

NEW MASSES

JUNE 6, 1939 FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY

Ernst Toller's Last Testament

And an Appreciation by Robert Forsythe

How Strong Is Hitler's Army?

By Lucien Zacharoff

The Men Behind Coughlin

By A. B. Magil

Who Owns New York's Libraries?

By Harry B. Henderson, Jr.

CARTOONS BY GROPPER, GROTH, RICHTER, AND OTHERS

BETWEEN OURSELVES

THE financial drive to save NM continues in a slightly new form. If you are a subscriber to NM you know what we mean—those coin-card collectors we sent you. Hundreds of them are already beginning to trickle in and it's our conclusion that this method of collecting with dimes, nickels, half-dollars, and quarters is going to spell the difference between success and failure in achieving the full amount of our \$30,000 goal. If you are a steady subscriber, won't you please send your coin-card collector to us now? We can use the money right away. If you are a newsstand reader, won't you please contribute whatever you can to the "save NEW MASSES" drive? Use the coupon on page 31.

We have got ourselves a new circulation manager. H. C. (Larry) Adamson has had an interesting career in what is usually referred to as public relations work: as a labor adjuster of the defunct NRA he handled a statewide drive on chisellers in the shoe industry, did research in New York City's Department of Licenses and publicity for Mayor LaGuardia in the Fusion campaign of 1933. When Vittorio Mussolini arrived for his rueful survey of America in 1937, Mr. Adamson and Tim



A. B. Magil

His pamphlet "The Truth About Father Coughlin," which was published in 1935, reached a circulation of more than 200,000. A second pamphlet, "The Real Father Coughlin," has just appeared. Magil has been an editor of NM for the past year and a half and was formerly on the editorial board of the "Daily Worker." He is co-author, with Henry Stevens, of the book "The Peril of Fascism: The Crisis of American Democracy."

Holmes hired a speedboat, equipped with powerful loudspeaking equipment, and met Vittorio on the *Rex* in the middle of New York harbor. With their powerful loudspeaker they gave Vittorio a few cheers known as Bronx and got themselves hurled into the poky for their sentiments. This wasn't nearly as bad as the time Vittorio had in America. Welcome, Larry Adamson, but leave your powerful loudspeaking equipment at home.

Our West Coast representative's trek across the country is completed, we are happy to announce. The covered wagon driven by the paterfamilias, George Willner, passed over the Great Divide, past the bleached buffalo bones, and trundled on to Los Angeles. Accompanying Willner was his wife, Tiba Garlin, and their two up and coming youngsters, and one of them named Lefty. Willner asked us to announce the West Coast bureau's address. It is 6715 Hollywood Blvd., Room 287, Hollywood, Calif. All our friends in the West are invited to drop around and talk things over with the NM man. There are a lot of things to talk about and you have a lot of ideas.

New York newspapermen and a lot of lay readers are calling up to find out when Robert Terrall's next piece on the press will be printed. We are glad to announce that Mr. Terrall is off in the country, quill in hand, diligently putting the finishing touches on Mr. William Randolph Hearst who will discover a lot of new things are known about his *Journal and American* and *Mirror* in New York. Mr. Terrall will polish off the *Journal and American* in next week's edition; the *Mirror* will get its polish the week following. Many readers think Mr. Terrall's name is a pen name for somebody on the New York commercial press. Mr. Terrall's right name is Mr. Terrall—and he is a staff writer on NM. Furthermore, we will print his picture in the next issue to allay the fears of a certain publisher that Mr. Terrall is his leading editorial writer.

A few more words about the painting of John Reed by his classmate, Robert Hallowell, which we are proud to present on page 17. The committee of which Corliss Lamont is secretary-treasurer is raising the price of \$250 to buy the painting for us. The idea is to raise the necessary sum in small amounts of \$10, \$5, or less, from twenty-five to fifty Harvard men "who are progressive or radical in their inclinations." Checks are being sent to Mr. Lamont at 450 Riverside Drive, New York City, made out in his name.

We have just received the following important telegram from Warner Bros.:

"The New York office of Warner Bros. Pictures, Inc., received cabled announcement from London this afternoon that the motion picture *Confessions of a Nazi Spy* had been passed without cuts by the British Board of Censors. Acceptance of the film is believed to establish complete reversal of policy by the board, which recently rejected in toto two anti-Nazi films that were produced in Europe. The picture will be presented as quickly as possible in England and will have its London premiere June 9."

Who's Who

HARRY B. HENDERSON, JR., is a newspaperman. . . . Paul G. McManus is Washington correspondent for NM. . . . Arthur Clifford is a young Michigan writer and a student of politics. . . . Duncan Stuart, an Oregon newspaperman, is NM's correspondent in the Northwest. . . . Lucien Zacharoff is a frequent commentator on international affairs for leading American newspapers, mag-

azines, and technical journals. His book *This Is War* will be published shortly. . . . Howard Selsam is the author of *What Is Philosophy?* and an assistant professor of philosophy at Brooklyn College. . . . Elizabeth Lawson is director of the Summer Day School of the Workers School of New York. . . . Ruth Lechlitner is the author of a book of poems, *Tomorrow's Phoenix*. . . . Robert Gessner is well known as a poet and prose writer. He is the author of *Some of My Best Friends Are Jews* as well as many brilliant short stories.

Flashbacks

TWENTY New York tailors were sentenced on June 6, 1836 either to go to jail or pay a heavy fine for their part in a "conspiracy to injure trade and commerce." They had struck for higher wages and a ten-hour day. . . . Madame Sun Yatsen, believer in China's unity and organizer of resistance to Japan, was born June 5, 1890. . . . The tent colony housing the workers in the Manville-Jenkes mill in Gastonia, N. C., was fired on, June 7, 1929, by police who sought to evict the strikers.

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Cover design by I. G. Abrams. Art work by A. Ajay, John Groth, Herb Kruckman, Mischa Richter, William Gropper, Georges Schreiber, Charles Martin.

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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The Last Testament of Ernst Toller

Less than a fortnight before his death, the great German anti-fascist writer gave to New Masses his last challenge to fascism in the following words.

WE, VICTIMS and witnesses of a flood already devastating Europe and threatening the other parts of the world, are asked: "How can emigrants do their share to defend the threatened culture?"

By culture we mean not only the amount of great creative productions of art, literature, and science; we mean as well the features of everyday life, the relations within the community and the nation and the moral ideals regulating them.

Though they may differ nationally in language and expression, in custom and habits, there is one root common to all the cultures of the occident: humanity.

Humanity is pouring from the sources of religions, it has grown from the perceptions of the sages, from the feelings of those who loved deeply. But its law did not come to universal prevalence until centuries and millenniums passed by. Today the dictators deny this prevalence in favor of the glorification of one tribe.

To us dignity meant: freedom of the individual; justice; his claim to a suitable development; compassion—the capacity to be susceptible to his fellow creatures' sufferings. Fascism, however, is the foe of freedom, justice, and compassion. The martial fitness of man decides his usefulness, justice becomes club-law, compassion contemptible and ridiculous. Fascism makes the lie truth, hatred virtue, murder a necessity. For it does not respect anything, neither man's happiness nor his sorrows.

Those men and women who resist dictators, and who are striving to keep intact the legacy of their culture and to enrich it by new perceptions and new creative productions, are persecuted and extinguished. Through exile they save themselves and their dignity. The German emigrants of 1933 are the successors of those fighters of independence, those Heines and Boernes, Wagners and Marxes, Herweghs and Schurzes, who in the nineteenth century—1819, 1830, 1840, and 1848—had to flee from Germany to escape tyranny and who, in exile, as representatives of their country enriched not only the culture of their fatherland which had ousted them, but also the culture of their guest-countries.

Richard Wagner's *The Ring of the Nibelungs*, Heine's most beautiful poems, Marx's most important work were created beyond the German borders, in exile.

No matter if his name be King Frederick William IV or Adolf Hitler, the dictator's



ERNST TOLLER. *His last work, "Pastor Hall," was dedicated "To the day when this play may be performed in Germany."*

eternal hatred gives evidence of clear and justified fear of the intellect. For the intellect is fearless and therefore a dangerous opponent. He who has overcome fear has overcome the dictator. That is true for the individual, today it is also true for states.

The democratic countries have received the emigrants with hospitality for which we feel profound gratitude and which proves that human solidarity is strong and alive. The same ideas, dear and sacred also to us, live and work in these countries. We have known and loved the work of their great men before they gave us shelter. The works of Shakespeare, Moliere, Tolstoy, Whitman, Zola, Ibsen, Byron, to name only a few, we have always considered our legacy of culture, riches belonging to all of us.

Such mutuality, though it does not relieve exile of its hardship, eases its bitterness. It is hard for writers to live in countries where their language is not spoken; they, who necessarily should listen to the audible and inaudible words of their people, hear only foreign sounds, the finest inflections of which remain inaccessible to them. Not to mention their difficulties in making both ends meet, pressing

hard on so many of them. (Let me thank here our American friends who enable the American Guild for German Culture to assure the existence and thus the capacity for creative work to numerous writers, both known and young ones.)

Comparing the emigration of the nineteenth century to the emigration of today, we see one striking difference: in those times the emigrant could fight his dictatorship as poet and as soldier, as George Herwegh did at the head of a German legion. Nowadays the dictator is very often, even outside his country, so very powerful that booksellers no longer dare to offer books written by the exponent of the spirit banished by the dictator, theaters to perform his works, art galleries to exhibit a free painter's pictures.

However, our emigrants as opponents are equal in rank to the German tyrants. Let Mr. Goebbels attempt a thousand times to offer the world an enslaved literature written in German, the world is reading the productions of the emigrants, because it has an inkling of these emigrants' battle to save the Germany of humanity, which has been so great and admirable a part of the Western culture—and will be so again one day.

In spite of his hangmen Mr. Hitler cannot prevent a dangerous specter going about in Germany: the voice of the outlawed writer. This voice is so powerful that Hitler cannot drown it by the screams of his rage; sometimes it overpowers him, when the "Führer" is telling his fettered people what we free ones are thinking and writing.

How can emigrants do their share to defend the threatened culture? The dictator was able to burn their books, to sequester their goods, but he could not rob them of the language of Goethe and Hoelderlin. Also, he could not rob them of their belief and their certainty that there are millions inside Germany who are conscious of their degradation.

The threatened culture can only be defended if all those who were fortunate enough to escape slavery devote themselves faithfully to their language, brand courageously and truthfully the treason against humanity, and fight barbarism wherever it threatens.

But this is not enough.

The threatened culture can be saved only if the subjugated nations keep alert the desire for freedom, justice, and human dignity and if this desire becomes so elementary that the desire turns into will and will into action.

ERNST TOLLER.

The Private Life of the Public Library

How the New York Public Library, a private corporation, sabotages literary culture in New York. Underpaid librarians and depleted stocks kept from city aid by tory trustees.

IN ANY major city in America it is generally assumed that the library is a good one. New Yorkers, knowing their city to be the richest in the world and the third largest, naturally assume that the New York Public Library is one of the best in the country. Unfortunately, they are wrong. In comparison with the libraries of Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Chicago, and Los Angeles, on a basis of books per capita, the New York Public Library has always been poor and inadequate, according to American Library Association statistics. It never has served the people of New York adequately, and with the tremendously increased use in recent years library service has been curtailed rather than expanded. Despite these facts, the popular myth of the excellence of the New York Public Library has persisted largely because the general public, though discouraged, is uncritical of what appears to be a vast coordinated system, and because the library administration has been able to keep its staff—which realizes fully the maladministration, inefficiency, and inadequacy of the library—"loyal" (and tongue-tied). Few New Yorkers know that:

1. The New York Public Library is not a public library in the strict sense of the term. It is a private corporation maintaining a free reading room and reference library.

2. Control of the entire library system is held by this private corporation's board of trustees which elects its own members, meets privately, spends more than \$1,500,000 of city funds yearly.

3. The book stock of the New York Public Library has been falling at an extremely high rate. As it continues to fall, service, already desperately inadequate, will be curtailed.

4. The reference library in the Forty-second Street building is not easily accessible to the general public. Technically speaking, it is what librarians call a research library. Little attention is paid to public demand and none whatsoever to public need.

5. In Greater New York there are three systems of "public" libraries, each separately administered. This causes great inefficiency, results in endless triplication of effort and cost.

6. The New York Public Library acquisitions are censored by the board of trustees.

7. Vast areas of New York are not reached at all by the New York Public Library. Particularly is this true of the Bronx, where there are more children than in other districts. Service has been steadily curtailed since 1934. Despite this fact, there are more people registered as borrowers than ever before.

8. For the 1,500,000 children in the Bronx, Manhattan, and Richmond, there are but 377,222 books, thousands of which are totally unfit for use.

The New York Public Library, a private corporation maintaining a free reference library and reading room, came into existence in this way: In 1895 there were three large en-

dowment funds, each supporting private reference libraries in Manhattan. These were the snooty Astor Library, founded by John Jacob Astor and worth \$941,000, the Lenox Library, found by James Lenox and worth \$505,500, and the Tilden Trust Library, founded by Samuel J. Tilden and worth \$2,000,000. After much consideration the various trustees of these three private libraries decided to consolidate them into a single reference library, as there was no large central reference library in the city. The agreement of consolidation, filed at the office of the clerk of the city and county on May 24, 1895, set up the name of the new corporation as "The New York Public Library" and stated:

First, the said corporations (Astor, Lenox, Tilden) shall be consolidated and hereby are consolidated into a single corporation.

Second, the terms and conditions of said consolidation are as follows: the said new corporation shall establish and maintain a free public library and reading room in the city of New York with such branches as may be deemed advisable, and shall continue to promote the several objects and purposes set forth in the respective acts of incorporation of "The Trustees of the Astor Library," "The Trustees of the Lenox Library," and "The Trustees of the Tilden Trust."

A by-law provided that the trustees of the new corporation could be elected only by the trustees. After all, the New York Public Library couldn't be too public. The result is that today the board of trustees is a self-perpetuating body consisting of the wealthiest,

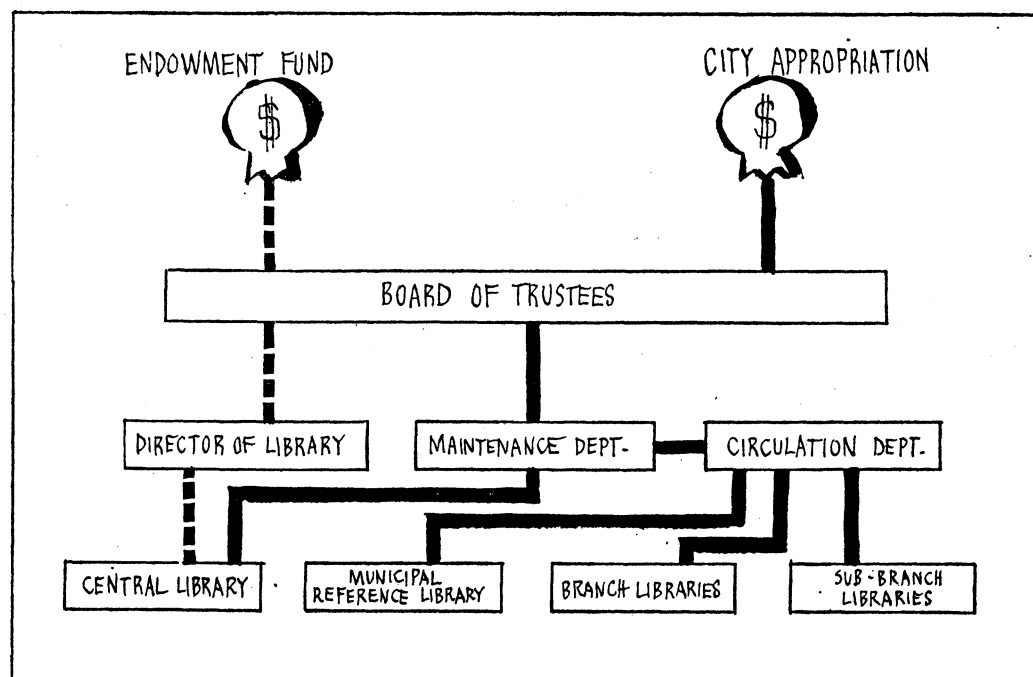
most reactionary financiers in America. Look:

Frank L. Polk, W. Vincent Astor, John H. Finley, Morris Hadley, Henry James, Grenville Kane, George De Forest Lord, J. P. Morgan, Junius Morgan, Morgan J. O'Brien, Lansing P. Reed, Roland L. Redmond, Elihu Root, Jr., John M. Schiff, I. N. Phelps Stokes, Percy S. Straus, Myron C. Taylor, Thomas D. Thacker, Lucius Wilmerding, Bronson Winthrop.

