of Hitler's hysterical radio voice followed by his quiet, dignified quotation from the Declaration of Independence did more to bring home the contrast between the spirit of fascism and democracy than many orations. The powerful response of the congress to Tom Mooney's telegram of greetings showed what depths of emotion and imagination platform speakers are likely to ignore.

But this is incidental, of course. The Fifth Congress for Peace and Democracy proved that the American League has made very real gains since the Pittsburgh congress, gains which parallel the advance of the anti-fascist movement generally. The league has become a crystallizing center for peace activity. It has established contact with many new people. Its job now, as its officers realize, is to strengthen the organizational contact with these people in their local communities. The league is planning to call state and regional conferences very shortly to take action on appropriate local issues. Dr. Ward has provided the working slogan for the league: "We say to the fascist internationals abroad, and to all the fascist reactionaries at home, that we are just beginning to fight."

Richter



FIRST OBJECTIVE

Misha Richter



# Don't Burn the Books!

## Protest Cuts in WPA Arts Projects

### A SURVEY

**E**VEN before the Republicans slickly maneuvered the House of Representatives into passing a bill depriving one million of their means of livelihood, the drive on WPA started in New York City. Two weeks ago 1,526 workers from the Arts Projects were given dismissal notices. Of these, 1,026 were from the Theater Project, and the remaining five hundred distributed more or less evenly among the others.

The cut in the Arts Projects signaled the beginning of the tory offensive. The figures cited, it is important to remember, apply only to New York City. They are the only figures available, but the Arts Projects are being cut in similar proportions throughout the country. And there will be cuts over and above the ones now being made if Congress as a whole is allowed to accept the relief bill approved by the House.

NEW MASSES has always stood for the continuance and expansion of all WPA projects, but particularly we have championed the Arts Projects. Our critics in all fields have recorded the achievements of the artists, writers, actors, dancers, and musicians on WPA. Invariably they have found the work to be of professional standards and in most cases possessed of far more vigor than the average commercial product. We campaigned as extensively as possible for the Pepper-Coffee Federal Fine-Arts Bill which would have put the WPA projects on a permanent basis.

Protests—against both the House appropriation and the dismissals already in effect—are reaching Washington. They must be multiplied and made more emphatic, for congressional tampering with WPA, the press to the contrary notwithstanding, was not the mandate of the November elections.

We have solicited statements on the cuts in the Arts Projects from people who had an opportunity to observe the projects, whether in professional association with the men and women employed or as interested spectators. Their statements follow, and in all probability we shall print another group next week.—THE EDITORS.

Stanley M. Isaacs

*President of the Borough of Manhattan*

**O**N DECEMBER 23, speaking over Station WOR, I expressed my viewpoint in opposition to the reduction of the Federal Arts Projects personnel. At that time I said:

"There is no justification for dismissals at this time. . . . Thus far I have spoken only on loss of jobs. That, of course, is tragedy enough. For a

very large number of people it means deprivation and starvation. Such an unhealthy situation is bound to have an adverse effect upon our national economy in the loss of mass purchasing power, increased relief costs upon local communities, etc. . . .

"The Federal Arts Projects have been a great stimulus to the development of new experimental art forms and to the encouragement of American creative art. I need only point to the exciting example of 'The Living Newspaper' productions, or the Orson Welles theater, which is a direct result of experimentation on the Federal Theater. . . .

"It is an important function of democracy to provide the opportunities of culture and education to all the people, for an enlightened people is democracy's best defense.

"For these reasons the Federal Arts Projects must be maintained and expanded to include wider sections of our population. The order to cut the personnel of the projects should be rescinded."

I stated my position on December 23 and that is my position today.

Donald Ogden Stewart

*President, League of American Writers*

**A**S PRESIDENT of the League of American Writers, I have had some opportunity to observe the work of the Federal Arts Projects and particularly the Writers Project. Their work in bringing American culture to the American people is of an importance which we cannot overestimate. The projects should not be given up or curtailed under any conditions.

Bennett A. Cerf

*President, Random House*

**T**HE work turned out by the project with which I, as a publisher, am most familiar, the Federal Writers Project, has been scholarly and effective, in many cases brilliant, and, from my knowledge of the other projects, I should say that the same standards apply throughout. It would be a disservice to the American people to take from them, at this time, the writers, musicians, artists, and actors who have, over the past few years, contributed so greatly to the enrichment of our culture.

Increase the efficiency of the project, by all means—replace the incompetents—but don't drop something that in the long run is going to mean a great deal to all of us.

Muriel Draper

*Author and Speaker*

**I**F WE are to complete and enjoy the particular civilization we have begun, the people who do the civilizing work must get at least the simple elements of a decent existence that are the necessary conditions of all work. The prevailing and proposed dismissal of workers from the WPA is a denial in part of these conditions, and constitutes a very real threat to the development of a free and equal life in America.

It makes us clearly aware, as well, that the creative processes depend upon material circumstances for their effectiveness. When this natural dependence is destroyed the darkest periods of hu-

man history set in, for life itself is a material circumstance. Only the dead can flourish—if dubiously—in an immaterial world.

*We are alive*, and have a right to demand of our elected government reasonable opportunities for working and living. It is one of the things we elect it for. If it fails to do so by the established methods and therefore improvises new ones—however imperfect—the new ones must be maintained until "perfect" ones replace them. The American people are not asking for perfection; they are asking for work. The proportion of people who prefer to remain idle is small and always with us. It is only since a powerful minority have become a little uncomfortably taxed—and therefore morally outraged—to support the newly improvised methods, that the majority of people eager to work are berated in terms of this small proportion.

No amount of bad art in the WPA projects is as important as the quickened and steadily growing response to good art it has aroused. No amount of corrupt practices and inefficient government administration of the projects is as important as the vigorous interest Americans as a whole are beginning to take in the functions of government itself—the responsibility they are beginning to feel for it.

Let us assume this responsibility in full, and see to it that the people who, because of the profitable manipulations of a minority beyond their immediate control are without the ordinary means of livelihood, suffer no further restriction of their already precarious right to live and work.

Edward C. Aswell

*President, Harper & Bros.*

**R**ICHARD WRIGHT, whose *Uncle Tom's Children* was published by Harper & Bros. last spring, represents in his own person almost the strongest argument that can be found in support of the Federal Writers Project. When *Story* magazine offered a nationwide prize to be awarded for the best piece of writing by a member of the Federal Writers Project, several hundred manuscripts were submitted, but there was never any question that the best of them was Richard Wright's book. This judgment was confirmed by the judges of the contest, who were Sinclair Lewis, Harry Scherman, and Lewis Gannett. When it was published it was almost universally acclaimed by the critics, not only for the strength of its writing, but for the singular honesty and integrity of the writer behind it. There could be no question then, just as there is no question now, that Richard Wright is a new author of very unusual abilities and promise. So I am happy to be able to add that Harper & Bros. have given Mr. Wright a contract for his next book, this time a novel, on which he is now hard at work.

But the point of this is that Mr. Wright was developed and aided by the Federal Writers Project at a time when, without the aid the project alone could give, he might have had to earn his living at something other than writing and thus might have been forced to turn aside from the work he was born to do, or at any rate to postpone it for months or even years. Therefore, all honor to the Federal Writers Project for its signal contribution to what I and many others feel sure will be one of the distinguished careers in American letters.

Robert M. Coates

*Art Critic, "New Yorker"*

**T**HE WPA Art Project has been a strong and effective force for artistic betterment ever since its inception. For the "depression generation" of artists it was the main thing that made even the bare continuance of their careers possible. To the nation at large it has brought incalculable benefits in the way of artistic education and appreciation. For these reasons it seems cruel and purposeless arbitrarily to cut down the projects now. The depression is not over. Young people with the impulse of the artist in them are still coming of age and seeking opportunity of expression. The mass of the

nation is still fertile with undeveloped artistic interests. Instead of being curtailed, the WPA Arts Projects should be accepted as a permanent factor in the life of the nation and their activities should be broadened. They might well lead to a true American golden age.

### John Howard Lawson

*Playwright and Screenwriter*

IT SEEMS amazing that there can be any disagreement concerning the value of the WPA Arts Projects, or that there could be any thought of interference with the magnificent work which has been done. It is not too much to say that these projects have actually changed the whole cultural life of our country; the WPA has created the foundations of a people's culture.

Thus, the present dismissals are not solely the concern of the workers who are affected. The WPA is a service to the whole American people. It is to the interest of the whole people that this service be protected and extended. The first step is to raise a nationwide protest against cuts or dismissals. The next step is to build a nationwide campaign to establish the federal projects on a permanent basis.

### Whit Burnett

*Editor, "Story" Magazine*

I ADD my protest against crippling the WPA Arts Projects, because they have already contributed valiantly to American culture, not only broadening the base but giving opportunity to raise the level. One of the strongest new talents of recent years is that of Richard Wright, author of *Uncle Tom's Children*, who is now finishing a brilliant first novel. Mr. Wright, winner of the Story Press prize for WPA writers, is one of the impressive arguments for continuation of the projects.

The heavy-handed gentlemen hoping to destroy the projects perhaps feel they are only doing their bit for art. They know how anti-cultural money can be, how it can stultify. They themselves can only long for, never enjoy, the hunger, desperation, and attendant spiritual joys so dear to the artist. They know how \$23.86 accumulates and men decay.

But everyone who knows the facts of art hopes not only for continuation but expansion of opportunity in theater, music, art, and writing.

### Sylvia Sidney

*Appearing in "The Gentle People"*

THE suffering and misery that the discharge of some 1,500 workers from the WPA Arts Projects will bring is a frightening thought. This, coming after the unquestionably wonderful work these projects have done in all cultural fields, is something that should shock any right-thinking person. Any action that will help reinstate these discharged workers, and keep the projects carrying on their good work, has my heartiest support.

### Franchot Tone

*Appearing in "The Gentle People"*

ALL OF us in the theater cannot help but feel that the mass discharges from the rolls of the WPA Arts Projects will prove a real blow to American culture. The arts projects have long been a vital and important force in the theater, in music, literature, and the graphic arts, and the curtailment of their ranks will undoubtedly mean the disappearance of some of the best and most exciting work ever seen hereabouts. I am heartily in favor of doing everything in our power to keep the rolls of the project intact.