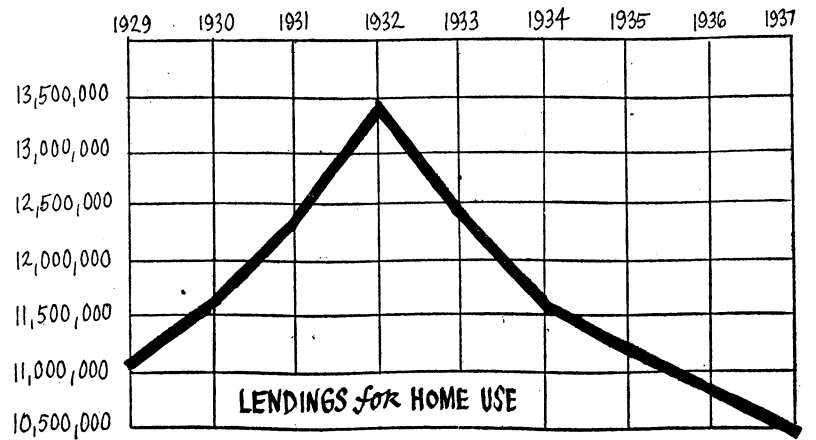
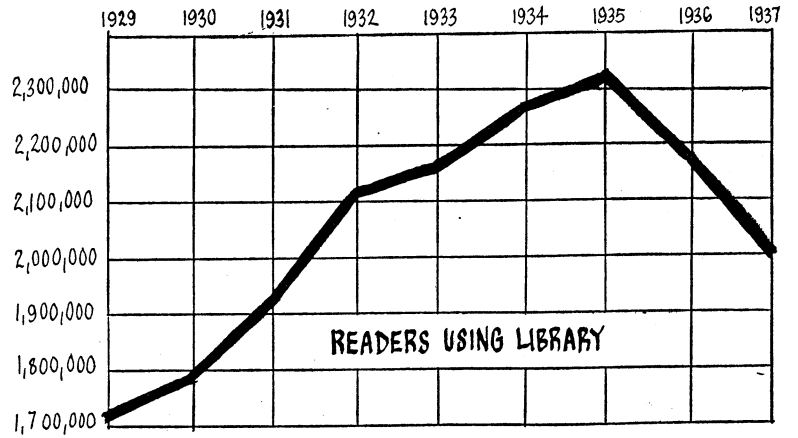
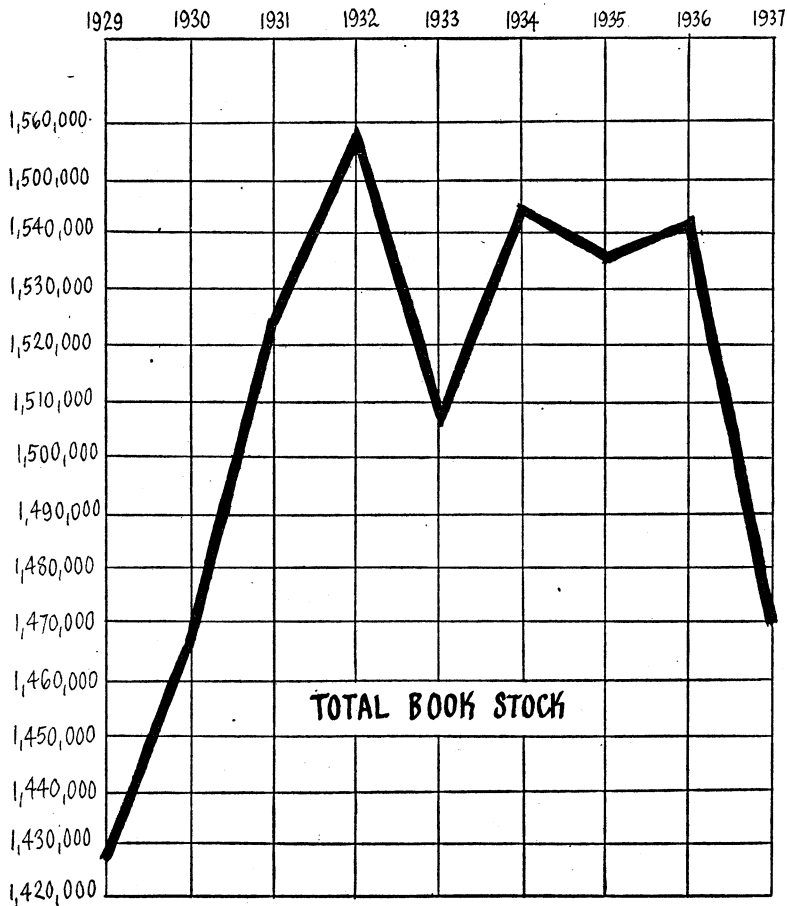
PUBLIC OR PUBLICITY-MINDED

To this group of men, who hold office only because they want prestige as public-minded citizens, can be traced practically every fault in the library, from book shortage to censorship. And before New York can have adequate library service their control over the entire library system must be broken. Not one of them, including John H. Finley, editor emeritus of the *New York Times*, is an educator, nor are they interested in public education. Nor do they in any way represent the people of New York. There is no one among them who has a dynamic conception of what libraries might be, the role they should play in the life of the people. If they are public-minded, aware of their responsibilities, why is it that Harry M. Lydenberg, director of the library, complains that they often cannot get a quorum for their meetings?

Besides having control of the \$40,000,000 endowment fund of the private corporation which is used solely for the reference department, *these men also have control of the vast*



THE CITY PAYS. Though New York citizens pay for most of the Public Library's upkeep, the private directors decide what the citizens may have in the way of books and services.



BOOKS AND READERS. The rapid falling off of available books to be read is clearly shown. New, necessary books are seldom added because of lack of funds. Because of lack of facilities researchers, students, and general readers have ceased to look to the Public Library for their book needs. The circulation department dropped three million users since 1932.

sums which the city appropriates yearly for the circulation department and the branch libraries. In 1896 the trustees of the New York Public Library, Inc., found their funds would not permit the building of a new library to house its collections. Therefore, on March 25, 1896, the trustees applied for aid to the city, stating that if the corporation had to provide its own site and building it would hardly be able to do more than maintain a fair reference library. The trustees declared:

What is necessary for real public interest and lasting public benefit is a great central library of reference and exhibit, and in addition, the public must be provided with some means of procuring books for home reading within some reasonable distance of their homes.

The city officials, aware of public need, pushed through the New York Legislature an act authorizing the building of a library in Bryant Park at an approximate cost of \$9,000,000. That is how the Forty-second Street building, one of the greater architectural monstrosities of an age of monstrosities, came into existence. Under the state act the city was authorized to lease this building to the private corporation known as the New York Public Library, which "in return undertook to maintain therein, with its own funds, what are known as the reference department, the central circulation room, and the central children's room." The city's only contribu-

tion to the library corporation was to be the maintenance of the building. Then Andrew Carnegie, seeing that the \$9,000,000 library planned by the trustees would hardly be providing the public "with some means of procuring books for home reading within some reasonable distance of their homes," offered to build branch circulating libraries for the city on the condition that it equip and maintain them. His generous offer had another string attached to it: control of these branch circulating libraries should be vested in the trustees of the New York Public Library, a private corporation. Carnegie's offer was immediately accepted and today the control and jurisdiction over the city-supported, Carnegie-built branch libraries is held by the corporation's self-perpetuating board of trustees.

THREE SEPARATE SYSTEMS

This system of libraries was intended to serve the Bronx, Manhattan, and Richmond, the three boroughs which then made up New York. Meanwhile, unendowed municipal libraries were developed in the boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens. When the city absorbed Brooklyn and Queens the three library systems were not consolidated, largely because of the trustees' jealousy over prestige. Thus, today there are three separate library systems in New York. The result is endless bungling, inefficiency, and the trebling of untold effort. It also means trebling the higher-paying

administrative jobs, such as director of the library, bursar, etc. Consolidation of these positions would result in greater efficiency and tremendous savings. Of course, it is chiefly from these officials, whose positions might be consolidated, and from the trustees, who might suffer in prestige, that the squawk comes whenever centralization of the three library systems is proposed. Despite their assertion to the contrary, such centralization is entirely possible; there is no really valid reason why there should be three separate library systems in New York.

To the board of trustees of the New York Public Library, Inc., can be traced the censorship of the library's acquisitions. Censorship was instituted in the library by the late Patrick Cardinal Hayes who until his death last fall was a member of the board of trustees. The censorship follows, therefore, the line generally established by the reactionary members of the Catholic clergy. No one knows the exact extent of this censorship. In many cases only one copy of an important book which displeases the trustees will be bought so that the charge of censorship can be dexterously avoided. Radical publications are accepted in most cases. At the same time books which mention the word *abortion*, or which intimate that an abortion has taken place, are generally not purchased.

The library administration reflects the attitude of the board of trustees. The reference

department is run as a museum and research library rather than a library intended for public use. Vast sums are expended for rare prints and books which are of no value to the general public and are used only by occasional scholars. In 1932, when the book stock was being rapidly depleted, the library paid \$68,000 for a Tickhill *Psalter*, an extremely rare book which is of little use to anybody, including scholars. Fully 70 percent of the Forty-second Street library's space is taken up by art galleries and exhibit rooms; there is no general reading room, and the circulating room is squeezed into a glass-roofed space which is unbearably hot in the summer, smells like a flophouse throughout the year, and which was originally intended as a shed for the trustees' horses and carriages. The only reading rooms in the building are two vast, noisy, and poorly lighted rooms which are known technically to librarians as "research rooms." All this and much more, which because of space limitations cannot be mentioned here, are simply results of maladministration.

However fundamental and disgraceful these faults may be, far worse is the fact that the New York Public Library, Inc., is not serving the people of the three boroughs it is supposed to cover. Instead it is actually curtailing and restricting the use of the libraries in the face of the greatest public interest in them since they were founded. Statistics compiled by the American Library Association show that the New York Public Library has never been, in relation to population, on a par with the libraries of other major cities and that it has never at any period really reached the people of New York. In the face of a steady population shift to the Bronx the New York Public Library, Inc., did not build branches there, with the result that the people are in the Bronx and the libraries are in Manhattan. This is one of the major reasons why the libraries, before the depression, never got the public use they should have.

UNEMPLOYMENT BRINGS READERS

The depression brought new thousands to the libraries: the unemployed for books on new vocations; budgeteers for reading as a cheap recreation; business men for books on economics, new trade practices, new theories of government and finance; the starving and cold for a place to sit in warmth. But more than that, men and women were questioning, searching for someone or something to tell them the what, why, and wherefore of their plight in this richest of nations—and they turned to what Alvin Johnson has so aptly called the "people's universities," the libraries. In Chicago, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, and Washington the libraries kept pace with this increased public demand. In New York the libraries, always inadequate, were swamped, and instead of expanding, instead of trying to keep abreast of public demand, they discouraged usage by the curtailment of service. Look at the charts on page 5.

The graph showing the total number of books lent for home use during the years

"No More Books"

IN 1938 alone, 2,257,353 people used the reference department of the Public Library in New York. They referred to 4,719,463 books in addition to the thousands of volumes on the open shelves.

Every day an average of 10,018 people visit the central building at Fifth Avenue and Forty-second Street; 3,653,553 visited it in 1938.

There are 2,618,624 bound volumes in the reference department alone and 1,365,611 additional ones available for circulation. In the forty-eight branch libraries in New York, Bronx, and Staten Island 11,269,048 books were issued for home use in 1938.

Yet the net increase in the book stock of the circulation department for 1938 was only 45,779 volumes.

The reference department bought 28,946 books in 1938.

"So the cry 'No more books,' heard in the library, is one of distress, not relief. It is heard because there are not enough books to go around: because there are not enough library buildings: because present accommodations in the central building are inadequate to the city's need."—*Facts and quotation from "No More Books," published in April 1939 by the New York Public Library.*

1929-37, according to statistics taken from the annual library reports, shows that the peak was reached in 1932 when a total of 13,408,909 books were taken out. Since 1932 the total has been falling off at the rate of almost a million yearly. The number of people using the library for study and reading during the same period mounted steadily each year of the depression until 1935, when a peak of 2,316,353 was reached.

These simple graphs might lead one to believe that the interest in the libraries has fallen off, that people no longer want books to read. The opposite is true. Public interest has never been higher. Figures taken from the library reports show a greater percentage than ever before of the population registered as borrowers, approximately 22.5 percent. Since 1929 there has been an increase of approximately 250,000 borrowers.

Why, then, are fewer books being taken out for home use? Why are fewer people using the library for study and reading?

REASONS FOR CURTAILMENT

The first reason is that service, instead of being expanded with increased public use and interest, has been curtailed. In 1929 there were 319 distributing agencies. Today there are but 296. Restrictions have cut down the number of readers using the central reference library. Books have been made even more inaccessible than they were before 1934-35. For instance, college and high school students, who have a real need for the central reference library, are no longer permitted to use it, and the general public has been actively discouraged. Everywhere there has been restriction and curtailment.

But the most important reason for the decline in the number of books used is the simple fact that *there are no books: the shelves are bare*. The book stock has been permitted to deteriorate without replacements. During the first years of the depression the book stock kept pace with the increased public demand. As the graph on total stock shows, the peak was reached in 1932 with 1,559,441 volumes. That year the number of volumes lent for home use also reached its peak. Since that time the book stock has been allowed to slide, dwindling to the point where there is considerably less than half a book per capita. According to the American Library Association, the average for cities of more than 200,000 is approximately one volume per capita.

In the children's department this lack of books is pathetic. There are only 377,222 books for the 1,500,000 children in the Bronx, Manhattan, and Staten Island. In the Bronx, where there are considerably more children than elsewhere, the conditions are appalling. Children stand in line for hours to get a book, and in the end there are no books. It is ridiculous and tragic that the library cannot supply these children of the city with books. Director Lydenberg stated in his 1936 report:

Thousands of books are in circulation which are absolutely unfit to be handled. So discouraging is the grimy array of books which remain on the shelves that there is little or no incentive to look for a book. In many of the children's rooms children stand about waiting for books to be placed in their hands by a persistent librarian or leave their cards with the comment, "I'll come back if you can get any books."

Why has the book stock been permitted to deteriorate in the face of increasing public demand? No funds, says the library administration, and points to the fact that the city appropriation for books, in Manhattan, Bronx, and Richmond, since Mayor LaGuardia took office, hasn't amounted to peanuts. The city's appropriations for books since 1925 are as follows:

1925	\$142,700
1926	232,250
1927	232,250
1928	250,000
1929	250,000
1930	250,000
1931	280,000
1932	257,500
1933	57,981
1934	50,000
1935	80,000
1936	125,000
1937	125,000
1938	146,050
1939	(proposed) 150,000

One must face the paradox that the regime of Jimmie Walker, one of the most corrupt governments this city has known, appropriated more money for library books than the reform LaGuardia administration has. Two things are worth noting in regard to this paradox. First, the board of trustees has not asked for much more than it got since

LaGuardia rescued the city from the edge of bankruptcy. The whole spirit of its recommendations to the Council has been, how much can we scrape along on, not how much do we need. It should also be remembered that these men are the city's chief creditors and while they enjoyed the city's near-bankruptcy they were terror-stricken by the thought of actual bankruptcy. Second, the appropriations from the city are steadily increasing and should soon again equal those of the Walker era. Because the city's finances are now sound, the appropriations should, in time, exceed those of the Tammany days.

While lack of funds from the city does explain the deterioration of the book stock in the circulation department, it does not explain the same situation in the reference department, which is paid for by the \$40,000,000 endowment fund protected by the board of trustees. In his last report Director Lydenberg wrote:

Work in the reference department is marked by steadily increasing use, steadily decreasing working space for staff, steadily increasing inconvenience, to say nothing of wastefulness of effort put forth under such conditions.

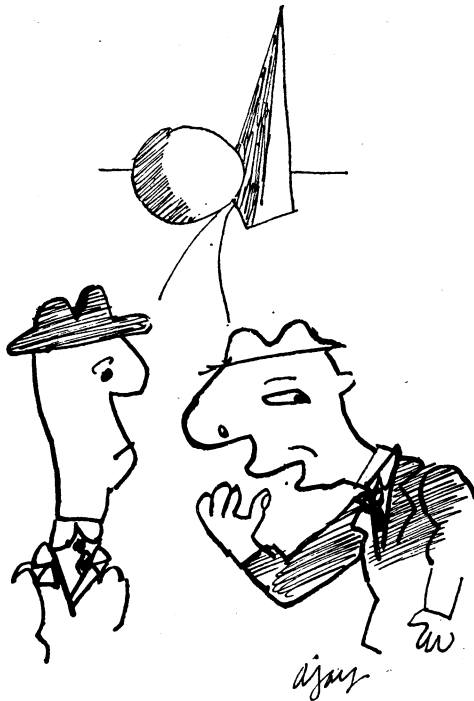
With no increase in its funds, with steady decrease in the return from investment, the encroachment on financial reserves of the reference department has grown day by day. Reserves are wiped out. Outgo exceeded income. The only solution is curtailment of activities. Fair warning has been given for several years. The blow is close at hand, deplored now by the library, to be deplored by the public as the results begin to show.

It will mean the closing of the reading room, a general slowing up of service. Time of delivery will have to be stretched out. . . .

So the book stock of the privately endowed reference department has been allowed to deteriorate—as in the case of the city-supported circulation department—because of lack of funds. What Mr. Lydenberg, the loyal servant of the trustees, is unwittingly saying is that private charity in the library can no longer keep pace with the demands of the public, that the time has come for the city to take over the reference department and control of the library system.

The board of trustees consists of the most powerful financiers in America, some of the best and most powerful in the world. Dismissing for the moment the fact that its members are reactionary and fascist-minded, the point is that the time has come when they cannot manipulate a \$40,000,000 fund efficiently enough to support the reference library, which was their part of the bargain with the city when the Forty-second Street building was erected. They must not be permitted to curtail service in the face of increased public use. They must be forced to give up their control of the library system. They have done their best and it simply is not good enough. The library must be turned over to the people to whom it belongs for their own use and education.

As it is, the city supports and maintains the circulation department and all branches



A. Ajay
 "Confidentially, the General Motors Building is just a lot of propaganda."

of the New York Public Library, as well as the library systems of Brooklyn and Queens. The only thing it does not do is pay the salaries and buy the books for the reference department of the New York Public Library. The city would have to assume the burden of paying the salaries of some six hundred people on the reference department payroll and that is all. The interest from the \$40,000,000 endowment could be used for the thing it was established for—books. With the board of trustees' control of the library system removed, it would be a simple matter to consolidate the three library systems. Then all library employees would be city employees and the next step would be to incorporate them into the civil service.

The board has long been at the bottom of all the defects of the New York Public Library. Now that Mr. Lydenberg has stated that the board can no longer support the reference library, its existence with the present powers is not justified by any stretch of the imagination. Indeed, it never has been. Control of New York's system of public libraries by a private corporation governed by a self-perpetuating board of trustees should be ended. Once this board of trustees is liquidated, it will become possible to begin constructing a library system worthy of the city of New York. HARRY B. HENDERSON, JR.

Servus Tepperte r!

THE traditional greeting of one friend to another in Vienna has always been, "Servus!" originally meaning in Latin, "I serve," or "at your service," but in modern times meaning only "Hello!" A traveler recently returned from the Vienna of the Hitler visitation reports that the greeting of citizens who have wittingly or otherwise be-

come members of the Nazi Party is not, "Heil Hitler!" but "Servus Tepperte r!" which means "Hello, you dope!"

Dies Covers Up

Explaining the pink paint on the face of the gentleman from Texas.

Washington.

THE Dies un-American committee has held its grand opening for 1939 (and, more particularly, for 1940). A noteworthy event in itself, it was made even more outstanding by the strange metamorphosis of Mr. Dies.

The burly gentleman from Texas established a reputation last year. He was hard. He was tough. He gave no quarter, even to the innocent. He accepted testimony that was irrelevant, immaterial, and inconsequential; his smile, the look in his hard blue eyes said that he would "get the real stuff" if he had to fight the world. For Mr. Dies was "investigating" progressives—"Communists," I believe he called them.

But this year Mr. Dies is different. He is pleasant and congenial. His two-bit stogy pokes from his face at a less aggressive angle. He is patient, and quite willing to go out of his way not to embarrass a witness. And above all, he is cautious as to what goes in the record. For Mr. Dies is "investigating" some of America's lesser fascists.

From what hidden wellspring of humanity and forbearance can Mr. Dies' new character have arisen? Whence his gentle mood? Why the "probe" of fascists? Word has been softly spreading that Martin Dies is a sick man, that his doctor advises a rest and has suggested that Martin can either work at his congressional duties for the remainder of the session and then retire to his Texas home for the summer, or that he can rest now and work during the summer. Since Martin Dies' circus is strictly a summer affair, with less competition, and bigger headlines, there is little doubt as to his choice of these two alternatives. Shortly he will betake himself to the plains of Texas for a rest.

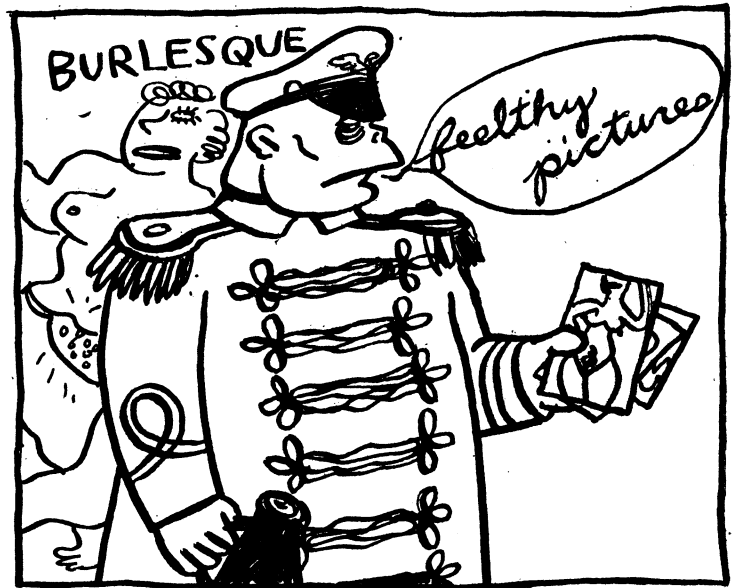
The word "rest" belongs in quotes. For there is a second rumor, that Dies fancies himself a dark horse in the Presidential race for 1940, and that during his rest period he may well make a few speeches to his fellow countrymen. There is little doubt that that has been in the back of his mind as he prepared this latest series of hearings. For the recent election of Maury Maverick as mayor of San Antonio strikes too close to Martin's home territory. Suddenly brought face to face with the realization that even in Texas progressives have strength, Dies has shifted on a sudden tack. No longer can he content himself with smearing the New Deal and witch-hunting "Reds." He must make at least the appearance of looking for a fascist or two—not too much of an effort, but just enough. So last week was cover-up week for Martin Dies.

PAUL G. McMANUS.

If They Lived in America



HITLER



GOERING



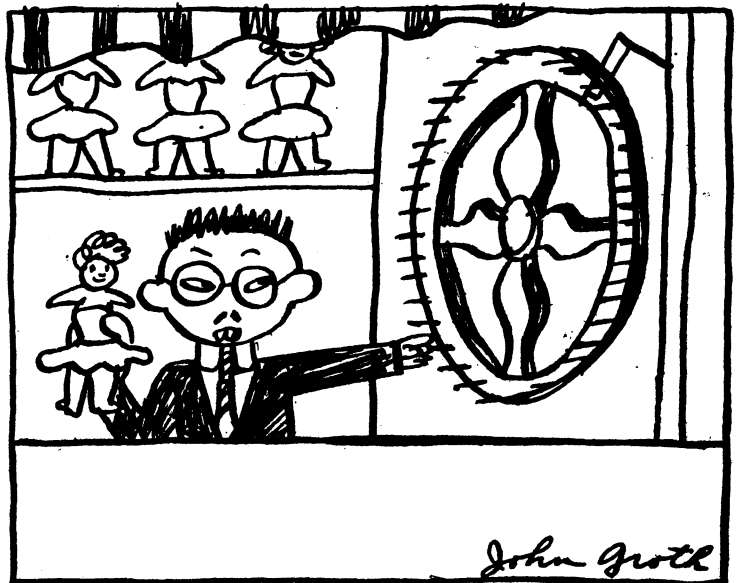
GOEBBELS



MUSSOLINI



FRANCO



HIROHITO

John Groth

The Men Behind Coughlin

The lords of reaction whose gospel is preached by the Royal Oak rabble-rouser come to light. Where does the money come from?

THEY are beginning to catch up with Father Coughlin. Four and a half years ago the Communist press first sounded the alarm and charged that Coughlin was a fascist and anti-Semite. Now this is no longer news; his fascism and anti-Semitism virtually leap at you from every issue of his weekly magazine, *Social Justice*. Four and a half years ago the Communist press declared that Father Coughlin was being subsidized by the very Wall Street interests whom he was so noisily denouncing. If the Dies committee means business, it ought to be able to provide us with documentary verification of this charge too.

As one who has had a hand in the exposure of the Royal Oak Goebbels, I should like to call attention to a few of the more salient facts concerning his activities during the past four and a half years.

When Father Coughlin launched his National Union for Social Justice on Nov. 11, 1934, he was still known publicly as an ardent supporter of the New Deal. It was he who had issued the slogan "Roosevelt or Ruin," and as late as April 9 of that year he had broadcast to the faithful: "I will never change my philosophy that the New Deal is Christ's Deal." In Congress he was most closely associated, not with the reactionaries, but with men like Senator Thomas of Oklahoma and Senator Nye of North Dakota, who were known as liberals. He was widely regarded as a neo-Populist, a sort of clerical Bryan, and even his enemies described him in terms no worse than money crank or crackpot.

On Nov. 1, 1934, the American Jewish Committee, which represents those wealthy Jews who advocate a hush-hush policy in regard to fascism and anti-Semitism, sent this letter to editors of Jewish newspapers:

We have not seen in the Jewish press any reference to Father Coughlin's first radio address of the year. The enclosed excerpts reflect a gratifying state of mind on the part of the reverend gentleman which we believe ought to be conspicuously noted in the Jewish press, for obvious reasons.

It seems that the gentlemen of the American Jewish Committee had been a bit perturbed by a statement Coughlin issued on April 28, 1934, following the Treasury Department's revelation of his silver speculations. In that statement he denounced Secretary Morgenthau as an enemy of "Gentile silver" and frothed at the "internationalists—the European Warburgs and Rothschilds." Apparently, the American Jewish Committee made the proper representations, and Coughlin obliged in a broadcast on October 28, in which he went out of his way to praise

Morgenthau, and, in addition, declared: "If there is anti-Jewish propaganda being maliciously circulated, it will never find support from a Catholic pulpit."

Coughlin was right about the vast majority of Catholic pulpits. The Catholic Church's opposition to anti-Semitism has been made abundantly clear in various pronouncements of the late Pope Pius XI and other high Catholic authorities. But there is one Catholic pulpit in this country, that at Royal Oak, Mich., which is an exception. It has become a fountainhead of the most un-Catholic doctrine—and not only on the question of anti-Semitism.

"A CHRISTIAN NATION"

Just a little more than a month after the American Jewish Committee sent out its letter urging the Jewish press to give the radio priest a clean bill of health I sat in the Shrine of the Little Flower and heard him inject an anti-Semitic innuendo into a lecture he was giving before an audience of about a thousand persons. And some six weeks later, on Jan. 22, 1935, at another lecture in his church, I heard him speak even more explicitly in the same vein. "We've got to say that we're either Christians in this country or not," he shouted. "We're so open-minded as to say to the Jews, the Mohammedans, the Burmese, and the others that while we love each other, remember this is a Christian principle, and when it comes to law, when it comes to representatives in Congress, don't forget this is a Christian nation! Let's not overwork this democracy."

These lectures were not broadcast. Newspapermen were present, however—yet not a line was carried by any paper or news service. And the Detroit Jewish *Chronicle* secured an exclusive statement from Father Coughlin which dripped with love for the Jews. Only the Communist press, so far as I am aware, published the facts.

During the next couple of years Coughlin increasingly emphasized Jewish names—Kuhn, Loeb, Rothschild, Warburg—in his attacks on "international bankers," but he avoided anything overt. Then at Cleveland on Aug. 16, 1936, he "forgot himself." It was at the open-air rally that concluded the convention of the National Union for Social Justice. Coughlin stood on a platform in the hot sun, the perspiration pouring down his face. Declaring that the Jewish doctrine was "a tooth for a tooth and an eye for an eye," he challenged "every Jew in this nation to tell me that he does or does not believe" in the principle of "love thy neighbor as thyself."

All of which is of course mild compared to the fine frenzy of Jew-baiting that one

finds today in certain of Coughlin's broadcasts and in the columns of *Social Justice*. This reflects a new phase in the evolution of his fascism. After his debacle in the 1936 elections Coughlin apparently abandoned hope of being able to seduce any large number of average Americans into building a mass fascist movement. He has, instead, directed his appeal to smaller groups of the most backward elements, inciting them against Jews, the labor movement, and the New Deal by methods borrowed from the Nazis. *Social Justice* has, in fact, become the chief Nazi organ in the country.

And pay for this fascist piper undoubtedly comes from those who call the anti-New Deal tune. The National Union for Social Justice was launched three months after the founding of the American Liberty League. At the time there seemed to be no connection between the two, and publicly the relations between Coughlin and the league seemed to be most uncordial. Both organizations, however, represented a crystallization under the aegis of big business of the reactionary forces opposed to the New Deal. As the struggle against the New Deal sharpened, Coughlin dropped all criticism of the Liberty League and, in fact, adopted its favorite shibboleths. His patriotic efforts during the 1936 campaign won him lavish praise from no less a person than former Gov. Joseph Ely of Massachusetts, member of the league's national executive committee.

THE MONEY-CHANGERS' FRIEND

Father Coughlin established contact with Wall Street at least as far back as 1932. His monetary ideas—and perhaps something more than ideas—were derived, not from the inflationary tradition of the agrarian Midwest and Northwest, as is popularly supposed, but from those very money-changers whom he pilloried so savagely. In his pious biography of the Royal Oak fuhrer, Louis B. Ward, Coughlin's chief publicity man and all-around stooge, has told the story of the visit of two Wall Street emissaries, George LeBlanc and Robert M. Harriss, who came to Coughlin "to persuade him that he should launch into an explanation of the gold subject." This was on Oct. 23, 1932.

Mr. LeBlanc, whose office is now at 44 Wall St., was at one time vice-president of the Equitable Trust Co. of New York and later president of the Interstate Bank & Trust Co., both of which merged with Rockefeller's Chase National, the country's largest banking institution. Mr. Harriss, a silver speculator and member of the New York Cotton Exchange, is a partner in the investment house of Harriss & Vose, 60 Beaver St., in the Wall Street district. Both these gentlemen

subsequently became leading figures in the Committee for the Nation, a big business inflation lobby of which James H. Rand, Jr., president of the anti-union Remington Rand, Inc., was chairman. The chief "theoretician" of the Committee for the Nation was the late Frank A. Vanderlip, former president of the National City Bank. The group's secretary was Dr. Edward A. Rumeley, who later served in a similar capacity with Frank E. Gannett's National Committee to Uphold Constitutional Government, spiritual heir of the Liberty League. The relations between Father Coughlin and the Committee for the Nation were extremely close and in his speeches on monetary questions he merely added the appropriate evangelistic touches to the committee's program. Just what this cost the committee is not known.

Eloquent of the character and direction of Father Coughlin's activities is the fact that he has for several years been on extremely friendly terms with the two archetypes of American big business fascism, Henry Ford and William Randolph Hearst. The May 22 issue of *Social Justice*, announcing that Hearst's New York radio station, WINS, has agreed to broadcast Coughlin's speeches, published the front page headline: "Jews Boycott Hearst for Aiding Father Coughlin." This is really more damaging to Hearst and Coughlin than it is to the Jews, who, of course, constitute only a minority of the participants in the Hearst boycott. Coughlin and Hearst have for long seen eye to eye on many questions. In May 1932 the priest spent part of a vacation on the publisher's California ranch. In 1935 he warmly endorsed Hearst's proposal for the organization of an anti-New Deal "Constitutional Democratic Party"—and a year later gave birth to the Union Party which had all the signs of Hearstian paternity. And today *Social Justice* is printed at the Cuneo Press, Chicago, whose chief customers are two Hearst magazines, *Good Housekeeping* and *Cosmopolitan*.

Incidentally, the Union Party first saw the light of day on the Great Barrington, Mass., estate of Francis P. Keelon, foreign exchange speculator, whose New York office is at 76 Beaver St.

HENRY FORD'S DEFENDER

As for Henry Ford, there too the affinity is of long standing. "Coughlin Defends Ford as a Patriot," read a headline in the *New York Times* of Sept. 6, 1933. And he has continued to defend the motor manufacturer at every opportunity. In 1937 the volatile priest, with the consent of Harry Bennett, head of Ford's private Gestapo, the service department, sought to organize at the Ford Dearborn plant a disguised company union called the Workers Councils for Social Justice. It didn't take. Whereupon Coughlin turned his attention to disrupting the CIO United Automobile Workers from within. It was he who served as go-between for Homer Martin, deposed president of the UAW, in his secret negotiations with the Ford Motor

Co. Martin was soon elevated to Coughlin's hall of fame and in the columns of *Social Justice* he was spoken of in terms reserved only for Hitler, Mussolini, and Ford.

Last December there emerged fresh evidence of Coughlin's intimate relations with the Dearborn rugged individualist. On two occasions Harry Bennett used the priest's broadcasts to issue statements designed to clear Ford of the stigma of having protested the Nazi pogroms. Coughlin has undoubtedly learned much from Ford's pioneer work in anti-Semitism. It is not so many years since the auto magnate's Dearborn *Independent* was, under the editorship of William J. Cameron, publishing articles of the same type as those now appearing in *Social Justice*.

It would be surprising if some of these friends of Coughlin were not contributing their share to "the cause." Nor is there reason to believe that the Nazis are proving less generous, in view of the fact that Dr. Goebbels' speeches have been known to find their way into *Social Justice* over Coughlin's signature. Certainly the activities of this high priest of fascism cost a lot of money. The bill for his weekly broadcasts over forty-six stations is about \$8,000 per hour. For a year

this totals up to \$416,000. *Social Justice*, a twenty-four-page illustrated weekly, carries no advertising. It claims a circulation of 230,000, but Coughlin is not notorious for veracity. The magazine's actual press run is 92,000, which means that it operates at a heavy loss. Copies of the priest's speeches may be obtained free on request, which adds another big sum to the printing bill. When Ward wrote his biography in 1933, he estimated that postage for these printed speeches amounted to \$450,000 a year. Even assuming that this has been considerably reduced, it is still quite an item. Then there is the clerical force of 105 girls, as well as other employees. Clearly, these huge operating costs cannot be covered by the small individual contributions from the radio public. The big money must come from other sources.

To speak for the poor while serving the rich is the essence of fascist technique. Father Coughlin, whose preachments have been repudiated by Cardinal Mundelein as not representing "the doctrine or sentiments of the church," fully measures up to this specification. It is time the Dies committee did a little unfrocking job and revealed the brown shirt under the cassock.

A. B. MAGIL.



Herb Kruckman
 "Lay off the Catholics awhile, boys, just a little while.
 Let's not embarrass our friend in Detroit."

They Voted Republican

Stories from three typical states in the East, Midwest, and Northwest tell the tale of GOP betrayal and corruption. The election honeymoon ends.

Detroit.

“**R**EPUBLICAN leaders apparently are supremely confident that Michigan citizens are ready to vote the Republican ticket under any circumstances.” So speaks the Republican *Detroit News*. And while the words are uttered in warning, they describe the situation exactly.