### Louis P. Birk

*Editor, Modern Age Books*

TO THOSE of us who are interested in the development of a vital American culture, the Federal Arts Projects have been a constant encouragement and a hope for the future. As publishers of four books prepared and written by the writers on the Federal Writers Project, we can say without reservation that the quality of this work is in itself evidence of the productivity of America's younger writers. Under the present economic limitations, which particularly affect writers, it probably is not possible for the American public to have the benefit of good literature, theater, and music unless some centralized organization with a careful and long-range plan encourages these projects. We are shocked at the thought that this work should be diminished in any way. On the contrary, we believe it should be greatly expanded, and we believe that evidence on all sides from the public and from those publishers and theatrical producers who have worked with the Federal Arts Projects indicates the most widespread popular approval of this work. We earnestly hope that Congress will not disappoint the many admirers and supporters of federal arts.

### Arthur Kober

*Playwright—"Having Wonderful Time," etc.*

THE civilized world has witnessed with horror and disgust the complete collapse of culture and art in Germany and Italy. Here, in our country, our administrative officials are striking a great blow at our culture and art by throwing into unemployment (and into starvation) those thousands of artists and workers who have contributed their knowledge and skill to the Federal Arts Projects. This is not Nazi Germany! This is not fascist Italy! If our democracy is to survive, culture must not be permitted to decline. Restore the federal-project workers to their jobs! Immediately!

### Carl Randau

*President, N. Y. Newspaper Guild  
Feature Writer, N. Y. "World-Telegram"*

THE Republicans in the House, in their attack on the WPA, declared that "a national scandal requires immediate action." They are right. The scandal that requires immediate action is the conduct of the Republicans in Congress and their Tweedledee Democrats. For this group of false servants of the people to denounce hardworking, underpaid WPA employees as malingerers and shirkers is a genuine major national scandal. It requires the immediate and persistent demand of the men and women of the United States that their agents in the House and in the Senate stop their malingering and proceed at once to authorize the funds necessary to fight starvation and want among millions of unemployed—millions who would welcome jobs in private employment, but who cannot find the jobs because they do not exist. In the newspaper industry we have the disgraceful conduct of publishers who are throwing men and women out of jobs at the same time that they are running editorials and biased news stories calling for lower relief expenditures on the ground that prosperity is here.

### George Seldes

*Author, "Lords of the Press"*

AN ECONOMIC system, to be successful, must provide work for the people who live under it. In the past, slavery and peonage were two ways; in Germany today, forced labor at a price which month by month approaches the starvation level is another method.

America is one of the few countries of the world which has the raw materials and the power to transform them into food, clothing, and shelter for

all the people. But it would take a radical change in our social-economic system to provide the minimum of the necessities of life for the dispossessed, the havenots, the millions who want work but are denied work by those who have power and wealth.

The present reformist administration, seeking to avoid a radical change, has provided jobs for many millions. These men and women have accomplished great things, from national highways to theatrical productions. They are writing a great page in our history.

The present campaign of the reactionaries to fire those on government jobs, at a time when private industry does not provide work, should be opposed by all those who believe in a democratic America.

★

### Neatly Put

"I SUSPECT that, when Mussolini finds his people out in the streets without any pictures to go to and with nothing to do but think, he may be very sorry," said Arthur Marcus Loew in the *New York Times*, showing what he thinks of the function of the Hollywood movie.

★

### No Spik

FOR von Ribbentrop's recent Paris reception, the invitations were sent out in German. Louis Marin, vice-president of the Ethnographic Society, returned his with the note: "Please send me a translation of this important document without delay."

Joseph Caillaux gagged: "If it's in German, that let's me out. I don't understand that language."

★

### The Leghorn Goose

AT A giant Fascist Students Congress at Leghorn, Italy, recently, Achille Starace, secretary of the Fascist Party, was scheduled as the main speaker. As he entered the great hall, the mechanical "Viva Starace! Viva Starace! Viva Starace! . . ." went up and a throng of students rushed to bear him to the platform. Triumphant he was borne on their shoulders, but when he was set down on the rostrum his eyes were blazing, his uniform was disheveled, he walked with difficulty.

The shouts of "Viva Starace!" had drowned out his screams of agony as the anti-fascist youths pinched and nipped him unmercifully while they bore him in pseudo-triumph through the aisles. Achille, who is Mussolini's heel, will think twice about exposing himself to the "love" of the Italian masses again.

★

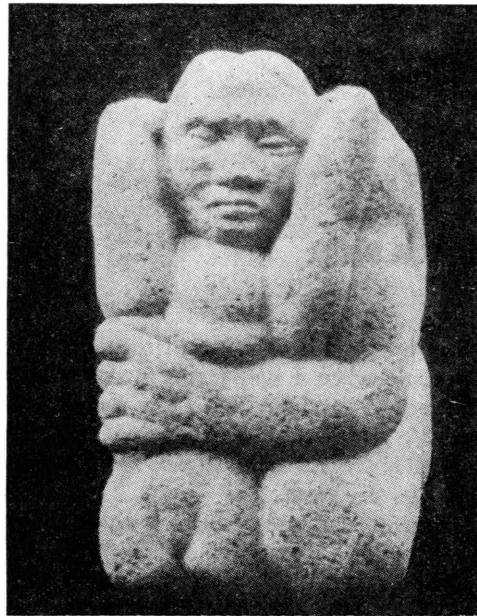
### Redskin Solidarity

CAUGHNAWAGA INDIANS of Quebec are on the warpath, protesting white exploitation and squalid reservation conditions. Says Caughnawaga Chief Joseph Delisle: "Us Injuns live in misery, squalor, on verge of starvation. Injuns in New York State get \$96 a month . . . We get only \$9. No can go back where we came from. We belong here."





Federal Art Project  
*"Industry" Robert Gronbach*



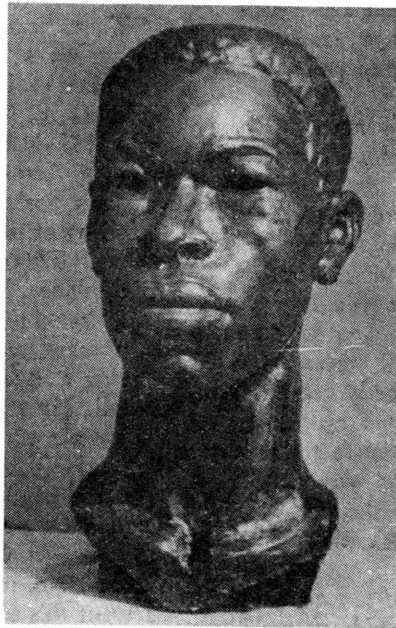
*"War" Mary Perry*



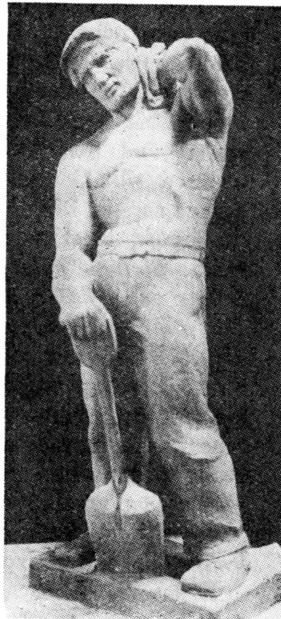
*"Southern Housewife" Robert Russin*



*"Miner's Son" H. Kallem*



*"Hanks" Frances Besner*



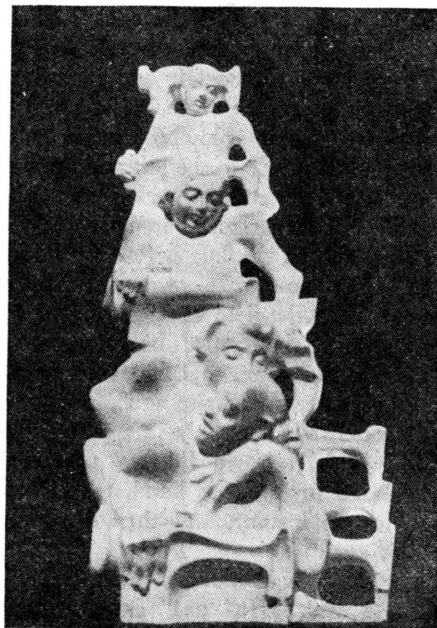
Federal Art Project  
*"Man With Shovel" H. Zucker*



*"Driller" Harry Allan*



Federal Art Project  
*"Steel Worker" Aaron Goodelman*



*"Song of the Shirt" John Hovannes*

### CIO Sculptors

THE sculpture reproduced on this page is on exhibit at a trade-union show. This month the United American Sculptors, a division of the United American Artists, which is in turn affiliated to the United Office and Professional Workers of the CIO, opened its first exhibit by members, at the New School for Social Research in New York City.

Scheduled to run throughout January, the show contains seventy-seven pieces varying in subject matter and ranging widely in technique. By its very breadth and complexity, the show is an answer to the detractors who lament the influence of organization on art. The movement grew out of and still receives much of its best work from sculptors on WPA projects.

# Solo Flight

## A Short Story

ALVAH C. BESSIE

THE plane rolled to a stop, my instructor released his safety-belt, stood up in the front cockpit and stepped out onto the wing. My God, I thought, it's come! (Twenty years ago I wrote a letter.) He bent down over me in a confidential manner, as though he were about to impart a piece of information intended for my ear alone, and he said: "O.K. You can go alone now." He stepped down off the wing onto the ground. "I'll be right here when you get back," he said.

"Hey, wait a minute," I said. "I don't feel at all confident about this."

"Nuts," he said. "Remember what I told you. There's a stiff breeze; you'll probably need the engine till you're most of the way down. Don't level off the way you've been doing. Bring it right down to the ground. Go ahead." Tachometer, I thought; climb at 1,600, turn at 1,550, cruise at 1,500. Five hundred feet.

I looked at him, but he turned away. I jerked the throttle open, and snapped it closed again. I turned to him (he'd swung on his heel toward me with an angry expression), and I said, "I'm sorry." I wanted to get off the ground; I wanted to get away from there before I lost—(Twenty years ago. . . .)