The present administration owes its election in great part to the dissatisfaction of the farmers. During the past several years about the only benefit farmers have received from the state is rural electrification. The Republicans have liquidated that. It was a New Deal measure.

The Republicans' biggest talking point was, next to economy, political probity. (Page Tom Dewey.) On the day that newly elected Governor Fitzgerald delivered his opening message to the Legislature, the gambling halls closed by Governor Murphy opened their doors—and stayed open.

Within a week after the administration took over, state civil service, enacted by Murphy, was a dead letter. To remove the last doubt concerning Republican honesty, it was revealed that GOP boss Frank McKay received a \$121,000 “commission” for getting the state to finance construction of an international bridge across the St. Clair River.

As for economy, when the Republicans assumed office they promised to balance the budget in sixty days. Three weeks later they said it couldn't be done. Today, the only difference between their expenditures and Murphy's is a qualitative one. His were for services. Theirs are strictly for pork.

For labor the administration reserved special treatment. A state “labor bill” which it sponsored would not only have outlawed sitdown strikes; it would have illegalized picketing by any except actual employees of the struck firm, required ten days' notice before a strike could be called, and provided for the registration of labor leaders. It was an innocent little measure, simply designed to return Michigan to its former preeminence as open shop fortress of the nation. Fortunately, swift action by the labor and progressive forces succeeded in modifying it substantially, though it is still a dangerous bill.

These are the highlights of a truly impressive catalogue of reactionary legislation that runs the gamut from a sales tax amendment in favor of income taxpayers to a measure placing candidates for President and Vice-President on a separate ballot, so that voters may choose state officers irrespective of national issues. No wonder the *News* is worried!

So confident are the Republicans that they have had the audacity to pay off the Old Deal Democrats with the same coin Hitler paid Chamberlain. The man chiefly responsible for Michigan's so-called “conservative swing” of

last November was no Republican but a Democrat, one Murray D. Van Wagoner by name. Van Wagoner, who as highway commissioner operates the only patronage dispensing agency left to the Democrats, went fishing when Murphy needed votes. The Republicans rewarded him for this cooperation by taking his patronage away from him and turning roadbuilding over to the counties.

Michigan was until 1932 a consistently Republican state. In 1932 and 1936 the rising tide of the New Deal swept the Democrats into power. Division in the labor movement, insufficient efforts to meet the needs of the farmers and small townspeople, and treachery in the Democratic Party enabled the Republicans to climb back into the saddle in 1938.

Whether Michigan will go Democratic in 1940 depends partly on whom the Democrats nominate for President. If it is Roosevelt or another strong New Dealer, and if a New Dealer is nominated for governor, the odds are heavily in favor of a Democratic victory. If Champ Clark or Cactus Jack or even jovial Jim is the Democratic standard bearer, it will be difficult, though by no means impossible, to unseat the Republicans.

ARTHUR CLIFFORD.

Portland, Ore.

OREGON has long had a tradition of progressive Republicanism. It was the tradition of W. C. U'ren's Oregon system (the direct primary, the initiative and referendum methods of submitting laws to the public), the tradition of Sen. Harry Lane, one of the few who dared vote against United States participation in the World War. During the last few years, in the inner councils of the Republican Party, the representatives of big business have managed a quiet murder of liberalism in all its forms, but the tradition has persisted in the minds of the voters. It was perhaps this that made Oregon open to such guile.

All over the country, under the tutelage of Dr. Glenn Frank, the Republican Party was claiming a more “realistic” view of the situation. Quite openly it stated that in order to regain mass appeal it must display a “social conscience.” In Oregon Charles A. Sprague, the Republican candidate for governor last November, who had been an excoriating reactionary in the editorial columns of his own paper, the *Salem Statesman*, seemed a more radical progressive than the New Deal candidate. To a less extent the same was true of the minor Republicans running for places in the State Legislature. Partially, at any rate, these men and women were voted into office on the basis of their

progressive platforms. Oregon, which in the previous legislature had put over much New Deal legislation, became predominantly Republican with the beginning of 1939.

Election day was not the end of progressive promises. In his inaugural address on January 10, Governor Sprague set himself certain aims. He stated that he was “in favor of increasing the income of the people” and providing “for its *fair* distribution” (my italics). He said that he wanted “to see Oregon increase its contribution promptly so that the present legal maximum of \$30 a month for old age pensions will be available to all needing that amount.” And he said that he wanted to see changes in the Public Utility District law that would make possible the cheap use of electricity provided by the vast federal dam at Bonneville.

On a few minor issues Governor Sprague has acted in the interests of the people. He vetoed a bill that would have given a monopoly to a small group of owner-controlled pilots in the Columbia River basin. He brought pressure to bear for the abolition of the corrupt and useless milk and bread boards. He kept fly fishermen from monopolizing a couple of trout streams, and once he suggested public power measures less dastardly than those the Portland General Electric was pressing.

But at the request of the fire insurance companies, which would have been taxed to help pay for it, he vetoed the firemen's pension bill. He and other Tories, who had made even more generous pledges for social security, never moved to make old age pensions “available to all needing \$30 a month,” to say nothing of *any* needing it. He signed bills wholesale castrating cheap federal power—diverting it into the hands of the utility companies—bills which cut \$2,000,000 from the state's relief budget, which lowered the income tax exemption and placed a greater tax burden on the poor, which relieved by two-thirds the “rich man's” tax on stock dividends. (Was that what Sprague meant by “a *fair* distribution” of income?) Worst of all, he promoted, quietly as always, and finally signed the bill which moves the state primary from May to September and thus prevents the direct choosing of delegates for the national Republican and Democratic conventions. It is a crippling sock at the progressives in both parties, an instrument of control (in party caucuses) for the reactionaries.

That was what happened to the revival of official progressive Republicanism in Oregon. The handful of Republicans who lived up to their liberal pledges were able to filter out the most blatantly reactionary bills but they could not stem the tide. The administration worked without splurge. It didn't need anything like that. The actual sentiment in the

Legislature was too nearly unanimous. At the end of the session the governor had signed 95.8 percent of the bills passed. He had filed (allowed to become law without signing) another 1.8 percent. It was like some former regime elected on one of Herbie's platforms, instead of the new streamlined one with a "social conscience." DUNCAN STUART.

Philadelphia.

ARTHUR H. JAMES, the Republican bright hope who was elected governor of Pennsylvania, is no longer a glamour boy. The news photographers used to shoot him from below, thus giving him added height and transforming him into a tower of strength. Now they take his picture, if at all, in the proper perspective, and he turns out to be very small indeed in stature.

The same diminishing process has been suffered by the James administration in its five brief months of office. The crusade for civic virtue has ended. The false promises to business have been exposed. The state's finances are in as complete a muddle as the ingenuity of man can make them. The "punitive taxes" on corporations, which James vowed to end, not only remain, but such worker-consumer burdens as the statewide sales tax are imminent.

The social legislation of the Earle "little New Deal" is being thrown overboard, piece by piece, like ballast from a sinking ship. Relief is being shamefully abused. Pennsylvania, in short, has returned to the Republican misrule which it knew for forty years before the New Deal.

The governor's most famous campaign speech, hailed gleefully by Philadelphia's Union League, was the one in which he promised to burn all the New Deal legislation that in four Democratic years had made Pennsylvania a liberal state. His other promises—to cut taxes and bring back "runaway" industry to Pennsylvania—are impossible of achievement, because they are based on untenable reasoning. But the "burning of the laws" has proceeded at a merry Hitlerian pace.

The Republican-owned Dauphin County Court has invalidated the Full-Crew Act, so necessary to railroad labor. The Republican-owned State Supreme Court has emasculated the model Workmen's Compensation and Teachers Tenure acts. The governor demands amendment of the state's "little Wagner act," and has had a bill introduced to strike out the clause authorizing the State Labor Relations Board to "encourage collective bargaining." It is being replaced by anti-union regulations, under the guise of "fair treatment" for the employer.

Another of James' promises was to "humanize relief." His first step in this direction was to institute the pauper's oath, whereby relief recipients must sign a bond permitting the state to levy on anything they own, or ever may own, to pay back their relief allotments. Then an administration bill was introduced to end the unified public-assistance system set

Drought

I'm talking to you out in the American desert,
I'm standing in a field dead with stunted corn.
The hoe in my hand's heavier than a log,
All the tassel's turned sand between my fingers.
I'm talking in wheat burnt like prairie grass,
I'm standing on land wrinkled like a witch's skin.

*trembling in the valley
white spire like a needle
bells tolling over death
ringing slowly for rain*

I've seen the clean clouds get dirty with dust,
The hungry desert tramping across the sky.
I've sealed the panes, stuffed car grease in my nose—
Still sand ribbed the linoleum like a beach.
Grit on my tongue—another farmer's gold—
Me, an American starving and thirsting on a desert.

*grasses blowing like clouds
buffalo on the wind
trees against the hills
water winding slowly*

I've lain in bed listening to the earth crack,
Paint blistering, like an echo, and grasshoppers frying.
I've stared at stars figuring each night for rain,
Return to the wife and remember when she was young,
When our land was young always with colored crops—
Rain now bounces off the hissing asphalt.

*disappearing wells
deeper in the earth
water table down
river beds gone dry*

They said my wheat would win the German war,
My bayonet plowed the Indian's paradise under.
I mortgaged my stomach to feed the Belgian kids—
Now eat pig-feed and hear my cattle cry,
Watch wagon horses sprout into skeletons
And there's no bread for me who fed the world.

ROBERT GESSNER.

up by Earle, return relief to politically dominated county boards, and throw all relief workers back into politics by removing them from civil service.

The school situation in Pennsylvania, thrown into crisis by the depression, has been made a complete mess by James. Two months ago several hundred teachers, unpaid for months and on the relief rolls, went on strike in the anthracite counties for increased state aid. Instead of granting the aid, James ordered a \$6,000,000 school appropriation postponed for two years, heightening the crisis.

Advocate of the balanced budget, James totted up a \$110,000,000 deficit in his vaunted economy program. To add to his financial woe, the courts voided a franchise tax on out-of-state corporations, thus not only cutting anticipated revenue (and increasing the budget deficit) by \$11,500,000, but also making the administration liable for tax refunds of \$26,000,000. "I am up in the air," said the governor, but he soon descended, to begin drafting a statewide sales tax, a state amusement tax, and a documentary stamp tax.

The problem of anthracite, which James promised to solve first, has instead been compounded. The Earle plan for state regulation of the ailing industry has been junked in favor of self-regulation by the big coal operators. The net result thus far has been a mandatory three-day week, further decreasing work and wages.

Civil liberties are also being assaulted by the Republican-controlled Legislature. An Alien Registration Bill has passed the Senate, and there have also been introduced a Teachers Loyalty Oath Bill and one providing for the cutting off of state funds from any school that fails to expel any teacher or student for "advocating communistic principles."

Even hidebound Republican newspapers are sensing widespread dissatisfaction with the administration, and are cooling off toward their "red-headed breaker boy." As for that manly little figure, there must be times when he wishes for the cool, dark restfulness of a mine hundreds of feet below the earth, even though it is available now only three days a week.

JAMES FITZGERALD.

Jane Among the Japanese

EGGLE-EYED readers will remember our report some issues back of the activities in Japan of Miss Jane Howard, daughter of Roy Howard of the S—s-Howard papers. Further word comes of Jane's latest adventures. She is on her way back to America with a Japanese girl, Miss Yuriko Goh, who acted as her guide in Japan and Manchukuo. Yuriko did such a good job that she has been selected to accompany Jane to America with all expenses paid by the Information Bureau of the Japanese Foreign Office. Yuriko with the help of Jane and Jane's papa, is being sent to supply "up-to-date information regarding wartime Japan to women's organizations in the United States."

To War on a Shoestring

Lucien Zacharoff presents some figures and facts that German generals worry about as Hitler pushes them toward Der Tag. The empty cupboard behind the philosophy of "lightning war."

"NOTHING," wrote Friedrich Engels, "depends in the same degree on economic conditions as precisely as the army and the navy. Armament, personnel, organization, tactics, and strategy are in direct dependence on a given degree of development of production. . . ."

Modern warfare consumes staggering quantities of most variegated materials. The power-producing raw materials are in growing demand, because of the widening use of internal-combustion engines in the armed services. The gargantuan expansion in the number of machine guns, artillery, armored cars, tanks, planes, etc., calls for a vast metallurgical base.

An incontrovertible analysis of Germany's needs and deposits of coal, oil, iron ores, and several other strategic items of natural wealth has been made in the October 1938 issue of the *Novy Mir* by Col. I. Popov of the Red Army. While the author makes a scholarly and most informative contribution to our fund of knowledge on the subject, what with his reference to World War economics and its evolution to date, his conclusions are not new. He shows that despite the feverish tempo of preparations for predatory wars, despite the intensive quest for substitutes for the missing military raw materials, despite the increase in imports, there is a virtually fatal famine of strategic resources.

This evaluation does not differ substantially from that made by Stephen Th. Possony, the economist, who has made a study of the planning, management, and cost of *Tomorrow's War* (William Hodge & Co., London, 1938). A distressing shortage of raw materials is reported by all unimpeachable international authorities.

NO WARTIME SUPPLY

Experts who do not spend sleepless nights devising ways of making the front page hold that in time of war Germany cannot hope to receive an adequate quantity of the wherewithal she lacks, either from the so-called "neutral" countries or from those smaller neighbors which are within the fascist orbit. From such quarters Germany can at best look forward only to Swedish iron ore and Polish zinc.

All this is known to the rulers of Germany if not to their sympathetic or unwitting supporters abroad. That is why the Nazis are so frantically trying to make up for their ominous shortcomings by accumulating reserves of supplies in their warehouses, by painfully contracting domestic consumption, and by evolving substitutes. But the *Ersatz* policy until now has failed to win any respect among the world's scientists.

In drastic manner, the fascists discard all

non-military production. They particularly concentrate on machine building, metallurgy, chemistry, cement, and certain branches of mining. About 50 percent of the entire German working population is engaged in these industries.

The fastest growing departments of their machine building are in automobiles, aircraft, and ships. Scores of factories are constructing a wide variety of automotive vehicles. Several plants have been converted to manufacture tanks and armored autos. In 1937 some 326,000 vehicles, of which 62,000 were trucks, had been manufactured.

At least 1,500,000 automobiles and about 1,300,000 motorcycles are at this time controlled by the Hitler regime. This makes possible a considerable motorization of the Reichswehr. The world press has also told of the formation of a "volunteer" automobile corps, commanding 170,000 machines.

OIL SHORTAGE

However, having a huge auto park and using it to the full in wartime are two different things. One need only recall the shortage of petroleum in Germany. The German soil has pitifully small deposits of it. In 1937 it had yielded about 500,000 tons, while in 1936 the country had consumed 4,500,000 tons of oil. The most modest estimates of the 1938 consumption in Germany mention figures in excess of five million tons. This is why the butchers of Berlin so earnestly discuss the Rumanian oil fields.

When the war starts, oil consumption will rise sharply. The Nazi military journal, *Deutsche Wehr*, said in its issue of Jan. 16, 1937, that under war conditions the German army will use annually twelve million tons of oil (it did not say where or how it will be obtained). Place that figure next to the annual yield of 500,000 tons within Germany, and the question looms: Will the absence of oil prove to be the Nazis' Achilles' heel? Hitler's strongest potential allies in a future war, Italy and Japan, are even more pitifully handicapped in this respect, and he certainly cannot look for help from them.

In recent years Germany's aviation industry has expanded enormously. Possibly 115,000 workers are now employed in it. Leading European students are agreed that 120 factories are busy in this field, of which about fifty are devoted to building planes, twenty to aero engines, and the rest to instruments and other control apparatus and accessories. The French press estimates that the annual German production capacity is between sixteen and sixteen and a half thousand aircraft.

But all is not well with the output. In

my article "The Experts vs. Lindbergh" (*NEW MASSES*, Nov. 1, 1938), I cited eminent German authority for the fact that fascist aircraft in Spain has performed poorly, largely because of the frailty of construction. Peacetime operation in Germany is also marked by a high percentage of structural failures and related accidents. All such defects would become even more pronounced in a conflict with first-rate military powers than in the slaughtering of civilians in a technologically backward Spain.

Preparing for war on the seas, Germany is intensively building ships. The years 1937 and 1938 witnessed additions of no mean tonnage to the revitalized German navy, and now that the London agreement has been unilaterally scrapped by Berlin in the latter's plans for unrestricted submarine construction, even greater additions may be anticipated. The significant capacity of Germany's shipbuilding industry may be judged by the fact that in her yards there may be built simultaneously seven line-of-battle craft, three heavy and six light cruisers, seven armored ships of the *Deutschland* type, and so on.

The Nazis are particularly solicitous of their military-chemical base because they cannot forget the "successes" scored by the kaiser's poison gases in the World War. The magnitude of their chemical warfare plans may be surmised from the presence of 250,000 workers in 7,600 factories of this branch of industry. In developing chemical substitutes, special attention is paid to fabricating explosives and poisons. Chemical armaments may be credited to the stronger side of the fascist arsenal.

The cement industry has been raising its output. Since housing construction in the Reich has dropped almost 60 percent from the 1929 record, and industrial construction 40 to 45 percent, it is clear that the output of cement is routed into military channels. There are reasons to believe that in 1937 Germany had produced nine million tons of cement as against 2,795,000 tons in 1932. A juxtaposition of these figures indicates the pace of "big" war preparations.