The plane rolled; I made a special effort with that throttle, pushing it forward slowly, infinitely slowly and with a steady pressure. The grass moved by swiftly, the engine was roaring, I held the stick forward, enjoying the pressure necessary to hold it against the airstream. The nose was down now and I eased back a bit on the stick, gently, gently. We were rolling fast now and I eased the stick a trifle farther back toward me, felt the excitement of the lift in the wings, held the stick toward me, my left hand on the throttle, my feet against the rudder pedals. I felt it lift, it was lifting now, it was off the ground, the ground was slipping by under me; it was dropping away. I enjoyed, for a second, the memory of many hours of maddening self-disgust, when I had had to fight the ship, fight my fear, fight my body to keep the plane running in a straight line across the ground. It had been impossible. But now I was climbing steadily; the earth was fifty feet below; the Coast Guards' squat military planes were beneath me, warming their engines on the ground; I shot a swift glimpse ahead, above, to both sides; there were no other planes in sight. I was rising diagonally across Flatbush Avenue, saw the toy cars going through the toll gate at the bridge, saw the green piers

of the new bridge I had used so many times as a guide when I was trying to fly straight and level. A straight line is the shortest distance . . . (Twenty years ago. . . .) *The fascists, the flight commander said, are sixteen miles due south.*

I remembered, and glanced at the tachometer; it was at 1,800 r.p.m. and with a feeling of deep regret I eased the throttle back a little till it fell to 1,600. ("Listen to the goddam engine!" he had said at least a hundred times. "Listen to it; don't fly so mechanical.") It made me sore that I had not heard the difference between 1,800 and 1,600. But I hated to ease it off; I hated to lose those 200 r.p.m. on the climb.

The bay was below me now, the shoal waters and the clean rippling surface, like watered silk. I could see the hundreds of parked cars in Riis Park, and on the far side, the beach, black with people safely on the earth. *Sixteen miles due south, under the baking sun, the enemy. Do you love peace? Do you love freedom? Do you love human dignity?* There was a small steamer far out on the horizon, and I suddenly recalled with a shock entirely unwarranted by the importance of the phenomenon, the fact that there really was no horizon; that was mist. That meant that when I got to the top, I would have to hold the nose above the point that looked like the horizon.

Exhausted, I reached the top of the climb (the altimeter on the underside of the upper wing read 500) and cautiously, as though I were handling eggs, reaching down a box from a high shelf, I pulled the stick slightly toward me and brought the throttle back a trifle. I leaned out to the left and looked at the tachometer in the front cockpit—1,550—and nodded my head. Slowly, cautiously, I brought the stick a trifle to the left and pressed gently on the left rudder pedal, saw the horizon tip, and then remembered that I had forgotten to look to the left before I turned. I cursed. The nose was swinging slowly around and when the field came into sight on my left, I brought the controls back to neutral again, brought the r.p.m. to 1,500, felt myself shaking as though I had the ague, and consciously relaxed. My legs ached; my knuckles were white with the grip I'd had upon the stick; I relaxed my throttle hand, took it off the lever for an instant, and then hurriedly put it back again.

"By Christ!" I said aloud, "that's funny." I laughed. I said, "Ha! ha!" as loud as I could say it, and then consciously relaxed again. My flesh was wet; there were beads

of perspiration on the backs of my hands; my back ached and my neck was stiff. I said aloud, "Well, you're flying." I said, "*Well, you're flying!*" I shot a swift glance down at the field, but I couldn't see him: I looked for him anxiously for a moment, felt the left wing go down, and hurriedly, my heart in my throat, looked forward and corrected the unintentional bank. The shadow of the plane moved under me across the earth, a dark cloud scudding, man's shadow on the earth he'd left behind.

Wind rising. A gust of wind struck us and the plane rose ten feet, dropped five, fell off on the left wing, and righted itself before my mind got round to directing my hand to correct the error. I could feel that I was tightening up again, and relaxed. "Relax!" I said aloud, "*Relax, you damned fool, relax!*" ("You'll either fly it yourself," he said, "or it'll fly *you*. I want *you* to do the flying, not the ship.") Twenty years ago I wrote a letter. . . .

There was something in my mind trying to get my attention, but I purposely refused to think of it; I knew what it was, but I rejected it, I held it off without too much effort; I knew it would worry me. Time enough. Across the field I could see long lines of cars parked, and a thin edge of people standing at the wire fence before the concrete apron. There were three people there I couldn't see. My wife was there, and my two small sons; one four and a half years old, one two years and three months. Maybe they're having a cocoamalt, I thought, not watching at all. How would they know he'd got out of the plane; they couldn't see across the field. The thought of them sitting calmly on the veranda of the restaurant, the kids having a cocoamalt, not watching, annoyed me. Don't they know? Can't they tell? Don't they feel it. . . . No, my mind, said; it doesn't matter. I want this for you all; I want *you* to handle this, and not the enemy. (Twenty years ago:

To: Master Alvah C. Bessie  
FROM: Chief of the Signal Corps  
IN RE: Riding in Government Airplanes

1. Your recent letter to the President has been referred to me.

2. I regret to say that it will not be possible for the President to grant you permission to ride in a government airplane.

3. If we gave permission to all boys your age to ride in government airplanes, there would be no planes available to train pilots for France.

4. If you wish to see an airplane, you may go to the nearest army flying field and ask for the commanding officer; and he will be willing to show you an airplane.)

This is no place for you, my mind said. This is no place to be; what are you doing here? The kids . . . the older boy has been up five times now; it doesn't mean a thing to him. "Poppy," he said, "if I jumped out of the airplane, would it hurt me?" "Yes," I said, "I suppose it would." "Poppy," he said, "if I jumped out of the airplane with a parachute would it hurt me very much?" Four and a half; thirty-three. What did I say, the kid?

Dear President Wilson, did I say? Honorable Sir, did I say? I am a young boy thirteen years of age, and I would like to ride in an army airplane twenty years ago. Now, now.

Suddenly I knew I was in the air, that I was flying, that the earth was below me, that the water was down there on my right, the field on my left, and millions were walking the earth, in Brooklyn, in Manhattan, in Chicago, and in Spain. The front cockpit looked empty for the first time, and I fought off the thing my mind wanted to tell me; just a little while longer now, just a little longer. Let them all fly; let all of them soar on stiff wings above the earth. Man made this thing for all, this was made for man and who is keeping it from him; who is keeping the shattering joy of flight from the multitudes of the earth-bound? Who will give it to them? I put my left hand out and felt the solid rush of the airstream. I looked to the left, and with my heart pounding, my body awake for the first time in my life, I eased the stick off to the left, gave it left rudder, felt the seat tip under me, saw the horizon tip. There were wings over the earth, moving swiftly from point to point, seeking out the distant places of the earth. Over the North Pole, the broad Atlantic, bringing peace and happiness and the exultation of accomplishment.

Below me there were some fishermen's huts on the edge of the swampy land; there were rivulets running out into the bay. *Basque*. There was a rowboat moored a few feet offshore, its shadow on the water. There were gulls below me, wheeling over the surface. The nose swung gently across the slanted horizon, Flatbush Avenue came into my field of vision, and the cars moving slowly on it, crawling like army ants on the march. There was a ship coming into the field ahead of me, and I banked to keep an eye on him and let him have all the time he needed. I remembered my instructor in the front cockpit, his goggled profile, pointing at his own eye, then at another plane in the air, then at his eye, then at the plane. Below me, the fishermen's huts; poor people. *Suddenly I released the bombs, saw them melting away below as they fell, twisting, saw the soundless detonation and the flash, the smoke, and the geyser of earth and broken wood and broken water. I thought of Guernica, of Madrid, of Durango, of Bilbao, and shut the sight out of my mind, the hate out of my heart. . . .* Who is keeping them all (the poor) upon the ground? Why can't they soar, why can't they stretch their wings? There are wings over the earth, moving swiftly, point to point, bringing death and grief and pain and the horror of man's ingenuity.

I leveled the wings with the horizon and looked down. The wind sock on the little signal tower was plain, and as I watched I could see him, he was standing there, just where I had left him. My heart rose into my throat and my mind acknowledged the thought it had been shunting off as a football player



Louis Ferstadt (Hudson Walker Gallery)

stiff-arms interference. I banked to the left again and slowly pulled the throttle toward me, heard the engine idle down, shoved the nose down, and waited. It was *now*.

"Do it!" I said aloud, and was astonished by the sound of my own voice. The wires were whistling and the plane rocked and rolled under me. I corrected a bit for the wind, gave it a little right rudder and brought it into the breeze. *For a brief moment, the machine guns rattled, two through the propeller, one on either wing, and the fascist troops threw themselves flat on the road, rolled into the ditches, their hands above their heads.* I could see him now, he was waving his arms to show me where he was. The wires were screaming and I pulled the nose up a trifle. I could feel I was undershooting the field, opened the gun for a few seconds, closed it again. There was nothing to do but wait—"Don't sit there like a dummy; keep your wits about you; you can't fall asleep in an airplane," he said. "What the hell do you want to do, dive it into the ground!"

The earth was rising, the soft green field was swelling under me, I corrected for the gusts of air nearer the ground, keeping the wings level, holding the nose along the line I had determined to land on, parallel to the concrete runway. My voice was in my ears.

"Wait. Wait.

"All right now, soon; all right now, soon. Don't level off too soon.

"Don't level off too soon. Bring it right in.

"Now," my voice said, and I eased back on the stick. He was standing to my left, his hands at his sides, watching. His goggles gleamed on his forehead and I had a momentary image of my own serious face, the sinister

face of the pilot, helmeted and goggled, like some monster, like an insect under a microscope, the clean sweep of the skull, the enormous eyes, the firm mouth with the lips in a thin line; watching, alert, the eyes moving behind the lenses. *Machine guns rattle for the poor.*

"Now," my voice said again, "take it easy; take it easy take it easy take it easy."

The ground was rushing past me; the individual grass blades could be seen; I felt like bursting.

"Now!" I shouted, pulled the stick into my lap, and felt the ship sit down, felt the dull shock of the solid earth vibrate through the fuselage, kicked the rudder right and left to keep the plane rolling straight across the grass, my chest aching with the desolation, the joy, and the agony of flight.

He was running up to me and I could feel my face cracking with the smile, my jaws aching from the pressure of my teeth against each other. I wanted a drink of water; my throat was bone-dry; my eyes felt as though they were bursting from their sockets; my head ached. The strap of the goggles cut into my scalp. (Twenty years ago I wrote a letter.)

"That was *ridiculous!*" he shouted. "The whole thing was *ridiculous!* Your takeoff stank, you climbed too fast—do you want to stall and crash! You yanked it through the turns, the approach was absolutely absurd, you bounced when you landed. Didn't I *teach* you to glide all over again? Do I—"

"I don't remember bouncing," I said.

He put his hands on his hips. "You don't remember?" he said gently, as though he were talking to a four-year-old. "Do you want me to hold your hand? I'm perfectly willing to hold your hand. I say it *stank!*"

He turned away from the plane, and without looking back at me he said, "Go ahead; do it again, and stop *dreaming.*"

★

## Me and My Shadow

ANOTHER little jolt for the Hollywood producers who can't seem to make up their minds about fascism comes from the Spanish rebel newspaper *Diario de Burgos*, of December 26. Following the cue of Hitler and Mussolini, the paper denounces the American film industry and Clark Gable, Norma Shearer, and Samuel Goldwyn, particularly, as "Jewish poison," adding wistfully that the absence of these "cursed serpents of Judaism" will be quickly made up by "splendid films, magnificent examples of Italian production, already announced throughout our country," to be followed "by others, very important, coming to us from Germany." While the rebel moviegoer is awaiting these epics he may bolster himself with the following admonition concerning the infamous trio Franco has banned: "Not only should their persons be barred but also their perfidious and very efficacious shadows, which glide, like thieves in the night, across the screen."



# Readers' Forum

## Catholics and Loyalist Spain

**T**O NEW MASSES: That a small group of a few thousands within the 21,000,000 membership of the Catholic Church should elect to abandon their religion and espouse the pagan war fetishism of Hitler and Mussolini is deplorable. They have, of course, the heretical behavior of the majority of Spanish bishops in supporting Franco's rebellion as precedent, if they so wish to use it. But for these renegades to be taken as the true voice of Catholicism, as many non-Catholics seem to take them, is to slander the great Catholic public who, as devout believers in a religion, really try to live in this modern world as their conscience and culture dictates.

It is this bedrock of American Catholics who believe in democracy, whose heart goes out to the people of Spain and who are right now undergoing the same attack by some of their renegade leaders that the Spanish Catholics underwent in the five years before Franco's fascist-backed revolt.

The greater part of the Spanish Catholic bishops, having abandoned Catholicism for the heresy of fascism, openly support this illegal, unholy attack upon the people and the state of Spain. Through anti-Catholic agents of fascism, these betrayers of their people have spread the notion that their murders should be considered a "Holy War."

This patent blasphemy has gained a considerable hold upon American Catholics, has fooled numbers of the American hierarchy, and wrought untold havoc with the consciences of otherwise devout believers throughout the United States. More: it has made it possible for open agents of Hitler and Mussolini to wage their war on democracy behind the façade of the church of Rome. This suicidal trend, in the face of its victims in Germany, Austria, and Italy, is astounding and only shows the cancer-like spread of fascism when introduced into even the most venerable of organizations.

But while American Catholics, whose sympathies have been shown to be with their fellow democrats of Spain, still await a strong leadership in fighting the immorality of fascism, Catholics of other lands have seen clearly their duty.

The formation, in France, of the "National Catholic Committee for Basque Aid and Help for Catalan Children" under the honorary presidencies of Cardinal Verdier, Archbishop of Paris, and Monsignor Felin, Archbishop of Bordeaux, and under the actual direction of Monsignor Mathieu, Bishop of Aire and Dax, shows the health of Catholic charity under the Popular Front. The Pope himself has contributed to this charity with a handsome sum. The distribution of this aid in republican Spain will be handled by the "Catholic Committee for Civil Aid" in Barcelona, under the direction of Sr. Ruiz Hebrard, president of the Catholic Youth of Catalonia. The millions of Catholics who remained loyal to their democratic government will thus see that they still profess a religion of charity for all. Similar Catholic committees exist in England, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, and other countries where Catholic culture has not been undermined by the pagan propaganda of Herr Goebbels and the spokesmen of the traitor Franco.

In America, where Catholics may number only one-sixth of the total population, but where they remain the most powerful political and financial

national unit of the church, such charity for the loyal people of republican Spain remains in non-sectarian or Protestant hands. Such pittance that the reluctant Catholics may give under clerical urging go to Cardinal Goma, whose blessings are for Mohammedan Moors, fascist tanks, and Nazi planes alone.

But anti-Catholicism has reached a new height within Catholic circles in this country with the pseudo-Catholic movement to keep our unjust embargo on republican Spain. To cover their motives, these agitators also shout for a similar embargo on Franco, if not for Hitler and Mussolini. Championing "isolation" and "non-intervention," these fascist agents count on the Catholic people's ignorance of the true state of affairs—that just such a principle enabled Cavour to gobble up, one by one, the Papal States into the King of Piedmont's Italy. Such a principle was condemned in the syllabus of Pope Pius IX. Such a principle is condemned in the program of the Catholic Association for International Peace. Such a principle would excuse Catholics from protesting when Mussolini bombs the Vatican. Such a principle is purely fascist. As the Catholic publication the *Wanderer* summed it up in the Jan. 5, 1939, issue:

"When a state is gravely threatened either by internal or external enemies, it is the duty of other states to come to its assistance, if they can do so without serious disadvantage. Similarly it may become a duty in charity to go to the assistance of a party clearly and unjustly persecuted or severely abused, either through diplomatic negotiations or through military force if the party seeks such help and it can be given without causing even greater evils."

The Spanish republic does not ask for military force. It has sent home its volunteers from other lands. The fascists openly send their conscripted troops and war material to Spain to attack its recognized government. This is contrary to international law (ironically enough, a Spanish invention) and Christian justice. No one but a fascist doubts that the Spanish people are gravely threatened by "internal and external enemies." The Pope has blessed the Catholic committees for aid to the civil population of Catalonia and for the miserable Basques driven from their country by the invading Italians and Germans. None but an anti-Catholic would attack the charity that goes forth to them from the free peoples of the world.

So eminent a Catholic jurist as Dean Francis M. Shea of the Buffalo Law School states: "I would put my plea that the Spanish embargo be lifted on much narrower ground. I consider, as those who hold the political leadership of this country consider, that the security of civilization depends upon restoration of international law and the sacredness of international commitment. The established rules of international law provide that a duly constituted government is entitled to free commerce with other friendly nations in arms and materials of war. A rebel force which has not been accorded belligerent rights is not entitled to such commerce. Under these principles loyalist Spain should be permitted to purchase munitions and materials of war in this country. Our markets should be closed to the rebels."

Today all free people, Catholics particularly,

must write and urge that the embargo be lifted so that not only Spain but also Rome, the seat of Catholicism, may be freed from fascism. As Father James M. Gillis, editor of the *Catholic World*, points out in the current number, Mussolini has turned his people to "war mongering and warmaking, to tyranny and race prejudice, to cruelty and injustice at the nod and beck of a great bully." Yet it is this war god who demands that Catholics of the world refrain from protest; whose propaganda department has replaced the corpus of Christian doctrine.

Nothing but moral blindness or strange corruption can explain the attitude of Catholics who reject the principles of international justice for the intrigues of the two great enemies of the church. The American Catholic people look with the eyes of the Spanish Catholics and the Basques who see the blasphemously blessed planes and tanks of the foreigner spit death at them. They hear a cardinal of their church uphold the Pope's plea for the defense of democracy and then hear the same cardinal urge American Catholics to support Franco, the sworn enemy of democracy. Out of this colossal confusion, there can come only ruin to the church.

For, as Archbishop Ireland said, "The church must be with the people. I wish that more of our bishops realized that."

If you print this, perhaps some Catholics may see it and examine their consciences. The profascists within the church have asked them to do everything (from healing Hitler to slandering Jews to cheering the bombing of babies) except that.

New York City.

TOM DAVIN.

Those who are interested in the true Catholic analyses of the fascist attack upon the Spanish people and their government, and the replacement of fascism for Catholicism in Franco's Spain, might read the following:

*Catholic Evidence on Spain: Assembled from Catholic Sources.* Published by the Medical Bureau and North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy, 381 Fourth Ave., New York City. 5 Cents.

*The Case of the Basque Catholics.* Published by the Basque Archives, 386 Fourth Ave., New York City. 10 Cents.

*The Basque Problem,* by Dr. De Azpilikoeta. Published by the Basque Archives, 386 Fourth Ave., New York City. 5 Cents.

NEW MASSES will welcome comment from its readers on the above letter by Mr. Davin, or on any phase of the problem he discusses.—THE EDITORS.

## Ben Leider

**T**O NEW MASSES: The following poem was written by my thirteen-year-old son Arnold, in memory of his uncle, Ben Leider. If you would like to publish it, you are welcome to do so.

Forest Hills, N. Y.

SAMUEL LEIDER.

### IN MEMORY OF MY UNCLE

When Ben grew up to take his place in the world,  
He saw the flag of democracy,  
And wondered how long 'twould remain unfurled.  
In his mind the populace of Spain he saw,  
People who would stand tyranny no more.  
He saw their would-be ruler a terrorist,  
And saw democracy fade into the mist.  
The fascist web was being drawn tight,  
As Ben Leider went to Spain to fight.  
He fought like a soldier and was on the level,  
He fought against Hitler and the fascist devil.  
While friends and brothers were shooting hot lead,  
"You can't kill freedom with bullets," he said.  
Even as he lay on his death bed,  
"You can't kill freedom with bullets," he said.

ARNOLD LEIDER.

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# REVIEW AND COMMENT

## A Literary Pogrom

THESE are pogroms and pogroms. This is perhaps a commonplace; but at a time when venomous anti-Semites, driven under cover for the moment, are finding it to their advantage to restrict the question of Nazi persecution to the Jewish race, it is well to bring home the fact that the Hitlerites are engaged, not only in the brutal suppression of *all* racial and religious minorities and of the working and lower middle classes as a whole, but are at the same time bent upon staging a widespread literary and cultural pogrom, which includes such victims as Einstein, Thomas Mann, Heinrich Mann, Sigmund Freud, Jakob Wassermann, Franz Werfel, and many others.