Notwithstanding the thorough subordination of all industrial activity to military requirements, the number of factories directly producing war supplies increases every year, as shown by the following table:

Year	Factories	Workers
1914	...	120,000
1933	30
1936	340	600,000
1937	350	800,000

Thus, with a fairly powerful industry, Germany is compelled to work largely with im-

ported raw materials. The German economists and military experts are gloomily silent on the subject, but those outside Germany are unanimous in the belief that in a large war the Nazi industry will be unable to increase production to a point where all the fundamental needs of the army, navy, and airforce will be satisfied.

The unbearable shortage of foodstuffs, which has been making the fascist rule so precarious, will precipitate worse crises at the front and in the rear in time of war. Even now, with the prevailing starvation regimen, Germany lacks 10 percent of the meat she needs, 20 percent of the dairy products and eggs, 30 percent of the butter, 50 percent of the fats.

Uneasy must lie the heads of the fascist bigwigs as they contemplate their dependence on foreign markets for vegetable and technological oils. Their margarine industry functions 100 percent on imported vegetable oil. The manufacture of technological fats and oils of animal and plant origin is based 85 percent on imported raw materials.

Space does not permit my giving even an approximate idea of the catastrophic shortage in raw materials for the militarized textile industries.

FOOD RESOURCES POOR

Because tremendous stretches of land are assigned for military purposes, and because the peasantry is brutally exploited, both the sown areas and their fertility are shrinking every year. In 1937 the harvest of grains was 1,600,000 tons smaller than in 1936. There are considerably fewer heads of cattle now than there were when Hitler seized power.

Food resources will be further diminished in a big war, for the most productive agricultural workers will be withdrawn from the fields, as well as large numbers of horses, which are the basic source of traction on the farms. The 1914-18 statistics may be consulted by those interested in how the sown areas and crops contract immediately following the launching of hostilities.

Hitler and his clique try to explain the disastrous shortage of foodstuffs by fables concerning overpopulation. But Germany is surpassed in density of population by a great many countries which amply supply their needs from their own agricultural crops. Besides, large expanses, like East Prussia and Brandenburg, are hardly populated at all.

Overpopulation fairytales are necessary to justify the unceasing aggression, demand for colonies, and so on. As for German agriculture's failure to satisfy home requirements, it must be attributed to the oppression of the Nazi capitalist system under which 2,500,000 poor peasants, constituting 73.6 percent of agricultural economy, own but 19 percent of arable land. At the same time seventeen thousand estate owners hold 32.5 percent of the best arable land. Sixteen agrarian magnates control 500,000 hectares of fields.

The Nazis are counting heavily on their transport system to aid their war schemes. In the first five days of the World War the Ger-

man railroads moved 3,800,000 troops and tremendous quantities of munitions and other supplies. In 1935, between September 9 and 18, the railroads carried out a test mobilization when they transported 870,000 participants to the so-called Congress of the National Socialist Party.

Exclusive of Austria, there is an average of 12.5 kilometers of railroad for each hundred square kilometers in Germany, compared with 11.6 kilometers in France and 4.4 kilometers in the United States. The mobility of the rail network has been greatly stepped up.

Gearing their transport facilities for a world war, the Nazis are building many automobile highways in all important strategic directions. These introduce a new combat method of deploying land forces. Large armies can be brought by motor vehicles along these roads to points where they can directly and at once engage the enemy.

Between Sept. 23, 1933, and March 1, 1937, Germany had built 1,141 kilometers of auto highways. They in turn resulted in the erection of 2,260 bridges. At least 1,618 kilometers of additional highways were under construction as of March 1, 1937.

The tense financial condition of the Third Reich is due to the staggering armaments expenditures, colossal government indebtedness, absence of gold reserves, and the hopeless instability of the Reichsmark.

In the meantime, the costs of waging war have grown prohibitively. The League of Nations estimated that in 1937 there were 8,500,000 men under arms as against six million in 1913. In 1918 military needs consumed 2,500,000,000 gold dollars, as against 7,100,000,000 gold dollars in 1937.

In other words, between 1913 and 1937 standing armies increased by 41.6 percent and the cost of their maintenance by 184 percent. These indices are dwarfed by the 1938-39 armaments resulting from the increased probability of universal war. Modern warfare obviously calls for a wide and firm financial foundation, of which no one suspects Germany.

The figures on German military appropriations, which have enormously increased both the domestic and foreign indebtedness of the Nazi government, are too detailed to present here. The financial strain, as I have noted, is being aggravated by the microscopically small gold reserve and by resort to inflation. It is not necessary to reiterate what every reader of the financial pages in the American press knows about the chronic German foreign-trade deficit.

Undoubtedly, this state of affairs holds great distress for Germany in the event of a great war. Despite the irreparable breaches in their military-economic structure (or rather in the process of creating them) the Nazis have knocked together large armed forces. But Hitler periodically has to purge the members of the General Staff, the more competent and patriotic of whom want to know how, in a major war, so imposing a war machine can be actuated by so weak an economic muscle of the feeble body-politic. LUCIEN ZACHAROFF.



Bessie and the Bund

The Philadelphia schoolmarm who packs a .38 shooter on her hip and chums with the Nazis.

Philadelphia.

THE gray-haired woman, who looked as if she should be sitting in the park cooing over a grandchild, picked up the ugly, snub-nosed .38-caliber revolver from the day bed, and twirled it expertly on her finger.

"Those Communists will never take me alive," she said. She patted her hip. "I have another gun here, so I'm ready for anything. But some day I will be found dead, and by my side will be a revolver with no fingerprints besides my own. It won't be suicide, though. It will be murder."

This was Bessie Burchett speaking, doctor of philosophy, teacher of languages in the Philadelphia high schools. Her one-woman campaign "to substitute Americanism for Communism in the public schools" was at the height of its absurdity. Her colleagues were suggesting that she consult a psychiatrist.

Today we wake up in the birthplace of American independence, home of the Liberty Bell, to find that our Bessie Burchetts have brought us harbingers of fascism. Hoodlum bands rove the streets, throwing bricks through store windows and posting "Buy Gentile" stickers. The daily mail brings a full quota of scurrilous, unprintable anti-Semitic literature. Meetings in the name of racial and religious tolerance are broken up by men with swastika armbands. Anonymous telephone calls threaten to bomb and set fire to the YMCA if a pacifist meeting is held. The Coughlinites picketline walks up and down Chestnut Street chanting its creed of bigotry. Avowing fear of rioting, schools and other public buildings are barred to the civic, labor, and progressive groups that would protest this terrorism.

BREAKS UP MEETINGS

Bessie Burchett's Anti-Communist Association breaks up our meetings; only the other day thirteen of its members were arrested for inciting to riot. Her Philadelphia Committee for the Defense of Constitutional Rights prevents the exercise of the constitutional right of free speech, by persuading school officials to close their buildings to citizens' meetings.

Bessie Burchett teaches our children by day, and at night she speaks openly at meetings of the German-American Bund, with the picture of Adolf Hitler hanging behind her and the upraised arms of Brown Shirts on both sides. She shares the platform with Fritz Kuhn and says: "I am glad there are so many German-Americans who will stand by our country against the awful menace threatening us." She sends notes, clipped to sheaves of anti-Semitic literature, inviting teachers to attend "select" gatherings—to be addressed by an organizer for the Silver Shirts.

Bessie Burchett is transferred from one

school to another for her anti-Semitic activities, following student strikes, parents' protests, denunciation by her own associates, and a request for her dismissal by the American Federation of Teachers. The transfer is immediately protested by seventeen "patriotic" societies, headed by the curiously named Loyal Legion. Two hundred "patriots" storm a Board of Education meeting and try to intimidate the board into revoking the transfer. Chief among the agitators is a former director of public safety of Philadelphia, well remembered because his superintendent of police was the most vicious strikebreaker the city's unions have ever known. In the midst of the fascist rioting, a violent Red-baiting tirade signed by Bessie Burchett appears in the official magazine of the women's Republican organizations of Philadelphia. In the same magazine the Republicans announce their plans for reversing the liberal trend of the preceding state administration, the "little New Deal."

Bessie Burchett emerged as a public figure on May 4, 1936, when she told a meeting of Baptist ministers that social service teachers in the Philadelphia schools were teaching Communism. She was at the time head of the department of foreign languages at the South Philadelphia High School for Girls, and her words carried some weight. When the Board of Education asked for proof of her statements, however, she could produce none. She continued to declare that Communism was being taught, especially in her own school, until in November of that year 105 of the 120 members of the faculty asked her dismissal because she was interfering with school routine, creating dissension, and breaking down discipline with her unfounded charges.

The seventeen "patriotic" societies, with the Loyal Legion at the head, sprang to her defense, praising her "unselfish loyalty to American ideals." But the school board apparently recognized that in Dr. Burchett's makeup there must be an even higher and more unselfish loyalty to something else, for it transferred her to the West Philadelphia High School, demoting her from her department headship.

It was the same story at West Philadelphia High. A few weeks after her arrival, Dr. Burchett spoke at a Nazi rally at Liedertafel Hall. More than two hundred students signed a petition asking for her removal as a Nazi supporter. A student strike and demonstration followed. The very next day, Dr. Burchett addressed two thousand members of the bund at their celebration of Hitler's birthday. Fritz Kuhn, national leader of the bund, and G. Wilhelm Kunze, local leader, flanked her.

Protests against her activities were made by forty-eight civic organizations, representing thousands of Philadelphians, but the school board took no action. Despite the intensity

of feeling in West Philadelphia, most persons still regarded the situation with humorous eyes. The two-gun interview and Bessie's call for "volunteers" for "instruction in patriotism and shooting" to "pop off a few Communists" were considered screwball stuff. The next meeting of the Anti-Communist Association, however, heard an organizer for the Silver Shirts urge "all good Americans" to stand "shoulder to shoulder against the Reds." The speaker took Silver Shirt credit for instigating the 1937 Memorial Day massacre in Chicago.

At a meeting of a Workers School class, at which Angelo Herndon spoke on Negro problems, Bessie and two bodyguards made their appearance, and the gray-haired spinster interrupted the speaker to announce, "I am a true friend of the Negro people. My grandfather was a Southern planter, and taught his slaves how to read." The teacher also invaded a church meeting at St. Stephen's Community House, where cooperatives were being discussed, and declared: "Democracy is one of the most inefficient, terrible means of government we know. All this talk about saving democracy is bosh."

TERRORIST THREATS

These fulminations continued sporadically, but the Anti-Communist Association and the Committee for the Defense of Constitutional Rights were not formally organized—this is highly significant—until after this year's Washington's Birthday rally of the Nazi Bund in New York. From the rally returned James A. Gallagher, a close friend of Bessie's, to form the little group of haters called the Anti-Communist Association, and name himself chairman. His righthand man, Thomas A. Blisard, Jr., at the same time set up the other outfit, with himself at the head. Their first violent stormtrooping was attempted at a meeting of the Committee for Racial and Religious Tolerance on March 14. Fourteen persons, including Gallagher and three members of the Blisard family, were arrested for trying to break up the meeting. All were held. Nearly all those seized were regular picketers of radio station WDAS, which had refused to carry the broadcasts of Father Coughlin unless he submitted his manuscripts in advance. On April 18, the West Philadelphia YMCA, which had scheduled a meeting of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, received a dozen telephone calls threatening bombing of the building unless the meeting was called off. It was canceled. Similar threats induced the Board of Education to cancel a meeting of the American League for Peace and Democracy, scheduled for the William Mann School on April 11.

To meet the growing peril all the progressive forces of the city have united. Whole neighborhoods have been organized. The school board has been forced to open an investigation of fascism in the public schools. Philadelphia is determined that the tolerance which founded it will remain a living force.

EARL MCCOY.

Forsythe

I Knew Ernst Toller

I SUPPOSE all of us who knew Ernst Toller are suffering from the thought that we might have done something for him, might have talked with him and encouraged him, might in some way have made him happier; but there is only one thing we could have done to help him and that was win the Spanish war. It was that defeat plus the persistent and vicious persecution of Hitler and his American hate-hounds that killed him.

When I met him first at a party at Lillian Hellman's, he was a gay fellow who seemed not at all affected either by his present status as an exile or by memories of his past. What I wanted to ask him about was his jail period but I hesitated for fear of stirring him up with things he wanted to forget. However, something came up that started him on reminiscences and he told us the story of the bird that came to the ledge by his cell and the infinitely beautiful story of the love affair between the girl prisoner in one wing of the penitentiary and the man who was in the cell near Toller. It was impossible for them to meet but they carried on a romance by signals from a distance, with the other prisoners sharing in the joy of it.

The next time I saw him was when he spoke at an anti-Nazi meeting in the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles. He had no sooner begun his talk than the Nazis began heckling him. There were cries in German which I later learned were accusations of "coward" and "traitor." From the others in the audience there were demands that the hecklers be thrown out, but Toller, who had turned pale and tense at the first cries, waved down the shouts of his friends and proceeded to answer his enemies. It was only later when I saw him backstage that I realized what a strain he was under. There had been threats by telephone and in letters and he was in an overwrought state; not from fear but at his inability to crush these monsters who had been hounding him ever since the first days of Hitler. They hated him as the leader of the Bavarian revolt in 1918; they hated him because he had been a pacifist; they hated him because in his own person he represented a culture that Hitler could not bear to see live.

He never seemed very clear in his political thinking but he was always on the right side and I particularly recall one meeting where money was being raised for a series of radio programs to be put on by the League for Peace and Democracy at which Toller made a really remarkable collection speech. He was working hard at his plays at that time but was never too busy to help with anything that needed doing. Because he was a man of character and an international celebrity, he often involun-

tarily acted as a rallying point for liberal forces. It is possible that the turning point in the fight against the reactionaries in Hollywood came when Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer refused to be blackmailed by the threats of the puny fascists on the lot who declared that if Toller were hired they would walk out. We're sorry, said MGM, but Toller is being hired. Before that all anybody had to do was yell "Red" and the studios were frightened into a panic.

The series of Nazi successes, which were being aided by the so-called "democracies," depressed Toller in a way which will not be understood by those who do not know how tortured and sensitive he could be. With us it was a comparatively new struggle; he had been at it since his days in the trenches in the World War. Hitler, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Spain . . . The blows were hard enough for any of us; for him, they were almost mortal. But with Spain, his energy was renewed. He saw it instantly as a turning point in history and threw himself into it with all his intense spirit. While liberal people in America were doing what they could in the way of medical help and aid for refugees, Toller aimed at larger support. He went to the parliaments of Denmark and Sweden and other neutral countries. From that effort he gathered millions of dollars for Spain. It was a superb feat and it was never properly appreciated here. One of the saddest things of all was Toller's appearance at the dinner of the foreign correspondents at the Commodore Hotel when, because of his poor accent and some mishap of timing in his presentation, the full effect of that triumph was received with meager applause. This brings up a subject which has long bothered me. We are too apt to take for granted the work of a firm friend and bestow our enthusiasm on a passing celebrity who has deigned to give us a minute of his time and a glance of approval. Toller suffered grievously from that. I know of instances where he wrote articles at the urgent request of a liberal publication, received no payment for the work, and was not even thanked. On one occasion he agreed to speak at a meeting in Brooklyn, for which naturally he was asking no fee. As a gesture they might have sent a car for him but they didn't even send anyone to act as guide, with the result that Toller was forced to find his way through the myriad subway lines which would daunt even a native New Yorker. These are small things and have nothing to do with the fate of Toller but they added to his distress and his feeling that the present-day public, even those who were supposed to be his friends, took him lightly.

I saw him last several weeks ago on West

Forty-fifth Street between the acts of a play. He was with Piscator, the famous German director, also an exile, and I happened to paraphrase the old adage about Paris by saying that if you waited long enough on the sidewalks of New York you would meet all the important people in the world. Toller looked at me a minute in that dark, piercing-eyed way of his and then said with a wry smile, "Yes, the sidewalks . . ."

Looking back at it, I suppose it was an indication of the mood which finally brought about his death but then it seemed no more than his usual awareness of the tragedy of things. That was always about him—the pain of the world. But saying that and nothing more would give you the wrong impression of Toller. He was a gentle man but an extremely intense man. When you joked about serious things, an unfortunate habit the Americans sometimes have, he often seemed not to get it, but just when you were certain of that he would add, "Yes, yes . . ." as if to say that he understood it well enough but it was nothing to jest about. It was only that it was impossible for him to take the world lightly; even if the jokes about Hitler were made by persons who hated him deeply, they were still not jokes to Toller. Hitler was a disease that was not to be touched by ridicule; liberty and democracy and freedom were not mere symbols to him. He might be able to talk freely about his five years in prison but how could he forget them? How could he forget what Hitler had done to the Germany he loved; how could he forgive a so-called liberal world that tied the hands of democratic Spain and allowed it to be beaten to death. Spain died for liberty and Toller died for the world and nobody can doubt it.

ROBERT FORSYTHE.

Peace

Peace. . . .

Not the pale thing
That sits trembling
In the councils of men,
Straining the ear
Against the first crashing shell;
Not even this—
This quiet moment,
Pervading sweet, and lost
Between the rushing things
Insistent on their task,
This hour sequestered
With intimate music, books, and
thoughts;
But rather the white knuckle, clenched
Against the threat of strife,
Placid thought
Behind the frowning brow
And the desperate word
Which passes scarcely mobile lips
That there shall be no war.

GWENDOLYN BENNETT.



John Reed

NEW MASSES is proud to hang on its wall the above painting of John Reed, by the late Robert Hallowell, Reed's classmate at Harvard. This painting was presented to the magazine by a group of Harvard graduates who felt there would be no more fitting place to keep the picture than in the offices of the magazine with which John Reed was associated for so many years. Corliss Lamont, Granville Hicks, and Malcolm Cowley served on the committee which made it possible to present this picture to NEW MASSES. The editorial

board hereby thanks the committee of Harvard men for this splendid gift.