This, again, is not new. Was not the famous bonfire of the books in front of the Berlin Opera House an accompaniment of the first Nazi pogroms, in the early Storm Trooper days of 1933? And now, as all men of good will everywhere go about with stunned minds and aching hearts, as they think of the physical atrocities that are being perpetrated in the Third Reich, there comes from out the land of "National Socialism" a ponderous semi-official tome entitled *Deutsches Land in Deutscher Dichtung*, edited by one Dr. Arthur Luther. It is a bibliography of those writers and works that meet with the approval of Dr. Goebbels and his henchmen, and more than ten thousand productions are listed. The arrangement is topographical, the works being grouped by locale.

Writers of the left are so often accused of presenting a distorted picture where Hitler's Germany is concerned that it seems well in this case to forego a detailed description of Dr. Luther's bibliography, and instead, to let a gentleman who has tried his best to be a tolerant friend of the "new Germany" tell the tale. The gentleman in question is the editor of *Books Abroad*, a quarterly publication devoted to reviews in English of foreign-language books; it is published at the University of Oklahoma, under an endowment from the Carnegie Foundation for International Peace. The magazine is one that is widely read by foreign-language teachers and specialists, in colleges and universities all over the world. From the start it has painfully striven to maintain an attitude of neutrality toward Nazi literature, or, rather, has followed a policy of presenting "both sides of the question." This policy has drawn protests from both Nazi and anti-Nazi readers and con-

tributors, and has resulted in rather a strange jumble of contents.

One thing, however, must be said for the editors—they have never in the experience of the present writer (who happens to be a regular contributor) exerted the least censorship upon anti-Nazi reviews. It will perhaps be a little easier to understand the situation, if one remembers that the men at the head of the publication are German scholars, steeped in the glorious culture of the Germany of old. They have, accordingly, leaned over backward in an effort to be "fair." But from time to time their instinct as literary scholars becomes too much for them, and they speak out their minds. The Luther bibliography would seem to have been about the last straw. In the department, "The Editor Parenthesizes," in the autumn number, we come upon the following:

... his [Luther's] remarkable book is like a dictionary with a few dozen pages torn out of it entirely. Or, more accurately, it is like a history, say of the sixteenth century, from which some zealous ultra-Catholic censor might have entirely deleted all mention of Martin Luther. In other words, from the point of view of the unprejudiced investigator who must have all the information, the book is exactly worthless.

What value has a list of Lübeck novels which makes no mention of Thomas Mann's *Buddenbrooks*? What is the good of piling up a string of second-rate stories whose locale is the Kurort of Davos in Switzerland, and leaving out of the list Thomas Mann's marvelous *Zauberberg (Magic Mountain)*? Go carefully through this allegedly representative if not complete catalogue of German-language nov-

elists whose stories have been located on German, Swiss, or Austrian soil, and you will never find a hint that there has ever been on the planet a novelist named Thomas Mann, or a Heinrich Mann, a Jakob Wassermann, a Max Brod, a Joseph Roth, a Franz Werfel. This ostensibly dependable book list convicts itself of unfairness by a series of omissions which are as flatly dishonest as positive misrepresentation would have been. This may not have been Dr. Luther's fault. The czarist government of cultural Germany may have forced these omissions on him. . . . There may be situations in which unwelcome voices may be stifled. But men like the Manns cannot be *totgeschwiegen*. . . . It is Germany's best friends who are the most troubled by her incomprehensible unwisdom in refusing to allow her enemies even those merits which every dolt and every blind man can see that they possess . . . leaving the name of Jakob Wassermann out of an allegedly representative list of German novelists is not merely dishonoring the memory of one of Germany's most gifted writers, it is plunging a knife into Germany's own heart. This is the beginning of Germany's cultural suicide. Can't something be done to stop it? Can't Germany's friends convince her that she is injuring herself by such maneuvers more than her enemies can possibly injure her? A great nation cannot afford to be dishonest. More than that, it cannot afford to make itself ridiculous.

From the foregoing it may be seen that the latest literary pogrom is having much the same repercussions as the physical one. The friends of true German culture cannot much longer delude themselves with the excuse that this, after all, is a "revolution," and literature may have to suffer in such a period. It is plain by now that the Nazis are bent upon exterminating all human culture worthy of the name, just as surely as they are bent upon annihilating the German Jew and Catholic and Lutheran, while enslaving the German working class and the great German people.

In France the Action Française fascists are calling for the extermination of all Protestants as well as Jews. Can you imagine the bibliographies which their Dr. Luthers would compile, with all the great non-Catholic names of French literature left out? (Fortunately, they are not representative of the Catholic masses of France.)

And speaking of literature and revolutions—it seems to me that Ehrenbourg brings it all out splendidly, when he notes the fact that, while the Nazis burned the letters of Rosa Luxembourg, one of the first acts of the Bolshevik government in Russia was to order a printing of the letters of the Empress Alexandrovna. Why? Because, as Ehrenbourg puts it, the working class is the young class and not an old and dying one; it does not see ghosts



Fred Ellis



Fred Ellis





Fred Ellis

or wrestle with cadavers. It represents a "dictatorship of the roving eye and the sturdy limb." It knows that, as Friedrich Engels said, it is the rightful heir to all the culture of all the ages. That was why one of the first things the Bolsheviks did was to order a Russian translation of the works of Walt Whitman, after Whitman's poems had been burned and his translators imprisoned by the czarist censor for a score of years past. For the Soviets mean to preserve their heritage of culture, freedom, and democracy. SAMUEL PUTNAM.

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## Marxist Theory

WHAT IS PHILOSOPHY? A MARXIST INTRODUCTION, by Howard Selsam. *International Publishers. \$1.25.*

THERE is a deplorable lack of simple and clear introductions to dialectical materialism. We need authors who can explain how reasonable the philosophy of Marxism is, how materialism and dialectics, forged together in inseparable harmony, give a concise foundation to scientific method, to progressive political action, and to plain common sense. Even serious students of Marxism sometimes express a belief that materialism may be acceptable, but dialectics is some artificial concoction preserved by Marx in pious reference to Hegel.

Professor Selsam has succeeded remarkably well in presenting Marxist philosophy as a careful expression of common sense. He follows Marx, Engels, and Lenin, who always taught dialectical materialism with their particular gift of making philosophy concrete. They always showed the intimate relations between the loftiest philosophical formulas and the most homely actions of everyday struggle. For these men philosophy was a living guide to action.

The reader of this book loses any notion he may have that philosophy is something outside of his own experience or vision. "It is not the purpose of the author," we read in the preface, "to bring philosophy down to earth, but to show how it has always been there." We understand that the different systems and types of philosophy have been just so many ways in which men have reacted to the world of nature and society around them. Marxist philosophy, in Selsam's hands, emerges as the theory which helps men in the present time in the fight against war and fascism, against hunger and disease.

The book explains, in five chapters, the outstanding aspects of dialectical materialism. Starting with an explanation of the place of philosophy in life, we find in the following chapters an introduction to materialism as opposed to idealism, a discussion of permanence and change, an analysis of the scientific method and the application of Marxist philosophy to historical problems. The author shows the relations between Marx and Engels and their

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predecessors, and explains how they represent a step in advance. He emphasizes the unity of thought and action in the struggle for Socialist reconstruction of society. The book ends with a discussion of the concept of freedom.

Professor Selsam has an enviable way of using simple language, striking examples and anecdotes. He takes illustrations from the history of thought and from contemporary struggles. The reader learns to see the course of philosophy not as an inconsistent enumeration of slightly foolish systems, but as an organic development. He will also find that inspiration in the fight for social betterment which issues from deeper insight into the laws of man and nature.

A great number of subjects are discussed in this book, from an explanation of Berkeley's idealism, Plato's attempts to eliminate change, Kant's attempts to reconcile science and religion, to the teachings and activities of the great masters of scientific Socialism. There is a keen analysis of the scientific method, in which the attempts to separate theory from practice are explained and criticized.

Dialectics, in its materialist Marxist form, gives theoretical aid in solving many of their difficult problems. Its conception of everything as in process, of the interaction of things, of the nature of change, of the autonomy of the various sciences because of the relative uniqueness of each specific kind of subject matter, of the unity of theory and practice—to mention only a few and to avoid difficult technicalities—prove fertile ideas for scientific work. Finally, such men come to see science as a social enterprise having a social function to perform.

The chapter on history and freedom has some excellent material. Here we find historic materialism explained as a science of social change, and opposed to economic determinism, a vulgarization. There is also an attempt at a Marxist introduction to ethics. The final pages are devoted to the concept of freedom as the full understanding of necessity.

The subject is partly presented as a controversy with religious viewpoints. This seems an advantage for a book of this kind. Many people receive their dose of philosophy in the form of religion. Discussion of the weaknesses of religious thinking allows excellent opportunity for popularization of Marxist philosophy. The role that religion, even now, can play in stimulating progressive action is also clearly recognized.

Reading the book, we found certain places where we could not entirely agree with the author. We should have liked to see a fuller use of Lenin's penetrating analysis of dialectics, condensed in the sixteen points published in his philosophical notebooks. The result would have been a better exposition of that cardinal character of the dialectical method, namely, its universality. Lenin, following Hegel, remarked that even in the simplest statement one can reveal, as in a cell, the embryo of all the elements of dialectics, showing that dialectics is in general the characteristic of all human knowledge. The proposition "John is a man" already proclaims that the particular is at the same time the general. In this way we begin to understand dialectics,

even without the help of science or politics, as the unity of opposites.

Another point of possible criticism is found on page 95. "Since Hegel," we read, "the traditional timeless world of all the classical philosophers is out of date." The whole idea of change, we are told, entered philosophy only with modern capitalism and with Hegel. This goes too far. Dialectics can be dated at least as far back as Heraclitus. "There is no statement of Heraclitus," writes Hegel, "which I did not use in my *Logic*." In the seventeenth century, philosophy was deeply influenced by mathematics. To this mathematics belongs the calculus, which is a symbolic treatment of change itself. Newtonian physics, quoted as having "caused men to ignore the whole problem of change," was, at the same time, so full of dialectical dynamite that Kant and Laplace, on the sole basis of this physics, could construct an evolutionary cosmology which went beyond the vision of Hegel himself.