We are particularly happy to have the opportunity to show this picture while the most active writers of the land are in town for the American Writers Congress. The painting hangs in our offices at 461 Fourth Avenue and all of our friends, readers, or contributors are invited to come in and see it.

The other painting of John Reed by Hallowell hangs in Adams House at Harvard.



RACE HATRED

ANTI-SEMITISM

GEN. MOSELEY

K.K.K.

ROME-BERLIN-AXIS



TERROR

PLOT

FRITZ KUHN

DEATHRAGE

NAZI SPIES

COUGHLIN

NAZI PROPAGANDA

BUND

SILVER SHIRTS

ANTI-SEMITISM

VIOLENCE

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A Soviet-British Pact

IT REMAINS to be seen just how much fire there is in the smoke of the reported readiness of the British Cabinet to conclude a mutual assistance pact with the Soviet Union. Though the British proposals are supposed to have received the personal approval of Ivan M. Maisky, Soviet ambassador to London, there has been no official announcement from either the British or Soviet government. Prime Minister Chamberlain, however, in a statement that was characteristically guarded, expressed the hope that a full agreement will have been reached by the time Parliament reconvenes Monday, June 5.

Should the reports from London prove to be true, the chances of preserving peace would be enormously enhanced. A British-French-Soviet alliance would create a powerful counterweight to the German-Italian combine which is bent on further aggression in the name of peace and "living space." Already even the threat of such an alliance has given the axis powers pause. When Hitler's bluff is finally called, it will be seen that fascism, for all its panoply and strut, is like the king in the fairytale, naked and pitiful.

One thing is clear: whatever agreement is made will be on Soviet terms. There will be no quicksand phrases, no nice convenient limbs on which the USSR or some other state menaced by aggression can be left hanging. It will be a pact based on genuine collective security and mutual assistance, in keeping with the principles outlined by Stalin on March 10 in his report to the Congress of the Soviet Communist Party.

Yet even now the appeasement melody lingers on in Downing Street. In the very same breath in which he announced that an agreement with the USSR was in process of completion, Chamberlain intimated the readiness of the British Cabinet to give de

facto recognition to Hitler's seizure of Bohemia and Moravia. And only a few days after Chamberlain described as a "mare's nest" the report that Britain was preparing to turn over to Germany £6,000,000 of Czechoslovak gold, the tory government was caught red-handed attempting to do just that. Pact or no pact, peace is not secure so long as men like Chamberlain and Bonnet guide the destinies of Britain and France.

The Budget of Socialism

BUDGETS are generally pesky things to the layman; chockful of figures, they are almost unintelligible to the average citizen in most lands. One simple fact stands out about the budgetary discussions taking place in the Supreme Soviet of the USSR last week: socialism pays. It is paying big dividends to the folk who believe in it and who labor for it. Revenue for 1939 will reach the staggering total of 155,600,000,000 rubles—about \$30,000,000,000—and less than 5 percent of this sum will be derived from taxes upon the people! The latter fact will be of considerable interest to Mr. Carter Glass—not to speak of the millions of taxable people in America.

A \$7,000,000,000 outlay for military defensive purposes will also be of interest to London, Paris, and Warsaw, not to speak of Berlin, Rome, and Tokyo.

"The successful completion of the two five-year plans has led to tremendous growth of socialist accumulation of Soviet finances," People's Commissar for Finance Arsene Zverev reported. During the Second Five-Year Plan Soviet national economy received 3.4 times as much revenue as during the First Five-Year Plan. The state expended 5.7 times more on social and cultural services during the Second Five-Year Plan than during the previous five-year period. This year's total intake is calculated at 22 percent more than 1938.

Contrast these facts with the groaning budgetary deficits of the aggressor nations. The tremendous war expenditures of these nations is covered by the imposition of back-breaking taxes upon the population.

Germany's state debt has grown by ten billion marks in 1938-39; Italy's by twelve billion lire; Japan's by six and a half billion yen. "The Soviet Union is the only state with a firm and stable budget," Zverev said. Here it is, in cold, dry—but fascinating—figures.

Vacation for Dies

THE Dies committee, having ventured up to its toes in the black pools of American fascist intrigue, has decided to rest from the strain. The sudden call for

an indefinite recess after less than a week of testimony tends to confirm those skeptical of this Red-baiting committee's sudden ardor in tracking down the real enemies of democracy.

What is particularly suspicious is the nonchalant attitude Dies has adopted toward Major Gen. George Van Horn Moseley. Testimony before the committee has revealed that Moseley, who has been barnstorming the country making bloodthirsty speeches against the New Deal, has close connections with various fascist groups who regard him as a "natural" for national fuhrer. The Dies committee, far from issuing a subpoena for Moseley, closed up shop when the general decided he was unable to accept its invitation to testify this week. Is Dies planning to let General Moseley evade investigation just as he did in the case of the Nazi agent George Sylvester Viereck?

One can easily understand Congressman Dies' reluctance to follow a trail which leads inevitably to his own political bedfellows. Dies has too much in common with those he is supposed to be investigating, as is evident from his failure to pursue obvious leads. Though George Deatherage, head of the Knights of the White Camellia, testified that he had dinner on the yacht of Frazier Jelke, oleomargarine king, who showed interest in his movement, Dies made no move to subpoena Jelke. He didn't even bother to find out who was the "young Astor" that Deatherage mentioned as also having been on the yacht. Nor has he done more than make feeble gestures at uncovering the connection between these tinpot Hitlers and the Republican Party.

Highly illuminating has been the attitude of the New York press toward this newest phase of the Dies committee's activities. While the *Post* published one editorial and the *Daily Worker* four, the *Times*, *World-Telegram*, *Sun*, *Journal-American*, *Daily News*, and *Mirror*, all of whom were decidedly vocal in their support of the committee's earlier crusade against the New Deal, lapsed into complete editorial silence concerning even this half-hearted investigation of fascist activities.

Not so the *Herald Tribune*. It published no less than three editorials in an effort to persuade its readers that the Jew-baiters and fascists were nothing but bumptious clowns and that "the less sleep we lose over the matter the better." Of course, one might ask why it is necessary to laugh off at such great length what is, after all, only romantic nonsense.

Is it possible that this elaborate laughter is designed to hide the fact that Representative Dies has stumbled across a shoe that fits?

Girdler: High-Hat Gunman

Two years ago almost to a day—Memorial Day, 1937—Republic Steel's Tom Girdler ordered ten men executed. Their crime: demanding union conditions and better wages for the hard task of making steel. The men died in a blaze of gunfire. Now Girdler emerges to the center of the stage again to enter suit for \$7,500,000 "damages" against the steel union. This trick obviously is meant to counter the decision of the Labor Board ordering reinstatement of five thousand discharged strikers. The steel union has entered claim for \$7,500,000 in back wages due the men.

About a week after Girdler entered his monstrous suit, he appeared before the American Iron and Steel Institute at the Waldorf-Astoria to plead for the people of America. They don't seem to be aware that the New Deal is manufacturing "mass poverty." Furthermore, they don't seem to understand that the Wagner act is "the most harmful of all monkeywrenches thrown into the industrial machine." And again, the benighted public does not know how fearful certain tax laws are. "I refer to such tax monstrosities as the capital-gains tax, the undistributed-profits tax, and similar levies," he cried. Mealy-mouthed as ever, he pretended a horror of war in order to propagate the isolationist line which has proved such a comfort to Hitler, Mussolini, and the Japanese warlords.

But these are weasel words, almost transparent in their treachery. Girdler acts too—as he did May 30, 1937. His damage suit for \$7,500,000 is a warning signal to labor. Way for such action was greased by the recent Apex decision which would, in effect, destroy the right to strike.

Following the Apex decision against hosiery workers on sitdown strike came the damage suit of \$900,000 against the Brotherhood of Teamsters in a case involving an ordinary walkout strike. Now, this amazing high-hat gunman demands \$7,500,000 of the steel union, sixteen of whose members his triggermen bumped off in Chicago and Youngstown. Labor and its friends in all categories can do nothing more important than to back the American Federation of Hosiery Workers in their appeal against the Apex decision. Behind the legal phrases and the weasel words of Girdler hide Girdler bullets.

Teachers Union Holds Firm

THE effort of Red-baiters to split the New York College Teachers Union was decisively rebuked by the membership in the elections held last week. The elections assume unusual significance because of the wide publicity given in the press to charges

by Dr. George W. Hartmann of Teachers College that the union is undemocratically run. The repudiation of this irresponsible charge was registered by a record vote in which 83 percent of the membership participated. The Hartmann "slate" was defeated five to one. The purposes of the union were set forth clearly in a statement by the newly elected president, Prof. Alonzo Myers of New York University:

The New York College Teachers Union welcomes to membership all eligible persons without restriction as to race, religion or political affiliation. This is as it should be in an organization devoted to the furtherance of education in a democracy and of democracy in education. There is a place in the Teachers Union for Republicans, Democrats, Socialists, and Communists. Indeed, all are represented in the present membership. But the union has not been and must not be used by any of these for partisan purposes. The union has enough fighting to do in fighting against educational retrenchment, unjustified dismissals, abridgment of academic freedom, and undemocratic administration.

This seems to us a model statement of progressive union policy. Only those who seek to disrupt the labor movement will oppose such a policy.

That Neutrality Issue

SECRETARY HULL'S letters to Key Pittman, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and Rep. Sol Bloom, acting chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, ought to jolt the whole question of revising the Neutrality Act out of the acute doldrums in which it has been languishing for the past few weeks. At least it ends the administration's hands-off attitude and puts it on record as favoring something.

Mr. Hull's proposals are essentially those embodied in the "cash-and-carry" bill introduced by Senator Pittman. They have now also been incorporated in a resolution sponsored by Representative Bloom. The cash and carry plan would permit trade in all materials with all belligerents, provided right and title to the products are transferred to a foreign purchaser. As NEW MASSES has previously pointed out, this is an improvement on the present Neutrality Act in the sense that since Britain and France would be able to dominate the Atlantic in event of war with Germany and Italy, it would operate to the advantage of the anti-aggression front. On the Pacific, however, it would for similar reasons give the upper hand to Japan over China. Moreover, a basic weakness of this whole approach is that it fails to distinguish between the aggressor and the victim of aggression. Short of outright repeal of the Neutrality Act, the amendments introduced by Senator Thomas of Utah, per-

mitting with the consent of Congress an embargo against any aggressor, hew most closely to the line of the policy outlined by President Roosevelt in various statements.

One of the proposals of Secretary Hull is definitely harmful. This provides for regulation of "the solicitation and collection of funds for belligerents." It has been embodied in the Bloom resolution in the form of a complete ban on such solicitation and collection. In other words, if this became law, it would in all probability be illegal to raise funds for China. This provision is out of harmony with New Deal foreign policy and should be killed.

Stop the Wreckers!

WE HAVE it on responsible information that the WPA administration is yielding to reactionary pressure by planning to wreck the arts projects on June 15. Thirteen hundred people will be fired from the Federal Theater and cuts up to half the personnel are to be ordered on the Art, Music, and Writers projects. Officials will neither confirm nor deny the report. This secretiveness is in character with the tactics of the House Appropriations Subcommittee investigating WPA. After positive assurance by chairman Edward T. Taylor that arts union representatives would be heard, the subcommittee adjourned without calling them.

Their testimony would have curled the hair of certain fink congressmen representing big business in Washington. They would have heard the story of the misery of pink slips and the ruined morale of creative people when they have to live in the shadow of a balanced budget. They would have heard how the thing they are trying to kill has broadened the lives of Americans, brought the stuff of museums and theater into the small towns, and has written chapters in the story of American life.

Make no mistake. If this ax falls on the projects it spells the end of a proud day in our culture. Half the structure gone means the rapid end of the whole. Mentally underprivileged officials and congressmen, like their clever cousins in Berlin, despise and fear the growth of learning and art. When they have cut off the head of WPA the body of the public works program is close to destruction. In terms of art this is vandalism, in terms of people it is murder.

We are fools to appease the wreckers. A book half-burned is no book at all. The Federation of Arts Unions, made up of thirteen unions, has opened the defense of the projects. It is a decisive hour in the reactionary guerrilla campaign to destroy the gains of the New Deal. Letters and telegrams to Col. F. C. Harrington, WPA administrator, and to the President, will help stop the wreckers.

American Writers Meet

GREETINGS to the Third American Writers Congress! Meeting in New York this weekend, hundreds of progressive writers affiliated with the League of American Writers will discuss their part in the defense of democracy and peace as well as their specific craft problems. These writers, alive to their responsibilities as spokesmen for the human values which fascism violates, plan to shape a policy with respect to the question of collective resistance to the aggressor nations; cooperation with exiled writers; support for the labor movement and the progressive policies of the New Deal; opposition to race prejudice—"in general, the defense of a free world in which writers can function."

We know that many of our readers will plan to attend the public session at Carnegie Hall on Friday evening. Speakers at this session include Eduard Benes, former president of Czechoslovakia; Louis Aragon, author of *The Bells of Basel* and *Residential Quarter* and editor of the *Paris Ce Soir*; Sylvia Townsend Warner, representing the British Association of Writers for Intellectual Liberty; Ralph Bates, representing the International Association of Writers for the Defense of Culture; Frederico Mangahas, president of the Philippine Writers League; Langston Hughes, vice-president of the League of American Writers; Thomas Mann; Vincent Sheean; Louis Bromfield; and Heywood Broun. Donald Ogden Stewart, president of the league, will preside.

The Albany Record

FEAR and contempt for the people were the two motives struggling for domination of the Republican majority in the recently concluded New York State Legislature. Contempt for the people's needs and desires lay behind the ruthless and illegal reductions in the budget and the crippling of essential state departments and services. Contempt for democracy inspired the Devaney anti-democratic bill and the Feinberg measure barring minority parties from the ballot. Contempt for labor motivated the Wicks bill, aimed at undermining the Transport Workers Union, and the Bewley bill, which in effect illegalizes trucking strikes. Contempt for the unemployed was expressed by placing relief administration under local authority as a prelude to the actual reduction of relief. And contempt for the very processes of democracy was expressed by the failure to act on the people's mandate for a system of social and health insurance.

But fear—fear of the aroused progressivism of the New York electorate being expressed in 1940—served to force Republican reaction into some tortuous channels. Fear

dictated the passage of a housing bill—but contempt limited the amount of money available to \$50,000,000 for the next year. Fear forced the Republicans to pass a number of supplementary appropriations to their budget—but contempt dictated their regressive 2-cents-per-package cigarette tax. Fear forced them to accept the recommendations of the governor's committee investigating the administration of unemployment insurance—but contempt led them to recommend a system of merit rating which would not only add numerous new complications to the law's administration, but would also favor larger employers and handicap small business. Contempt dictated the administrative changes in regard to relief—but fear prevented any direct reductions.

Fuller organization of the people to make their sentiments known to Albany, plus the emergence of a clear-cut New Deal leadership among the Democrats, can balk Republican reaction at the apparently inevitable special session of the Legislature, as well as provide the basis for a smashing defeat of reaction in 1940.

Immediately urgent is the blocking of some of the reactionary legislation, such as the Feinberg, Devaney, Wicks, Burrows-Perry, and Young bills, through the governor's veto. Particularly pernicious is the Feinberg bill. Governor Lehman ought to hear from the people on these measures.

Hypocritical Hippocrats

AT ITS recent convention in St. Louis, the American Medical Association claimed that only forty thousand persons in the United States are unable to get needed medical services. This fantastic figure reduces the estimate of a WPA health survey by 39,960,000. In New York's East Side alone there are more than forty thousand persons unable to obtain adequate medical care. Criminal indifference to the basic needs of one-third of the nation was even more brazenly expressed in the AMA's opposition to the Wagner Health Bill. Since congressional hearings are being held on the bill this week, the action of the medical Tories is particularly ominous. Hand-picked representatives of the AMA have already appeared in Washington to speak against the Wagner proposal. Their influence must immediately be counteracted by the public and by those doctors who have not forgotten their Hippocratic Oath. The passage of the Health Bill is a "must" for this session of Congress.

Publishers Defend PWA

FORTY-FOUR leading publishing houses have sent a joint statement to Rep. Edward A. Taylor, chairman of the House committee investigating WPA, urging the

maintenance of the Federal Writers Project, which is being threatened by the Tory book-burners in Congress. Signers, comprising virtually all important houses, deny the charge that WPA books are full of propaganda: "on the contrary, in our considered opinion these books represent a genuine, valuable, and objective contribution to the understanding of American life." Lauding the American Guide Book series as the foremost example of the valuable work that could be done by no other means than WPA, the publishers point out that the project was put these books within the reach of poor people, underwritten research of a scope that no publisher could venture himself, and enriched our literature with indigenous, regional material. Despite the fact that the Writers Project has operated on a short-term basis it has been able to produce some three hundred volumes in its brief history. We have said it before and we are happy to join these alert publishers in saying it again—the Writers Project must continue at full strength.

Japan Blows Its Top

THE degenerate men who call themselves the military and political leaders of Japan seem to have blown their collective tops. In the face of setbacks at the hands of the Chinese defenders from Hupeh in the North to Canton in the South, the Japanese government chiefs have fallen into a fine fascist frenzy. They are now putting a fence about the Chinese coastline two hundred miles out at sea, and are searching every ship that they may find within such waters. They shot at French, English and now German vessels last week, stopped them, and boarded them to search their manifests.