A critical reader will find more such places, which may occur rather easily in a book of a popular character, which sets itself the task to explain in less than two hundred pages a comprehensive conception of the world. The same critical reader will be more often struck by the clarity of the exposition, the ease with which really difficult things are explained—as in the final discussion on freedom—and will feel glad that he has found an introduction to Marxist philosophy which he can gladly recommend to those persons who like to find out what it is all about before they plunge into the classical literature.

D. J. STRUIK.

## Negroes Against the Confederacy

THE NEGRO IN THE CIVIL WAR, by Herbert Aptheker. International Publishers. 10 cents.

THE persistent and heroic struggles of the Negro people against slavery, especially during the Civil War, have never been recognized, much less studied, by bourgeois historians. Even liberal writers have been content to disregard the fact that the most ardent, the most daring, and certainly the most constant champions of their liberation have been the Negroes themselves. It has remained for Marxist writers to exhume and analyze the unbelievably rich revolutionary history of the Negro, and for the first time to evaluate it in terms of the battle for democracy of all progressive people.

Just such a job has been done by Herbert Aptheker in the pamphlet under review. He tells the inspiring story of Negro participation in the Civil War with scholarly precision and historical understanding. It is a story of courage and infinite resource on the part of a whole people, of secret and open resistance to the Confederacy, and of soldiering against it as members of the Union army, once the gen-

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erals' reluctance to accept them was overcome. The cumulative effect of this struggle was one of the chief factors in crushing American slavery. As Aptheker summarizes the situation:

... a blood-stained, militaristic oligarchy saw its national power ripped from it, and its local, internal power threatened by a revolution of its mudsill, its base. It rose in rebellion itself in a desperate attempt to stop the clock of history. *Its effort was foiled essentially because the internal revolt it foresaw occurred.* [My italics—S. P.] The poor whites fled from its armies and waged war upon it. The slaves conspired or rebelled, or broke its tools, or refused to do its work, or fled its fields and mines and factories. Many fought shoulder to shoulder with the Southern poor whites against a common enemy, and a multitude joined the army from the North and brought it information and guidance and labor and a desperate courage. Thus was American slavery crushed.

While Aptheker's final comment may be an over-simplification of the effect of the various forces which converged to smash slavery, his detailed account of the part which the Negro played is a very fine piece of historical writing which draws on private letters, accounts in Southern newspapers, army reports, and the official records of both armies.

Read today, *The Negro in the Civil War* fills a definite historical gap and makes a significant contribution to the struggle of the Negro people for complete freedom.

STEPHEN PEABODY.

## The Real Don Juan

AFTER THE DEATH OF DON JUAN, by Sylvia Townsend Warner. Viking Press. \$2.50.

THE Don Juan of Miss Warner's story is not romantic. He is a spoiled, malignant brat, conceited and ignorant, whom the tenants on his father's land curse as they measure his libertinism by the soaring figures of their debts. Moreover, he was never dragged to hell by the avenging father of a betrayed senorita. This was a tale invented by his valet when Don Juan hid from the eyes of Seville until he had recovered from a skin disease. When finally he turned up again, at his father's castle in Tenorio Viejo, it was to call out the troops against an enraged peasantry who had counted on his death to deliver them from the worst phases of hunger, fleas, and drought.

But the peasants, as one of them remarks, had more on their backs than the son of Don Saturno. There was Don Saturno himself, a feudal landlord with liberal impulses, too polished to offend the "elegant waxworks" of his own class, too passive to help his tenants, whom he relishes as individuals. There were the tax collectors, the soldiers, the petty bourgeoisie of oily character, the less lovable members of the clergy. The return of Don Juan is only a signal for the revolt. The revolt itself is a miniature of the 1936 canvas.

No reader can miss the allegory of modern

Spain in this eighteenth-century tale. It is not, however, forced upon him. In fact, the author's wit—which is reminiscent of but sturdier than Ellen Glasgow's—threatens at times to turn her story into a comedy of manners. You can hardly blame her, considering the material she had; for the ways of the elegant waxworks are ludicrous when they are not repellent. Chief exhibit is Doña Ana, the lady who did protest too much, with the dismaying result of bringing papa to the rescue—he is the avenging father of the legend—and who dedicates her life to praying and searching for Don Juan, until he comes back to slap her face and describe her as "visionary as a money lender." Theatrical, beautiful, slow-witted but implacable, she is more than a match for her cuckold bridegroom, whose thriving instinct of self-preservation is unsustained by dignity or common sense. Toward the end of the book, he returns to Tenorio Viejo to avenge his honor on Don Juan and stays to help him resist the besieging peasants.

Miss Warner is more interesting when she writes of the villagers and it is a pity she did not give us more of them. There is comedy in their lives also, as well as confusion and rascality, but they are a far more engaging, natural lot than the "devil's rosary" of aristocrats. Their speech, as they discuss their troubles, is simple and pointed, with a subtly poetic intonation of anger. Ramon and Diego, who lead the rebellion, voice the painful, bewildered hope of untutored men who are yet able to see beyond their native mountains and their own time. The book closes with their conversation when Ramon is dying from a wound inflicted by the troopers:

"What are you looking at, Ramon? What do you see?"

"So large a country," said the dying man. "And there in the middle of it, like a heart, is Madrid. But our Tenorio Viejo is not marked. I have often looked for it. It is not there, though. It is too small, I suppose. We have lived in a very small place, Diego."

"We have lived in Spain," said the other.

"Aye."

His gaze left the map and turned to the face bent over him. They looked at each other long and intently, as though they were pledged to meet again and would ensure a recognition.

BARBARA GILES.

## Brontë Sisters

THE MIRACLE OF HAWORTH: A BRONTË STUDY, by W. Bertram White. E. P. Dutton & Co. \$3.50.

WHITMAN's warning—"I charge you forever reject those who would expound me"—holds good for this study of the Brontës. The sharp clear story of one of the world's great families of genius survives this study because so much of the writing of the Brontës is included in it, but when Mr. White begins to expound, comparing Emily with women writers from Sappho to Edith Wharton, his ratings take this form: Emily and Sappho were

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Plate 3: Pierrot and Harlequin (Cézanne)

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great poets but Emily was also a novelist; therefore Emily is greater. Ditto for Emily Dickinson. And his interpretations of the various Brontë letters are better left unsaid.

The facts of the family life are well known, yet complex and extraordinary; the modern "psychology of depths" alone can interpret a man who put masks on his children at the ages of four, six, seven, eight, and asked them such questions as, "What is the best way of knowing the difference between a man's intellect and a woman's?" (to Branwell, aged seven), and, "What is the best mode of education for a woman?" (to Charlotte, aged eight). The relationship of the children to the father, their efforts to mature—successful only with Charlotte—the suffering which drove Charlotte, that quiet puritan, to a Catholic confession, the cry of Emily to be "cherished, strengthened, and fed without the aid of joy," her terrible poem, "The Prisoner," in which she describes the relief of utter denial of the body—these things do not fit themselves into a surface frame such as Mr. White provides.

What is needed is a biography of the family as penetrating as the writing of the Brontë sisters themselves. Charlotte could write in *Shirley*:

"I observe that to such grievances as society cannot cure, it usually forbids utterance, on pain of its scorn: this scorn brings only a sort of tinselish cloak to its deformed weakness. People hate to be reminded of ills they are unable or unwilling to remedy: such reminder, in forcing on them a sense of their own incapacity, or a more painful sense of an obligation to make some unpleasant effort, troubles their ease and shakes their self-complacency. Old maids, like the houseless and unemployed poor, should not ask for a place and an occupation in the world: the demand disturbs the happy and rich: it disturbs parents . . ."

The power behind *Wuthering Heights* and Emily's poems and the great humanness of Charlotte appear in this biography only as the reader can reconstruct them, but they are worth the reconstruction.

MILLEN BRAND.

## A Magazine For Progressives

NATIONAL ISSUES, January 1939. Vol. 1, No. 1. 15 cents.

THIS new monthly magazine of the Communist Party would be valuable to progressives at any time and its appearance this month, with the opening of the 76th Congress, is particularly welcome. Subtitled "A Survey of Politics and Legislation," the first issue carries pointed, factual analyses of problems facing the national administration and the Congress.

Earl Browder writes of "Armaments and Peace," explaining the post-Munich developments on this question and presenting a practical plan of action for the opponents of war and fascism. Alan Max compares the legislative programs of the CIO and AFL, and

reveals a surprising amount of agreement between these two labor organizations on fundamental social objectives. The un-American activities of the Dies committee are summarized by Milton Howard, who gives sound advice on how to counter this propaganda mill of reaction. And the monopoly investigation, its background and setup, what it has done and what it can and should accomplish, are explained with gratifying clarity by David Ramsey.

For those who regard the subject of taxation as somewhat too esoteric for laymen, John Page's piece on "A Progressive Tax Program" should be especially helpful. Roger Bacon discusses "WPA and Recovery," Rob F. Hall reports on the Southern Conference for Human Welfare, the Wagner act is reviewed, and there is a valuable lengthy editorial on the 76th Congress, written by Gene Dennis, the magazine's editor. The publication also performs a much needed service in the way of a "Congressional Calendar" which gives a brief report on measures now before Congress or likely to come up in the near future, and tells in each case which senator or representative should be written to in support or opposition of the particular measure.

*National Issues* is an excellent handbook for progressives who want to understand and influence the course of national legislation. The writing throughout is lucid and unpretentious and the facts are presented in as simple and interesting style as possible. The magazine will fill a vital need in the democratic-front movement.

JOSEPH STAROBIN.

★

## Brief Review

THE LITERARY LIFE AND THE HELL WITH IT, by Whit Burnett. Harper & Bros. \$2.50.