The Japanese are importing from the United States 52.4 percent of the raw materials and finished products that feed their war machine. Unless an embargo is imposed against Japan, we may soon witness the spectacle of American war materials being used to kill American citizens on American ships. The Pittman resolution permitting such an embargo ought to be passed without delay.

Hearst Approves

IN CASE there are some 'liberals' who still feel that any criticism of Russia is 'Red-baiting,' we suggest that they read the Manifesto from the Committee for Cultural Freedom, sparkplugged by leftist Sidney Hook [and other Trotskyites.—ED.], and signed by more than ninety recognized American Liberals who stand 'to the left of center.' This passage clearly names Russia among the enemies of those democratic principles found now only in America.—EDITORIAL in *Hearst's New York "Mirror."*

R E V I E W A N D C O M M E N T

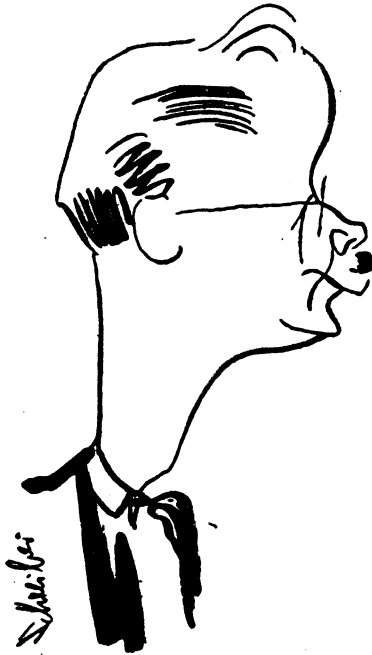
The People, Yes

Gorky's conception of literature as a unifying force is extremely pertinent to the problems of the contemporary writer.

LITERATURE, Gorky once wrote, "must at last embark upon its epic role, the role of an inner force which firmly welds people in the knowledge of the community of their suffering and desires, the awareness of the unity of their striving for a beautiful and free life." It is pertinent to recall these words on the eve of the Third American Writers Congress. For who can deny that the best writing of our day has served to *weld the people* by making them conscious of their common experience and aspiration? In poetry, Carl Sandburg's *The People, Yes*; in fiction, John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*; in the theater, Robert Sherwood's *Abe Lincoln in Illinois*—to take outstanding examples—have been at once great democratic affirmations and notable works of art. It is surely significant—and heartening—that each of these works has at the same time won great audiences.

Creative writers in this country, like their contemporaries abroad, understand that if they are really to be "the unacknowledged legislators of mankind," they must have an intimate relation to their constituents. More truly than ever before in our history do writers feel the impulse to express their sense of solidarity with the common man. The people, the masses of working men and women, are the heroes of our most satisfying books—of Elliot Paul's *The Stars and Stripes Forever*, of Ruth McKenney's *Industrial Valley*, of Richard Wright's *Uncle Tom's Children*, of Josephine Herbst's trilogy. The people, yes: in Margaret Bourke-White's and Erskine Caldwell's *You Have Seen Their Faces*, in Archibald MacLeish's *Land of the Free*. Our writers have discovered new sources of strength in the sharecroppers of Oklahoma, the migratory workers of California, the rubber workers of Akron. They have been successful in the measure that they have been faithful to the people.

And, by contrast, the writers who have failed to reflect the unity of the people in their striving for a beautiful and free life have at the same time been unfaithful to their craft. Sinclair Lewis' *The Prodigal Parents* is a rotten novel. It is rotten with contempt for progressive ideas and heroic actions. John Dos Passos' *Adventures of a Young Man*, to be published soon, shows how impotent and shrill a gifted writer may become when he moves away from the democratic struggles of the people and turns to contemptible Red-baiting. Great literature cannot be built upon a lie. A novel cannot seek to divide and disrupt the movement toward freedom without humiliating its creator. For such a novel is poisoned at the source and it cannot survive the hatred



Georges Schreiber
DONALD OGDEN STEWART. *The president of the League of American Writers, which opens its Third Congress at Carnegie Hall, N. Y. C., this week.*

which originally motivated its production.

The progressive writers of our time are not the dividers of the people, but the welders of the people's unity. That is why they are hated by the fascists who burn their books. That is why the Trotskyites on *Partisan Review* call *The Grapes of Wrath* "didactic and long-winded" (a miserable judgment) and Newton Arvin's *Whitman* a democratic front maneuver! That is why Edmund Wilson boils over with spite for Hollywood at the very moment when Hollywood produces a *Juarez* and a *Confessions of a Nazi Spy*. That is why the reactionaries in Congress assail the Federal Writers Projects. The fascists and Trotskyites join hands in attack not merely because they fear the unity of writers as citizens but also because they fear the unifying force of literature itself.

A writer, if he is conscientious, will arrive at Gorky's lofty conception through the torment of his own work. Just before he died, Thomas Wolfe wrote "A Statement of Purpose" (as yet unpublished) which described his own process of discovery. It is worth citing at some length:

The value of the Eugene Gant type of character is his personal and romantic uniqueness, causing conflict with the world around him. In this sense the Eugene Gant type of character becomes a kind of romantic self-justification, and the greatest weak-

ness of such a character lies in this fact. In this book [Wolfe is referring to *The Web and the Rock*] there is no trace of Eugene Gant-ness in the mind and spirit of the creator. . . . And although the protagonist should be, in his own right, an interesting person, his significance lies not in his personal uniqueness and differences, but in his personal identity to the life of every man. The book is a book of discovery, hence of union with life; not a book of personal revolt, hence of separation from life. The protagonist becomes significant not as the tragic victim of circumstances, the romantic hero in conflict and revolt against his environment, but as a kind of polar instrument round which the events of life are grouped, by means of which they are touched, explained, and apprehended, by means of which they are seen and ordered. . . . And, in order that there may be no doubt as to what this process of discovery involves, the whole book might almost be called *You Can't Go Home Again*—which means back to one's family, back home to one's childhood, back home to the father one has lost, back home to romantic love, to a young man's dream of glory and of fame, back home to lyricism, to singing just for singing's sake, back home to estheticism, to one's youthful ideas of the "artist," and the all-sufficiency of "art and beauty and love," back home to the ivory tower, back home to places in the country, the cottage in Bermuda, away from the strife and conflict of the world . . . back home to the old forms and systems of things that once seemed everlasting but that are changing all the time, back home to the escapes of Time and Memory. . . . This is a hopeful book—the conclusion is that although you can't go home again, the home of every one of us is in the future, there is no other way.

This passage expresses that exalted sense of liberation from pessimism and individualism which we find in so many writers today. It is not far removed from Thomas Mann's renunciation of the Schopenhauerian myth that culture and politics are alien. It is what one feels in Hemingway's *War in Spain* (which someone in this country ought to publish in a hurry) as opposed to *The Sun Also Rises*. Louis Aragon, who made the discovery earlier and more completely, expressed the same feeling in his paper on "From Dada to Red Front," read at the First Writers Congress in 1935.

The fulfillment of this liberation involves a close identification with men in the mass. But beyond that, it involves a sense of the community of nations. In the same essay from which I have quoted, Gorky speaks of literature as "the International of the spirit." The writer's responsibility transcends the frontiers of his native land, as the fate of the exiles in our midst has made abundantly clear. The writer is at once a devoted nationalist and internationalist. The nature of this paradox was understood by Jean Jaures, who said:

"A little internationalism turns one away from the fatherland, a greater internationalism returns one to it." Compare the devotion to their native traditions of Malraux and Bonnet, of Bates and Lord Londonderry, of Upton Sinclair and Tom Girdler. Who are the true nationalists? And compare their concern for the peoples of other lands. Who are the true internationalists?

At the Third Writers Congress these two impulses, the sense of international solidarity and the sense of solidarity with one's own people, will be dramatized. Ludwig Renn and Ralph Bates, both of whom fought for the Spanish people, will speak. And they will speak, let us not forget, for the Ralph Foxes of all lands. A special session on "Writers in Exile" will hear Oskar Maria Graf, Arnold Zweig, Klaus Mann, and representatives of Spain, Italy, and Czechoslovakia. Vincent Sheean, who is an outstanding example of the American patriot-internationalist of our day, will speak. Thomas Mann, Langston Hughes, Heywood Broun—do not all of these writers constitute a living refutation of isolationism? Their unanimous support of concerted action to resist the fascist aggressors follows inevitably from the fact that "a greater internationalism" has made them conscious of the national interests of their respective countries.

SAMUEL SILLEN.

"Who Was Socrates?"

A reinterpretation of the philosopher's social role.

A GENUINE revaluation of philosophy requires the reconstruction of its history. This is what Alban D. Winspear and Tom Silverberg, the authors of *Who Was Socrates?* (Cordon Co., New York, \$1.25), have so excitingly set about doing for a small but most significant segment. If the results are shocking to followers of the classic tradition created so illustriously by Plato, it is really because in reinterpreting the figure and teaching of Socrates they have uncovered the very roots of this tradition.

Who Was Socrates? is an essay on Socrates and on Athenian society and thought of the fifth century BC. But this study of Socrates from a dynamic historical and social point of view has far-reaching implications for the whole history of philosophy. Indeed, it makes more imperative than ever the reexamination of the basic concepts and methods of all Western philosophy. Nor does this awareness seem foreign to the authors. They approach their task with a zest and spirit that no pedantic scholars could have who set out on a mere iconoclastic or "muckraking" venture. Underlying the suspense of a mystery story that comes from ingeniously piecing together the fragments of what is really known about Socrates is the ringing challenge to contemporaries to study anew the history of philosophy in the light of the material background of all philosophizing—the conflicts of social

groups amidst the development of the forces of production and the changing social relationships of men involved therein. This particular study also provides a lesson on democracy of significance to Americans today. For—and this is the thesis of the book—the later teachings of Socrates, as expounded and amplified by Plato, were developed in the interests of the anti-democratic Athenian aristocracy of the late fifth century BC.

The first paragraph of the book sets the stage on which the study unfolds itself:

Socrates emerged from a humble background. His parents were members of the rising class of skilled artisans who, in the period just ten years after the Persian Wars, were for the first time beginning to achieve prominence. It was this class, created by the new mercantilism, that in the fifth century was to provide the backbone for the brilliant Athenian democracy.

Placed in this social setting the strange case of Socrates is dexterously recounted in connection with the ups and downs of Athenian political life. As the authors indicate, we seldom find "the same transparent unity of ideas and social struggles that we find in fifth-century Greece," for there "the struggle between oligarchs and democrats found its reflection in the mental and artistic argument between the conservative, theological, idealistic tradition, and its naturalistic, relativistic, and skeptical critics."

As is to be expected, this study of Socrates provides suggestive insights into many other Greek leaders in the social, artistic and philosophical spheres. Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes enter the picture. Solon and Pericles are reinterpreted, while new light is thrown on such philosophers as Anaxagoras, Archelaus, Protagoras, and Thrasymachus, not to mention the Pythagoreans who are the villains behind the scene. The whole Sophistic movement acquires new meaning and presents striking parallels with figures and currents of our own day.

The main theme of Messrs. Winspear and Silverberg is that Socrates, originally a poor artisan, had by the age of forty achieved eminence through his thinking which was closely related to the democratic movement and its vigorous offshoot, materialistic and skeptical sophism; that his material and social position then improved and after some years of conflict he emerged as a political conservative, a friend and mentor of Alcibiades, Critias, and other leaders of the discontented nobility, and as a philosophical idealist close to the Pythagorean school; and finally, that Socrates was tried and executed by the Athenian democracy, after the overthrow of the short-lived bloody dictatorship, as the ideological ringleader of the aristocracy and a traitorous enemy of the people of Athens. This last is the subject of Part III, entitled "The Later Socrates," and it constitutes the most exciting part of the book for the average reader. Against Plato's hallowed *Apology* the authors educe a striking array of Greek references to Socrates' trial and seek to exhibit the *Apology*

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as "the extremely adroit and facile plea of a partisan."

From the professional philosophers and the Greek scholars will inevitably come the cry that the case outlined above is not completely established. To this reviewer, who cannot regard himself as an adequate judge of all the evidence brought forward and who certainly would not claim that an irrevocable case had been made out, this objection seems unjustifiable. Is *anything* proved about Socrates? The fact that this interpretation may not be irrefutably demonstrated is no excuse for its rejection in favor of the traditional Platonic version. It is perhaps quite enough if Winspear and Silverberg have shown another interpretation possible, have presented it plausibly, and have, in so doing, presented a picture of Socrates and his contemporaries which is socially and politically infinitely more meaningful to us than the figure traditionally accepted in the histories of Greek philosophy.

HOWARD SELSAM.

The Great Commoner

A biography of Thaddeus Stevens, by Alphonse B. Miller.

THADDEUS STEVENS was one of those rare figures in the history of bourgeois revolutions—a thoroughly consistent bourgeois democrat, who scorned to circumscribe or limit democracy. He was of the stature of Tom Paine. In the anti-slavery struggle which culminated in Civil War and Reconstruction, he gained the title of the Great Commoner. Too many other leaders of the day hesitated and compromised, frightened by the intensity of the storm they had called forth. Stevens, however, rejoiced to unleash a whirlwind that would sweep America clean of human bondage and inequality under the law. His enemies have called him Jacobin—a proud name, even though flung as a taunt.

Alphonse B. Miller's biography (*Thaddeus Stevens*, Harper & Bros., \$4) is not the usual diatribe against Stevens that we have come to expect from histories, novels, and moving pictures—for example, *The Birth of a Nation*. The book has therefore enraged our neo-Confederate reviewers. Unfortunately, it deserves their anger far too little. To do justice to the magnificent revolutionist Thaddeus Stevens, a biographer should properly be as fervent a partisan of democracy as was Stevens; as fiery as he in demanding full rights for the Negro people; as eager to wipe out—at the very least insofar as can be done under capitalism—every trace of legal and political inequality. And Mr. Miller is none of these things. Whatever passion he may feel for justice, he restrains most decorously.

The biographer appears to have not the faintest suspicion that the men with whom he deals were the products, and also the leaders and molders, of class forces in a great social struggle; that Stevens stood in the forefront of a progressive coalition — industrial



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bourgeoisie, working class, free farmers, Negro people—which overthrew the dominant slave power; that President Andrew Johnson, whom Stevens fought to remove, was representative of a party bourgeoisie which, to prolong its own political life after the Civil War, made alliance with the ex-slaveholders and thus with reaction. No: to Mr. Miller, all the acts of Stevens, Johnson, and the rest resulted solely from traits of character—a common enough interpretation which empties history of all meaning. One even gathers, as one reads, that regard—or disregard—for the niceties of etiquette determines the destiny of men and nations. Thus, the activities of the Abolitionists were "indiscretions"; Johnson fought Congress because he lacked "tact"; Congress and the President could easily have agreed "had the spirit of accommodation dwelt in either faction." Thus, also, the resignation from Johnson's Cabinet of some vacillating members of the Radical group (under pressure of the reactionaries) was dictated by "a sense of good taste"; while Stanton, whose greater consistency did not allow him to resign, was a "cad" who "showed no respect for the amenities." Likewise, Grant's praiseworthy refusal to usurp Stanton's place was "gaucherie." The reader trained in history grows impatient with such triviality of outlook.

Of course the book fails in its estimate of the era of Radical Reconstruction. It parrots the usual slanders against the "Black Parliaments" through which the Negroes and poor whites, for all too short a time, brought democracy to the South.

Because Mr. Miller has given us the facts even while he has misinterpreted them, whoever can read between the lines may trace in these pages the inspiring story of Thaddeus Stevens: how he fought for universal, free, public education when such a proposal was embraced only by "extremists"; how he served the anti-slavery movement, organizing, speaking, writing, aiding fugitive slaves; how he helped found the Republican Party when it was the party of progress; how, during the war, he scorned vacillation and brought forward those measures so needful for victory—emancipation and arming of the Negroes; how, with the slogan of "forty acres," he tried to give the soil to its tillers; how he fathered the Fourteenth Amendment and laid the basis for the many progressive acts of Radical Reconstruction, which he did not live to see. One may, as I say, read the facts in Mr. Miller's book and draw one's own conclusions. Still, it is better that readers unfamiliar in the field learn the story from other sources—as Thomas Woodley's *The Great Leveler*.

It would be unfair not to mention that Mr. Miller does good service in his chapter on Stevens' relations with Lincoln. Here he disproves the myth of serious disagreements between two great leaders, and shows how wholeheartedly Stevens admired Lincoln even while impatient with his early hesitations, and how greatly Lincoln came to depend on Stevens' leadership in Congress.

ELIZABETH LAWSON.

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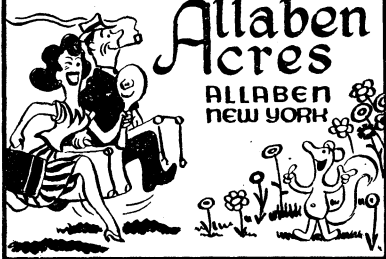
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 - They usually are on duty 36 out of every 48 hours and don't have time to be husbands even if they could afford it.
 - It's more fun for the nurses.
- (3) It has been determined that 87% of all motorists stopped at red lights race their motors when a pedestrian crosses in front of them. This is because:
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Papinin's Diary

"Life on an Ice Floe," story of Soviet Polar expedition.