It's a good title for a book, but it doesn't have much to do with this one. Mr. Burnett's loving connection with the literary life has been as co-editor of the magazine *Story*, which he and his wife, Martha Foley, founded eight years ago in Vienna. They put it out as a bi-monthly, mimeographed periodical for a while, then packed off to Majorca where they set it up in type, a much cheaper process. A year later they turned up in New York to launch the first American issue on a most auspicious occasion, the national bank holiday declared by Roosevelt.

To give variety to *Story's* contents, the editors have introduced book reviews, verse, and essays, of which last many have been written by Whit Burnett himself. Some twenty of these make up *The Literary Life and the Hell with It*.

Marginalia, they don't pretend to say anything profound about writing or writers. With an ability to convey the light or nostalgic moods through the minor technique of the informal essay, Mr. Burnett makes good use of personal reminiscence, bits of dialogue, characterization, and narrative. Lots of literary people you may know or have read pop in, what they did or said at various times and places making amusing gossip. The piece on "hammock writing" I thought the funniest, and the one on the death of Vienna a fine elegy.

It's a casual book, to be read casually. Put it on your night table between Clarence Day and Frank Sullivan.

MILTON MELTZER.

## S I G H T S     A N D     S O U N D S

## Church of and for the People

THE Catholic Church belongs to its millions of work-worn members—never to a reactionary clergy. “Clerical fascism will destroy us!” cries old Canon Matt Lavelle, at the climax to Paul Vincent Carroll’s new play, *The White Steed*.

*The White Steed* is the story of the dramatic struggle in modern Ireland between the people and a little block of fascist-minded clergy who try to use the church for reaction. Mr. Carroll’s play is a drama peculiarly and poetically Irish. Yet its theme is universal. Even as the first-night critics applauded the Irish girl who loved both her church and her freedom, and the little old priest who felt sure the Virgin Mary would never approve of vigilance committees, a group of reactionary American clergy held meetings in Washington to prevent the lifting of the embargo on Spain. And this in the face of the sympathy of the rank-and-file American Catholic with the cause of democratic Spain. In America, in Spain, in France, in Italy, in Mexico, the story of *The White Steed* is a living drama of today.

Mr. Carroll’s play, I hasten to report, is no child of newspaper headlines. The issue is presented only in its very broadest terms. A new priest comes to a poverty-stricken Irish parish, to serve during the illness of the old canon. Father Shaughnessy, one of the most stirring villains to turn up on Broadway this season, sets out to wipe out love, drinking, walking in dark lanes, reading Heine, among his stubborn parishioners. He forms a vigilance committee of snoopers who track down the local intellectuals, school teachers, bar flies, and engaged couples.

The Irish peasants are finally stung to revolt after Father Shaughnessy tries to deport the old canon to a home for aged priests and arrest the fiery girl who kept the lending library. But the Virgin Mary lets Canon Matt Lavelle walk on his paralyzed legs, long enough at least to send the fascist priest packing and restore tolerance and liberty in the parish.

The story is simple, the references to passing events few, but the issue is made very clear. Mr. Carroll has one of his characters say to the vigilante priest, “It was not for this I fought the black-and-tans, not for this I risked my life and saw many a good man fall.” The canon argues with Father Shaughnessy for tolerance, and finding no response, goes on to point out that the people will never

allow the church to enslave them. “We will be hunted on the hills,” the canon says, “if your kind prevail in the church.”

Many honest people, who try to understand how the American Catholic church—whose members belong to the CIO, walk on picket lines, vote for Roosevelt—still allows Father Coughlin to broadcast fascist bombast, will understand the conflict better after they have seen *The White Steed*. Laymen who puzzle over the publication of the Jew-baiting *Brooklyn Tablet* and the pro-democratic *Commonweal* by members of the same church, will cheer Canon Matt Lavelle as he triumphs over Father Shaughnessy, an Irish Coughlin.

*The White Steed* is one of the most important and moving plays of the season. And it is also one of the most delightful. Mr. Carroll loves his countrymen, and he has set down their wit, their richness of speech, with an affectionate pen. The nicest comedy I have seen on Broadway this year is the fine scene where Father Shaughnessy and the judge he has put on his vigilance committee speak Gaelic, to the confusion of the peasants and Canon Lavelle, Irishmen all. The judge finally addresses the canon in Gaelic, and the canon, after reflection, replies in Latin. “I have not the Latin,” says the judge stiffly. “Ah,” says the canon thoughtfully, “I have not the Gaelic.”

Eddie Dowling has cast *The White Steed* magnificently, with Barry Fitzgerald doing a beautiful job as the witty canon, and George Coulouris squeezing the last drop of vitriol out of Father Shaughnessy. I suppose it must be quite a triumph for any actor to have the audience loathe him as thoroughly as Mr. Coulouris is loathed at the final curtain of

*The White Steed*. Jessica Tandy has come over from England to create the role of Nora. Her performance alone would make the play a triumph.

TWO DRAWING-ROOM COMEDIES, both on the feeble side, appeared on Broadway this week, through the courtesy of our English cousins. *The Importance of Being Earnest*, a little gem by the late Oscar Wilde, served small purpose except to prove that drawing-room English comedies haven’t changed in any important way since 1895. Mr. Wilde was an enormously overrated playwright, and it is somewhat staggering to reflect that this dreary little play about two young-men-about-town was produced for the first time nearly twenty years after Ibsen wrung the withers of frightened audiences with his *Ghosts*. Mr. Wilde was not exactly in the forefront of theatrical thought in 1895, and even high-school students of English literature are going to find *The Importance of Being Earnest* creaky stuff in this January 1939. Clifton Webb, Estelle Winwood, and Hope Williams do better with Mr. Wilde’s opus than it deserves. The costumes, however, are swell.

*Dear Octopus* was presumably written only yesterday, but I can’t say it is much more exciting than Mr. Wilde’s minor masterpiece. It’s a very deft little tale of a nice English family, very white-tie, celebrating grandmama and grandpapa’s Golden Wedding anniversary. Lillian Gish does nicely with her role as genteel companion to the grande dame, and Dodie Smith, the playwright, draws a number of pleasant little character sketches. The whole thing actually made me yawn, and the theater seldom, almost never, in fact, makes me do that.

There’s nothing really wrong with *Dear Octopus*. It’s just dull. Recommended for people recovering from nervous breakdowns and old aunts who shock easy.

RUTH MCKENNEY.

## The Roots of Treason

FROM the Soviet Union has come a movie that delves directly into the pseudo-enigma of the Moscow trials, a highly political film that states in dramatic language the background of treason. *The Great Citi-*



Charles Martin



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zen, directed by Friedrich Ermler, deals with treasonable people when they were still an inner-party problem, at the beginning of the dialectic process of disaffection, organized secret opposition, sabotage, and finally plotting with fascist powers. The story of Alexei Kartashov, secretary of the regional Party Committee of Leningrad, is told in startlingly bold detail, with keen understanding, and dramatic force. The picture has the relentless progress of Greek tragedy but it is not mystical. As the investigator from the Moscow Control Commission says, "What motivates them [the traitors]—cowardliness, disbelief, villainy—it is not important now. We'll look into their psychology later." It is the extraordinary accomplishment of this picture that you do understand the traitor's urges. That is what lifts it from a vigorous polemic against Trotskyism to a work of art.

The time is 1925, at the end stages of NEP, before the First Five-Year Plan; the place, in and about the Red Metal Worker factory in Leningrad. Secretary Kartashov has been commiserating with discontented comrades until they reach, in the course of time, specific differences with the idea of building Socialism in one country. "We're at the crossroads," says Kartashov to a staunch Bolshevik, Piotr Shakhov, whom he is trying to convert. "History is changing her course and dashing all our hopes. Our whole strategy was based on world revolution, but we occupy ourselves with nonsense, chatter about increased production, technical progress. Here is this fat-rumped, slow-moving Russia—and we still want to persuade ourselves and others that we're building Socialism." Shakhov asks, "Then what are we building?" Kartashov evades the answer with a ready quotation, then says, "Things can't go on like this. Either there will be civil war—or Thermidor, decline, ruin."

SHAKHOV: Terrible thoughts.

KARTASHOV: I believe in you, Piotr. I want you to understand my doubts, and if I'm right, let's look for a solution together, like Bolsheviks. We'll go before the party, the Congress . . .

SHAKHOV: Have you told anyone about this?

KARTASHOV: No.

SHAKHOV: You say terrible things. I'm afraid, not for the party, not for the country, but for you. So—civil war, Thermidor, decline, ruin. Then it means that the revolution has failed and we cannot build Socialism.

KARTASHOV: I didn't say that.

SHAKHOV: Evidently you thought it. Just tell me what we're building. Tell me. Tell me what we're building—Socialism, which you say is impossible? Or a bourgeois democracy? Or a Romanov restoration? You must realize—if what we're building is not Socialism, nothing has any meaning. The party, the Soviet power, thousands of people who died for it—all will be lost. Do you understand what you are saying? For this whole generations went to the gallows, to hard labor, to exile. Lenin burned himself out, millions suffered. People are moving mountains with their bare hands in the belief that they are building Socialism—and you say it's impossible.

KARTASHOV: I didn't say it.

SHAKHOV: You didn't say it is possible.

KARTASHOV: You see, Piotr, I come to you with an open heart, and you talk to me like this.

SHAKHOV: You're not a girl who's in love—you have political doubts, and you didn't come to me for consolation. This is the question: Will Russia be fat-rumped, slow-moving—or a land of Socialism?

KARTASHOV: I didn't come for a lecture.

SHAKHOV: No, you came to borrow a match. Now I see it all. These are not doubts of yours, it's a definite line. Your whole fight against industrial planning has deep roots.

KARTASHOV: That's contemptible!

SHAKHOV: You must say these things to the entire party. You must take it all up with the Central Committee. Or I will.

KARTASHOV [leaving]: Thank you, Piotr. Now I no longer have any doubts at all.

After this interview Kartashov's faction continues to plot and oppose planned production in the Red Metal Worker plant, and Shakhov writes a letter to *Pravda*, outlining the situation. Kartashov has the Leningrad shipment of *Pravda* suppressed and the persecution of the loyal Shakhov is redoubled. Finally Maxim, from the Control Commission, arrives to investigate Kartashov. Maxim forces a meeting of the local party membership which Kartashov tries to control by admitting only his minority faction. Despite a ruse to keep Shakhov from the meeting, a loaded agenda, and several clever, quotation-studded speeches by the plotters, the meeting is invaded by Shakhov and the prohibited majority and turned into a rout for Kartashov.