VISITORS to the Soviet Arctic Pavilion at the World's Fair will see the tent and other equipment used by the Papinin expedition on their ice-floe Polar Station. This exhibit recalls the highly important nine-month voyage (May 21, 1937, to Feb. 19, 1938) of four Soviet scientists from a point near the North Pole down to the coast of Greenland. Here, in *Life on an Ice Floe* (Julian Messner, \$2.50) are the day-by-day, diary-entered experiences of Ivan Papinin and his companions: marine biologist Shirshov, radio operator Krenkel, astronomer Federov—and Jolly, the dog mascot.

The book is much more than a valuable scientific document. Because of the informal, intimate appeal of Papinin's diary notes—and the likable modesty, vigor, and charm of the diarist himself—the reader takes part not only in a drama of high adventure and discovery, but in a story of real people in daily association for a common purpose. Papinin, as cook, has awful luck with his first attempt at biscuit making. Zhenya becomes ill after hours of work outside in freezing wind and snow. Jolly is punished for stealing a large chunk of meat. An oil stove explodes, severely burning Papinin's hands. The four men eagerly look forward to radio news of their families, and to the bath and shave they allow themselves, maybe every six weeks, as a form of holiday celebration or reward for scientific achievement. Such notations are just as interesting to the reader as accounts of Shirshov's hydrochemical experiments, or a radiogram from Moscow announcing the bestowal of high honors on the scientists. As you travel with these hardy companions, isolated by a vast world of ice and blizzards on their perilous floating island, you get that most vital writer-to-reader contact: the sense of experience shared.

After being set down by planes on May 21, the four put up their "living tent," aerial, etc. The long, lonely, hazardous life begins. Many of the days are monotonous, but filled always with hard work—carrying in supplies, rescuing and repairing snowed-under instruments, reporting weather conditions, nursing comrades sick from tainted food, listening awhile in the evenings to radio broadcasts, or perhaps playing chess. Not so bad while the sun shines; but the long Polar night and miserable weather try even Shirshov's cheery spirits. To Papinin's credit as a scientist, he records mistakes and failures, big and little, as well as accomplishments. To his credit as a writer, his entries build up, like good fiction, to a dramatic climax: the ominous, ever-widening fissures on the ice floe as it speeds southward; then the anxious waiting for the arrival of rescue ships and planes, which finally, nick-of-time fashion, reach the heroes.

Papinin wisely decided to publish his log of the expedition just as it was roughly jotted

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down. Disarmingly, he says in his introduction that he is "not a writer," but is only "setting down the facts." The following facts are from a February 13 entry, just after word was received that the icebreaker *Murmanets* was on its way to them:

We are not worried either for ourselves or our families. The tragic last words of Captain Scott come to my mind, words written on his return from the South Pole. The dying explorer was tortured by the thought—who will care for my family when I am dead? We have no such troubled thoughts. Behind us stand the whole Soviet people, our party, and our government.

At noon I went out of the tent and, with unrestrained joy, exclaimed, "The sun! At last, the sun!"

Dispelling the fog, the long-awaited sun had appeared at last, a hazy red disk blazing on the horizon. It rose red and flamed against a background of flamboyant orange. Serrated ridges of block ice were etched in jeweled brilliance by the long beams of sunlight. Ernst and Zhenya turned around from a heap of fur garments which they were industriously sorting, and their faces beamed with smiles as they watched the gorgeous spectacle.

What the expedition accomplished scientifically is simply told in the concluding diary pages: discoveries including the recorded movements of Arctic ice, and soundings of ocean depth enabling the scientists to "sketch a profile of the Arctic Ocean from the North Pole to the Greenland Sea," a service of great value to ship navigation and Polar plane flight. The many illustrations in the book, from camera shots taken "on location," add much to its merits.

RUTH LECHLITNER.

Government and Art

Grace Overmyer's book discusses federal support of the arts.

IN A modest historical introduction to her book (*Government and the Arts*, W. W. Norton & Co., \$3), Grace Overmyer stresses the new problems that developed when the rise of democratic government and popular, secular education made support of the arts a vaster matter than private patronage could solve. It is doubly appropriate, therefore, to investigate the problems created by economic decline in terms of the security and status of the artist and his work.

Miss Overmyer does this modestly, but her documented study contains valuable source material for the student who will do the bigger and more generalized job. Her treatment of the Soviet help to the arts leaves much to be desired. But the point emerges in a remark that "although no separate official estimate of Russia's arts appropriation has been supplied, it seems probable that it exceeds . . . any other nation of the world." Her treatment of the WPA arts projects throws into relief the scanty work of private and municipal agencies, underlining the advantages of a national approach to a national problem.

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The Cursed City

An inspired camera turns to our urban nightmare in the documentary film "The City."... "The Oppenheim Family" comes from the USSR.

THE people who live in the city have adapted themselves to an inhuman life. In this labyrinthine bedlam of rivets, stopwatch lives, grit, and neon, they live like the systematically frustrated mice in the psychologist's trap. A dirty blond child stirs his dreams in the horsepiddle of the gutter, millions move against each other in the subway, dodge traffic, and climb the crooked mile in company towns. The horrors of the city are commonplace; we have had to ignore these things in order to endure them. From a train window as you pass through East Chicago, Homestead, or the Jersey flats, the sight is painful, but it has taken the lens of a camera to show this degradation fully. *The City*, a four reel film, now showing at the Science and Education Building at the Fair, has recorded urban life so sharply that it stands as one of the landmarks of the movie turned to public use.

The Carnegie Corporation put up \$50,000 and Civic Films made a million dollars' worth of social criticism for the money. Directed and photographed by Ralph Steiner and Willard Van Dyke under the supervision of Oscar Serlin, the script was prepared by Pare Lorentz, Henwar Rodakiewicz, and Lewis Mumford. Aaron Copland wrote the music, which is conducted by Max Goberman; Theodore Lawrence edited the film; and Morris Carnovsky speaks the commentary.

The picture has five parts. First, the New England town before the industrial city began. The people live in harmony with the land and their handicrafts in the bucolic beauty of space, sun, and nature. But the "City of Smoke" intrudes upon the screen, the Pittsburghs, Garys, and Buttes, where the raw strength of ore and coal dominates the lives of the people, where greedy capitalism has made its graveyard rows of company houses in mud and smoke. Then the metropolis, "The Steel City," the empty siren city, with the human ants jammed up and dehumanized. In this sequence Mr. Steiner and Mr. Van Dyke have wrought a triumph of realism. The movie camera, rarely used so powerfully, is handled like a candid camera. It discovers a worried little man trying to cross a street, sallying out, washed back, peering around nervously. There are kids playing street games, a shot of a loft window with three youths watching the girls in the street. One of them describes a voluptuous shape with his hands. There are traffic jams with a montage effect built around the suspense of a clicking taxi meter. There is a satirical sequence in a quick lunch room, toast popping, pancakes poured automatically, sandwiches made with the efficiency of a Ford part,

and the customers eating with the same tempo. It scares you and makes your gorge rise to see what profit has done to people.

The fourth part is an acute idea called "The Endless City," the highways leading out of the metropolis, where the city takes its ugliness to the country in rows of slow-moving cars like Nazi helmets. The omnipresent lens catches the refugees in their private reactions to the gaseous journey—grimaces, boredom, and exasperation.

The fifth part is "The Green City," the city of tomorrow, a decentralized garden town, like Greenbelt I presume, although no actual place is named. Here is the full cycle from the New England town back again to a natural relation with the country in the industrial age. The commentator asks the audience to choose between this happy life and the places we have just seen, the places "where people are always getting ready to live, some other time, some other place." This is not the question. How do we get the Green City? is the question. The film does not answer it.

After a staggering indictment of contemporary cities the picture trails off in a maundering fashion when faced with the answer. The commentary in the last sequence poses several false alternatives, like "who shall be master,

things or men?" People can master things with their hands tied, but pushing aside the class which imposes this way of life is another matter not mentioned in *The City*.

As a piece of film making and social indictment, the film is masterful. Mr. Copland's music, Mr. Carnovsky's trenchant reading, and the superb photography and montage make *The City* a film that will shock thousands of plain Americans into recognizing the streamlined misery of the city. It asks an enormous question and begs the answer.

BERLIN

Although it resembles *Professor Mamlock* in treating the plight of the middle class Berlin Jew in the first months of Hitler's power, the new Soviet film, *The Oppenheim Family*, tells the story of a larger group. Lion Feuchtwanger's novel, upon which the film was based, considers the family of Martin Oppenheim, furniture merchant, Prof. Edgar Oppenheim, eye surgeon, his assistant, Dr. Jacobi, Pachinke, a chauffeur, and several others in biographical sketches. The film shows two kinds of Nazi violence, the destructive raid on Professor Oppenheim's clinic, and the mental anguish of young Berthold Oppenheim having his humanitarian ideas stifled by a Nazi



EVENING IN DACHAU CONCENTRATION CAMP.—A scene from the Soviet movie "The Oppenheim Family," adapted from Lion Feuchtwanger's novel of 1933 Germany.



EVENING IN DACHAU CONCENTRATION CAMP.—A scene from the Soviet movie "The Oppenheim Family," adapted from Lion Feuchtwanger's novel of 1933 Germany.

schoolmaster. In the physical savagery of the Nazis the film is as eloquent as *Mamlock*. The story of young Berthold is not as successfully managed. Although the Soviet film is making great strides in psychological portrayals, it has not yet achieved the intimacy of the French characterizations.

Serafima Roshal, sister of the director, Gregory Roshal, has made a rather clumsy screen treatment of the novel. She loses several significant characters in the shuffle. The Aryan wife of Professor Oppenheim, who is proud of the fact that her husband does not look Jewish and who later denies being his wife during the Nazi raid, is one of these. There are so many stories told here that the film's length of an hour and forty-five minutes cramps the development.

In its sympathy with the unpolitical people uprooted by fascism *The Oppenheim Family* is immensely effective. There are characters in Feuchtwanger's group study with which any middle class person can immediately associate himself or compare people he knows. In America the fascist thing is expanding. The era of streetfighting may well have begun here, as it did a dozen years ago in Germany, in the provocations of Coughlinites and Bund rallies. The tide came up to Edgar Oppenheim's window before he saw it; the quiet musicales were violated and his nephew driven to suicide before the boots came into his operating theater, bringing the brutal act.

The Oppenheim clan is a culture-loving, comfortable part of Berlin, which was destroyed as ruthlessly as the working class movement in the Brandenburg quarter. Pachinke, Martin Oppenheim's chauffeur, is a quiet, resourceful Communist, a confidant of the boy Berthold. Not until the Oppenheims are scattered by exile and thrown into concentration camps do they see the Communists and glimpse another world. In the concentration camp Professor Oppenheim meets Weller, a Communist functionary, who quotes Goethe as he leaves the cell for his beatings. After he is released from the camp the professor goes to Switzerland, vowing that the first thing he will do is write a book about Weller.

Lion Feuchtwanger wrote his book about the Wellers and Mosfilm has enlarged it for the world. The style of the film is not successful but its story is an important detail of contemporary history.

JAMES DUGAN.

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Back in 1932, when Jimmy Walker was riding high as treasurer of Tammany's tinboxes, George Sklar and Albert Maltz exposed the mess in *Merry-Go-Round*, at the Provincetown Theater. When the play's success induced them to move uptown, Mayor Walker had it stopped. Right after that the same two young men squared off and took a smack at the warmakers in the Theater Union's first production, *Peace on Earth*.

For their next play the Theater Union did Sklar's and Paul Peters' *Stevedore*, a rousing melodrama of Negro and white workers' struggles in the South. In 1935 the Theater Guild produced *Parade*, a left-wing musical written largely by Sklar and Peters.

Long before his first play had met an audience, Sklar was making notes for what turned up ten years later as *Life and Death of an American*. He was in Baker's Workshop at Yale then, and very much under the influence of Dos Passos and the New Playwrights Group. The first draft of the play was completed in 1935, and has been rewritten a few times since then. In its present form it is a strong and sincere panorama of American life quite superior to the somewhat romantic and overblown *American Way*.

For his typical American, Sklar has picked Jerry Dorgan, son of Irish Catholic workers. Jerry grows up in a small city, raises hell with the other kids, wins fair marks on his report card and loud cheers on the football field, falls in love at the high school prom, and sets his course for college and the white collar job that means making good. But his father dies as the result of long hours and low wages, and Jerry has to put on the overalls to keep the family alive. Then the bombs drop on Europe, and Jerry changes into flying togs. When the war's over, he takes his place at the end of the queue of uniforms outside the factory gates. The boom-boom of the twenties—Jerry gets married and works up to a technician's post in an airplane plant. A kid, and then depression, breadlines, and years of hunger and fear. When things pick up, a job in a steel mill. A wage cut—they organize and walk out, and we're on a field in South Chicago, Memorial Day, 1937. The cops shoot, Jerry gets it. Capitalism has killed the decent guy who wanted the ordinary things that make for a happy life.

That's the outline of the "dramatic biography." It takes in most of the fundamental things that could have happened to a man born at the turn of the century. Sklar wants his audience to understand the average American in relation to the period he lives in. To enlarge the scope of the action, he combines the stylized form of the Living Newspaper with simple and direct realism. You get flashes of the significant personal moments in Jerry's life juxtaposed with shots of turning points in American history. Throughout the play there are songs, headlines, the voice of the chorus, symbolic dances, and expressive backdrops to heighten the tone of the times. The total meaning of Jerry's life is there—full and clear and bitter.

If the play is weak in any respect, it is in over-abundance. By trying to say so much so quickly, it fails to secure all its potential dramatic effectiveness. The use of both stylized and realistic techniques does not fully achieve its end. From the occasional resort to the Living Newspaper you do not derive as much enlightening information as you get in a solid play of that type, like *Power*. And when that device forces the condensation of Jerry's personal story into a series of quick glimpses, you don't get to know Jerry as a complex, human individual.

Nevertheless *Life and Death of an American* is well worth seeing as a challenging experiment in the drama and for the splendid production the Federal Theater has given it. Howard Bay's settings, the score by Alex North and Earl Robinson, Moe Hack's clever lighting, and the acting of J. Arthur Kennedy and Mary Rolfe in the lead roles are outstanding. If the tories should succeed in crippling the Federal Theater, one of the most vital sources of American art will have been lost to us.

MILTON MELTZER.

Federal Theater Radio

FTRD proves to be one of the most valuable of the arts projects.

ONE of the most valuable of the federal arts projects has undoubtedly been the Federal Theater Radio Division, which was organized in March 1936. The executives in charge were quick to recognize the poverty of cultural material then existing in air entertainment, and immediately established a policy of combining artistry and educational value with popular appeal. The FTRD has now reached the point where it is regarded by critics and public as one of the foremost drama-producing groups on the networks, and it has a radio following of fifteen million.

At first recognition came slowly because of the success of reactionary influences in instilling a widespread lack of respect for the abilities of any unit associated with WPA. Smooth functioning was also somewhat retarded by the fact that the morale of many project actors and their co-workers had been shaken by unemployment and other discouraging factors. However, in time the project was stabilized, and has risen, in spite of obstacles, to the position it holds today.

Private enterprise has cooperated more with the FTRD than with any other WPA activity. To date over \$6,000,000 worth of free time has been donated by the various broadcasting systems, a sum almost ten times the cost of the project. Prominent authors have generously made gifts of radio rights to their work. James Truslow Adams allowed the use of *The Epic of America*. Mary Roberts Rinehart donated her "Tish" stories. And Paul de Kruif gave the rights to one of the project's greatest successes—*Men Against Death*.

One of the first steps taken by this division was the presentation of sixteen Shake-

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GOINGS ON

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.

spearean plays. In this field, the FTRD stands as a pioneer. Incidentally, the idea had been previously rejected by National Broadcasting, which, together with the Columbia network, picked it up a year after the FTRD successes and aired a rival series of Shakespearean dramas.

In the FTRD's search for material it has been fruitful. Symphony, opera, operetta, drama ranging from Elizabethan to Ibsen, literary masterpieces—all have provided opportunities for vital and experimental presentation. To meet problems of social significance, crusades for better housing, and school news, intended to stimulate educational interest among the younger element, have been carried out with greater care and thoroughness than many similar programs by commercial sponsors with unlimited appropriations. One of the most entertaining of the FTRD's programs has been *There's a Law Against It*. This is based on certain odd and archaic statutes which still are part of our penal code. A new feature, *Women in the Making of America*, started last Friday. Written by Jane Ashman, a competent young author, this program dramatizes the lives of pioneer women from the year 1620 to the present day. To my knowledge this series is the first which seeks to popularize the services of American women in the furthering of democratic ideals.

One of the by-products of this project has been the absorption by private industry of a number of individuals as a result of their showing with the FTRD. Some have found jobs in Hollywood, while others have become associated with sponsored programs. In 1938 almost 50 percent of the personnel were boosted to well-paying positions. *Professional Parade* alone returned eighty-five WPA and non-WPA actors to the stage, screen, and radio. Minnie Dupree, now in pictures; Howard Da Silva, with *Abe Lincoln in Illinois*; Henry Youngman, on the Kate Smith program; Ethel Intropidi, recently in *American Scene*; Lester Scharf, now with the MGM Hollywood directorial staff; Charles Leland, MC-ing in a Chicago night spot; George Ewarts, tenoring at the Rainbow Room in Manhattan and at Atlantic City's Steel Pier; Sidney Grant, playing in *The American Way*; Ralph Hertz, who went with Cissie Loftus: these are only a few of those whose work with the FTRD won them commercial recognition.

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I, for one, intend to champion NEW MASSES among my fellow teachers. I'm going to sell its virtues as frankly and forcefully as I can. You see, it isn't just a magazine I'm selling, but a much larger question of whether we are to retreat in the fight for something better for all of us—or to go forward to achieve real gains that every progressive American knows we must have—if we are to survive.

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