An epilogue, after the cashing of the plotters, shows the next step. There are abject confessions before the Fourteenth Congress, the group is apparently destroyed, but the opposition takes new forms. The picture ends with the completely discredited plotters meeting with an agent of a hostile power, the first step of outright treason.

Kartashov is portrayed by I. Bersenov in a masterful manner; here is no simple villain, but a complex intellectual. "Kartashov is an excellent pleader. He defends both truth and lies with the same passion." N. Bogoliubov, who plays Shakhov, reminds me of both James Cagney and Jean Gabin, a natural, personable hero. Ermler, the director, tackles his difficult task with complete mastery of the subtle meanings he has to convey to make the picture convincing; the rest of the acting is heads above the average. There is even a little love story in the picture—a charming and humorous bit of Soviet realism. Shostakovich's musical score is also there but I will have to see the picture again to hear it. The narrative is so fascinating that the techniques that make it up are not so obvious.

Friedrich Ermler's *The Great Citizen* is a brave and daring picture which presents the Trotskyist argument fairly and answers it devastatingly. The people will decide—that is the plan of the Bolsheviks. Kartashov is full of quotations. As he says when his differences have begun to become a plot, "New tactics—to use their slogans in reaching our goal." The goal is Shakhov's yardstick, and he makes Kartashov answer for his goal to the people. The heart of the traitor's problem is stated by old Katz, a metal worker: "If I don't believe the land will yield a harvest,



I won't sow it, I won't sell it!" Belief in the masses, in the integrity of the Bolshevik party, in life itself, is Shakhov's faith, and he expresses it in a moving, Lincolnesque speech:

It's possible to fool one person, to mislead, frighten, isolate, destroy one Katz, one Dubok, one Shakhov. But you can't fool or frighten thousands of Communists, thousands of Bolsheviks. You may be cunning as a snake, you may strike in the dark. You may extinguish the lights, but not the hearts and will of 150,000,000 of the great people who, barefoot, starving, ruined, hurled fourteen foreign armies into the sea. Shall a handful of cheats and conspirators actually take our banners from us? Never! That can never be! The Bolshevik Party, to which the masses have given all their faith and their best people, is building a new life, is realizing humanity's age-old dream, and whoever stands in the way and interferes with our work—the people will destroy!

*The Great Citizen* is the answer to many other sincere questions and unprincipled attacks on the Soviet Union. How the opposition was given every opportunity of free speech and press, the leniency with which plots were met for fully a decade before the decisive trials, and the basic motivation for treason, are shown. It is the first picture of a trilogy in which Trotskyism will be portrayed. It is another example of Soviet art as a weapon in the struggle for another world. It must not be missed.

JAMES DUGAN.

## Szigeti, Petri and Goodman

UNDER the hands of Joseph Szigeti, a violin spoke with a lucid and weighted eloquence. A clarinet jumped to life with the breath of Benny Goodman. Endre Petri was creative and humble at a piano. All of this happened on the stage of Carnegie Hall on the evening of January 9. People who had read words like "jam-session" saw fit to evaluate the concert in those terms (some in print); music lovers gasped at the most stunning per-



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formance of the well known *Chaconne* by Bach which has ever reverberated in the halls of New York—the only exception being, possibly, the performance once given it in the same hall by the late Ysaye. After consideration of that obvious quality of Szigeti's playing, his dignity of approach, one senses next an intellectual hardness which is as plastic as it is stern, equal to the occasion of Bach or Bartok.

With a similar amount of versatility, Benny Goodman bent his talents to a piece of music designed for the more intrepid of our clarinet players; for the playing of *Verbunkos* and *Sebes*, two dances contrived for clarinet and violin by Béla Bartok, is well worth union wages to any violinist and any clarinetist. This music springs at you with the same vigor and freshness as does the design and color of a Kandinsky canvas. It's the music of one who is still emotionally inventive, who still pulses to living, a composer who would thrill at the idea of writing especially for a Szigeti and a Goodman. It was a happy day when these three elements met.

COLUMBIA PHONOGRAPH has issued a group of sets which will please many. First, because of the artist and the music, comes Egon Petri's exalted performance of Brahms' *Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel* (Set No. 345). This is one of the happiest possible couplings of artist and music, since Petri brings a magnificent performance to superb music. With deep penetration, these variations are unwound by Mr. Petri's skillful hands and resourceful imagination. The set is one of the important contributions to recorded music.

Under the curious title of "Strange Music of the Modern Russian School," Set No. 347 includes music by Shostakovich, Meytuss, and Mossolov. The title makes me wonder if Honneger's *Pacific 231* will not soon be issued as "Strange Music from the French Republic"; however, that's quibbling. The set is interesting in that in Meytuss' *Dnieper Water Power Station* and Mossolov's *The Steel Foundry* we are given examples of frankly descriptive music, which, with the sound limitations of the modern orchestra, attempts to simulate the noise, music, and overtones of machinery. Mossolov's piece is embarrassingly reminiscent of Honneger, and not as interesting as the composition by Meytuss, which paints a more convincing picture. The excerpts from Shostakovich's *Age of Gold* ballet are not the best of this composer's writing; the humor is rather labored and never indicates his real talent for satire. It is well to remember that these records present only a small part of the creative music scene of Soviet Russia.

Set No. X-111 on Columbia is devoted to Bach's Sonata No. 2 in D-Major for harpsichord and viola da gamba, played by Ernst Victor Wolff and Janos Scholz. Both artists give fine performances, Mr. Scholz gallantly struggling with the somewhat dolorous tone of the viola da gamba. It's not a set to make you want to rush to the nearest record shop with the money pressed in your hand, but old

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### GOINGS ON

DANCE RECITAL by Jane Dudley and Group (Member Martha Graham Concert Group). One of America's Leading Younger Modern Dancers. Friday, Jan. 20th, 8:30 p.m. 809 Westchester Avenue, Rm. 15. Admission 25c. Auspices: The Prospect Peoples Forum.

SENDER GARLIN on "Three years in the USSR" Sunday Evening, January 22d, 8:30 P.M. New School for Social Research. Admission 50c. Call CA ledonia 5-3076 for reservations. Sponsored by NEW MASSES.

ANALYSIS OF THE NEWS of the Week every Sunday evening at 8:30 p.m. at the Workers School, 35 East 12 Street, 2nd floor. Admission 20 cents.

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INTRODUCING "KEYNOTE" The New Masses Club. Get-together and dance. Spirituals to Swing records will be played. Saturday evening, January 21st, at 201 West 52d St. Admission 65c. Sponsored by New Masses.

SATURDAY 8:30 P.M. JAN. 21st AT 204 W. 84th ST. "BUNIN'S PUPPETS" Dan Brown, M. C. Dance and Entertainment. Subscription 50c. Auspices Pharmacists Committee for Democracy.

ANNA SOKOLOV AND DANCE UNIT. First full length recital of season. Alvin Theater, 250 W. 52d St. Sunday evening, February 26th. Tickets 83c.-\$2.20. Reserve your tickets now and avoid being disappointed. Call CA ledonia 5-3076. Sponsored by New Masses.

music enthusiasts will find it interesting. There's a lack of definitive strength in the recording of these two instruments which makes for casual listening. The same is true of Set No. X-109, Gaubert's *Les Chants de la Mer*, an example of a French prix-de-Rome winner of 1905, a year when the vintage must have soured.

In the class of satisfying but not scintillating records are Sets X-106 and X-108, respectively Mozart's Sonata in D-Major for two pianos and Respighi's *The Birds*, which, I understand, the late Italian composer would have enjoyed giving to Mussolini.

JOHN SEBASTIAN.

## Dancer's Return

FOLLOWING a five-year absence from American concert halls, a decidedly talented Pauline Koner (feted for two years in the Soviet Union) returned to the Guild Theater to exhibit a wide range of interests, a fine stage presence, an excellent eye to theater, an unusual sense of rhythm, and a sensitivity for thematic materials that make for people's dance.

However, at present, her work is inclined towards the spectacular and the substance of her dancing suffers for it. She is an exceedingly clever dancer—using voice, percussion, castanets, anything she can put her hands to, for surprise effects and good climax—but her dances on Spain and China sacrifice anti-fascist force and conviction for theatrical coloration. Similarly, she allows an eagerness for unequivocal statement to develop into a looseness of structure and anti-climax.

Tighter composition, more precise, also more direct, should do much for the choreography of Pauline Koner, who right now must be reckoned among the more important of our younger dancers, a dancer of exceptional merit.

OWEN BURKE.



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in his first platform appearance since his recent return from the USSR where he spent three years as Moscow Correspondent of the *Daily Worker*. He will speak on his experiences in the Soviet Union. The meeting will take place at 8:30 Sunday evening, January 22, at the New School for Social Research, 66 West 12th Street, N. Y. Admission will be 50 cents. Reservations will be filled immediately upon receipt. Since the capacity of the New School is 450, we urge our readers and friends to make reservations immediately.

~~Tom Mooney #31921  
Calif. State Prison  
San Quentin, Calif.~~

**W**E'RE changing the address stencil of one of our oldest readers. Usually it's a routine affair. Dick Jones of Altoona, Pa., writes in to say that he's moving from Green Avenue to Third Street, and will we please see that the change goes through.

But it was different when Tom Mooney left San Quentin. We'd been wanting to change that address for twenty-two years, and there it was—tangible evidence of a movement that stirred the nation.

*New Masses* looks with pride on its part in the Mooney case. Back in 1916, when Tom was first arrested, our writers and artists—Robert Minor, John Reed, Boardman Robinson, Art Young, Charles Erskine Scott Wood, and others—rallied to the Mooney defense. In the twenty-two years that followed our writers and artists have continually been at Mooney's service, and the magazine itself, Tom has told us, played no small part in preserving in him the extraordinary sensitiveness to world affairs he displays after twenty-two years in a California prison.

And now we join Tom in all the causes he has made his own—the freedom of Warren K. Billings, J. B. McNamara, all of labor's prisoners, and the worldwide fight for peace and democracy.

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